**Wisconsin Conservation Congress**  
**Mississippi River Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ORDER OF BUSINESS</th>
<th>11/12/2020</th>
<th>6:30PM</th>
<th>Zoom</th>
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I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. CALL TO ORDER

| Meeting called to order by | Mike Britton at 6:32PM |

B. ROLL CALL

| ATTENDEES | Mike Britton, Marc Schultz, Hugh Hatch, Travis Buree, Wes Domine, Charles Gauger, Rick Wayne, Reed Kabelowsky, Kelly Toelosen, William Howe, Wayne Stietz, Josh Hennich |
| EXCUSED | Dan Heidel, Maurice Amundson |
| UNEXCUSED | Ted Engle, Doug Stelzner, Julie de la Terre, Andrew Novack, |
| GUESTS | DNR - Bob Jumpek (LE) (not present), Dave Heith (Fisheries) Tim Mueller - USFWS, Fallon French, Chris Tallman |

C. AGENDA APPROVAL/REPAIR

| DISCUSSION | Wisconsin Conservation Congress  
Mississippi River Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda  
November 12, 2020 at 6:30 pm  
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Mississippi River Advisory Committee of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress will convene at 6:30 pm on November 12, 2020 via Zoom to review the agenda below. Please log on to the meeting at 6:15 pm so that we can assist with any technical difficulties before the meeting begins at 6:30 pm.  
Meetings of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress are public meetings and open to participation by any member of the public. If you would like to participate in this meeting, please register at https://zoom.us/meeting/register/j1ocOCqTMrG9e56h6kirdXrzQCpum6lyyn to obtain access information for the Zoom meeting.  
ORDER OF BUSINESS  
I. Organizational Matters  
A. Call to order  
B. Roll call  
C. Agenda approval or repair  
D. Review committee mission statement:  
Within and to the support of Wisconsin Conservation Congress process; it is the mission of the Mississippi River Committee (MRC) to advise the Wisconsin NRB and Department of Natural Resources on issues, rules, or policies which affect the river and/or associated natural resources. The MRC strives to stay acquainted with current river resource management; the science in support or opposition to that management; and with public opinion thereof. The MRC encourages river management agencies to seek public participation in management decisions or policy. Influence stemming from the MRC shall be generated with greatest intentions toward long term benefits to all fish and wildlife resources; and with an emphasis toward preserving public access and harvest of game resources, (i.e., preserving outdoor heritage activities of hunting, fishing, and trapping).  
E. Public comments Citizens who wish to address the committee should contact the committee chair (Michael Britton at 715-234-0096) prior to November 10, 2020.  
II. Information & Action Items  
A. Citizen resolutions - none  
B. Department information items & updates  
1. DNR Fisheries updates  
2. Law enforcement update  
C. USFWS Update  
D. DNR landing at Trempealeau Lock and Dam maintenance needs  
E. Mississippi River Committee letter of support for a Lake Onalaska/Pool 7 hydrology study/investigation  
F. Railroad Crossing Update  
G. Walleye Initiative Update (if not covered in DNR Fisheries)  
H. Bow Fishing Update (from 2019 agenda)  
I. Big Mouth Buffalo Protection Update (from 2019 agenda)  
J. Corp of Engineer Update – update from after public comment period ended 09/15/2019 |
K. Future committee meetings

III. Member Matters

IV. Adjournment

D. REVIEW COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

| ACTION | Mike Britton presented the meeting agenda - there was no discussion of changes. A motion was offered by Marc Schultz and 2nd by Kelly Tollefson to accept the agenda as written/presented - motion was carried with no dissents. |

DISCUSSION | Within and to the support of Wisconsin Conservation Congress process, it is the mission of the Mississippi River Committee (MRC) to advise the Wisconsin NRB and Department of Natural Resources on issues, rules, or policies which affect the river and/or other associated natural resources. The MRC strives to stay acquainted with current river resource management; the science in support or opposition to that management; and with public opinion thereof. The MRC encourages river management agencies to seek public participation in management decisions or policy. Influence stemming from the MRC shall be generated with greatest intentions toward long term benefits to all fish and wildlife resources; and with an emphasis toward preserving public access and harvest of game resources, (i.e., preserving outdoor heritage activities of hunting, fishing, and trapping). |

ACTION | Secretary Reed Kabelowski read the Mission Statement to the group. Motion by Wes Domine and 2nd by Reed Kabelowski to accept the Mission Statement as written - motion was carried with no dissents. |
II. INFORMATION & ACTION ITEMS

A. Citizen Resolutions

| DISCUSSION | No citizen resolutions were on the Agenda. |
| ACTION |

| PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |

B. Department information items & updates

1. DNR Fisheries updates

   - Dave Heath presented an update - see attached document. Tim Miller (USFWS) presented an update - see attached document. The department is still conducting a fair amount of field work - some work is not possible due to current COVID restrictions. The department is under a hunting freeze. Department has favorable recommendation regarding the Trempealeau Project. No waterfowl surveys have been conducted on river.

   - Bill Howe discussed sediment issues and relocation of sediment deposits. Mike Britton asked about Onalaska items - Dave Heath gave a summary. Talked about heavy fishing pressure on this lake year around. Stated that at 50° fish start to move to wintering areas where fishing becomes quite good. Bill Howe commented about how the railroad is contributing to rip-rap and large solids in the river. Marc Schultz commented how the increase in moneys being directed to the river and its projects combined with economic growth and sustainability = successes. Reed Kabelowsky asked about comparison of river during last visit when high levels caused so much damage compared to now - presenters indicate that things are still very tough on the river. Marc Schultz commented that the high water during the winter caused beavers to resort to girdling many trees increasing an already bad situation. Presenters gave an update on the McGregor Lake project which is continuing. There was much discussion about the various projects and initiatives that involve the river resources and budge information was discussed. Tim Miller gave a presentation about invasive species - of note, a new invasive plant on the scene - Flowering Rush - has come on fast due to low water environment at present favors this plant - there is no information yet on what values or harm it will have for wildlife. Permit process was discussed and it was noted that Wisconsin is a tougher to get through the permit processes compared to Minnesota. The other notable invasive involves Asian Carp - some work is being done to track silver carp. Marc Schultz commented that various draw-down efforts will add to the Flowering Rush issue. Mark Schultz inquired if any agencies are doing any soil surveys in conjunction with all the forestry work. Wes Domine discussed the use of dead (leaner) trees in forestry/erosion management. Tim Miller indicated preventative maintenance work is being completed. The discussion was lengthy and much good information was offered.

2. Law enforcement update

| DISCUSSION |

| ACTION |

| PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |

C. USFWS Update

| DISCUSSION | Included in DNR update |
| ACTION |

| PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |

D. DNR landing at Trempealeau Lock and Dam maintenance needs

| DISCUSSION | This is a DNR controlled property. Much sediment and only usable at high water. Major landing for Pools 5, 6, & 7. Management of facility comes from folks stationed at Perrot State Park. DNR managers looked at it and gave the |
| ACTION |

| PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
summarize that it was not their issue. Disagreement from members was offered. Dave will look/talk about this with the managing folks again. It was noted that there has not been any work by the Corp in the area for some time as well. Mike Britton commented that this should be a separate management team from the park - Dave Heath commented that they are just stationed there. Mike Britton commented that a follow up letter from MRAC may help.

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<td>Dave Heath offered to follow up with managing folks.</td>
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### E. Mississippi River Committee letter of support for a Lake Onalaska/Pool 7 hydrology study/investigation

Marc Schultz

**DISCUSSION**
Marc discussed the great amounts of sediments in this area - some areas going from 6' to 6". Black River influent causing/evolving problems. Lot of water entering and leaving this body of water creating management difficulties. Dave Heath commented that groups have started brainstorming on fixes.

**ACTION**
A motion was offered by Marc Schultz and 2nd by Wes Domine to draft a letter to the Army Corp, the USFWS, and the DNR to support hydrological studies of the Pool 7/Onalaska Area - motion was carried with no dissents. Reed Kabelowsky was asked to assist in drafting this letter with supporting information from Marc Schultz. A draft will be worked on and submitted to Mike Britton for final approval.

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<td>Reed Kabelowsky, Marc Schultz, Mike Britton</td>
<td>Not a rush - do it right.</td>
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### F. Railroad Crossing Update

Marc Schultz

**DISCUSSION**
LaCrosse Sportsmen's Alliance working diligently on this. Dave Trawicki from local Safari Club International also working on this. There is bipartisan support for changing the law on this. Congress has had this on its plate several times with no outcome at present. Mike Britton discussed if the MRAC should issue another letter. Best course of action is to continue to make frequent contacts with legislators.

**ACTION**
Members and WCC is encouraged to contact legislators.

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### G. Walleye Initiative Update (if not covered in DNR Fisheries)

Dave Heath

**DISCUSSION**
There is an ongoing public input survey - on state website. Many regional focus meetings (virtual) are being conducted with small groups invited to participate due to Zoom format. Has been about 15 meetings to date. Marc Schultz commented that he was impressed by some of the varied research being conducted in this area. Commented that managing walleyes on a river system is very different that our northern Wisconsin lakes. Marc Schultz and Wes Domine have been in on some of these meetings.

**ACTION**

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### H. Bow Fishing Update (from 2019 agenda)

Dave Heath

**DISCUSSION**
Noise complaints persist. No real update on any enforcement. Very difficult with guidelines for enforcing noise complaints - very regulated on sound collection techniques. On Oct. 16, there was a bowfishing boat violating the "no entry" area on the river - this is on video. It is felt that the level of noise and the large lights used will have an affect on migrating wildlife in the area. Discussion on use of decibel meters and laws governing their use. Reed Kabelowsky commented that Bob Junbeck had commented that LE was looking into enforcement at our last meeting. Again - very difficult to enforce legally.

**ACTION**

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I. Big Mouth Buffalo Protection Update (from 2019 agenda)  

**DISCUSSION**  
Wes Domine authored a resolution regarding management/study of this species. Resolution went through spring hearings process. Mike Britton commented that there has been some push back on this item. Resolution/Item has passed through DLC. Mike Britton will check with DLC/Tony Blauth to see where this is at.

**ACTION**  
Mike Britton will check with DLC

**PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE**  
Mike Britton

**DEADLINE**

J. Corp of Engineer Update – update from after public comment period ended  
09/15/2019

**DISCUSSION**  
It is not clear if the full public comment period is finished yet. Has been about a year. An e-mail update was sent out by Kari last year around this time. Marc Schultz will reach out to Sarah Strassman (Corp) for an update.

**ACTION**  
March will contact Sarah Strassman

**PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE**  
Marc Schultz

**DEADLINE**

K. [DESCRIPTION OF TOPIC]  

**DISCUSSION**  
Mike Britton discussed a second MRAC meeting. This has been okayed by WCC. Hoping to cover more items with two meetings. Current format will be Zoom. A March and August (normal) meeting were discussed and was agreeable to members. Dave Heath was okay with this. Tim Miller had no issues at this time. Discuss dates.

**ACTION**

**PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE**  
Mike Britton will come up with dates.

**DEADLINE**

III. MEMBERS MATTERS

**DISCUSSION**  
Mike Britton thanked everyone for an orderly and productive meeting. Reed Kabelowsky talked about upcoming YCC activities. Asked the MRAC group and the DNR&USFWS folks to consider coming up with a summer project that could utilize the help of YCC delegates. Wes Domine inquired about the status of the bait harvest resolution - Dave Heath said it is stalled out for now. Comment about lands in the Lower Chippewa River Area - several parcels are available to DNR (Knowles/Nelson funding). DNR seems to be interested, but worried that time will run out and it will get sold. Feels it always gets shot down in Joint Finance Committee. Wayne Stietz inquired if it would be feasible/of interest to fly the river and make a video of the damage for public distribution/education.

**ACTION**

IV. ADJOURNMENT

**MEETING ADJOURNED**  
Motion to adjourn by Wes Domine and 2nd by Wayne Stietz - carried  8:22PM

**SUBMITTED BY**  
Reed Kabelowsky

**DATE**  
[Date]