

RE: MRCC meetingFrom: Otto, Richard J MVP [Richard.J.Otto@mvp02.usace.army.mil]

Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2003 4:00 PM

To: 'ragrawe@hbc.com'; Marc Schultz; Kent Pehler; John Campe; Bill Howe; Bill Burke; Amy Denz; Ann Sheehan; Barb Gronemus; Barb Naramore; Barry Drazkowski; Bev Spande; Big River; Bill and Sandra Allaire; Bob Drieslein; Bob Kierlin; Bob Mullally; Bonnie Koop; Brian Aldrich; Catherine McCalvin; Cindy Samples; Craig Olson; Krumholz, Daniel J MVP; Dan McGuinness; Dick Hegle; Dick Lambert; Dick Larson; Otto, Richard J MVP; Don Hultman; Powell, Donald L MVP; Dorothy Hoffmann; Doug Altrichter; Ed Passe; Eric Nelson; Fred Funk; Gene Pelowski; George Hoffmann; Greg Davids; Greg Egan; Gretchen Benjamin; Harland Knight; Harry Buck; Holly Stoerker; DeZellar, Jeffrey T MVP; Jeff Janvrin; Jennifer Shilling; Jim Eddy; Jim Harrison; Jim Nissen; Jim Sieben; Joel Luehmann; John Gabbert; John Lindell; John Marty; Jon Stravers; Jonathan Ela; Karrie Jackeln; Ken Lubinski; Berg, Kevin F MVP; Kim Cates; Larry Laber; Lisa McCurdy; Marjorie Bunce; Marian Havlik; Marian Meyer; Mark Andersen; Mark Beorkrem; Davidson, Mark D MVP; Mark Meyer; Mark Noll; Mary Beth Garrigan; Matt Nickolay; Michelle Marron; Mike Conrad; Mike Davis; Mike DeLong; Mike Griffin; Mike Huebsch; Mike Kennedy; Mike Majeski; Mike Osskopp; Nick Hennemann; Norm Senjem; Pat Pariseau; Patrick Connolly; Machajewski, Paul R MVP; Urich, Randall R MVP; Ray Cox; Ray Vandever; Richard Moore; Rodney Rovang; Perk, Roger A MVR; Roger Steinberg; Ron Brown; Russ Eichman; Ruth Nissen; Sandy Heidel; Sarah Halaverson; Scot Johnson; Scott Gritters; Whitney, Scott D MVR; Shane Crawford; Sheila Kiscaden; Steve Delapp; Steve Dille; Steve Johnson; Steve Sherwood; Steve Sviggum; Suzanne Blue; Tim Breza; Tim Schlagenhaft; Tom Hackbarth; Tom Saxhaug; Tom Thompson; Victor Langer; Wabasha Chamber; Winona Chamber of Commerce

Cc: Star, Franklin E MVP

Subject: RE: MRCC meeting

I would like to provide some comments on the draft legislation so you can all mull it over prior to the MRCC meeting. I will plan on being there as I am sure it will be a lively discussion.

1. We agree there is a need for more federal involvement in managing recreational uses on the Refuge and the Upper Miss 9 Foot Navigation Project in general.
2. We don't believe that outgranting these responsibilities to the states is a viable solution. Case in point is the Gores WMA. As some may know, throughout their entire lease period the MnDNR has been extremely limited in their capability to respond to public recreation issues on COE lands in Pool 3. They haven't had a budget that supports it. As a result, the number of illegal structures is steadily increasing and there has been nothing in the way of recreational improvements or beneficial management actions to serve the growing number of public recreation users. It seems that most states are currently going through budget restrictions. As a result it seems very unlikely that the states would be capable of taking on additional river management responsibilities, especially in the realm of recreation.
3. As we understand it, the FWS is currently limited in their recreation mgmt capabilities on the Upper Miss because their policies and regulations are geared towards the more 'typical' FWS refuge. These typical management areas rarely involve multiple land ownerships or a complicated set of congressionally-designated purposes, such as navigation and national wildlife refuge. On the typical refuge, the 'Big 6' appropriate recreation uses are limited to wildlife dependent activities (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, environmental education and interpretation). We believe there is FWS policy

that allows refuge managers to review and authorize recreation uses beyond the 'Big 6,' but they must meet compatibility requirements (Maybe Don Hultman can confirm this for me). From what we have heard at FWS planning meetings we feel it will be very difficult to convince the FWS higher echelon that pleasure boating, etc. are compatible with the designated purposes of the Upper Miss Refuge. Our understanding of the Upper Miss CCP process leads us to believe the Service currently plans to continue their focus on the wildlife-dependent recreation uses along the river, (which is probably appropriate) but it leaves the many other non-wildlife-based recreation uses to continue without any significant increase in management action.

4. The Corps currently has authority to manage for recreational purposes on Corps Water Resource Projects. The problem is that all the COE policy that goes along with this authority is geared towards developed recreation areas such as parks, campgrounds and boat ramps. Management of dispersed use such as we have here on the River is not addressed very well in the authority or in COE policy.

5. We understand that there are many (including some folks in the Corps) who operate under the mindset that the COE/FWS Co-op agreement outgranted all management responsibilities to the FWS. In actuality the co-op agreement outgrants fish and wildlife management responsibility to the Service and retains other management actions for the Corps. It would be most appropriate to state that these Co-op lands are currently co-managed by COE and FWS.

6. We believe a strong case could be made for COE actively managing the more dispersed recreational uses occurring on the river, at least on the COE fee title lands, if the legislation addressed this type of use directly. We agree that the FWS might also be considered for this type of authority but it may be setting a dangerous precedent if FWS is forced to change agency rec mgmt policy to accommodate one 'atypical' refuge.

7. One of the bigger problems we have is the budget. Everyone knows that an authorization isn't much good without an appropriation to go with it. Somehow that needs to be addressed in the proposed legislation. It would be unrealistic to expect COE or any other agency to take this on without the funds to do it properly. Within the Corps there is already a 60+ year precedent set that management of dispersed recreation is not needed. Thus, funding for recreation has always been an uphill battle.

8. As we see it legislation is needed to define agency authorities (FWS and COE) and to provide funds to carry out that mission.

Richard J. Otto
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-----Original Message-----

From: Robin Grawe [mailto:ragrawe@hbci.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2003 2:23 PM
To: Marc Schultz; Kent Pehler; John Campe; Bill Howe; Bill Burke; Amy Denz; Ann Sheehan; Barb Gronemus; Barb Naramore; Barry Drazkowski; Bev Spande; Big River; Bill and Sandra Allaire; Bob Drieslein; Bob Kierlin; Bob Mullally; Bonnie

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Subject: MRCC meeting

<< File: agenda 9-17-03.doc >> << File: Rec Magt. legislation proposal.doc >>
<< File: Nav_newsletter_of_09-03- final.pdf >> << File: Meeting notes 8-6-03.doc >>
>> << File: Meeting notes 5-21-03.doc >> Friends,

The next meeting of the Mississippi River Citizen Commission will be held Wednesday, September 16, at 10:30 at the Lake City Yacht Club (at the marina to the right of the landing). The major subject of discussion will be proposed draft legislation for funding recreational management by federal/state partnership, and we encourage wide-ranging discussion.

See attached agenda, draft legislation, navigation newsletter, and meeting notes.

Robin A. Grawe, Secretary
Mississippi River Citizen Commission
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