

To: Robb Turner and the Independent Science Advisory Panel
From: USACE Management Plan Team
Re: Response to ISAP Evaluation of Effects Analysis Deliverable 2a
Date: July 3, 2014

Thank you for the evaluation of Deliverable 2a. The final evaluation has been discussed thoroughly within and among the Management Plan and Effects Analysis (EA) teams. The EA species team leads have provided separate written responses to the ISAP addressing specific technical comments. Those responses will not be reiterated here.

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) appreciates the ISAP's acknowledgement of the schedule constraint the Management Plan and EA Teams are working under and the influence of that constraint on Deliverable 2a. The schedule constraint, the intense level of effort involved in conducting this analysis, and the importance of timely, independent review of these products with the engagement of the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC) are factors that will continue to shape our communications and engagements. As noted in the ISAP's evaluation, the Deliverable 2a is "a snapshot in time" and has since been improved by the discussions that have occurred during multiple interactions of the ISAP with the Management Plan and EA Teams during Webinars and in-person meetings. The Teams value the ISAP's feedback and look forward to the opportunity for continued scientific discourse on the EA products to come.

As noted in the evaluation's conclusion, the EA is not simply a linear effort. The EA Team leads have shared, in subsequent calls, the iterative nature of the analyses and modeling, as the building blocks for our Adaptive Management efforts (Phases 2 and 3) for the Management Plan. USACE believes it is our agency's responsibility to identify a suite of actions based on Phase 1 of the EA that will allow us to continue to provide the authorized purposes of the Missouri River Mainstem Reservoir System and Bank Stabilization and Navigation Project without jeopardizing the continued existence of the protected species. Upcoming discussions about the Adaptive Management (AM) Concept currently under development will help us all to better understand the iterative nature of the EA process and how subsequent Phases will expand the analyses and modeling.

The constructive recommendations made in your evaluation have already contributed to improvements to the EA process. As mentioned, the EA Team leads have responded to the specific technical and process recommendations within their control. Other recommendations and resulting improvements will be identified during the development of the AM Concept and the process moving forward. We look forward to further engagement with the ISAP on the inclusion of these recommendations in our products and process as well as in the review of upcoming EA deliverables.

If you have questions regarding this response please call Craig Fleming at (402) 667-2880 or Mark Harberg (402) 995-2554.