

Missouri River Basin Interagency Roundtable Meeting (MRBIR)
Meeting Summary
August 19, 2015
Omaha, NE

Executive Summary

The Missouri River Basin Interagency Roundtable, chaired by Tim LaPointe, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) met at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife North Dakota Field Office building in Bismarck, North Dakota, on August 19, 2015. Missouri River Basin executives or their alternates, representing eleven federal agencies, attended the meeting along with Planning Committee members and staff. The meeting was facilitated by Peter Williams of the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (U.S. Institute), and meeting notes were prepared by Mitch Chrismer (U.S. Institute). The meeting agenda is provided in Appendix A.

A main purpose of the meeting was for agency executives to brief one another on Basin agency programs, projects, and recent activities occurring in the Missouri River Basin since the group met last in January 2015. Several informational briefings were made at the meeting, including: 1) an update on the Bakken Federal Working Group; (2) an update on the status of the Intake Project and Environmental Assessment; (3) an update on the Ideker Farms and Intake litigations; (4) a report on the Missouri River Recovery Management Plan EIS; (5) a report on the status of WRRDA Implementation; (6) a report on El Nino weather patterns; and (7) a report on the lower-Missouri Hydrogeomorphic Study.

Updates from MRBIR committees included: (1) a briefing from the Tribal-Federal Relations Committee; (2) an update from the Sediment topic team; (3) a briefing from the Climate Collaboration topic team; and (4) an update from the Ecosystems Functions topic team. At the meeting MRBIR executives and Planning Committee members provided updates from each of their agencies and discussed Missouri River basin issues and opportunities for increased collaboration and coordination amongst federal agencies working in the region (see Appendix B to this Executive Summary for the updated MRBIR work plan as of August 18, 2015).

Six primary needs, each with an action item, were identified during the meeting:

- (1) Need: Coordination on Housing and Locality Pay in Bakken Shale-play Area
 - Action: Work through Bakken Federal Executive Group (BFEG)
- (2) Need: Improve understanding of Policy Issues related to Interactions between Groundwater and Surface Water
 - Action: Bureau of Indian Affairs to present current status of Indian Water Law related to groundwater and surface water interactions
- (3) Need: Coordination of Federal Permitting Processes
 - Action: Work through BFEG
- (4) Need: Coordination of Interagency Spill Response
 - Action: Organize a “tabletop” spill response exercise, working through BFEG
- (5) Need: Improve Understanding of Opportunities presented by Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs)
 - Action: Invite US Fish and Wildlife Service to present LCC overview at winter 2016 MRBIR meeting

- (6) Need: MRBIR Operation

Action: EPA to take Chair following FY16 Winter meeting; WAPA to take vice-Chair