

**MRBIR Work Plan**  
**Approved January 20, 2011**  
**Updated May 17, 2016**

**Overarching Goal:**

To capitalize on the capacity of the MRBIR member agencies by leveraging resources and ensuring strategic coordination of priority issues that benefit the Missouri River basin. Key to the success of this goal is establishing a shared understanding and knowledge of federal efforts in the Missouri River basin. For each task, consider how agency budgets may be coordinated to leverage agency resources.

The Federal Government has a unique relationship with Indian tribes derived from the Constitution of the United States, treaties, Supreme Court doctrine, and Federal statutes. All MRBIR initiatives will strive to ensure full coordination of basin Tribes including coordinated agency consultations during the development of statements, policies and positions to ensure they reflect the active participation and views of basin Tribal governments.

**Background:**

This document summarizes the proposed priority topics, goals and tasks of MRBIR in the fall of 2010. The topics are in response to the directive the MRBIR executives issued to the Planning Committee at the July 2010 MRBIR meeting: *The executives agreed that MRBIR Planning Committee (PC) should be revitalized and tasked with developing a set of basin topics and sub-issues that “deserve MRBIR coordination, communication and common understanding” and delivering a prioritized list of potential areas of focus to the MRBIR at its next meeting.*

The Planning Committee identified four topics of equal priority for agency coordination in the Missouri River basin during FY11 and FY12: Climate Collaboration, Sediment, Coordination on Federal Tribal Relations, and Missouri River Watershed/Ecosystem Functions. Each topic includes a goal or desired outcome and associated tasks and approximate timelines for starting work and completing the tasks. It is important to note that from time to time emergent issues in the basin may require priority over the topics listed in this plan. At the July 2012 MRBIR meeting, executives review a list of possible additional priority areas and added these areas to the tasks under the existing topic teams.

For each topic team there is a designated PC lead. In addition to the PC members, subject matter experts may join topic teams as warranted. Topic team leads have the following responsibilities:

1. Team leads will schedule an organizational conference call with team members and additional calls (or webinars) as necessary.
2. Teams will discuss and agree on the products being developed for MRBIR and the relative priority of the tasks in their respective topic team. The products should include goals and objectives; potential products/deliverables; and timelines (e.g., internal schedules for product development and deadlines for product delivery).
3. Teams will identify where along the process they may need to check in with MRBIR executives.
4. **On, the next PC call**, team leads will report on their draft implementation plans to the Planning Committee.

**CLIMATE COLLABORATION (CC)**

**Goal:** Coordination of Missouri River Basin Interagency CC initiatives and services

**Tasks:**

1. **Coordination of drought resiliency, outlooks and planning actions.** Provide a regular forum to exchange drought management information undertaken by MRBIR agencies via the Missouri Basin Federal Climate Collaboration. Activities might include coordination with states and tribes who are doing risk mgmt. and drought preparedness work. Coordination with the National Integrated Drought Information System's Missouri Basin Pilot will be at the center of this activity and awareness.
2. **Continue agency awareness of climate related initiatives** as they relate to the Missouri River Basin and the authorized purposes of the river (e.g., USGS regional CC Centers and USFWS landscape Conservation Cooperatives) and explore ways to leverage resources across agencies, reduce redundancies and provide better integration. This activity will be focused through the Missouri Basin Federal Climate Collaboration and reported on at MRBIR meetings.

**Climate Collaboration Team Members as of 05/17/16:** **Doug Kluck NOAA (lead)**; Rick Clark, NPS, Marty Sterkel, NPS Associate Regional Director, Natural Resources, Science, & Partnerships; Richard Nelson, USFWS; Verlon Barnes, NRCS informed; Jeff Morrisette USGS; Justin Derner USDA; Jody Farhat USACE and others (see MBFCC membership list).

**SEDIMENT**

**Goal:** Implementation of the NAS Sediment Study Recommendations

**Tasks:** Items in red are priority

**Sediment Team Members as of 5/17/16:** **Bob Swanson, USGS**; Verlon Barnes, NRCS; Damon Frizzell, EPA; Dan Pridal, USACE; Casey Kruse, USFWS; Rick Clark, NPS; Doug Epperly, BOR

Task	Status (March 2014)	Next Steps
1	Brief MRBIR executives about the NAS Sediment Study.	Briefing completed at January 2011 meeting. The Corps will follow through on the immediate tasks recommended in the NAS report related to development of shallow water habitat (SWH). Planning Committee (PC) discussed giving Execs update on USACE progress toward implementing NAS recommendations
2	Develop a comprehensive list of agency sediment mission objectives and projects for Missouri River basin; steps may include:	
a	Reviewing existing studies and agency initiatives and projects related to, or that may implicate, sediment	Spreadsheet has been updated and will be provided to MRBIR Executives PC will continue to keep current
b	Developing a comprehensive federal position paper on sediment in the Missouri River	Sediment team has drafted a Federal agency perspective paper on sediment. This is different than a unified position paper. Individual agencies are requested to provide their perspective on the sediment issue
c	Develop a sediment budget (in-flow and out-flow) as proposed in the NAS report	USGS has written a draft of the report using the best available information to establish the initial framework for a sediment budget by updating the NRC conceptual model. Publish report in the 3rd quarter of FY16
d	Assessing how climate change affects movement of sediment into the lower river	Addressed as part of NOAA climate change workshop Currently no further action needed.
e	Identifying the role of soil quality in sediment issues, e.g., soil quality, chemical constituents	Addressed as a part of Task 2a Currently no further action needed.
f	River bed degradation study NOI 7 Feb 2014	USACE study nearing completion Flag for Winter 2016 MRBIR meeting?
	Stay apprised of Platte River sediment study	

and potential

## **FEDERAL-TRIBAL RELATIONS**

**Goal:** All MRBIR initiatives will strive to ensure full coordination and consultation of basin Tribes including coordinated agency consultations during the development of statements, policies and positions to ensure they reflect the active participation and views of basin Tribal governments.

### **Tasks:**

1. **Tribal trust consultation training/overview** – DOI is developing a training Diane is checking on format of training, audience is MRBIR executives; reinforcing key consultation in terms of trust relationship requirements for exec's; are there nuances and differences across the agencies in how trust responsibilities are handled?
2. **Reviewing implications of WRRDA2014**
3. **Working on Lower Brule erosion impacting Lower Brule Village lagoons** - need to organize a higher level meeting among USACE (Paul and Cathi), BIA (Diane), IHS
4. **Tribal Meeting on Extreme Events (High Water, Drought Resilience) and Update on WH Climate Change Subgroup in Sept**
5. **Soliciting tribal leader/chair to speak at Exec meeting on perspectives on sediment, ecosystem functions other topics related to MRBIR.**
6. **Ongoing activities**
  - A. Identify tribal work group members from each agency). Possible tasks:
    - 1) Identify liaison from each MRBIR agency (near term) - ongoing
    - 2) Identify key tribal federal events in basin and put on a calendar (near term) – ongoing  
Check with Paul C
    - 3) Post 1) and 2) to MRBIR website
  - B. Primer regarding agency resources to tribes
  - C. Updates about pertinent consultations and other meetings between MRBIR member agencies and basin tribes.
  - D. Post to the MRBIR website relevant Missouri River basin agency programs of interest to tribes, include agency web links to programs and initiatives
7. **Seek opportunities for co-hosting, coordinating a regular meeting** of basin tribes and federal agencies, that meets the needs of basin tribes. (long term, coordination)

**Federal-Tribal Relations Team Members as of 08/28/14: Paul Cloutier, USACE NWD (co-lead); Diane Mann-Klager, BIA (co-lead);** Rosalyn Days-Austin, APHIS; Sandy Leach, BLM; Mark Sant, BLM; Dugan Smith (Section 106 Tribal Liaison), NPS; Todd Hagel, NRCS, Doug Epperly Rec;

## **MISSOURI RIVER WATERSHED/ ECOSYSTEM FUNCTIONS**

\*\*Updated 5/17/16

- 1) Ecosystem Functions Vision and Collaboration - Interagency collaboration towards a shared vision/understanding and improved Missouri Basin ecosystem function.
  - (a) Share pertinent information to become more knowledgeable.
  - (b) Identify (priority, key, relevant or all?) Missouri Basin ecosystem functions. Consider identifying the 'foundational pieces' and/or the 'common links' between priority issues, and where the greatest 'return-on-investment' is to improve the most issues.
  - (c) Identify ecosystem functions that are influenced by Federal agency actions

- (d) Develop an ecosystem functions vision statement based on the practical ability of the Federal agencies to influence ecosystem function and use to guide future activities of MRBIR.
- (e) Identify priority actions to improve ecosystem and functions
  - i. Follow through with completion of Lower Missouri River Corridor Hydro-geomorphic Study as a tool to improve wetland restoration and management by end of 2016.
- (f) Consider development and/or implementation of projects to improve ecosystem and functions.

**MR Watershed/Ecosystem Functions Team Members as of 05/17/16:**

**Verlon Barnes, NRCS (lead);** Mike Philbin and Sandy Leach BLM; Steve Fischer, USACE; Lisa Yager, NPS; TBD, BOR; Brian Yanchik, FHWA; ; Dean Ownby, FEMA; Casey Kruse, USFWS

**ADDITIONAL POSSIBLE PC WORK PLAN ACTIVITIES:**

- 1. Energy Development in the Missouri River Basin
  - a. Engage with Bakken Federal Working Group

**Tasks Accomplished (as of February 20, 2014)**

- 1) Convene a CC workshop at March 8, 2011 MRNRC meeting (to include agency presentations on Missouri River Basin CC initiatives/issues and CC components of existing studies such as the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP), USACE Plains Snow Survey, Mountain snowpack measurements from SNOTEL, etc.) Status: COMPLETED
- 2) Address MRBIR Executive general comments regarding Federal Position Statement on Sediment Management on Missouri River Recovery, Shallow Water Habitat Creation Projects Down Stream of Gavins Point Dam. (10 January 2011) Status: COMPLETED
- 3) Review Mississippi Basin Sediment Proposal. Explore the feasibility of equipping six (6) current monitoring sites on the Missouri. How will the data collected improve management operations of the river? Develop a funding strategy. Status: COMPLETED (Shared at summer 2010 MRBIR)
- 4) Increase understanding of invasive species and how they impact the Missouri River ecosystem Status: COMPLETED
- 5) Evaluate the extant research data on reservoir sediment chemistry, mobilization and characterization studies. Dr. Paul Boyd, USACE presented findings of the Lewis and Clark sediment flush study to MRBIR executives January 2012. Status: COMPLETED
- 6) Plains snow monitoring proposal and outline monitoring resources, types of expertise needed, report to MRBIR executives January 2013. Status: COMPLETED
- 7) Develop executive level tribal trust responsibility ppt shared January 2014. Status: COMPLETED
- 8) Trust land management and distinctions from Federal Public land – Presented July 2014. Status: Completed
- 9)
- 10) Have a presentation from Bakken Executive Federal Working Group –Presented July 2014 Status: COMPLETED