

Missouri River Basin Interagency Roundtable (MRBIR)

Meeting Summary

September 23-24, 2020

Remote

Executive Summary

The Missouri River Basin Interagency Roundtable (MRBIR), chaired by Scott Morlock, United States Geological Survey (USGS), met via the WebEx platform September 23rd -24th, 2020. The meeting was held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Missouri River Basin Executives or their alternates, representing 14 Federal agencies, attended the meeting along with Planning Committee members and staff. Marci DuPraw and Mitch Chrismer of the National Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution (National Center) facilitated the meeting, and Alyssa Bonini, also of the National Center, took notes.

The objective of all MRBIR Executive Roundtable meetings is to provide opportunities for Executives of the Federal agencies in the Missouri River basin to engage in collaboration, coordination, and communication pertaining to natural resource management challenges in the basin. They do this by developing partnerships, sharing information, finding ways to support efficient resource use, reporting accomplishments, and garnering Federal focus and fiscal support for natural resource enhancement in the basin.

Over the course of the two-day meeting, participants briefed one another on (1) the Center Directors from 8 USGS Science Center's efforts to inform resource managers on real time drought monitoring, invasive species, water quality/quantity, flood response, oil and gas, and restoration of fish/wildlife and their habitats in the Missouri River Basin; (2) impacts of COVID-19 to MRBIR agencies and opportunities for future collaboration despite physical distancing restrictions; (3) the use of Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution (ECCR) in the Federal government and how ECCR can help agencies in the Missouri River Basin; (4) the climate outlook and river conditions in the Missouri River Basin; (5) water supply update; and (6) the progress of Federal actions to prevent the looting of cultural resources. In addition to these reports and updates, the MRBIR group discussed the top priorities and pressing issues from their respective agencies and various operational aspects and challenges of the group.

The next MRBIR Executive Roundtable is anticipated to take place in February 2021, and the group will have to wait and see how the situation with COVID-19 progresses before determining whether or not to meet in person.