



Flood Recovery Advisory Working Group
March 9, 2020
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Lewis and Clark State Office Building; Jefferson City, Missouri

- Carol Comer, Director of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Chris Chinn, Director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA) welcomed the working group and audience members.

Reports/Briefings

- Soil Moisture Network: Scott Kaden (DNR)
 - Using existing groundwater monitoring sites
 - Sensors are ordered and installation will begin soon
 - Discussion:
 - Dru Buntin (DNR) asked about cost and timeline
 - Luke Holtschneider, Missouri Department of Economic Development, asked what the data will be used for
- Update on Lower Missouri River State coordination (Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri): Dru Buntin (DNR)
 - Pinch point analysis of lower river; study by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
 - Legislation is being developed in Washington D.C. to create a mechanism by which early recommendations of the study can be put into production before the finalization of the entire plan
 - Six month process to identify problem areas
 - Local conversations about solutions and recommendations can occur concurrent to the analysis as early results become available
 - Discussion:
 - David Shorr (Coalition to Protect the Missouri River): Are you going to provide a list of the areas identified? Dru: Yes, a prioritized list may be discussed in a future meeting

- H.R. 5288 Legislation: Meghan Schmittlein, Taylor Gibbs, Jeremy Ketterer (Representative Luetkemeyer's Office)
 - Upper Mississippi River
 - Effort to ensure all stakeholder voices are heard
 - Discussion:
 - Adam Jones (Mississippi River Farmer, CoBank Lender): Is this the same as "Plan H"?
 - Jeremy: No. Rep. Luetkemeyer is not supportive of Plan H. This legislation promotes extensive stakeholder engagement so that everyone's voice is heard.
 - Adam Jones: The legislation would gain more support if it included specific directives regarding fair flood protection.
 - May provide for storage area compensation through USDA
 - Upper Mississippi River Basin Association study may be folded into legislation

Discussion of Group Draft Recommendations

- Based on information provided by Jose Cruz, Wainright Levee District, discussion was held to add an additional recommendation to allow for levee districts with approval from USACE to begin levee repairs themselves with the potential to be reimbursed for expenses incurred by the district that would be above the districts 20% match. Currently USACE does not have the ability to reimburse for surplus work in kind provided by the levee district.
- Additional recommendation might be for the USACE to forgo the 20% levee district requirement.
 - Possible benefits
 - Allow faster repairs to be made
 - USACE could act faster avoiding delays by levee district
 - Potential for cost savings by eliminating administrative cost involved in segregating and tracking of levee district funding
 - Possible problems
 - USACE could have additional cost sunken into levee preventing setback or other benefits not foreseen.
- Ryan Ottman detailed some of the impacts to local roads due to material hauling for levee repairs and railroad repairs. Ryan asked if fuel tax could be distributed in a manner that will recognize the impacts of material hauling for levee repair on secondary roads.

- Chris Engelbrecht noted that MODOT continues to make repairs for safety throughout the process and will complete final repairs after levee repairs are complete using federal funds.
- Ryan O. also asked how railroads are held accountable for their share of the impacts to roads due to material transportation
- Dru Buntin relayed to the group that a letter had been received from the Missouri Railroad Association that indicated they would be interested in possibly partnering with levee districts to make improvements. This may be a topic for presentation for the group at the next meeting in April.
- DNR will share the letter sent by to the FRAWG.
- David Shorr asked if the conservation groups could present their recommendations during a future meeting.
 - A representative will be scheduled for the April 13 meeting. The conservation group recommendations and comments will be shared with the FRAWG prior to that meeting.
 - In addition, The Nature Conservancy will be scheduled to present their Floodplain Prioritization Tool to the group in April.
- David S. asked for an overview of current legislation related to flooding on the major rivers in Missouri. This topic will be added to the April agenda.
- USDA NRCS will be invited to the April meeting to discuss access agreements on easements in emergency projects.
- A conversation with universities about a Missouri flood center will be added to the April agenda.
- David Shorr mentioned a hearing in the Missouri House of Representatives regarding SEMA procuring dredging equipment from the USACE.
 - SEMA responded that USACE did not have an emergency dredge on the Missouri River, and only one on the upper Mississippi River.
 - SEMA would not be able to procure the dredge from USACE.
 - SEMA believes the intent of the potential legislation would be to allow SEMA to procure the dredge to complete dredging in general. More conversations are needed to better understand the intent and potential impact of this request.

Public Comments

- Jim Karpowitz, Missouri Coalition for the Environment: Appreciates the fact that conservation partners are being invited to present and have been utilized in the flood recovery strategy. He noted that the conservation groups were not invited to be part of the FRAWG but have been involved

nonetheless.

- Craig Timmerburg, Farmer in Loutre River valley: Asked group about Public Law 566. Tributary rivers have been neglected in the group's discussions. The focus should be on these rather than the Missouri.
- Thomas, Big Bags USA: The company representative discussed the benefits of his product for flood fighting again. Asked if this was the right forum, or if he would be able to help.
- Molly Freeber, Show Me Solar – Reiterated the advantages that could be gained in carbon sequestering when adapting Organic Farming.

Future Meeting Dates

April 13, 2020: 1 p.m. – 4 p.m., webinar available at <https://dnr.mo.gov/floodrecovery/>.