

UMRCC 2014 Annual Meeting- OREIT Section Minutes

Number of people attending-17

Discussion-

1. Selection of New Chair – Rotates with state host of annual meeting. This year it will be Wisconsin.

2. Year of Campaign by Mississippi River Connections Collaborative- Year of Fishing postponed to 2015

3. Field Trip Applications and Response- 10 offered this year, 2 have been awarded. It is a cost effective program as \$3.50 per student served. With eight grants still being available the recommendation was made to forward a proposal to the Executive Board to consider altering the procedure for two per state to first come first serve for the rest of this year. If a state can come forth with three good proposals we do not want to turn them down when there are still several spots open. **Action: Executive Board approved two per state until March 1 then the process will change to first come first serve.**

Presentations:

1. Economic Impact Study on wildlife watching on the Mississippi River with a focus on the Brownsville Overlook by Mike Hilficer (UWL Economic Dept- senior capstone project). The survey used the previously approved questions used in a USGS survey. Results were similar. 76% of people surveyed were there with friends and family, 67% were local origin (within 50 miles). Conversion of money spent was the same as USGS survey. When applied to 9000 visitors at Brownsville and 3300 at Shady Maple Overlook recorded in 2013 the economic benefit was \$300,000.
2. Tundra Swan Hunting - Conservation Congress Advisory Question on Spring Hearings by Brenda Kelly
 - If passed it will be a lengthy process. The first step would be the legislature.
 - Trumpeter Swan locations are a concern after the effort put into reintroduction. Dept. wants to avoid accidental take.
 - User conflicts are a concern with 9000 visitors at the Brownsville Overlook and firing line possibilities.
3. Mary Kay Salwey presented “Rise and Fall of Conservation Education”- An awesome reminder that every 15-20 years we have to reeducate the public on conservation. To improve awareness the WI DNR has changed the name to Wildlife Conservation Education Program
4. Scott Yess presented the summary of field trip grants.