The 74th Annual Meeting of the

Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee

March 20-22, 2018

Hilton Doubletree Hotel

Collinsville, Illinois

Tuesday, March 20

**Wildlife Technical Section**

1:00 – 1:05 Introductions and Orientation

Upper Mississippi Waterfowl

1:05- 1:35 Canvasback Project - Adrew Bouton, Western Illinois University

1:35 – 2:10 Dr. Michael Eicholz – Southern Illinois University

2:10 – 2:30 Upper Mississippi River Aerial Waterfowl Surveys; Where we’ve been and where we’re going! Cale Severson, WDNR

Break 2:30 – 2:45

Upper Mississippi Floodplain Forest

2:45 – 3:05 Successful Silvicutlural Treatments with Tree Plantings, Ben Vandermyde, USACE

Illinois Wildlife Research and Disease Management

3:05 – 3:25 An Overview of Illinois Chronic Wasting Disease Management Program and current status of the disease in Illinois, Jeff Horn, Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Break 3:25 – 3:35

UMRCC Veg Committee, etc.

3:35 UMRCC vegetation sampling proposal reviews

3:45 Pool 21 sampling report – Ben Vandermyde, USACE

3:55 Pool 9 sampling report – Brenda Kelly, WDNR

4:05 UMRCC vegetation sampling database – Stephen Winter, USFWS

4:15 UMRCC coordinator update; UMRCC website

4:25 State Reports

Notes from the 2018 Spring Wildlife Tech Section Meeting.

March 20, 2018; 1-5 pm

There were 50 people in attendance.

The first 2 presentations were regarding waterfowl. Dr. Eicholz from Southern Illinois University gave a presentation titled “Biotic and abiotic factors that influence nest site selection of upland nesting ducks and their adaptive significance.” He talked about his research in the prairie potholes region and Canada on nest site selection and success. Ultimately, his findings showed that patch size did effect nesting success – smaller patches and really large patches were the most successful, mainly due to the predator densities in those patches.

Neal Jackson with USFWS introduced himself as the UMRCC coordinator and gave some updates on the newsletter, library, and asked for feedback regarding the UMRCC website.

Cale Severson with Wisconsin DNR talked about the aerial waterfowl surveys on the upper Mississippi River. 2017 was the first year with the reduced # of flights for waterfowl counts. The flights were successful, but it offers some challenges if there are delays with the airplane it pushes back the next flight and the peak migration is missed.

Ben Vandermyde with the USACOE talked about some of the Corp’s tree plantings on the upper Mississippi River bottoms. He discussed some of their successes and failures. He also talked about a new project trying to reseed a dredge drop area that has been planted to radish to get some organic matter in the soil and loosen the soil prior to planting.

Jeff Horn with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources gave an update on the status of Chronic Wasting Disease in White-tailed Deer in Illinois. He discussed the amount of spread and the prevalence rates across northern Illinois. Prevalence rates remain below 2% but there are 17 counties in IL that have CWD documented. Jeff also highlighted some areas where they have had good hunter cooperation and it has been very successful in reducing the CWD prevalence.

Beta testing update. Thank you to all those that contributed time to testing. Revisions have been sent to USGS. Completion time line is unknown, but anticipate a quick turnaround.

2018 sampling effort review. Each project manager gave a quick summary of their submitted proposal which included Harpers Slough HREP aquatic vegetation inventory in Pool 9, Pool 10 Islands aquatic vegetation inventory in Pool 10 and Clarksville Island Forestry inventory in Pool 25. Based on discussion, group unanimously supported conducting all three efforts. Leads were appointed (Pool 9 Jeff Janvrin, Pool 10 Kyle Bales and Pool 25 Robert Cosgriff) with coordination outreach beginning begin in May.

Review of 2017 inventory efforts. Ben Vandermyde presented on the timber inventory for pool 21, Pecan Grove. Effort occurred on September 19-20, 2017. Partnership participation included ACOE, USFWS, and MO Department of Conservation staff which successfully completed 300 acres of timber inventory.

Brenda Kelly reviewed the Harpers Slough HREP aquatic vegetation sampling effort. Partnership effort including staff from the ACOE, USFWS, WI DNR, IA DNR and MN DNR accomplishing 248 sampling points in a single day’s effort! 48 points