

## Minutes

### Missouri River Association of States and Tribes (MoRAST) Great Falls, Montana May 21-22, 2008

Chairman John Cooper called the meeting to order about 8:30 a.m., May 21, 2008 and welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was held at the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Regional Office in Great Falls, Montana. Mary Sexton and Jeff Hagener each welcomed the group to Montana. Mary indicated that Richard Opper, former Director of MRBA, had a motorcycle accident and is in the hospital, but is doing well. A get well card to be sent to Richard was passed around for signature. Introductions were made for all in attendance:

#### **MoRAST Directors, alternates and other representatives present:**

MONTANA: Mary Sexton, Jeff Hagener, John Tubbs, Tim Bryggman and Mike Ruggles

WYOMING: Sue Lowry

NORTH DAKOTA: Todd Sando and Terry Steinwand

SOUTH DAKOTA: John Cooper, Garland Erbele, Mark Rath, and Geno Adams

NEBRASKA: Gene Zuerlein and Justin Lavene

IOWA: Mike McGhee

KANSAS: Mike Hayden, Tracy Streeter and Steve Adams

YANKTON SIOUX TRIBE: John Stone and Basil Heth, Marty, SD

SAC AND FOX TRIBE: Bucky Pelcher, Reserve, KS

STAFF: David Pope, MoRAST Executive Director

**Federal Agencies:** USFWS: Mike Olson, Bismarck, ND; Mark Wilson and Brent Esmoil, both from Helena, MT; Wayne Nelson-Stastny, Yankton, SD; WAPA: Nick Stas, Billings MT; USACE: Witt Anderson, Northwest Division, Portland, OR; Larry Cieslik and Rose Hargrave, Northwest Division, Omaha, NE; Randy Sellers, Mike George and Joel Ames, Omaha District, Omaha, NE; Col. Roger Wilson and Steve Irverson, Kansas City District, Kansas City, MO; USGS: John Kilpatrick, Helena, MT; USBR: Gary Davis, Billings, MT.

**Others:** Burt Williams, TNC, Billings, MT; Bill Bryan, Missouri Attorney General's Office, Jefferson, City, MO; Bruce Measure and Rhonda Whiting, NW Power and Conservation Council, Helena, MT; Don Pfau, Fort Peck Advisory Committee, Lewistown, MT; Doug Martin,

Montana Dept. of Justice, Helena, MT; Paul Azevedo, Montana DNRC, Helena, MT; Brian Barels, NPPD, Columbus, NE.

**Business Meeting:** Chairman Cooper reviewed the draft agenda for the meeting. Under old business, he suggested adding a review of the FY 2009 and FY 2010 budget and consideration of FY 2010 dues. Under new business, he suggested including a discussion of the 2008-2009 Annual Operating Plan (AOP) process. In addition if not covered elsewhere, he suggested a discussion of a potential link between the MoRAST and Missouri River Recovery Program websites. He also suggested that during the second business meeting we consider election of a new Vice-Chairperson to succeed Mary Sexton who will become Chairperson after this meeting.

**Minutes:** One correction was noted on page 2 the Minutes for the February 25, 2008, meeting held in Nebraska City, NE. Chairman Cooper's name should be capitalized. Jeff Hagener moved approval of the minutes as corrected. Terry Steinwand seconded the motion which was passed without objection.

**Treasurer's Report:** The report was presented by Gene Zuerlein on behalf of Kirk Nelson, MoRAST Treasurer, showing expenditures since the February report and the balances in each account, which totaled \$229,519.54. A motion was made by Sue Lowry to approve the report. It was seconded by Jeff Hagener and passed without objection.

**Executive Director's Report:** Mr. Pope distributed packets for the Board and provided a summary of recent MoRAST activities. He noted that in addition to routine office activities, he spent time following up on actions from the last meeting. He indicated a lot of time was spent on our Congressional agenda which included a trip in early March to Washington, D.C. and follow up contacts. Several MoRAST members also attended the briefings in Washington, D.C. During these visits, information was provided regarding funding support for the Missouri River Recovery Program, funding for USGS water data programs, Tribal travel support and the 1944 Flood Control Act study. Mr. Pope indicated he also spent considerable time making arrangements for this MoRAST meeting, preparation of agenda and meeting notices, etc. Significant time was also spent making arrangements for the Upper Missouri River Basin Cooperator's Roundtable being co-sponsored by MoRAST in conjunction with the USGS and ICWP on August 26-27, 2008, in Cheyenne, WY, just before the next MoRAST meeting on August 27-28, 2008. The May issue of the MoRAST Newsletter was also prepared and distributed.

#### **Old Business:**

**Insurance:** Mr. Pope briefed the Board regarding the potential need for general liability and liability insurance for director and officers of MoRAST and called the Board's attention to a summary sheet in their packets about coverage provided by the insurance. He indicated that depending on the level of coverage, the annual premium would range from about \$731 per year for \$500,000 coverage to \$910 per year for \$1 million coverage. General liability insurance is not included in these premium values but would be less expensive. After discussion, the Board asked David to explore additional options, receive quotes and provide them at a future meeting.

**Tribal Participation and Travel Reimbursement:** Mr. Pope indicated he provided a special notice and invitation to the American Indian Tribes in the basin along with background information about MoRAST in an effort to improve participation. Discussion ensued about ways to best improve tribal participation. John Stone, Vice-Chairman of the Yankton Sioux Tribe suggested contact with the Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association and potential for meeting at the same general time and location as a way to encourage participation. Mr. Pope also noted that we need to develop criteria for Tribal travel reimbursement since the budget now includes funds for travel reimbursement. He outlined some potential options. John Stone offered to assist Mr. Pope with development of criteria. Mary Sexton moved that an Interim Tribal Travel Reimbursement Policy be developed and approved by the Executive Committee in time for use for the August meeting. Motion was seconded by Garland Erbele and passed without objection.

**Budget:** Chairman Cooper noted that the MoRAST budget was adopted at the February 25, 2008, meeting but suggested we review the budget since some questions had been raised regarding the level of dues for FY 09 (July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009) and FY 10 (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010.) It was noted that the FY 09 adopted budget does not require an increase in dues which are currently \$10,000 per agency (\$20,000 per State, except Wyoming.) However, the FY 10 projected budget indicates that dues may need to be increased to fund the budget. After discussion of the level of expenditures needed, Mike Hayden moved that the dues for FY 10 be set at \$12,500 per agency (\$25,000 per State, except Wyoming), that \$18,000 be included in the FY 10 budget for Tribal travel support, and that the FY 10 budget be approved. Motion was seconded by Mary Sexton and passed without objection.

#### **New Business:**

**ICWP:** Mr. Pope briefed the Board on the potential merits of joining the Interstate Council on Water Policy (ICWP). He noted that ICWP is an organization of States and river basin commissions or other similar interstate water organizations. He indicated that participation in ICWP allowed an opportunity to network with other similar organizations and receive information related to congressional and federal agency activities and other matters. Mr. Pope indicated that he attended the recent Washington, D.C. Roundtable sponsored by ICWP when he was in Washington, D.C. and found it very useful. A motion was made by Garland Eberle to join ICWP, at the affiliate level with dues at \$1,500 per year, if that level of membership is acceptable to ICWP. Motion was seconded by Sue Lowry and passed without objection.

#### **Presentations:**

**USACE Division Program Director:** Witt Anderson, Program Director, Northwest Division USACE, Portland, Oregon, provided comments regarding the Northwest Division and Missouri River issues. He indicated his appreciation for being able to attend and the importance of Corps participation in MoRAST activities. He noted that he was selected for the Program Director position in January and now has responsibility for oversight of approximately 130 people in the Division Office along with about 5,000 people in the five Corps of Engineers District Offices throughout the NW Division. He noted that the districts execute programs while the division provides command and over sight. The Northwest Division budget is approximately

two billion for military and eight hundred million for civil works programs in the five districts. Mr. Anderson summarized his background which includes considerable experience administering environmental and other Corps of Engineers programs. He noted that Colonel Bill Rapp will assume command of the Division soon and will be promoted to Brigadier General. Mr. Anderson summarized some of the important provisions included within WRDA 2007 that was enacted by Congress last fall related to the Missouri River Basin. These include Section 5018 which directs the Secretary, in consultation with the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC) to conduct a study related to eco-system of the Missouri River. He noted that MRRIC is being established and will provide recommendations and guidance to the Corps. He also noted that WRDA 2007 authorizes the Corps to work with the USBR on the Intake, Montana Project, related to fish passage. In addition, the Corps has a role in working with Montana officials on the St. Mary's Rehabilitation Project. He noted that the project is not currently an administration priority and will need Congressional funding.

Mr. Anderson provided a summary of the status of work to create MRRIC and the efforts of the Northwest Division. He noted that Assistant Secretary of Army Woodley is very supportive of the effort. Work is underway to finalize implementation guidance related to these matters. Mr. Anderson also discussed the MoRAST request for a Section 216 or a comprehensive study of the Missouri River project. He noted two important letters that have been written in response to this request generally indicating that the Army does not currently have funding for such a study nor has a request been made for such funding. However, if funded and directed by Congress, the Corps will carry out the study. He is aware that the Senate Energy and Water Development Subcommittee is currently looking at all options regarding this matter. He also provided an update regarding the Corps budget and ongoing efforts to implement the Missouri River Recovery Program. Chairman Cooper expressed his appreciation for Mr. Anderson attending the meeting and noted that MoRAST has appreciated the opportunity to work with other Corps personnel as well. He noted the interest of South Dakota Governor Rounds and others for a fresh look at the authorized purposes under the 1944 Flood Control Act and would like to do that in a cooperative way with the Corps.

**Corps Update:** Larry Cieslik provided a brief update on current hydrological conditions in the basin and the status of reservoir operations. He noted the climate variability and that for the first time in years, the mountain snowpack is above normal. He said the bad news is that the plains are dry with some exceptions. He noted the Corps' runoff forecast is still 20 million acre feet (MAF) and that the navigation season will be shortened 41 days this year. He said since the system storage was above 36 MAF, the Corps did implement a spring pulse but there was a fair amount of controversy because of high flows downstream on the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers, even though the amount of the spring pulse was not significant compared to the flood flow. Larry further described the planned operations for the coming year including operations to protect the threatened and endangered birds that nest along the river

**MRRIC status:** Rose Hargrave provided an update on the status of the process to form the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee. She noted that her role will change as she will shift to working for Witt's successor in the Northwest Division related to planning. She

noted that the MRRIC drafting committee approval of the MRRIC Charter was an historic event. She indicated that ASA Woodley had been briefed and that the Corps had been involved in consultation with the Tribes in the basin regarding the draft Charter. In general, she said the feedback has been positive but there are concerns about lack of funding for Tribal travel to MRRIC meetings. She indicated that after the Charter is approved, letters will be sent to the Governors and Tribal Chairs inviting them to appoint a representative and an alternate to MRRIC. At the same time, stakeholders will be invited to file applications for membership on the committee. Rose Hargrave noted that additional meetings of the planning group may be needed if there are suggested changes to the draft Charter, perhaps by the Tribes. She indicated that there is strong support for the MRRIC draft Charter by the Northwest Division. Mark Roth noted that a problem area is the prohibition in WRDA 2007 for reimbursement of travel expenses for Tribal members and stakeholders.

**2008-2009 AOP:** Mark Rath suggested a new procedure be used this year for participation in the AOP process. He noted that the Corps starts drafting the next AOP in August based on end of July hydrologic conditions. Based on discussions with the Corps, he noted that it would be better for our MoRAST AOP Technical Committee to meet sooner than last year and provide preliminary comments to the Corps in August after the Corps has completed its preliminary computer runs. After discussion, the Board supported the new process by consensus.

**Status of MoRAST Request for Study of 1944 Flood Control Act:** Chairman Cooper provided a brief background about the request for the study which was originally envisioned under Section 216 of the 1970 Flood Control Act. However, he noted that based on feedback from the Corps and Congressional staff, it now appears more appropriate to seek a more comprehensive study. He noted the effort underway by Senator Dorgan and others to secure authorization and funding for the study and acknowledged the significant effort to provide letters of support from Basin Governors for the study.

Chairman Cooper and David Pope also led a discussion related to the need to better define the scope of the issues to be studied. They noted that Dr. Steve Light of Adaptive Strategies Inc. has offered to work with MoRAST and others through an adaptive environmental assessment process. They noted that a short course on “Modeling as an Assessment Tool for Adaptive Management,” sponsored by the Collaborative Adaptive Management Network and the University of Nebraska, will be held July 28-August 1, 2008, in Lincoln, NE. Dr. Light and several others will give instruction regarding this process at the short course. There was discussion about whether or not the AEA process would be helpful in the Missouri River Basin and several directors offered different views regarding the matter. It was suggested that participation at the short course by agency staff would be a good idea but that other alternatives should also be explored that might be helpful as we pursue the study in question.

After more discussion, Chairman Cooper summarized the discussion by noting that we would (1) continue working with Congress on the study approach, (2) invite staff from various agencies to attend the AEA short course, and (3) pursue other alternatives as well. Chairman Cooper recognized Don Pfau. Mr. Pfau noted he has been involved with the Fort Peck Advisory

Committee for over 25 years. He indicated appreciation for the study MoRAST is attempting to get authorized and noted that it was important to get the Governors and Congressional delegation in the basin together for this effort.

**Missouri River Recovery Program:** Mike George of USACE provided a summary of the recovery programs underway in the Basin. He said three things are needed to implement the program (1) authorization by Congress, (2) guidance by the administration and (3) appropriation of funds. He noted that the Missouri River Recovery Program is now authorized and summarized the level of appropriations that have occurred in recent years. He stated that \$70 million is needed in FY 09 for ESA compliance. He discussed how these funds are used and prioritization of work. Mike and the Board confirmed a desire to share links for the Missouri River Recovery Program Website [www.moriverrecovery.org](http://www.moriverrecovery.org) and the MoRAST Website. (His power point presentation is now available on the MoRAST Website: [www.mo-rast.org](http://www.mo-rast.org).)

**Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Program:** Randy Sellers, USACE, provided information regarding the MRERP study especially as it related to cooperating agencies participating. He described the intent of the study which is to restore the ecosystem, mitigate habitat loss and recover species. He said the study is to be done in consultation with MRRIC but there will be opportunities for participation by the public, federal, Tribal and State cooperators. Mr. Sellers noted that the study is the responsibility of USACE but that they are working very closely with the USFWS. (His power point presentation is now available on the MoRAST Website: [www.mo-rast.org](http://www.mo-rast.org).)

**The St. Mary's Project:** Mary Sexton introduced Paul Azevedo, State Coordinator for the St. Mary's Rehabilitation Project. Paul provided a detailed description of the history of the project, its relationship with the Boundary Waters Treaty with Canada and its importance to the State of Montana. He noted the difficulty with aging infrastructure and the cost of rehabilitation of this project. (His power point presentation is now available on the MoRAST Website: [www.mo-rast.org](http://www.mo-rast.org).)

**Water Management and Fish and Wildlife Issues in the Columbia River Basin:** Bruce Measure and Rhonda Whiting, Montana members of the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, made a power point presentation regarding issues in the Columbia River Basin regarding historic conflicts and efforts to mitigate the impact of reservoirs in the basin. They described a NW Power Act and planning process conducted in conjunction with local people, Tribes and others. They noted that \$9 billion has been spent thus far on these programs and another \$900 million has been committed for the next 9 years. They noted that the council is charged to balance power production with other uses and with fish and wildlife resources. (Their power point presentation is now available on the MoRAST Website: [www.mo-rast.org](http://www.mo-rast.org).)

The meeting was recessed at approximately 4:30 p.m. for evening events which included an informal tour the Montana FWP fish hatchery, BBQ dinner and a tour of the Lewis and Clark Interpretative Center.

**May 21, 2008 Session:** Chairman Cooper called the meeting back to order at 8:30 a.m.

**Removal of Mill Town Dam:** Doug Martin of the Natural Resources Damage Program for the Montana Department of Justice made a power point presentation regarding the removal of the Mill Town Dam which is a superfund site on the Clark Fork River in Missoula, Montana. He noted that the Mill Town Dam was constructed around 1908 and that arsenic was found in its water in 1981 as a result of historic copper production in the area. Ultimately a decision was made to breach the dam as the best way to protect public health and restore the area. It was an extensive project because of the need to remediate the area and remove contaminated material. The dam was breached on March 29, 2008. (His power point presentation is now available on the MoRAST Website: [www.mo-rast.org](http://www.mo-rast.org).)

### **State, Tribal and Federal Reports:**

**North Dakota:** Todd Sando reported on drought conditions in the western part of the State. He noted that the Governor and Water Commission had recently provided an additional \$1 million for drought assistance. He indicated drought impacts including low lake levels and problems with water supply intakes, etc. He indicated North Dakota was trying to get through the EIS process for the NAWIS project and hope for a Record of Decision by the end of the year. This project has been complicated by challenges from Canada and concerns expressed downstream in Missouri. He noted they also are waiting for a Record of Decision on the Red River project that proposes to take supplemental water to eastern North Dakota for the Fargo and Grand Forks area. Terry Steinwand Stated that Garrison Reservoir was supposed to be favored for a water level rise this year but it did not occur and that resulted in a large mortality of the smelt.

**Montana:** Mary Sexton reported on the status of water supply projects in Montana. She noted that the mountain snowpack was very good but the plains were average. She noted that Montana continues to work on settlement of Tribal water right claims and are continuing its State wide adjudication. She further noted that the U S Supreme Court has under consideration the *Montana v Wyoming* case dealing with the Yellowstone River Compact. Jeff Hagener reported on the beginning of the Paddle Fish season and matters related to Yellowtail National Monument. Mike Rugles provided an update on fish production at Fort Peck Lake.

**South Dakota:** Garland Erbele indicated the Plains snow pack was low except in the northern hills. They did experience a good rise in the level of Lake Oahe. He noted there had been increased applications for permits for ethanol and irrigation projects and that they were also dealing with water needs for a new oil refinery near Sioux Falls. He noted that their rural water system projects were mostly completed.

**Wyoming:** Sue Lowry reported that the Wyoming legislature had provided \$1.6 million additional funding for water measurement sites and its own GOES System which will be compatible with the USGS. She said coal bed methane projects are still going strong although the number of applications for permits has leveled off. She noted that the *Montana v Wyoming* case has been keeping them busy. Later in the meeting, Sue provided information about plans for the August meetings in Cheyenne.

**Kansas:** Tracy Streeter noted that storms have produced significant runoff in eastern Kansas which was draining through the Kansas River System but that western Kansas continued to experience drought. A significant concern in Kansas is reservoir sedimentation. He indicated that a supply/demand analysis is being conducted by KWO for historic drought conditions and that reservoir capacity is an issue. The State is considering reallocation of storage space at John Redmond, Wilson and Kanopolis Reservoirs. Mike Hayden noted that Kansas has had recent discussions with Oklahoma and Texas regarding storage loss due to sediment and further discussion may need to occur in the Missouri River Basin, particularly in light of potential climate change impacts on water supplies. He noted that Tracy recently had led efforts for a reservoir summit in Kansas and it is apparent we need to be planning for the long term future. Steve Adams noted that Kansas is looking for opportunities to stabilize western Kansas reservoirs that have suffered from low runoff. He also indicated that Kansas is thankful for recent acquisition of properties along the Missouri River for mitigation projects.

Chairman Cooper indicated that South Dakota has been working with the USACE under Title IX and with the Tribes regarding trust lands related to the sediment issue. Colonel Wilson noted the different views in the region regarding sediment. In some places, more sediment is needed and in other areas bed degradation is a problem. He noted that the USACE is beginning to look at the need for regional and national management of this issue.

**Iowa:** Mike McGhee indicated that Iowa experienced some real winter again this year, including 60-90 inches of snow. The Iowa legislature authorized a sustainable fund for natural resources using 3/8 of 1 percent of the sales tax which will generate about \$150 million per year, if passed by the voters in the future. He reported on successful funding for a recreation development at Rathburn Reservoir and on their Lake Restoration Program. He indicated that they are updating their State Water Plan and receive funding for State wide LiDar coverage. Mike noted that the Iowa legislature authorized a State inter agency group (Iowa Missouri River Authority) pertaining to Missouri River issues that includes five member agencies: Departments of Natural Resources, Agriculture, Economic Development, Transportation and Utilities. These agencies will determine Iowa's position on MoRAST issues based on a simple majority of the five agencies. Mike noted that this process was not in place at the time of the February 25 MoRAST meeting when the action was taken to support the 216 study. However, the group wanted to make clear that Iowa support for that motion was from Iowa DNR and does not reflect the majority view of the five agencies. He presented a letter explaining these concerns. Chairman Cooper indicated the letter will be distributed to the MoRAST membership. Iowa would like the person it sends to the MoRAST meetings to have both votes for Iowa. It was noted that the voting arrangement will need to be reviewed for consistency with the Bylaws.

**Nebraska:** Gene Zuerlein reported that Ann Bleed had resigned from her position as director the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and that the Governor had appointed Brian Dunnigan as the Acting Director. He noted that Nebraska is still feuding with Kansas over the Republican River and noted that part of the difficulty is that ground water is administered by Natural Resource Districts (NRD) and surface water is administered by DNR. Gene also reported on a conflict on the Niobrara River Basin and discussed in-stream flow issues. Gene and Brian

Barels reported on activities related to the Platt River Cooperative Agreement. Gene noted that many of the river basins in Nebraska are over appropriated and Nebraska is dealing with significant challenges to manage water in these areas. He noted that integrated management plans are being developed by the NRD's and the DNR.

**Western Area Power Administration:** Nick Stas reported on implementation of new energy legislation. He said studies are being conducted by WAPA related to hydropower/wind integration. He also reported on a Supplemental EIS that is nearing completion related to a proposed coal plant. They have provided some funding, mostly in the upper basin for Pallid Sturgeon recovery. He also noted that Bob Real has retired as the Power Marketing Director and will be replaced by Jody Sunset. There was also some discussion regarding potential in-stream flows in the reach of the Missouri River below Fort Randall Reservoir. Nick discussed how in-stream flows are established in conjunction with States in some areas.

**U S Fish and Wildlife Service:** Mike Olson reported that the next meeting of the Missouri River Basin Interagency Roundtable will be in about six months. He indicated they would still like to meet jointly with MoRAST at some point. He noted that he will be updating some people soon and will provide information from the MoRAST newsletter. Wayne Nelson-Stastny indicated his appreciation for the MRERP staff being able to meet with many of the States and Tribes recently and discussed the need for cooperating agencies with them for the MRERP program and that staff from the Corps and Fish and Wildlife Service will be working hard on the study.

**Sac and Fox Tribe:** Bucky Pilcher thanked the Board for support of the Tribal travel reimbursement. However, he said he would like to see more help coming from the States for the Tribes regarding water issues and would like to see more State-Tribal cooperation. He has had to rely on donations for travel to represent the four Kansas Tribes. Chairman expressed appreciation for these concerns, but also noted the significant effort provided to the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe to resolve a major problem with its water intake recently.

**Yankton Sioux Tribe:** John Stone reported on projects his Tribe has been working on including erosion and bank stabilization issues along the river. He said some habitat restoration projects are also being completed on the reservation. He said he will discuss ways to improve Tribal participation in MoRAST with the Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association. It includes 13 Tribal Chairpersons. He suggested holding a future MoRAST meeting on a reservation, perhaps at one of the casinos and partnering with another group for future meetings. He expressed appreciation for being able to meet with the group, believes interaction between the States and Tribes is very important and that MoRAST can be very effective if the States and Tribes work together. He will be reviewing the 1944 Flood Control Act study issue.

#### **Continued MoRAST Business meeting:**

**Review By-Laws:** Mr. Pope reviewed the "Manner of Acting" provision in Section 11 of the By-Laws. This section expires two years from the adoption of the MoRAST By-Laws, which occurred August 31, 2006, and that a review of this section of the By-Laws needs to take place

during or prior to our August meeting, as an action item. Mike Hayden encouraged the Board to revise this section of the By-Laws related to voting as he thinks the bar is set too high to pass an action by MoRAST. It was noted that the options would be to readopt the current language, modify the current language or readopt the current language for a specific period of time. Mike Hayden offered to develop alternative language for the Board's consideration by the August meeting.

**Review of Executive Director Contract:** Mr. Pope noted that the two year contract between Pope Consulting, LLC and MoRAST requires a review of the contract after one year, especially if there is a desire to change the work plan. Chairman Cooper noted that compared to the work plan, Mr. Pope had done more than required and he was very pleased with Mr. Pope's efforts in carrying out the work plan. Mr. Pope indicated his appreciation for being able to work with Chairman Cooper and the Board and did not have suggestions for changes to the contract. No specific action was required or taken.

**Election of Vice Chairperson:** Chairman Cooper reminded the Board that he has completed his work with the State of South Dakota and this would be his last meeting. He will turn the Chairmanship over to Mary Sexton about June 15, 2008. Discussion ensued regarding the process to fill the position of Vice Chairperson that Mary will vacate. By consensus the Board decided to defer the election of this position until the August meeting but invite members of the Board to submit nominations for the position. This action included a request for the Executive Director to send out an e-mail to the Board with a request that nominations be sent back to him by a certain date, such as 10 days. If more than one candidate is nominated, an election will be held by ballot at the August meeting.

**Other business and next MoRAST Meeting:** The next MoRAST meeting will be held in Cheyenne, Wyoming, August 27-28, 2008. Representatives of the States and Tribes are also encouraged to attend the Upper Missouri River Basin Cooperators' Roundtable MoRAST that is being co-sponsoring with the USGS and ICWP August 26-27, 2008 just prior to the MoRAST meeting at the same location. Explicit plans were not set for the fall/early winter meeting of MoRAST, but there was interest in meeting at a convenient time and location with another group, such as the Upper Missouri Water Users, the Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association or the Missouri River Basin Interagency Roundtable. Appreciation was expressed to Mary, Jeff and their staff for hosting the meeting. It was agreed that the costs for meals and breaks provided by the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department should be reimbursed by MoRAST.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:10 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

//Signed

Tracy Streeter, Secretary