

The UMRCC Newsletter

Winter 2017



This Newsletter is a publication of the Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee (UMRCC) but does not necessarily represent the official views of the UMRCC. Suggestions or comments regarding its content should be directed to the Chairperson, 555 Lester Avenue, Onalaska, WI 54650. Please contact the Coordinator by e-mail (umrcc@mississippi-river.com) or phone (608.783.8432) and visit our website at <http://www.mississippi-river.com/umrcc>.

Hello River Rats!

Chairperson's Letter

I just had the pleasure of signing the latest batch of River Rats Awards for the annual meeting. I am always humbled when I look at the names of those who have been participating for so many years, and then I am encouraged when I see new names that I don't recognize because they will be the future of the UMRCC. As the River Rats award so aptly illustrates when you look at the ones for 25 and 30 years of participation, one of the great benefits of the UMRCC is the opportunity and forum for "old" Rats to share knowledge and experience with the "younger" Rats. I can't stress enough the value of this opportunity and the need to take advantage of your elders, at least when it comes to picking their brains; so take a few moments and seek out one of the retirees, or one of the more seasoned (not older) members at the annual meeting and ask them about their experiences; the stories are fascinating.

In last Fall's note, I asked several questions to learn what you value about the organization and how it helps you in your jobs; what restricts your attendance and participation; products and features you would like to receive from the UMRCC and ways to enhance the mission of the UMRCC. I only received a few replies, but I think the comments received are ones that we need to consider as the UMRCC works to maintain relevance on river related topics. As travel becomes more and more restrictive, the UMRCC will have to demonstrate why it is important for agencies to continue to participate and send multiple attendees. Transfer of knowledge among biologists is just one valuable item; what we may need to spend some time on is following up on UMRCC plans and identifying what has been achieved and sharing that story, and also noting sharing that there is still much to be done as a group. On another note, to grow participation by some of the federal agencies that used to attend in larger numbers, suggestions were made to add topics to the agendas that will help them justify to their leadership the need to attend – this may be UMRR-LTRM/HREP discussions and data sharing or USFWS Refuge management needs/topics. And because federal programs greatly influence the condition of the river's resources, we should revisit the need to comment and provide input on UMR management as it relates to fish and wildlife resources, especially at a system scale, since UMRCC is best suited to provide that perspective. These are just a few things to chew on for the coming months and I can't encourage you enough to spend some time on these topics. Enough for the soapbox and I know I am speaking to the choir.

I will be attending my 15th annual meeting (where did the years go?) in Red Wing. I expect Minnesota has a great meeting planned and am looking forward to seeing you in March! Safe travels.

Janet Sternburg, UMRCC Chairperson

2017 UMRCC Meeting

73rd Annual UMRCC Meeting Announcement

March 21 -23, 2017

St. James Hotel, 406 Main St.

Red Wing, Minnesota

<http://www.st-james-hotel.com/>

Please join river biologists, scientists and managers for the 73rd Annual meeting of the Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee. We have a great lineup of speakers for another thought provoking meeting.

Deadline for reserving a hotel room is February 28! – We have a block of rooms reserved for \$83 per night (plus tax) for single or double occupancy. Rooms are available for Monday night, if you are traveling a day early. Make your reservations early as the St. James Hotel has limited occupancy. To reserve your room call the St. James Hotel at (800) 252-1875 and let them know you are attending the UMRCC meeting. An additional block of rooms has been reserved at the AmericInn Lodge and Suites where a shuttle is scheduled to transport meeting attendees between hotels. Additional lodging options are also available nearby (see listing below)

Deadline for early registration is February 28th! – Details and registration form below. Please help us out by registering early.

Questions regarding the meeting agenda or logistics should be directed to Megan Moore megan.moore@state.mn.us (651) 345-3331 ext 225.



2017 UMRCC Meeting (Continued)

Alternate Lodging locations near the St. James Hotel: A St. James Shuttle will provide free service to the AmericInn Lodge and Suites, which is located next to Nichols Inn & Suites. Other lodging is available a short drive away and parking is available at the St. James or at the public lot across Hwy 61 from the hotel.

AmericInn Lodge & Suites of Red Wing - \$85.41 + tax/nt. 1819 Old West Main Street, Red Wing, MN 55066 651-385-9060. www.Americinn.com. Block of rooms saved under UMRCC

Nichols Inn & Suites – \$83.00/nt + tax. 1819 Old West Main Street, Red Wing, MN 55066 651-388-6633 nicholsinn.com

Country Inn & Suites – \$91.00/nt + tax 4275 U.S. Hwy 61, Red Wig, MN 55066 651-388-9000 www.countryinn.com

Days Inn Red Wing – \$55.00 single/nt \$62.00 double/nt + tax. 955 East 7th St., Red Wing, MN 55066. 651-388-3568 www.wyndhamhotels.com



2017 UMRCC Meeting (Continued)

2017 UMRCC Annual Meeting – Registration Form

Full Registration	Includes all breaks, facility and speaker costs, and evening meals on Tuesday and Wednesday	\$160	
Tuesday or Thursday only Registration	Includes cost of breaks, facility and speaker costs – NO Meals	\$35	
Wednesday only Registration	Includes cost of breaks, lunch, facility and speaker costs – NO Banquet	\$80	
Late Registration	Add \$25 to price listed above after February 28th	\$25	
Retiree	Please register so we can include you in the count. (lodging not included)	\$0	
Extra Social	Spouse/extra Tuesday Social	\$25	
Extra Banquet	Spouse/extra for Wed Banquet	\$35	
TOTAL Payment Enclosed			
(Check or Purchase Order payable to UMRCC)			
TOTAL Payment Due			
(Pay at meeting or make arrangements with Adam Theise, Sec/Treasurer)			

Note – UMRCC does not accept credit card payments

To help plan meeting space, please indicate the Tech Section you plan to attend on Tuesday:

Fish		Wildlife		Water Quality		Law Enforcement		OREIT		None	
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NAME:	
AFFILIATION:	
ADDRESS:	
DAYTIME PHONE:	
EMAIL:	
NAME TAG: (if different than above)	

Please send registration to: Megan Moore, Minnesota DNR, 1801 S. Oak Street, Lake City, MN 55041

Or by email to: megan.moore@state.mn.us

UMRCC Transitions

New Arrivals

Neal Jackson, UMRCC Coordinator

Neal recently joined the US Fish and Wildlife Service as the new permanent, full time UMRCC Coordinator. He began his career working with shovelnose sturgeon in the Middle Mississippi River before shifting to a sportfish management role as a fisheries biologist in Kentucky. Neal spent 10 years in Western Kentucky where he managed nationally recognized sportfisheries and helped address regional fisheries conservation issues.

Neal served the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources as Fisheries Program Coordinator for the Critical Species Investigations Branch. In this role, he led Kentucky's invasive carp control efforts and coordinated interjurisdictional fisheries projects on species of concern in the Ohio and Mississippi River Basins. Neal was active in creating partnerships on fisheries resource committees including the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society Reservoir Committee, LMRCC, Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership, Southeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and MICRA sturgeon and paddlefish committee. As a result, in 2014, Neal was offered the opportunity to develop and implement a research branch in Kentucky dedicated to the control of aquatic nuisance species, specifically Asian carp.

Neal holds a B.S. degree in Environmental Biology from Eastern Illinois University and a M.S. in Zoology from the Southern Illinois University Carbondale Fisheries and Illinois Aquaculture Center.

Neal assumed all of his duties with the Service in early January and will take over the coordinator role full time after the annual meeting in March.



UMRCC Transitions

Retirements

Hannibal Bolton, US Fish and Wildlife Service

An open letter to US Fish and Wildlife Service Employees written by former Director Dan Ashe:

A common lament heard these days is that there are no more heroes. That in our hyper-partisan, hyper-connected and hyper-critical world, it's difficult, if not impossible, to find leaders who truly stand apart for their integrity and selflessness.

My friend and colleague, Hannibal Bolton puts the lie to that. For nearly 45 years, he has embodied what it means to be an exceptional public servant – leading by example and devoting himself to nurturing and developing others.

On January 3, for the first time since 1972, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service will head to work without Hannibal, who is retiring to pursue his great passions – fishing; mentoring young people; and growing grandchildren who love the outdoors. Selfishly,

I'm glad I won't have to serve as Director for more than a few weeks without him by my side. I also know how great a loss it is for our agency to see him go. Still, because of his tireless efforts to recruit and develop diverse leaders at all levels of the Service, I'm confident that others will step up and fill his shoes. And also, that Hannibal will keep working to recruit and grow young, talented and diverse people into our profession.

For the few of you who don't know him personally or by reputation, it's worth understanding the remarkable journey Hannibal has taken over the past 45 years. He grew up on a small cotton and soybean farm in the Mississippi Delta near Crawfordsville, Arkansas, part of a family of 7 boys and 5 girls. After attending segregated schools, Hannibal was the first – and only – member of his family to graduate from college, in 1971, when he received a bachelors degree in agriculture from the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff. Fortunately for conservation, Hannibal went on to earn a Master's Degree from UAPB in Fisheries Management, and joined the Fish and Wildlife Service a year later, gathering and assessing data on fisheries and water quality in Southern Indiana.

It's hard to imagine the challenges facing a young black man at that time, entering an organization and a profession that included few, if any, people of your race and ethnicity. Us lesser beings might cower in fear, but Hannibal endured, reflecting Nelson Mandela's view of courage:

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."

He rose steadily through the ranks of the Service in various leadership positions within the Fisheries and Refuge Programs. After serving as Deputy Assistant Regional Director for the Fisheries Program in the Midwest Region, he came to Washington in 1995 to become Chief of the Division of Fish & Wildlife Management and Habitat Restoration. It was in that role that Hannibal led the transformation of our Fisheries Program, expanding its role and importance far beyond the Hatchery System to be a driving force in aquatic conservation. He played key roles in the creation of the Aquatic Invasive Species Program, the National Fish Passage Program, and in the establishment of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan and National Fish Habitat Partnerships that supported it. In recognition, he was inducted into the Fisheries Management Hall of Fame by the American Fisheries Society – just one of dozens of major awards bestowed on him for his exceptional leadership.

He joined the senior leadership of the Service, in 2008, as Assistant Director for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration, serving with distinction until he stepped aside, this year, to spearhead the agency's Diversity Retention and Recruitment efforts. It was the culmination of a lifetime spent mentoring and developing young people.



UMRCC Transitions

Retirements

Hannibal Bolton, US Fish and Wildlife Service (continued from Page 6)

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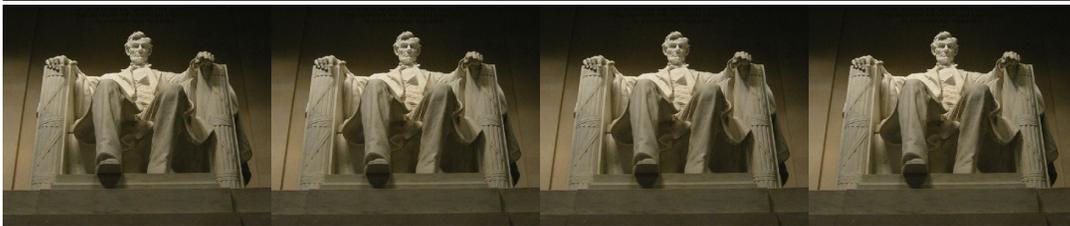
Through his leadership in the national ranks of his college fraternity, Kappa Alpha Psi, as a member of the UAPB Board of Trustees, and through the American Fisheries Society, Hannibal has been a mentor to scores of young men and women. It's truly remarkable how much time he has devoted to helping them become leaders in fisheries management and in so many other professions.

Throughout his impressive career, Hannibal has also been a friend, colleague, and mentor to me and so many others across the Service. Most of all, he's an uncommonly skilled consensus builder, always working to find common ground with others in the pursuit of shared goals and solutions.

Hannibal, we've been privileged to work with you for so many years. Hang out the "Gone Fishing" sign on your door – you've earned it! But, we're hoping you're not done yet!

-Dan

UMR-Related Congressional Legislation



Outdoor Recreation

**Bill H.R. 343 Sponsor: A. Sires (NJ-8)
UMR Co-sponsor: None**

A bill to authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to establish a program enabling communities to better leverage resources to address health, economic development, and conservation concerns through needed investments in parks, recreational areas, facilities, and programs, and for other purposes.

Introduced 5 Jan 2017; Referred to the Subcommittee on Federal Lands (10 Feb 2017)

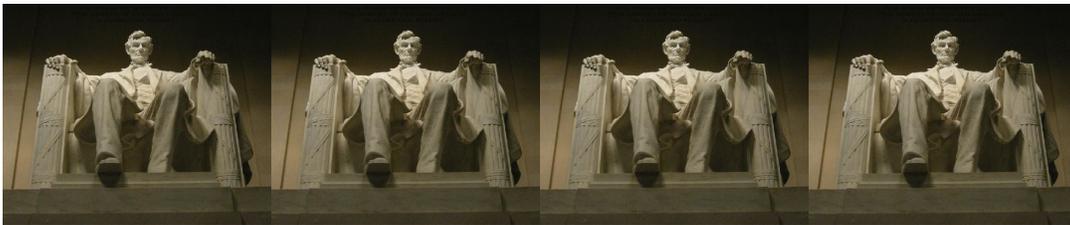
Fisheries

**Bill H.R. 214 Sponsor: D. Young (AK-at large)
UMR Co-sponsor: None**

To establish the American Fisheries Advisory Committee to assist in the awarding of fisheries research and development grants, and for other purposes.

Introduced 3 Jan 2017; Referred to the Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans (10 Feb 2017)

UMR-Related Congressional Legislation



Conservation

Bill S. 168 Sponsor: R. Wicker (MS)
UMR Co-sponsor: None

A bill to amend the *Commercial Vessels Incidental Discharge Act* requiring complete ballast water changes at least 200 nautical miles from the Saint Lawrence Seaway.

Introduced 17 Jan 2017; Ordered to be reported without amendment favorably by the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation (24 Jan 2017).

Bill H.R. 581 Sponsor D. Young (IA-3)

A bill instructing the United States Postal Service to issue a semipostal to benefit certain conservation programs authorized by the Department of Agriculture for a 4-year period.

Introduced 13 Jan 17; Referred to House Agriculture Committee (13 Jan 2017)

Bill H.R. 502 Sponsor R. Grijalva (AZ-3)

UMR Co-sponsors: J. Schakowsky [IL-9]; G. Moore [WI-4]; M. Pocan [WI-2]; D. Loeb sack [IA-2]

A bill to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 to make permanent the authorization for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Introduced 12 Jan 17; Referred to Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans (10 Feb 17).

Wildlife

Bill S. 159 Sponsor: A. Hastings (FL-20)
UMR Co-sponsor: None

A bill To expand the workforce of veterinarians specialized in the care and conservation of wild animals and their ecosystems, and to develop educational programs focused on wildlife and zoological veterinary medicine.

Introduced 3 Jan 2017; Referred to Subcommittee on Federal Lands (10 Feb 2017)

Bill H.R. 368 Sponsor E. Crawford (AR-1)

A bill providing for certain regulations that allow for the taking of double-crested cormorants that eat fish at aquaculture facilities.

Introduced 9 Jan 17; Referred to Subcommittee on Federal Lands (10 Feb 2017)



UMRCC Chairperson

Janet Sternburg - Missouri Delegate - Missouri DC - Jefferson City, MO

UMRCC Vice-Chairperson

Bradford Parson - Minnesota Delegate - Minnesota DNR - St. Paul, MN

UMRCC Board Members

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Travis Moore - Mussel Section Chairperson - Missouri DC - Hannibal, MO

Brenda Kelley & Ruth Nissen - OREIT Section Co-Chairs - Wisconsin DNR - La Crosse, WI

Sabrina Chandler - Refuge Observer - USFWS - Winona, MN

Sam Finney - Interim Coordinator - USFWS - Onalaska, WI

The Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee (UMRCC) was established in 1943 with the goal to: "Promote the preservation and wise utilization of the natural and recreational resources of the Upper Mississippi River and to formulate policies, plans, and programs for conducting cooperative studies".

