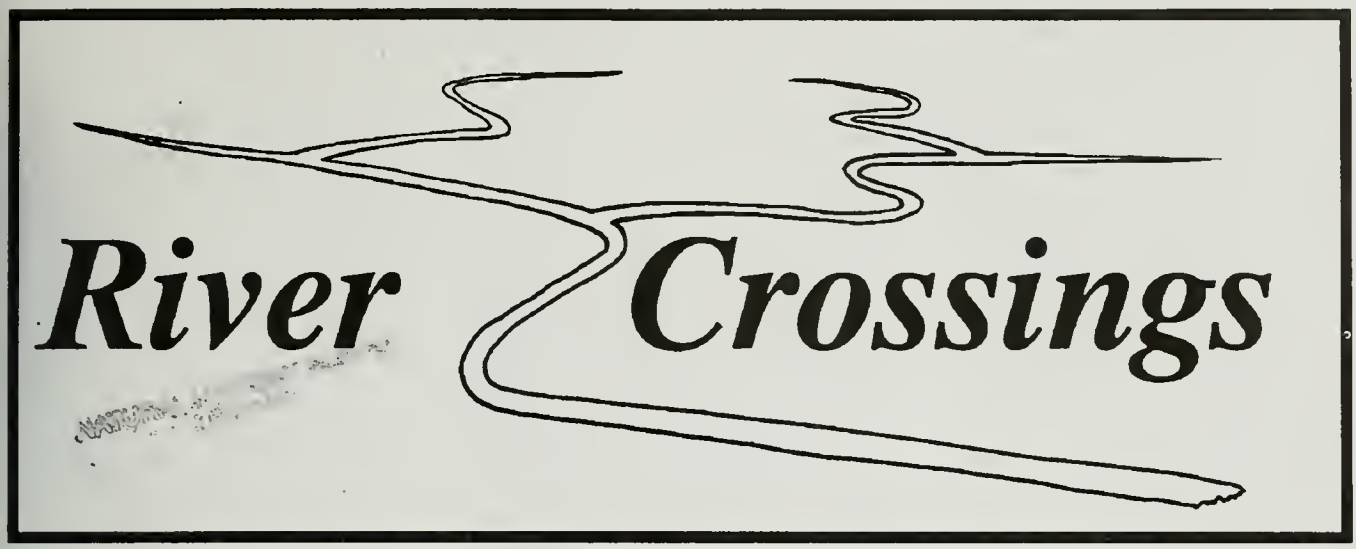


Volume 6 March/April 1997 Number 2

MICRA On Line

By popular demand MICRA has opened an America On Line account, and is now on line at IJRivers @AOL.COM. We also have a Web Site under construction at http:// members. aol.com/ IJRivers. Our last issue of *River Crossings,* Vol. 6, No. 1 was placed on the Web, but some folks had difficulty accessing it. So, obviously, we still have a little work to do, but hope to be up, running, and networked with several other Web Sites within the next few months. Thank you for your patience!

American Heritage Rivers Initiative

During his State of the Union message, President Clinton announced a new "*American Heritage Rivers Initiative*." Clinton said, "Tonight, I announce that this year I will designate 10 American Heritage rivers, to help communities alongside them revitalize their waterfronts and clean up pollution in the rivers, proving once again that we can grow the economy as we protect the environment."

Katie McGinty, Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, said that the program will target river communities for focused federal assistance, including grants and technical assistance. McGinty said that federal brownfields money and Farm Bill money would be funneled to the projects, as would resources from the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. She said, "This is about celebrating our rivers as part of history, as part of our culture, as an incredibly important environmental and economic resource for the country."

The Clinton Administration will designate a community representative to help implement each community's vision and provide a link between the feds and experienced local people who have worked on river efforts in the past, McGinty said. She said the Cabinet will take nominations from local communities for 10 river stretches and make recommendations to Clinton within 90 days.

Competition began almost immediately between various groups and communities vying to propose candidate American Heritage rivers:

- *American Rivers* will propose the **Mississippi, Columbia, Hudson and Colorado rivers** — all of which "played a major role in our cultural and historical development".
- An aide to Sen. Chuck Robb (R/VA) said that the Dept. of Interior is encouraging Robb and Richmond officials to propose VA's **James River**.
- Providence, RI Mayor Vincent "Buddy" Cianci (I) says the city's **Woonasquatucket River** is "strongly positioned as a prime contender".
- Environmental groups in the Con-

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

necticut River Valley are pushing to have the **Connecticut River** listed. The *Connecticut River Watershed Council* and the *CT chapter of the National Audubon Society* have led early efforts to gain designation for the Connecticut River -- which at 410 miles is the longest river in New England.

- Sen. John Chafee (R/RI) has asked Clinton to list the **Blackstone and Woonasquatucket rivers** in RI and MA. Chafee cited both rivers' historical significance and drew attention to an ongoing greenway project along the Woonasquatucket that is restoring abandoned industrial sites.

Meanwhile, Rep. George Nethercutt (R/WA) said he is concerned that the Program will "impose the weight of the federal government" on the entire Columbia River system "against the will of the people who live there." At a House Appropriations subcommittee budget hearing on 3/26, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt told Nethercutt that he doubted any river would be included in the program unless the move had the support of the local community.

The Clinton Administration has provided "few details" on designation criteria, but Babbitt told the panel that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service could provide "technical help" and the USEPA might assist communities with wastewater issues.

Sources: Greenwire Vol. 6, No. 186, 191, 197, 204

Flooding and Floodplain Management

The National Weather Service on 3/17 predicted that heavy snows in the upper Midwest and the Rocky Mountains could lead to the worst flooding in a decade in parts of the Mountain West, the eastern Dakotas, southern MN and WI, and northern IA. Areas at risk include the lower Missouri and upper Mississippi rivers, much of WA state and northern OR, central CA, the Great Lakes region and the southern U.S. from eastern TX to SC.

Massive flooding along the Ohio River has already led to more than 50 deaths, contaminated water supplies, and more than $300 million in damages to homes and businesses throughout WV, OH, IN and KY. The damage has caused many to question whether too much development has been allowed in floodplains along the river.

The Sierra Club on 3/17 charged that recent flood damage in the Midwest may have been aggravated by the legal destruction of wetlands. The group advocated a "crash program" to restore wetlands in flood-prone states and suggested holding builders and Realtors financially responsible for damages to homes they sell in floodplains and drained wetlands. A Sierra Club report said that of the states damaged by recent floods, OH has lost 90% of its wetlands since the 1780s; IN, 87%; KY, 81%; AR, 72%; and TN, 59%. Other flood-prone states with high wetlands losses include CA with 91%; IA, 89%; and MO, 87%.

The National Assn. of Home Builders (NAHB) accused the Sierra Club of using "gross exaggerations to scare the public". NAHB President Daniel Pincus said, "Shame on the Sierra Club for using tragic natural events such as floods as political weapons. ... Our message to environmental organizations is a simple one: If you really want to protect the environment, work with us, not against us".

Rep. Richard Pombo (R/CA) contends that the Endangered Species Act (ESA) restrictions prevented maintenance of CA levees and allowed rodents and insects to burrow into them, contributing to their collapse during flooding this winter. Environmental interests have attacked Pombo's claims, and five House Democrats from CA sent a letter to him on 3/7 saying the levees broke because of "too much water," not because of

River Crossings

Published by

Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Association
(MICRA)
P.O. Box 774
Bettendorf, IA 52722-0774

River Crossings is a mechanism for communication, information transfer, and coordination between agencies, groups and persons responsible for and/or interested in preserving and protecting the aquatic resources of the Mississippi River Drainage Basin through improved communication and management. Information provided by the newsletter, or opinions expressed in it by contributing authors are provided in the spirit of "open communication", and do not necessarily reflect the position of MICRA or any of its member States or Entities. Any comments related to "River Crossings" should be directed to the MICRA Chairman.

the ESA.

Interior Dept. Assistant Secretary John Garamendi is pushing new flood control strategies in CA, including paying farmers to let their land flood and removing federal subsidies for floodplain development. Garamendi said federal officials are considering buying land or obtaining easements to restrict development in flood-prone areas and creating new river bypasses to divert storm runoff away from urban areas.

The MICRA Coordinator/ Executive Secretary was among others invited in mid-February to a CA post flood meeting and tour of flooded areas. Concepts for floodplain management and habitat restoration efforts along the Missouri and Mississippi rivers were passed along to CA state and federal officials. A SAST-like effort to integrate science into floodplain management (similar to that used for the Upper Mississippi River Basin in the aftermath of the 1993 floods) is planned for CA.

The Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) in CA is also undergoing a "change in thinking" from building dams to natural restoration projects, including widening waterways and constructing wetlands to slow down and spread out flood waters. The Corps is considering such restoration projects along the Sacramento River near Yuba City, Marysville and Sacramento.

These suggestions echo conclusions of a 1994 Galloway Report that decided the best way to prevent damages from flooding is to relocate people away from floodplains. But according to environmental interests, the Clinton Administration's intended policy shift "has been only marginally felt," as federal officials admit that disaster-aid programs and efforts to urge residents to leave floodplains "have not persuaded enough people to move to higher ground."

Source: Greenwire Vol. 6, No. 185, 206 and 215

Flood Tolerant Crops

Floodplain farmers in many parts of the Mississippi River Basin struggle each year in their efforts to raise corn and soybeans on lands that are often too wet for conventional farming practices. Farmers on the Minnesota River have decided to do something about this dilemma.

Galen Halverson, one of those farmers, is looking for answers. "There has to be other things you can do," Halverson said. "We just haven't had imagination enough to see them, or haven't been flexible enough to do them." Even though the soil on Halverson's Yellow Medicine County farm is rich, glacial till, extensive drainage practices have eliminated an estimated 90% or three million acres of the prairie pothole wetlands that once comprised the MN River watershed. Absent wetlands to hold it, water now races rapidly to the river. Spring snow melt and both summer and fall rains bring with them the threat of flooding. In most years, flooding is becoming a sure bet.
Todd Lein, a Rice County farmer, has already found a better way; turning 70 acres of flood-prone land into pasture. His renter had given up on the land in despair because of consecutive years of flooding damage to his corn and soybean row crops. Lein is making the very same land pay its way by using a rotational grazing system. His grasslands can withstand the occasional, but usually brief summer floods that had so plagued his renter. He does not worry that floods will destroy his crops, or wash sediments and pollutants into the river, and Lein is now working with *American Rivers* to show others a new way of doing business.

The *American Rivers Minnesota River Floodplain Project* is seeking to demonstrate that alternative agricultural uses of the floodplain are economically viable, and beneficial to the environment. Lein is meeting with farmers such as Halverson and encouraging them to try alternative practices on their river lands. He hopes to establish a number of demonstration sites along the river.

Because of these efforts, farmers are beginning to see profitable options to corn and soybeans, and they are looking for such options. Last year, *American Rivers* sent surveys to 900 people who own 40 or more acres of land along the mainstem of the MN River. Some 270 returned the surveys, and 150 attended three workshops held this winter in river communities.

Lein said landowners are genuinely interested in finding uses that actually benefit the river environment. A 59% majority of respondents rated the need to restore the river's natural filtration system as their top reason for trying alternative floodplain land uses. The survey also found that landowners are interested in options such as:

- raising renewable energy crops,
- timber and pulp-wood,
- leasing their land for hunting, or
- converting it for grazing, hay and forage production.

The problem is that landowners are unsure of how to proceed; citing equipment costs, markets, and lack of experience as the main obstacles faced in converting to alternative crops. Lein said the *American Rivers* project aims to address those issues, and help provide answers.

The *MN River Basin Joint Powers Board*, is serving in an advisory role to the *American Rivers* project. Steve Hansen, its director, finds it hard to over-state the importance of what the project seeks to do. Hansen believes that solving the river's troubles will depend on finding economically viable land use options. Floodplain landowners will adopt environmentally beneficial practices if their economics can be demonstrated. Voluntary compliance, not governmental regulation, is the key to making positive changes,

according to Hansen.

The challenge is identifying just what alternative practices will work in the modern farm economy and market. Until now, only limited work has been accomplished in this area. "It is definitely and absolutely an imperative part of the puzzle that has to be worked out," Hansen said.

American Rivers is using computers and engineering to help solve this issue. Barr Engineering, Minneapolis, will examine the economics and environmental impacts associated with various alternative land uses. For example, the computer models will look at:

- the economics of raising flood-tolerant grasses on floodplain lands,
- how different practices will affect water quality, habitat, and flood losses, and
- the recreational benefits that might be created.

The models will give farmers the sort of information that Hansen said is so desperately needed. In the process, they will be looking at agriculture as few others ever have. Lein said that a wide variety of alternative crops and practices are being examined. One of the most promising comes under the heading of agri-forestry.

Many advocates in the basin are encouraging the growth of hybrid poplar trees, because there is a growing demand for wood fiber in the state's particle board and paper industries. Other are eying the trees as possible fuel. Hybrid poplars raised on marginal river bottoms could be harvested as "biomass" for energy production. The prospect of producing "green electricity" from agricultural crops is appealing for those working to reduce greenhouse gasses. The crops remove as much carbon dioxide while growing as they produce later when consumed as a fuel.

The Department of Energy has approved a $4.1 million grant to help a farmer cooperative in the upstream portion of the Minnesota River who plans to develop a plant which would use the stems of alfalfa plants as a biomass fuel. The state's largest electric utility has committed to purchasing power from the cooperative, known as the *Minnesota Valley Alfalfa Producers*. Its proposed biomass plant is scheduled to go on line in 2002.

Other, smaller scale options for farmers include the old adage that some things are best when just left alone. According to Patrick Moore, a director of a citizens group known as *Clean Up our River Environment* (CURE), there is money to be made by leasing land to hunters and other recreational users. He tells the story of one farmer who found the best of both worlds. He restored a wetland and allowed natural vegetation to return, and he now derives economic value from the hunting opportunities it created. In the meantime, his own crops benefit from the flood control gained by restoring the wetland.

Lein said there are cottage industries developing along the river. The crafting of attractive furniture from naturally grown willows is one example. Others are exploring the possibility of harvesting wild plants for decorative uses.

Lein would like to see the once familiar wild rice return to the river valley, and he'd like to re-introduce it. The river basin once supported huge stands of the native grass, evidence of the biological health the river once enjoyed. Wild rice is not tolerant of poor water quality or flooding.

Lein is hardly alone in being willing to try alternative uses for the land. Paul Homme, a farmer in Renville County, is one who has done so successfully. For three consecutive years, Homme watched mid-summer floods destroy promising fields of corn and soybeans. "I got real sick of that," said Homme. His cure came with the planting of a low alkaloid, reed canary grass. Even though the field continues to flood once or twice a year, it still produces, and can be used by livestock for grazing. He will also harvest the grass as hay. Best of all, the grass' firm root structure assures that the field will still be there when the waters recede. Homme likes the fact that it all makes economic sense. "You can always sell cattle," he explained. He is now realizing an economic gain from the flood-troubled lands.

Others, however, are not realizing such gains. John Kral, a farmer in Nicolet County is not realizing a gain on land that his father had farmed for decades. The flooding, he said, has gotten worse due to increased tiling of upstream fields. He is still looking for alternative uses for his lands, and is doubtful that the alternative uses now being touted will work for him. "It'd be nice to use it for something else," Kral said, adding that he will be watching to see what *American Rivers* learns on its demonstration sites.

Lein said he is hopeful that some floodplain demonstration projects could begin as early as this year. If successful, *American Rivers* may be able to provide landowners along the river with real choices for an improved river and economy in just a few years time. To learn more about the Minnesota River Project, visit the following Web site: www.soil.agri.umn.edu/research/mn-river

Source: Mississippi Monitor, Vol. 1, No. 1, Mar. 1997

Climate Change and Floods

As the global climate continues to warm, extreme flooding like that recently experienced in the western U.S. is expected to become more frequent, reports a senior NOAA scientist. Although it is impossible to link any particular weather or climate event to global warming, and present-day climate models are not sophisticated enough to accurately pinpoint regions of the globe where changes will be the largest, extreme flooding is expected to become more frequent across the U.S. due to an increase in precipitation extremes, said Thomas Karl, senior scientist at NOAA's National Climatic Data Center in Asheville. NC.

Observations in the U.S. since the beginning of the 20th century indicate that intense precipitation events have already increased by 20%, and cold

season precipitation has increased by nearly 10%, Karl said. An increase in the intensity of precipitation has led to an increased flood potential. This happens because increased concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere lead to an increase in mean global temperatures. As the global climate warms, the hydrological cycle is affected because a portion of the heating will go into evaporating larger quantities of water from the earth's surface. As global temperatures increase, the atmosphere can also support greater amounts of water vapor. In general, an increase in the proportion of extreme and heavy precipitation events would occur where there is enough atmospheric instability to trigger precipitation events.

This means more flooding with an increase in extreme precipitation events, but also more droughts. Droughts arise where and when the atmosphere is not favorable to precipitation, and the evaporated moisture is transported to other regions. The additional evaporation from the surface leads to a drying of the soil, and more severe and widespread droughts.

Comparisons of climatologies, and from climate models run with present-day and doubled carbon dioxide concentrations, reveal some dramatic changes in the hydrologic cycle as the global climate warms, Karl said. When carbon dioxide concentrations are doubled, the expected frequency and extent of extreme droughts and intense precipitation in the U.S. increase (more than 5 cm/day) and in Canada (more than 2.5 cm/day), some models showing a 3-4 fold increase. There is also a distinct increase in wintertime or cold season precipitation.

Recent events, like the flooding last fall and the Northwest flooding this winter, offer examples of the kind of situations that are expected to be associated with an increased risk of occurrence' Karl said.

Source: NOAA Legislative Informer, January 1997, Issue #21

ESA Ruling Favors Landowners

The Supreme Court on 3/19 gave landowners a new means of fighting environmental regulation. The Endangered Species Act (ESA) can now be used to try to quash federal protections that landowners think go too far. The unanimous decision overturns a 1995 appeals court ruling that said only people with an interest in preserving endangered species could use the ESA to challenge federal regulation of scarce land and water resources.

According to Gregory K. Wilkinson, who represented OR ranchers and irrigation districts before the high court this is a big decision. "The opinion levels the playing field. It does not put people who have economic interests at a disadvantage in terms of getting into the courthouse," Wilkinson said. The ruling gives landowners new legal standing to challenge environmental law, but whether they will ultimately prove successful in loosening government's grip on land-use policy will be known only as individual cases are brought and resolved in courts across the country.

Already, property rights advocates are predicting that the high court decision will embolden landowners whose development plans have been thwarted because of perceived threats to endangered animals and plants. By expanding protections for property owners, the court succeeded in accomplishing something that congressional Republicans had hoped to achieve through legislation. A bill introduced this year by House Republicans would specifically recognize the rights of property owners to file citizen suits over alleged ESA violations.

The historic ESA is believed to be responsible for the comeback of the bald eagle, the American alligator and numerous other species that have recovered since its enactment in 1973. Among its provisions is one that allows "any person" to sue to stop the government or anyone else from threatening the nation's species or from otherwise violating provisions of the Act. The "citizen suit" provision has been used for years by environmentalists to challenge what they believed was lax government enforcement of the ESA.

The 3/19 case (Bennett v. Spear) began when ranchers and irrigation districts sued the government for reducing water flows from two reservoirs on the OR-CA border to protect the Lost River sucker and shortnose sucker, which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) had listed as endangered species in 1988. The ranchers alleged that a report prepared by the FWS, urging reduced water allocation, was scientifically flawed and violated the ESA. Without the usual water supply, Wilkinson said, ranchers could not feed their cattle.

The lower courts said the ranchers group lacked legal "standing." The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals emphasized that the ESA was intended to protect the habitat of delicate animals and plants and that only plaintiffs who allege an interest in the preservation of species fall within the interests protected by the law. But the ESA also requires the FWS to consider any economic impact of designating an endangered species, and the challengers contended that the law must cover anyone affected by action under the Act, including those economically harmed.

In the Bennett v. Spear case Justice Antonin Scalia, writing for the Supreme Court, said the provision permitting "any person" to sue should be broadly interpreted, adding that "the overall subject matter of this legislation is the environment . . . a matter in which it is common to think all persons have an interest." The court also said landowners could object to biological opinions made by the FWS, which lead to an endangered species listing. The government had contend-

ed that property owners had no such right because such opinions, however crucial, are not a "final" agency action.

Environmental groups generally were restrained in their criticism of the court's opinion. Having fought tenaciously for the right to sue the government over its enforcement of species-protection laws, some groups were loath to publicly oppose granting the same right to others. Bob Irvin of the Center for Marine Conservation said attacks on the ESA will backfire by proving the need for stronger ESA enforcement. Irvin said, "When people look at implementation of the ESA, they're going to see that there are problems with it, and those problems are causing the number of threatened and endangered species to continue to grow. This is not a defeat for environmentalists". At the Interior Department, officials said they expected few changes in ESA administration as a result of the ruling.

Sources: The Washington Post, By Line Article by Joan Biskupic and Joby Warrick, 3/20/97; and John Nielsen, "All Things Considered," National Public Radio, 3/19/97.

One-Third of Native Species Imperiled

At least 1/3 of all U.S. plants and animals are at risk of extinction, according to a 2/27 report of *The Nature Conservancy* (TNC). The report says that at least 110 of the nation's 20,500 known plant and animal species have become extinct since the 17th century, while another 427 are missing and possibly extinct.

Using its own databases and information collected by the *Natural Heritage Network*, a public-private partnership involving agencies in every state, TNC tracked the status of 20,500 species, arriving at what it calls the "most comprehensive appraisal available on the health" of U.S. species. In all, the environmental group says that freshwater species "fared the worst" proportionally in its study, while flowering plants had the greatest number of species at risk.

Across the nation, TNC found that states with the most extinctions tended to be the ones with the most species or ones that have experienced "intense human alteration of the landscape." Hawaii topped the list with 26 presumed extinctions and 243 possible extinctions. On the mainland, AL has experienced 24 presumed extinctions and 74 possible extinctions, followed by CA with 25 presumed extinctions and 21 possible extinctions.

The Northeast and the upper Midwest, on the other hand, "have been little affected by species extinctions," the group says. TNC found no extinctions in WA and few losses throughout the Northwest -- but the group tempered that good news by reporting that declines in the runs of salmon and other fish have led to the loss of 100 distinct fish populations. To preserve the country's remaining species, TNC says that efforts must be focused on protecting those species at greatest risk and healthy ecosystems that still exist.

On a positive note, the report found that about 2/3 of the nation's species "appear to be relatively secure at the moment." Still, the group cautions that extinctions are "sure to grow if human activities continue to degrade our nation's ecosystems".

A group of 15 environmental groups from across the nation has informed President Clinton (in a letter) that his Administration has "severely weakened our nation's commitment" to the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The group calling itself the *Endangered Species Coalition* criticized:

- the Administration's ESA funding levels,
- its "*no surprises*" and "*safe harbor*" policies,
- its failure to list certain rare species and critical habitat, and
- its moves to drop several candidate species from the ESA list.

Among the groups signing the letter were the *Biodiversity Legal Foundation, Defenders of Wildlife, the Sierra Club* and various regional groups.

Meanwhile, a draft of an ESA reauthorization bill being circulated by Sens. Dirk Kempthorne (R/ID) and John Chafee (R/RI) is still "weeks away" from introduction, according to a Kempthorne spokesperson. Kempthorne has been negotiating for a year with Senate Environment and Public Works Committee ranking Democrat Max Baucus (D/MT) and drinking water, fisheries and wildlife subcommittee ranking member Harry Reid (D/NV) to produce a consensus bill.

Jack Mingus of the *National Endangered Species Act Reform Coalition*, a landowner-oriented group, said he is "exceptionally pleased" with the draft bill, even though it does not include provisions to compensate landowners for loss of land values due to ESA enforcement. But Michael Senatore of *Defenders of Wildlife* said a provision in the bill requiring the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to choose the least costly or burdensome recovery plans would slow development of the plans and lead to litigation. The bill would also lift requirements for review of federal actions that could adversely impact wildlife. The rollback of rules requiring agencies like the U.S. Forest Service and Army Corps of Engineers to consult on certain projects with the FWS is the "most controversial" part of the draft bill.

The Kempthorne and Chafee bill would also:

- establish independent peer review for species-listing decisions;
- codify the Interior Department's "no surprises" and "safe harbor" policies, which protect small landowners and those involved in habitat conservation plans; and
- create an "incidental take" permitting process for small landowners.

A coalition of environmental groups including the *Environmental Defense Fund, Sierra Club and National Audubon Society* have sent the senators a list of more than 20 suggested ESA improvements. The groups call for:

- stricter listing deadlines,
- better recovery plans and tracking of rare species, and
- financial incentives for landowners who go beyond ESA requirements.

Sources: Greenwire Vol. 6, No. 186, 188, 197, 201

AAAS Tackles Environmental Issues

Leaders of the world's largest organization of scientists on 2/15 urged researchers "to redirect their efforts toward heading off a global environmental crisis of unprecedented scale." It was "the first such call" in the history of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), according to AAAS President Jane Lubchenco, a marine biologist at OR State University.

The AAAS Board of Directors voted unanimously to launch an "intense dialogue" about the state of the environment and the role of scientists in protecting it. The board will seek to publish a paper summarizing its views in a scientific journal.

Scientists attending the AAAS annual meeting in Seattle held discussions and presented research on a range of environmental issues, including human exposure to pollution, population growth, environmental accounting, global climate change, nuclear waste disposal, agricultural sustainability and biodiversity. In one session, participants focused on developing methods for valuing services that are normally provided by healthy ecosystems.

Columbia University professors Geoffrey Heal and Graciela Chichilinsky, along with the Smithsonian Institution's Thomas Lovejoy, announced an ambitious research agenda to determine the economic benefits provided by 371 *UNESCO* biosphere reserves worldwide, including their role in cleaning water, handling waste, regulating the climate and controlling pests. Economist Heal estimates that using various technologies to replace these natural services would cost on the order of $30 trillion, or more than the world's total economic output.

Heal also proposed the creation of new financial instruments called "earth securities," which would fund ecosystem preservation projects and yield returns based on savings generated by avoiding the use of more costly technology-based systems. In sessions cosponsored by the *President's Council on Sustainable Development* (PCSD), scientists discussed the links between human population growth, global climate change and biodiversity, and "the policy-oriented science needed" to implement the PCSD's recommendations.

The loss of timber jobs in the Pacific Northwest stems from years of overcutting rather than more recent measures to protect old-growth timber and the northern spotted owl, according to a study presented at the conference by Univ. of Wisconsin sociologist Bill Freudenburg. Freudenburg said the greatest decline in timber employment in OR and WA occurred between 1947 and 1964, before the passage of modern environmental laws. Freudenburg said, "We found no statistically believable evidence of a 'spotted owl' effect on logging jobs".

At the meeting, a group of biologists called for greater federal involvement in studying invasive species that have crowded out native plants and animals in U.S. waterways. More than 200 scientists plan to send a letter to Vice President Al Gore next month requesting the formation of a presidential commission to study the threat of exotic invaders.

In a "featured" lecture, Thomas Lovejoy – a wildlife biologist, director of the Smithsonian Center for Biodiversity Conservation, and a Greenwire analyst -- said environmental issues "have moved from the foreign policy fringe to become central national security issues for diplomats." Lovejoy said that while the link between environmental concerns and diplomacy is not yet fully developed, "in just the past three years or so" environmental factors have become a part of diplomatic discussions on economic security, peace-making and protection of individuals' health and wealth.

Source: Greenwire Vol. 6, No. 195

Dams and Rivers - A Look Downstream

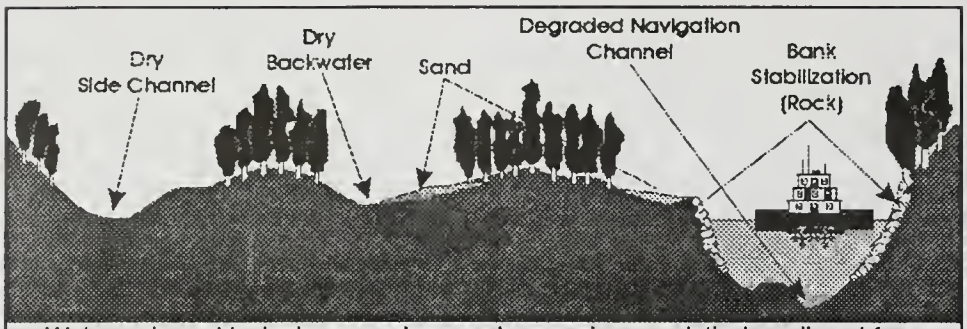
The downstream environmental consequences of dams including eroding river banks, changes in waterfowl habitat, concerns for safe recreational use, and the loss of river sand bars are addressed by a recent USGS report: *"Dams and Rivers: Primer on the Downstream Effects of Dams."* The report outlines the role of science in restoring or otherwise altering these downstream effects, and looks at dams and rivers in seven selected areas of the country:

- the Upper Salt River in central AZ;
- the Snake River in ID, OR and WA;
- the Rio Grande River in NM and TX;
- the Chattahoochee River in GA;
- the Platte River in WY, CO and NE;
- the Green River in UT; and
- the Colorado River in AZ.

The 94-page, richly illustrated report has a special section on the role of science in the management of dams to minimize downstream impacts. For example, research provides hard data on environmental changes that might occur if water releases are altered. By using computer modeling, management plans can be developed that best balance user needs with environmental concerns. Monitoring and long-term data sets of stream flow trends can help in the development of better predictions of downstream water and sediment movement below dams.

"Scientists are increasingly being called upon to suggest dam operation regimes that will minimize a particular negative impact to the downstream environment," said Robert Hirsch, USGS chief hydrologist. "Scientific insights gained from hydrology, however, must be integrated with recommendations from the fields of biology, economics and engineering. We must look more and more to interdisciplinary scientific approaches to help those who manage the nation's water and other natural resources.

"Any scientific recommendation that alters a dam's operation must be evaluated in the context of the people whose lives will be most directly affected -- people whose interests may be as disparate as the river runner who



Waters released by hydropower dams and reservoirs are relatively sediment free. These sediment free waters create erosion problems in downstream channels and tributaries lowering water tables and draining floodplain habitats.

wants steady in-stream flow and the farmer who wants to irrigate crops with low-salinity water," Hirsch said. "To better balance those issues in the management debate, we must be able to provide the critical science foundation upon which sound and effective decisions can be made."

Highlights from the featured rivers and the issues they represent include the following:

• The **Upper Salt River**, a natural stream in central AZ, has all of the characteristics of a healthy, unregulated river. Flow and sediment transport vary widely from one season to another and from year to year. Occasional high-magnitude floods move cobbles and boulders into bars, which form rapids that attract recreationists. Native riparian (along the river bank) vegetation forms a dense band above flood level and non-native vegetation is sparse. The river is always in the process of adjusting its channel to the equilibrium that exists between erosion and sediment deposition. The Salt River offers a standard against which to compare regulated rivers.

• The **Snake River** in OR, ID and WA is one of the most extensively dammed rivers in the West. The Hells Canyon Complex of dams on the Snake River in OR, ID and WA have severely altered the normal dynamics of the river's flow. The dams have limited reservoir storage and limited value for flood control and are used to provide hydroelectric power at times of peak demand through a grid system that provides electricity throughout the West. Dams on the Snake block historical salmon spawning runs. Frequent high-flow releases have caused depletion of sand in the river channel downstream from the dams.

• The **Rio Grande** is, in a sense, one river cut and transformed into two -- a vigorous and unregulated snow-fed river in northern NM and a highly regulated river with substantial flow where it reaches the Gulf of Mexico. The dam was designed to retain all flow on the Rio Grande, releasing water only for irrigation purposes. As a result of this restricted flow, sediment loads, which normally are resuspended and transported downstream during high flows, have accumulated on the river bed and the channel has been invaded by tamarisk (a non-native, salt-tolerant bushy tree) for hundreds of miles below the dam. The channel has diminished in size since the dam was constructed and can no longer contain floods as large as it once could. As a consequence, relatively minor floods have caused significant damage to riverfront properties and structures downstream from the dam.

• The **Chattahoochee River** in GA is managed with recreation as a high priority, including boating and prize trout fishing. Lake Lanier above Buford Dam is the most heavily visited, federally managed lake in the country. Buford Dam is also used to meet peak-power demands of the Southeast hydroelectric power grid. The consequences of these patterns of frequent water release affect the safety of recreational users and have resulted in erosion of the river banks downstream.

• The channel of the **Platte River** in WY, CO and NE has been narrowed to as little as 15% of its former width as a result of in-channel sediment accumulation in some stretches, caused by the placement of dams upstream. The numerous dams and reservoirs that provide flow regulation for irrigation have also depleted much of the Platte River's volume and significantly reduced the magnitude of spring floods. The riparian habitat, depended on by various species of cranes and other waterfowl, has also been severely restricted. Balancing the need for irrigation water for farmers upstream and for restoring wildfowl habitat downstream is one of the management challenges being faced. Adaptive management techniques have been suggested that would allow for moderate releases that could submerge sandbars that would otherwise host germination of unwanted vegetation. Under such a management strategy, planned releases could also open and maintain a channel adequate for use by waterfowl.

• The **Green River** in UT, WY and CO has had its channel profoundly altered and its water temperature affected by the construction and operation of Flaming Gorge Dam. Native fish were sufficiently threatened by these changes that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service invoked the Endangered Species Act to mandate dam releases deemed least likely to harm native fish. Dam operations have been modified in ways thought to be beneficial to the habitat of native fish. Collaborative work on the operation of Flaming Gorge Dam sets a precedent for a cooperative approach to minimizing the problems that exist below dams.

• The **Colorado River** is the very heart of the Grand Canyon in AZ. Glen Canyon Dam, which impounds Lake Powell, traps the vast quantity of sediment that once flowed through Grand Canyon. The clear, cold water that is discharged from the dam and the elimination of annual flooding have altered sediment transport and the biological communities along the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park. Glen Canyon Dam is authorized for flood control, recreation and hydroelectric power in addition to its water storage and distribution function. To balance these many mandates, studies that

provide scientific input into dam operation suggest the benefit of occasional, specifically designed high-flow releases -- beach-building flows. Such a controlled flood was conducted in April 1996 downstream from the dam and was designed to resuspend and transport accumulated sediments at the bottom of the channel. In rebuilding sand bars and beaches along the river, this controlled flood experiment demonstrated that such engineered floods can have a beneficial effect and that dam management strategies can be developed to allow for such periodic events.

Written for a general audience, the USGS report also provides an extensive bibliography of available resources for a more technical investigation on the general topic and the specific river systems. Single copies of the report, published as USGS Circular 1126, *"Dams and Rivers: Primer on the Downstream Effects of Dams,"* by Michael Collier, Robert H. Webb and John C. Schmidt, are available free of charge from the Branch of Information Services, U.S. Geological Survey, Box 25286, Denver Federal Center, Denver, CO 80225.

Grand Canyon Update

Almost one year after opening the Glen Canyon Dam's flood gates to help repair environmental damages caused by the dam's operations, federal officials began releasing large volumes of water into the Colorado River from Lake Powell in late February. Some scientists believe that this move could "wipe out" many of the beaches and backwater habitats restored by the man-made flood last March.

Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) officials estimate that heavy snows and runoff in the Rocky Mountains this year will be 171% of normal, sending 13.2 million acre-feet of water into Lake Powell. That amount could exceed the lake's capacity and overflow the dam unless large releases are begun soon. To protect the dam and make space for the extra runoff, BOR officials say they may have to allow water releases of 27,000 cfs throughout the spring and early summer.

Bob Winfree, senior scientist at the Grand Canyon National Park, fears the prolonged releases could harm young endangered fish like the humpback chub, flood habitat needed by the endangered willow flycatcher, and harm the endangered Kabab Ambersnail. Winfree said, "This is probably not the worst thing they could do, but it is definitely not the best".

Meanwhile, the *New York Times* reports that results of last year's artificial flood in the Grand Canyon are "decidedly mixed.". The March 1996 flood to restore beaches and wildlife habitat was hailed a month later by federal officials as a grand success. And, indeed, "the flood did build many new beaches, sand bars and backwaters. But the deluge was not strong enough to flush non-native species from the system, as had been hoped." "Experts" say that a natural flood, which would have been on

average twice as strong as the controlled one, "would have swept away the non-natives."

"Short of partly renovating the dam to allow it to pass more water safely, the full restorative effects of flooding cannot be exploited, some experts say." Still, "whatever its ecological outcome," the flooding experiment "is widely seen as a breakthrough" in the "arena" of politics and policy toward restoring rivers rather than strictly harnessing them for power production. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt said the Grand Canyon experiment "has enormous implications for river management all over the West" and that its lessons will be applied to other rivers.

Sources: The Washington Post (2/16/97); New York Times By Line Article by William Stevens, 2/25/97; and Greenwire Vol. 6, Nos. 194 and 199

Yellowstone Update

The Clinton Administration offered to give a Canadian mining company $65 million on 3/12 in revenue from federal coal, oil and gas leases in MT if the company will drop plans to develop a "controversial" gold mine near Yellowstone National Park. The offer "is key to concluding a deal" between Toronto-based *Crown Butte Resources* and the feds. Despite Crown Butte's assurances that the mine would not affect the park, environmental interests were concerned that it could contaminate rivers and streams that flow through Yellowstone.

Under the Clinton Administration proposal, payments to Crown Butte would be spread over several years through 2002. Crown Butte has 30 days to review the offer; if it accepts, the deal would still have to be approved by company shareholders and the Congress.

Larry Hamilton, director of the Bureau of Land Management for MT and the Dakotas said, "It's the simplest and most elegant solution in that it's just diverting federal royalties rather than entering into a land exchange or trading one environmental problem for another". Crown Butte Director of Investor Relations Les Van Dyke said, "I think it's a good proposal. We'll just have to look at it".

A joint press release issued by the *Greater Yellowstone Coalition*, the *Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund* and several regional environmental groups "strongly endorsed" the proposal. *American Rivers* President Rebecca Wodder congratulated both the Administration and Crown Butte and urged the Congress to prohibit future mining upstream from the park.

But MT officials were more skeptical. MT Governor Marc Racicot (R) declined comment on the specifics of the offer, but he had been trying to "keep the deal within MT" by studying state coal

or timber properties that could be developed and offered for exchange.

Sen. Craig Thomas (R/WY), chair of the Senate Subcommittee on Parks, Historic Preservation and Recreation, said he is "passionately committed to protecting" Yellowstone. But he warned that offering federal "cash for threatened development" could inspire

others to make such threats, and he said "a lot of questions" must be answered before Congress acts on the plan.

The Congress would have to figure out how to replace the $65 million lost to the Treasury. The BLM's Hamilton "said one possibility" is to use money from the federal Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), which pays farmers to idle land for environmental purposes. But House Appropriations Committee Chair Robert Livingston (R/LA) criticized the offer saying, "These assets belong to American taxpayers, and it is the responsibility of Congress to see to it that dangerous precedents are not set in a mad rush to fulfill campaign promises"

Several "key" Republicans on 3/13 "reacted with fury" to the Clinton Administration's plan. *House Agriculture* Chair Bob Smith (R/OR), *Senate Agriculture Production and Price Competitiveness Subcommittee* Chair Pat Roberts (R/KS), and *House Agriculture Forestry, Conservation and Research Subcommittee* Chair Larry Combest (R/TX) objected to the purchase and the payment plan.

Roberts, in a letter to Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said "The effort to take the very limited funds for the (CRP) that we fought so hard to obtain in order to pay royalties to a mining company to fulfill a campaign promise (regardless of merit) is a non-starter."

But a USDA spokesperson said Glickman supported the "very difficult decision" to delay the CRP, and is "convinced" CRP goals will not be undermined.

Source: Greenwire Vol. 6, No. 211, 213

Religious Leaders Launch Environmental Campaign

A coalition of 25 senior religious leaders descended on Washington, D.C. in February to offer a pointed message to lawmakers of both political parties -- in essence, "God wants you to protect everyone's environment". Much has been made in recent years of the political power of the so-called religious right, most notably represented by the Christian Coalition. But increasingly other communities of faith have begun to flex their political muscle. This new coalition of notable religious leaders is getting involved in politics and linking a message of environmental stewardship with the need for social justice.

"It is hard enough to be poor in America, without bearing disproportionate burdens of poison and pollution," said The Very Rev. James Parks Morton, chair of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment (NRPE), through which the various religious faiths are joined. "As the State of the Union message is being delivered, major faith groups are sending senior leaders to Washington to call upon the Clinton Administration, Congress and environmental organizations to give greater priority to the needs of vulnerable people in programs to protect air, land, and water. The moral integrity of environmental protection is at stake here." Dr. Ismar Schorsh, chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary, put it more succinctly. "We are here today to lift our voices to stop the poisoning of the poor," he said.

The three-year $4 million campaign will be facilitated by the NRPE which includes among its members the U.S. Catholic Conference, the National Council of Churches of Christ, the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life and the Evangelical Environmental Network. Building on activities already underway, the campaign will include:

- the formation and strengthening of legislative action networks of 25,000 clergy and lay leaders;
- creation of 2,500 "covenant congregations" which will integrate environmental justice projects into ongoing church and synagogue activities; and
- the development of religious environmental education criteria for young people.

Members of the coalition have also been active on endangered species issues and some have helped lead opposition to "takings" bills in Congress and in their states.

Sources: Land Letter, Vol. 16, No. 7

Subsidies and the Environment

A study conducted by the *Dutch Institute for Research on Public Expenditure for the Earth Council* found that subsidies from the "public purse" in four sectors -- agriculture, water, energy and road transportation -- cost the world more than $700 billion and harm the environment. The study, released on 3/12, concludes that policymakers are "addicted" to subsidies that discourage sustainable development and face "entrenched opposition" to change from "strong, vested" interests. Some subsidies include:

- $335 billion in annual agriculture transfers;
- $50 billion to $100 billion on water irrigation worldwide;
- $70 billion to $80 billion a year on energy (specifically fossil fuels); and
- $100 billion to $215 billion a year on road transportation.

Source: Greenwire Vol. 6, No. 211

Coal Slurry Spill in SW VA Waterway

A massive coal slurry spill on 10/24/96 in rural southwestern VA, blackened miles of mountain streams and killed thousands of fish. It also threatened downstream drinking water supplies and the survival of rare fish and mussels. The spill occurred when a portion

of a holding pond near Pennington Gap, VA, collapsed into an adjacent abandoned mine shaft, spilling underground waste into the mine works.

The waste traveled underground for about a mile before surfacing through an air shaft. Until the hole was plugged 36 hrs. later, 3,000 gal. of waste/min. flowed almost directly into nearby Gin Creek. Contaminated water traveled through several creeks before entering the North Fork of the Powell River. Only a small amount of coal fines traveled to and were deposited in the Powell River itself.

The spill released an estimated 6.2 million gallons of slurry -- 4.2 million gallons of water and 2 million gallons of coal waste. The slurry, a mixture of slate, shale, and coal fragments (fines), also contained residues from chemicals such as sulfuric acid, aluminum hydroxychloride, sodium chloride, and sodium sulfate, used to purify extracted coal.

Arch Mineral Corporation of St. Louis, the owner of *Lone Mountain Processing Company*, assumed full responsibility for the spill and cleanup efforts. VA Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy (DMME) cited the operators with violations for the pond failure and the resulting pollution, and forced the company to halt operations pending investigations. Eventually, the company, which had been disciplined eight times in the past year for similar infractions, was fined $15,000 under the VA Coal Surface Mining Reclamation Act. *Lone Mountain Processing Company* could end up paying more if they lose a lawsuit filed by the State Attorney General. State water law imposes a maximum civil penalty of $25,000 for each violation of a permit condition-- the total number of violations in this case has not yet been established.

The spill severely degraded water quality, but did not impair the drinking water supply of Harrogate, TN, located on the Powell River 50 miles below the confluence of the North Fork of the Powell River. The spill's most damaging effect, however, was a massive fish kill. The VA Department of Environmental Quality estimates that 11,200 fish were killed from exposure to the slurry, primarily in the 11-mile stretch of creeks directly downstream of the spill. By 11/26, there was no evidence of water discoloration and pockets of coal fines were found only in pool areas, primarily in the creek directly below the spill, according to Michael Abbott of the VA DMME.

The Powell River supports a number of threatened and endangered species including two fish species (slender chub and the yellow fin madtom), and three mussels (Cumberlandian combshell, oyster mussel, and rough rabbit's foot). VA wildlife experts feared the effects of the spill on these species, but in an impact assessment submitted to the state on 11/15, *Lone Mountain Processing Company* said that the spill did not have observable impacts on these species.

Also on 11/15, Lone Mountain submitted a spill remediation plan to the state. The first step is the removal of coal fines from the streambed and streambanks, using both manual methods and vacuum trucks. Once the maximum possible amount of coal fines are removed, the company will estimate the amount of waste remaining in the streams (by comparing the waste released to the waste recovered). This determination will then be used to develop a deposition model that will estimate the spread of remaining material over time.

The remediation plan also includes the initiation of a long-term monitoring program to measure the health of the aquatic system and its recovery from the spill. In light of the Lone Mountain spill and a subsequent similar spill in November at the *Consolidation Coal Company's* Buchanan No.1 facility, DMME, the Federal Mine Safety and Health Administration, the Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation Enforcement, and mine operators are reevaluating and inventorying all existing or proposed underground mine workings close to coal slurry impoundments.

DMME will also be requiring more information from permit applicants and permittees and will set up a geotechnical analysis of impoundments and adjacent areas to locate old, unidentified underground mine workings.

Contact: Michael Abbott, VA DMME, Big Stone Gap, VA; (540) 523-8146; FAX (540) 523-8148; e-mail: mda @bsg1.mmel.state.va.us.
Source: Nonpoint Source News-Notes, Jan./Feb. 1997, Issue #47

Illinois River Recovery Proposal

After nearly four decades, of listening to the cries of Illinois River fishermen, waterfowl hunters and grass-roots conservationists, state officials are proposing action. "The bottom line is the Illinois River dies if we don't do something soon," said Illinois Lt. Gov. Bob Kustra in announcing 34 recommendations for reducing the siltation and pollution plaguing one of the state's greatest economic and recreational resources. "If we don't act now, the river will be too shallow to move barge traffic, water quality will continue to deteriorate, and people will no longer be able to use the river for boating, fishing, hunting or other purposes," he said.

Kustra, who headed a two-year study of the crisis by the 150-member *Illinois River Strategy Team*, announced the recommendations at a recent news conference in Peoria. The unfunded proposals call for cooperation between federal, state, local and volunteer organizations, and some of the proposals will undoubtedly meet with resistance from farmers and other private landowners. Kustra admitted that funding and implementing the recommendations will be a far greater challenge than studying the matter. Kustra said he is hopeful that the Illinois River watershed will qualify as a "national priority" area and be eligible for grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"We have no estimates about what it is going to cost," Kustra noted. "We are led to believe . . . that there will be substantial sums of (federal) money available to those who can make the case for priority areas within their boundaries, and the Illinois River, which runs nearly the entire length of the state, is contained within its boundaries." The Illinois River's water-

shed encompasses 55 of the state's 102 counties and 90% of its population.

Eroded soil carried into the river from watershed tributaries has reduced the depths of river backwaters by more than 1 ft. over the last 8-10 yrs. The channel requires frequent dredging to clear the way for billions of dollars in barge traffic that includes grain, coal, oil, steel and other products vital to the state's economy. The plan to halt the river's decline includes proposals to:

- Increase tax incentive programs that pay landowners to reduce soil erosion and improve water quality;
- Create and restore wetlands to slow floodwaters and filter out sediment;
- Examine the possibility of temporarily lowering the river's level to dry out sediment and compact it;
- Appeal to local governments to adopt ordinances that would encourage property owners to reduce storm water runoff; and
- Reduce soil erosion from forest bluffs, woodlands, gullies, pastures and stream banks;

Since the late 1950s, those who live, work and play in the Illinois River Valley have been increasingly concerned about the rapid rate of siltation and loss of depth in the river and its lakes. In recent years, the problems have become so acute that many recreational boaters have been unable to navigate except in the River's heavily trafficked main channel. Commercial barge operators have become alarmed because in some areas the main channel is only 9.5 feet, deep less than required for their barges.

Although the recommendations are general and funding is up in the air, even hard-core river activists were cautiously hopeful that those with the power to do something about the river's decline might take action. "This is the first real beginning, but basically, much depends on what the people in agriculture do," said Peoria environmentalist Tom Edwards, who has been campaigning for action on the River's problems since the late 1960s. "Now, it has become a political issue and everybody wants to be for it; we'll have to see if they stick with it."

Another outspoken river advocate, Mike Platt, Executive Director of the *Heartland Water Resources Council* and a member of Kustra's strategy team, hailed the recommendations as "the most positive piece of hope I have seen." "Taking responsibility is the first step to solving any problem . . . It is up to us to make sure the ball doesn't get fumbled and to do as much as we can as fast as we can to save the river," Platt said.

On 2/12 Illinois asked the Agriculture Department to designate the Illinois River Basin as a *National Priority Area* and approve federal funds to aid in its cleanup and restoration. Gov. Jim Edgar (R) said his administration had earmarked $2 million in matching funds over the next year to attract federal money to launch a 15-year river preservation program.

Illinois would pay almost $100 million of the estimated $513.7 million program if the plan is approved by the USDA. The state's proposal would ease flooding on some 175,000 acres of agricultural land, restore almost 93,000 acres of wetlands and prevent erosion along about 2,800 miles of streams.

Sources: Chicago Tribune, By-Line Articles by Wes Smith, 01/29/97 and Courtney Challos 2/13/97).

Miscellaneous River Issues

AL, GA, FL Rivers Compact - AL Gov. Fob James (R) and GA Gov. Zell Miller (D) on 2/25 signed legislation to begin negotiations on the use of rivers flowing through their states into FL. The GA legislature was the first to pass the bills setting up the negotiations; the AL legislature "followed suit" on 2/18. The FL legislature convened in late February. One of the new laws establishes a compact for FL, GA and AL to develop a water-use plan for the Apalachicola, Chattahoochee and Flint river basins. The other law sets up a process for GA and AL to develop a water-use plan for the Alabama, Coosa and Tallapoosa river basins. The governors are trying to establish water allocation plans by 12/98. One state could block an allocation plan. Sources: Associated Press and *Tallahasseee Democrat* 2/26/97

BLM Water Rights - The NV state Attorney General's (AG) office surprised Elko County, NV, officials by siding with ranchers over the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in a water rights dispute. The AG's office upheld the constitutionality of a 1995 state law that essentially requires holders of stock watering rights to use those rights. Therefore, since the BLM doesn't own livestock, it isn't allowed to hold the rights and use them for conservation purposes, according to *Defenders of Wildlife* (DoW release, 2/18). Nevada state Sen. Dean Rhoads (R) said, "This has been a truly historical ruling and will send shock waves to the other western public land states and to Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt's rangeland reform proposal". Source: Greenwire Vol. 6, No. 198

BLM Wetland Restoration Criticized - The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has fallen "far short" of its goal of restoring 75% of its damaged river-vegetation areas by this year, having restored only about 40% of such agency lands nationwide. BLM figures ending in 9/96 show that of 800 river miles in AZ, 287 were in "proper functioning condition." The BLM's pace in restoring AZ wetlands has led to criticism from environmental interests and calls for a ban on cattle in riparian areas. But the BLM's Ron Hooper, the agency's only full-time riparian specialist in the state, says the BLM has been working with the *AZ Cattlemen's Association* and individual ranchers to reduce and better manage grazing. Meanwhile, a coalition of AZ environmental groups has called for the protection of 10 state wetlands areas under the little-known Ramsar Convention, an international treaty signed in 1971 that recognizes 846 swamps, marshes and rivers worldwide. Source: Greenwire Vol. 6, No. 190

Deerfield River Utility Deal - VT officials on 2/26 announced a deal with *New England Power Co.* to buy two hydroelectric projects along the Deerfield River and turn them into nature preserves. Besides selling its dam at Somerset Reservoir and its generating facility at the Searsburg Reservoir in southern VT, the utility

also agreed to protect 16,000 acres that it owns around the reservoirs. Under the deal, the state has the option of purchasing the dams and generating facility for $8.39 million. Gov. Howard Dean (D) said the state would have to find outside sources of funding if it were to buy the dams. The VT Natural Resources Council hailed the agreement and dropped its challenge to relicensing the rest of the utility's Deerfield River facilities. The group said it will now focus on improving river flow and fish habitat in the river. Sources: By Line Article by Aaron Nathans, Associated Press and *Boston Globe*, 2/27/97.

Delaware River Restoration - As part of a deal to avoid building a $2 billion cooling tower for its nuclear power plants on the Delaware River, NJ based Public Service Electric & Gas Co. (PSE&G) is working to restore some 20,000 acres of wetlands in "the largest privately funded wetlands mitigation project of its kind ever attempted in the U.S." In return for being allowed to continue operating its Salem nuclear reactors and their "massive" cooling pumps, PSE&G is restoring wetlands by replacing invasive phragmites reeds with a "more environmentally suitable" grass. The project stems from a 1990 state order directing PSE&G to comply with the U.S. Clean Water Act and maintain aquatic life along the Delaware River. The utility, which would have had to build a new cooling tower to comply, instead suggested the wetlands project, which should cost about $1.9 billion less and "provide environmental benefits long after the reactors [are] shut down." "Despite environmentalists' protests" that Salem's cooling pumps kill "tons of tiny fish, fish eggs, plant life and microorganisms" in the river, the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP) is working with PSE&G and will evaluate the utility's progress next year. The DEP will base a 1999 renewal of PSE&G's 5-year wetlands work permit on the evaluation. Source: Greenwire Vol. 6, No. 202

Lower Mississippi/Atchafalaya Pollution - An emergency rule issued by the LA Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) allowing companies to continue discharging liquid oilfield wastes into coastal waters could lead to "significant" violations of water standards, the USEPA says. Under state regulations adopted in 1991, companies had until the end of 1996 to stop the discharges. But DEQ Secretary Dale Givens extended the deadline by 120 days to give some small companies more time to comply. The USEPA contends that the DEQ did not get federal approval for the move, as it was required to do. Givens said he tried to get USEPA approval in advance, "but couldn't because of the Christmas holidays." Givens ordered companies to submit plans for halting the discharges as soon as possible, and said he will develop a final rule with approval from the USEPA. But companies were told "generally" they will have two more years to stop the discharges. Environment interests and fishermen have "fought" the discharges into parts of the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers and LA's coastal bays because the wastes are highly saline and may contain radioactive material from deep geological deposits. They say the discharges should be pumped back into underground sands. Source: Bob Anderson, *Baton Rouge Advocate*, 2/10/97.

MS/MO Rivers Confluence Park - A 4,600 acre parcel of land at the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers called Columbia Bottoms will be preserved as open space. In mid January, the City of St. Louis and the MO Department of Conservation struck a $9.3 million deal, in which the State will purchase the land for an urban wildlife area. The City of St. Louis originally bought the land in the 1950's as a potential airport site. They have held onto it with the hope that it could be sold as industrial land. However, its location in the floodplain have precluded that use, and, for the past several years, the land has been leased out for farming and closed to the general public. While the sale must still be approved by the City Aldermen, area conservationists anticipate that it will go through. Numerous individuals and organizations in the St. Louis region and beyond have worked quietly behind the scenes to put pressure on the Governor, the Mayor, the City Comptroller and the City Aldermen to make this acquisition a reality. Now, St. Louis will have an excellent new recreational area close to the City; now foreign visitors (who have heretofore traveled to the region to see the confluence of these two world-class rivers and have been baffled that they can't) can visit this awesome meeting point. This is a truly a momentous occasion! Source: *Mississippi River Basin Alliance*, 1997 Newsletter

Montana Rivers Suit - Five Montana environmental groups have filed suit in U.S. District Court in Missoula, MT, to force state and federal agencies to set a schedule for cleaning up "impaired" lakes and streams in the state. The *MT Environmental Information Center and the Alliance for the Wild Rockies* contend that MT's Dept. of Environmental Quality and the USEPA have violated the federal Clean Water Act by failing to clean up polluted waters or to set a timetable for doing so. The groups say the state identified more than 900 "impaired" lakes and streams in a 1996 survey, but has determined pollution levels and received USEPA approval of a cleanup plan for only one. In addition, none of the 29 stream segments listed as "high priority" have been addressed. Source: Associated Press/ *Great Falls, MT Tribune*, 3/2/97.

Neuse River - The USEPA is pressuring NC officials to establish pollution limits for the Neuse River after an environmental group filed suit against the agency. The *Neuse River Foundation* filed the suit in U.S. District Court in Raleigh, NC, alleging the USEPA has failed to require the state to set and enforce "firm thresholds" in the river for nitrogen, a pollutant linked to "massive" fish kills and algae blooms. Mike McGhee, head of the USEPA's water division in the Atlanta regional office, has been negotiating with the various parties in an effort to avoid litigation. McGhee said, "We realize we are legally vulnerable in this area." Rick

Dove, who monitors the river for the New Bern-based foundation, said the group decided to file suit after state regulators "repeatedly refused" to add firm thresholds to its Neuse plan. Source: Greenwire Vol. 6, No. 192

Ohio Rivers - A coalition of eight environmental groups, led by *Rivers Unlimited*, have requested a temporary restraining order to bar the OH EPA (OEPA) from issuing permits under a new state water pollution law until a lawsuit filed by the groups in June 1996 is resolved. The law allows the OEPA to classify the state's 61,000 mi. of waterways into six categories based on their current water quality and potential for improvement, and then set limits on how much pollution can be discharged into the streams, with the higher quality waters receiving more protection. But environmental groups say the law violates the federal Clean Water Act (CWA). The OEPA has issued 28 permits for activities such as wetlands fill projects, sewage treatment plants, dredging in the Ohio River and break wall construction on Lake Erie since the law took effect on 10/1/96. The groups say they were not aware that the state was issuing permits until Jeff Skelding, Executive Director of *Rivers Unlimited*, spoke with OEPA officials in late January. On 3/3 Common Pleas Judge Beverly Pfeiffer in Franklin County, OH, ruled that the state's 5-month old water pollution law violates the federal CWA since it does not provide for enough public participation. The ruling struck down a controversial aspect of the law that permitted the state to allow more pollution into certain streams without public hearings. Environmentalists "cheered" the ruling, while state officials said it would affect a small number of permit holders and not alter the way they do their jobs. - Source: Greenwire Vol. 6, No. 196

Platte River (NE) - The *Platte River Whooping Crane Maintenance Trust* and the *National Audubon Society* have both pulled out of a three-state effort to develop an endangered species program on the Platte River. The talks were with CO, NE, WY, and the feds over projects -- such as relicensing the Kingsley Dam near Ogallala, NE. The dam must meet endangered species requirements to gain new operating licenses. Paul Currier, Executive Director of the *Crane Trust*, said proposals from the states did not go far enough to protect wildlife and that the cooperative effort, which began in June 1994, had "become a major part of the problem, not a potential solution." Dave Sands, Executive Director of *Audubon Nebraska* and John Echeverria, attorney for *National Audubon Society* said the group is concerned that the discussions among NE, CO and WY officials -- now "approaching their third anniversary" -- are prolonging the 13-year effort to relicense the Kingsley Dam. New licenses could include conservation measures that provide a basis for basin-wide restoration efforts, Echeverria said. With relicensing "out of the way," the states could work on "other sticky issues," he said. The states in June 1994 signed an agreement brokered by Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt to try to resolve species' habitat needs. Don Kraus, general manager of the *Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District*, said he does not believe the discussions are delaying relicensing Sources: By Line Article by Julie Anderson, *Omaha World-Herald*, 3/3/97 and Greenwire Vol. 6, No. 193 and 260

Tennessee Rivers Fish Consumption - Under pressure from industry, the TN Dept. of Environment and Conservation (DEC) in late January dropped plans to warn the public about fish that might be tainted with dioxin in two east TN rivers. State officials had recommended the warnings after finding that average dioxin levels downstream from two pulp mills on the Hiwassee River and the South Fork of the Holston River were higher than 0.7 ppt, the level for health warnings set two years ago. But in a 1/22 letter to one of the mill's owners, the DEC's Paul Davis said the state would revert to a previous advisory level of 5 ppt. Citing "widespread scientific uncertainties" about dioxin exposure, Davis said the higher level is consistent with water quality standards approved by the state and the feds in 1991 and "does not represent a case of the state subordinating public health to industry demands". - Source: By Line Article by Tom Charlier, *Memphis Commercial Appeal* 2/10/97

West Virginia Streams - The WV Division of Environmental Protection (DEP) Director Eli McCoy is "bucking" a proposed legal settlement that "could help clean up hundreds of polluted WV streams." In a 3/10 letter to USEPA Regional Administrator W. Michael McCabe, McCoy contended that the stipulations of the settlement, proposed by the USEPA and two environmental groups, could cost the DEP $8.8 million or more. The settlement, proposed on 1/17, would require the DEP to establish tougher pollution limits, called total maximum daily loads (TMDLs), for the state's most polluted streams. Environmental interests in July 1995 sued the USEPA in federal court, alleging the federal agency had done nothing to require WV to publish lists of the most polluted waterways and establish TMDLs. But McCoy contended the DEP recently established a plan to put in place TMDLs for eight streams within the next five years. USEPA lawyer Bruce Byrd said the DEP had already signed an agreement to comply with the terms of the settlement, but the deal has not yet been approved by the court. Source: By Line Article by Ken Ward, *Charleston [WV] Gazette* (2/24/97).

WWF Prompts Sturgeon Conservation Efforts

A widely circulated *World Wildlife Fund* (WWF) study outlining threats to caviar-producing sturgeon recently prompted five Caspian Sea countries to agree to stop aggressive fishing for sturgeon. The report, published in November by *TRAFFIC*, WWF's wildlife trade monitoring program, detailed a rapid worldwide decline in sturgeon.

According to the study, *Sturgeons of the Caspian Sea and the International Trade in Caviar*, almost all of the world's caviar comes from the Caspian Sea and from three sturgeon species: Beluga or giant sturgeon, Russian sturgeon, and stellate sturgeon. The number of adult sturgeons living in the Caspian Sea is estimated to have declined from 142 million in 1978 to 43.5 million in 1994, mostly as a result of overfishing. Russia and Iran are the

main caviar suppliers, and, investigators believe illegal harvest may involve 90% of the total trade, valued at around $125 million.

Days after the report's release, fishing industry leaders in Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakstan, Russia, and Turkmenistan signed a protocol agreement that bans 1997 open-sea fishing for sturgeon in the Caspian. The five countries also agreed to carry out regular raids to catch poachers.

This closure will likely place increased pressure on the harvest of U.S. paddlefish resources. Readers will recall from the last issue of *River Crossings* Vol. 6, No. 1 that North American paddlefish eggs are being marketed in the Seattle area as a surrogate for sturgeon caviar at a retail price of $89.95 for a 4 oz. jar.

Source: *FOCUS* (WWF Newsletter) Jan./Feb. 1997, Vol. 19, No. 1

Strugeon Habitat Model

Tarandus Associates Ltd. (Brampton, Ontario) and *Ontario Hydro* (Toronto) are currently developing a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) Model for lake sturgeon which could assist fisheries biologist with the management of this significant native species.

The model, which considers spawning habitat for adults as well as foraging/habitat requirements for both juvenile and adult lake sturgeon, was designed for application to large, slow-flowing rivers of north-central Ontario, although the model most likely has applications in other geographic locations. Development of the model was based on a thorough review of relevant North American literature, as well as extensive contact

Lake Sturgeon

with lake sturgeon experts and other fisheries specialists throughout Canada and the north-central U.S. The model received external peer review by Canadian and American authorities. A computer model was also developed as part of this assignment for use with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's HSI software.

The model is currently in an advanced draft form and is expected to be completed by early 1997. Limited "ground-truthing" of the spawning habitat variables was completed in the Spring of 1996.

Source: Sturgeon News, Nov. 1996
Contact: Chris Lowie, (716) 691-5456 or FAX (716) 691-6154

Deformed Frog Update

According to Gilman Veith, Associate Director for the USEPA's ecology division, "There are so many plausible explanations for what's being observed with frogs -- we need to first get a lot of data on what's happening".

In December, the *National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences* in Research Triangle Park, NC, sent a five-member team to St. Paul, MN for a briefing at the MN Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

In addition to studying specimens collected last summer by the USEPA's Mid-Continent Ecology Lab in Duluth, the agency is setting up a reporting center that will begin analyzing the distribution and extent of deformed frogs nationwide. This spring, at least three of the agency's 10 regional offices will start field investigations where abnormal frogs have been reported. The agency also plans to begin monitoring amphibian and reptile populations in several national parks, Veith said.

Kathryn Converse, a wildlife disease specialist at the National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, WI said, "This is a real problem. There's a much higher incidence of deformities out there than you'd expect to naturally occur. It's not like we find 300 frogs and one of them has a bad leg."

This Spring David Hoppe, a University of MN herpetologist, will attempt to breed three pairs of deformed northern leopard frogs presently hibernating in his laboratory. Hoppe wants to determine whether their limb deformities – missing feet and club feet -- will be passed on to their offspring in a controlled environment. The deformities include missing or truncated legs, misshapen legs, extra legs, and missing or malformed eyes. Hoppe said he expects to apply for research funding from at least one of the agencies interested in the frog problem, but that his work will go forward regardless of government backing. Hoppe and his longtime colleague, Robert McKinnell, a cell biologist and cancer expert at the University of MN in St. Paul, were the first scientists to confirm the MN deformities.

McKinnell, who has worked on frogs for nearly 40 yrs., is studying internal abnormalities in MN frogs he collected last summer -- as well as in specimens he has obtained from an outbreak in VT's Lake Champlain. Along a 100-mile stretch of the eastern shore of Lake Champlain, researchers have confirmed a significant incidence of deformed leopard frogs. The VT frogs, said McKinnell, are showing deformities identical to those found in MN.

Richard Levey, an aquatic biologist with the VT Agency for Natural Resources, said the Lake Champlain deformities were especially striking. Historical records going back almost 80 yrs. reported only five previously known cases of frogs with deformed limbs in the state, he said. Last Oct. 9, Levey and another researcher visited four sites on the eastern shore of Lake Champlain and collected 230 leopard frogs and found 16.5% were deformed. Levey said he plans to revisit the same sites this spring and summer.

Jim Mumley, owner of the J.M. Hazen Frog Co. in Alburg, VT, has been supplying leopard frogs to researchers for 13 years. While he has occasionally seen frogs with missing limbs in the past, this year there were an unusually high number of deformed animals among the 40,000 frogs harvested by the company, he said. "I think there is something to it," Mumley said. "I really do. I just don't know what to make of it. It hasn't had an impact on us yet, but I expect in a year or two it might."

A team of Canadian scientists has linked probable exposure to pesticides with a large number of deformed frogs in the St. Lawrence River Valley. In the latest issue of the *Journal of Wildlife Diseases*, the researchers note that they found deformities in 106 out of 835 frogs collected from 14 farmland areas, while they found only two deformed frogs out of 271 taken from "pesticide-free" environments. Martin Ouellet, lead author of the study, said that he "strongly suspect[ed]" pesticides and that he has planned a more comprehensive study this spring.

Sources: The *Washington Post* By Line Article by William Souder, 1/29/97 and Greenwire Vol. 6, No. 196

Boat Wave Impacts on Plants

A completed laboratory study on how boat generated waves affect aquatic plants is now under review by the Corps of Engineers' (COE) *Navigation Environmental Coordination Committee*. The results indicate that waves generated by navigation traffic are capable of causing damage to plants (submersed macrophytes), but that the level of damage depends on the interaction of velocity, wave height, exposure time, plant morphology and plant size.

The study found that aquatic plants with highly branching form, like the European water milfoil, are most vulnerable to damage from boat generated waves. The damage is due primarily to entanglement and breakage, and it occurs at lower velocities when the plants are more upright in the water column. Aquatic plants with ribbon-like leaves, like water celery, are much less vulnerable to damage from waves and currents.

The findings are one piece of a larger study on the effects of navigation on plants. The study objective is to determine the extent to which navigation-induced hydraulic disturbances and sediment re-suspension affect the growth and distribution of submersed aquatic plant communities, and to predict the spatial extent and magnitude of the effects in the Upper Mississippi River - Illinois Waterway System.

The plant flume study involved a set of experiments conducted over the past year to determine the effects of waves and currents generated by navigation traffic. The experiments were conducted in a flume or large "bathtub" at the COE Waterways Experiment Station. The circulating water flume was equipped with a large pump to control current velocity and with a wave machine to generate waves of different heights. The flume has a large glass window on the side to allow observation of conditions within. Flats of aquatic plants were grown in a greenhouse and were carefully transferred to the flume, then subjected to a series of treatments of current velocities and waves.

Source: UMR-IWW System Navigation Study Newsletter, Jan. 1997, Vol. 4, No. 1

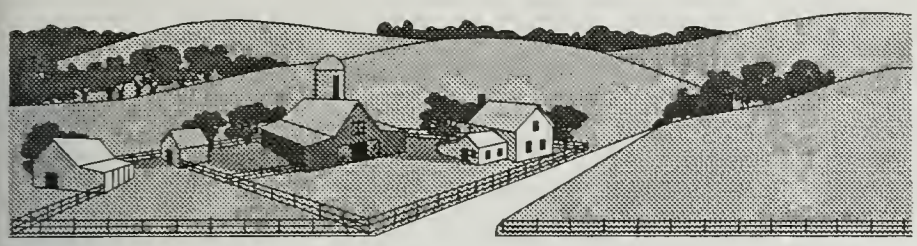
River Friendly Farmers

MN's *River Friendly Farmer Program* is giving public recognition to farmers who are doing their part to protect and enhance the state's rivers. The Program is sponsored by the *MN Alliance for Crop Residue Management* (MACRM), a coalition of government agencies, agricultural organizations and private firms whose purpose is to promote crop resources management practices that protect soil and water while maintaining the profitability of farming.

Program goals are to:
- Publicize and promote farming practices that benefit rivers in MN while maintaining river quality and farm profitability; and
- Inform non-farm publics about farmer positive contributions to the clean-up of MN's rivers.

To accomplish these goals, the MACRM and contributing organizations have developed a farmer recognition program for any MN farmer who satisfies the 10 following criteria:
- All crop land has 30% surface residue coverage after planting, as a rotation average. (Alternatively, equivalent sediment control can be provided from measures such as contour farming, buffer strips, terraces, strip cropping, filter strips, hay in the crop rotation, field windbreaks, and seasonal crop residue management in wind erosion areas);
- Soil loss on highly erodible land (HEL) is at or below the tolerable soil loss level;
- Fertilizer application rates are based on soil testing, manure testing, realistic yield goals, and credits from previous legume crops and manure applications;
- Statewide and applicable regional best management practices (BMPs) for nitrogen, as recommended by the University of MN are observed;
- Phosphorus is banded below the surface or incorporated right after surface application;
- All feedlots in use are permitted by the MN Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), or in the process of being permitted, with manure storage adequate for current needs;
- Liquid manure is injected, or incorporated within 48 hrs. of surface application;
- Within 300 ft. of surface waters, drainage ditches, tile intakes, and other waters needing special protection, manure is applied in a manner that minimizes contamination according to MPCA guidelines;
- Pesticides are used together with cultural pest-control practices, at no higher than labeled rates, observing guidelines for water quality protection (atrazine setback distances, for example). Containers are stored, handled, and disposed of in accordance with state and federal law; and
- Overall, the farm is profitable/ productive as compared to surrounding farms in the region.

Designation as a *River Friendly Farmer* includes:
- public recognition through a variety of methods,
- issuance of a *River Friendly Farmer* certificate at a public ceremony,



- placement of a *River Friendly Farmer* sign on the farmer's property, and
- other publicity yet to be determined.

The *River-Friendly Farmer Program* solicits the help of farmers, members of various organizations, and con-cerned private citizens in nominating a farmer, getting a local organization involved, sponsoring activities such as tours and recognition ceremonies, or preparing publicity materials such as brochures, posters, and signs.

Contact: Tim Wagar, University of MN, University Center Rochester SE District Office, 863 30th Ave SE, Rochester MN 55904, (507) 280-2866, FAX (507) 280-2872 ; or Michael Price, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 375 Jackson St., Suite 600, St. Paul MN 55101, (612) 290-3677, FAX (612) 290-3375

Proposed Natural Resources Budgets for FY98

The FY98 Clinton Administration budget calls for roughly level funding for operations of most of the federal land management agencies. Overall, the Interior Department (DOI) budget request of $7.5 billion represents a 6.6% increase over current funding.

As in recent years, the biggest winner is the EPA - a 12% increase. The National Park Service (NPS) would get a 5% boost to $1.2 billion, including a 1% increase overall for each park. The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) would receive a $33.8 million increase for wildlife refuges and endangered species funding. Land acquisition has never been a high priority for this administration, and the current budget calls for no significant changes in the program. Total land acquisition funding for FY98 is set at $167.4 million.

Details of the FY98 proposed budget for selected natural resource programs at the four major land management agencies [Bureau of Land Management (BLM), FWS, Forest Service (FS), and NPS] follows. Selected funding is also listed for the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), EPA, and the Agriculture Department's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Farm Services Agency (FSA).

Land and Water Conservation Fund ($000)

	FY96 Final	FY97 Estimate	FY98 Request
BLM	14,100	10,400	9,900
FWS	40,319	44,479	44,560
FS	41,000	42,000	42,000
NPS	44,262	53,915	70,900
Total	139,681	150.794	167,360

BLM ($000)

	FY96 Final	FY97 Estimate	FY98 Request
Lands/Res. Mgt	566,537	572,164	587,495
Energy/Minerals	67,049	67,493	68,263
Range Mgt	49,902	52,059	54,342
Maintenance	30,051	32,754	36,097
Res Mgt Planning	8,486	6,000	6,292
Cultural Resources	10,982	12,014	13,122
Recreation	44,018	45,864	50,589
Wilderness Mgt	13,975	15,072	16,232
Recreation Resources	26,043	27,772	31,283
Soil/Water/Air	16,975	19,518	24,101
Wild Horses/Burros	14,821	15,866	18,740
Wildl/Fish Habitat	25,048	27,232	27,778
Land Acquisition	14,100	10,410	9,900
Acquisition Mgt	3,250	2,500	3,000
Range Improvements	9,252	9,113	7,510
OR/CA Grant Lands	132,295	100,515	101,406
Pymnts in Lieu of Taxes	113,500	113,500	101,500
Wildland Fire Mgt	286,912	302,042	280,103
Total	1,157,000	1,139,648	1,121,539

The president's FY98 budget proposes $1.12 billion for the BLM, an effective increase of $31.9 million, or nearly 3%, from current levels. Programmatic changes include an additional $4.7 million to improve facilities and management of recreation sites and $10 million for resource protection improvements. The administration proposes a $28.1 million increase for the multi-bureau wildland fire program. These increases were funded in part through decreases of $12 million in the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) account that provides payments to counties that have federal lands within their borders. The BLM manages 264 million acres of public land primarily in the West and AK while supervising mineral leasing on an additional 300 million acres of public land. Altogether these lands amount to 41% of all land owned by the federal government. The president's budget proposes no significant changes to the agency's grazing programs, in light of ongoing negotiations with Congress, western governors, livestock interests and environmentalists to reform the nation's grazing management laws. The bill would make no changes to the fee structure. Resource Advisory Councils, established in 1996 to balance multiple users demands are now firmly in place and expected to provide guidance on rangeland use in 1998, according to the DOI. Range management spending, much of it aimed at improving the health of the nation's rangelands, will receive a $2.28 million hike. In one of it's more controversial steps, the administration is proposing to levy a 5% royalty on hard rock minerals mined on federal lands. Reform

of the 1872 Mining Law, which designates fees and other mining procedures, has been stalled in Congress for years. A moratorium on the patenting of new mining claims, imposed with passage of the department's FY95 appropriations bill and reimposed each subsequent year, remains in effect. The BLM continues to play a significant role in implementing the president's forest plan. In total, the agency will fund forest plan implementation and *"Jobs in the Woods"* job opportunities for timber dependent communities at $43.7 million, a $1.1 million increase from FY97. The agency plans to redirect funding from planning and reforestation, where the need is no longer pressing, to other areas of forest plan implementation, including experimental techniques in adaptive management, surveying, species and habitat management, and refilling the timber pipeline. The Clinton Administration's request of $9.9 million for land acquisition is based on "priority needs" and are not intended to reflect previous years' funding.

FWS ($000)

FY96 Final	FY97 Estimate	FY98 Request
Resource Mgt.		
507,041	525,447	561,614
End. Species		
60,297	67,385	78,781
Consultation		
15,997	17,949	26,528
Listing		
4,000	5,000	5,190
Prelisting (Cand Cons)		
3,800	4,800	4,903
Recovery		
36,500	39,636	42,160
Habitat Conserv		
55,408	55,132	56,998
Env Contam		
8,821	8,796	9,074
Fisheries		
64,698	66,248	69,200
Refuge O/M		
169,237	178,140	191,951
Law Enforcement		
35,265	35,243	35,964
Migratory Bird Mgt		
15,255	15,274	17,107
Construction		
74,905	43,365	35,921
Natl Wildl Refuge Fund		
10,779	10,779	10,000
Land Acquisition		
40,319	44,479	44,560
Acquisition Mgt		
7,500	8,500	8,860
N Am Wetl Cons Fund		
6,750	9,750	15,000
Coop End Sp Fund		
8,074	14,085	14,000
Wildl Cons/Apprec		
800	800	800
Total		
603,864	654,105	687,923

The FWS's budget would increase $33.8 million, or 8%, under the Clinton proposal. The request includes a three-tiered effort to address the highest needs of the National Wildlife Refuge system, including a $13.8 million increase in operations spending. The budget includes a recreation fee demonstration program which will initially generate about $1 million for on-the-ground project work at refuges that collect user fees. Thirdly, construction funding totaling $22.2 million would be used for infrastructure backlog needs in refuges. The Clinton plan proposes $78.8 million to support what it calls a "workable" endangered species program, including a requested program increase of $10 million. The plan includes $4.9 million for candidate conservation actions to support partnership efforts aimed at keeping species off the threatened and endangered lists. There are 292 such conservation actions planned for FY98. The listing program is funded at $5.2 million to respond to petitions and respond to legal challenges. In FY98 the FWS anticipates that nearly 100 species will be proposed for listing and 120 species will be added to the list. The budget also includes $42.1 million for recovery of listed species. An increase of $5.2 million is proposed for the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund. The budget also includes a request of $2.4 million for fisheries-related programs. The agency manages 92 million acres of public land, including 509 national wildlife refuges and 37 wetland management districts. The agency's 7,845 person work-force would increase by 200 employees in FY98. The agency's land acquisition budget would stay flat. The administration requested $44.5 million, which would fund priority acquisitions in 19 states.

BOR ($000)

FY96 Final	FY97 Estimate	FY98 Request
Water/Related Resources		
704,943	678,582	666,372
General Investigations		
12,684	12,684	-
Construction		
411,000	411,000	-
Operation and Maintenance		
273,076	273,076	-
Total Agency		
830,361	810,881	948,338

The FY98 budget reflects the BOR's evolving role in water resources management. As funding for traditional construction projects continues to drop; funds for efforts to improve water conservation projects is reduced; funds for efforts to improve water conservation, waste water reclamation/reuse and environmental restoration will be provided. A new account (Water and Related Resources) incorporates activities previously funded under Operation and Maintenance, Construction Programs, and General Investigations. BOR is the largest supplier and manager of water in the 17 Western states, delivering more than 30 million ac-ft. of water annually to 31 million people for agricultural, municipal, industrial and domestic uses. The agency is also the 5th largest producer of electric power in those states, generating nearly $1 billion in annual power revenues. Total budget authority for the bureau in FY98 would be $948.3 million, an increase of $137 million from the FY97 enacted level. The president's budget request includes $763.6 million for BOR's ongoing programs, a decrease of $ 11.8 million.

FS ($000)

FY96 Final	FY97 Estimate	FY98 Request
National Forest Sys		
1,282,000	1,275,000	1,326,000
NW Forest Plan		
96,000	107,000	107,000
Watershed Assessment		
20,000	21,000	21,000

20,000	21,000	21,000
Sust. Timber Sales Prog		
21,000	22,000	22,000
Adaptive Mgt Areas		
8,000	8,000	8,000
Ecosystem Planning		
12,000	20,000	20,000
Research		
5,000	5,000	5,000
Ecosystem Restoration		
14,000	16,000	16,000
Rural Assistance		
16,000	15,000	15,000
Land Acquisition		
41,000	42,000	42,000
Recreation/Trails		
267,000	281,000	266,000
Forest/Rngelnd Research		
178,000	180,000	180,000
State/Private Forestry		
137,000	155,000	156,000
Emerg Pest Suppression		
17,000	0	0
Wildland Fire Mgt		
385,000	530,000	514,000
Presuppression		
295,000	319,000	303,000
Suppression		
90,000	211,000	211,000
Total Discretionary		
3,201,000	3,464,000	3,136,000

The FS can expect level funding under the president's budget proposal. The difference in agency totals from FY97 to FY98 reflects the elimination of $300 million in emergency fire suppression funds. The cost of fire fighting has varied dramatically since FY80 and has been inherently unpredictable. Firefighting has become more expensive in recent years, the agency says, because of the growth of urban areas into what were previously wild lands. Fires that might previously have been left to burn must now be fought vigorously to protect lives and property. Total federal funding for FY97 is $408 million, a 6% increase over the FY97 estimate. In FY96, the volume of national forest timber sold was 3.4 billion board ft. (bbf) The current estimate is that 3.8 bbf will be offered for sale in FY98 compared to an estimated 4.2 bbf in FY97. The FS manages 191 million acres of national forest and grasslands, provides assistance to state and private foresters while carrying out major forest research and working on international forestry issues. The FS in FY96 would receive $42 million for land purchases in 24 project areas.

NPS ($000)

FY96 Final	FY97 Estimate	FY98 Request
Park System Oper		
1,081,772	1,154,626	1,220,325
Resource Stewardship		
171,359	193,310	211,158
Visitor Services		
251,555	271,977	287,599
Maintenance		
349,280	367,698	381,310
Park Support		
220,675	228,967	241,815
Land Acquis (total)		
44,262	53,915	70,900
NPS land acquisition		
34,400	39,715	56,700
Acquisition Mgt		
7,200	7,200	7,200
State LWCF Grants		
0	0	0
State Admin Expense		
1,500	1,500	1,000
Everglades Rest Fund		
-	-	100,000
Construction		
191,225	169,744	150,000
Nat'l Rec/Pres		
37,579	37,976	42,063
Historic Pres Fund		
36,212	36,612	45,612
Urban Park/Rec Fund		
0	0	0
Total		
1,403,764	1,571,490	1,789,373

With a budget comprising 21% of DOI spending, the NPS is once again the biggest winner among the four major land management agencies, but many environmental organizations warn that the 5% funding hike is still inadequate to address the agency's $5.5 billion backlog in operations and maintenance needs. Under the Clinton plan, the agency would receive nearly $1.8 billion in FY98, an increase of $217.9 million over the FY97 level, to help the parks accommodate the more than 270 million visitors expected next year and address ongoing maintenance needs. The largest portion of the requested increase in funding is in parks operation, where an increase of $65.7 million is requested. This funding will enable the NPS to provide start-up operations at the five new parks established last year in the Omnibus Parks Act, including the Tallgrass National Prairie in KS. Construction is funded at $150 million, which is $19.7 million below current levels. Particular emphasis will be placed on rehabilitating existing facilities and correcting health and safety problems. The National Park System consists of 368 units covering 80 million acres. Visitation continues to grow, with more than 273 million visits recorded in FY95 and 279 million expected in FY96. The land acquisition program is funded at $70.9 million for high priority areas. Of the total, $21.8 billion is earmarked for the acquisition of the Elwha and Glines Canyon dams in Olympic National Park. The dams are to be purchased and destroyed to restore salmon runs. Additionally, the agency is requesting $100 million through a new direct appropriation, the Everglades Restoration Fund, for land acquisition to restore the Everglades watershed. The funds would support accelerated acquisitions at Everglades National Park and Big Cypress National Preserve and provide assistance to the state of FL to acquire lands to restore the Everglades' natural hydrologic function. Congress declined to support this item last year, preferring instead to fund Everglades programs through the Farm Bill.

NRCS ($000)

FY96 Final	FY97 Estimate	FY98 Request
Conserv Oper		
725,000	707,000	722,000
Watershed/Flood Prev		
99,000	90,000	40,000
Resource Conserv/Dev		
29,000	29,000	48,000
Forestry Incent Prog		
6,000	6,000	6,000
CO River Salinity Cont		
3,000	0	0
Cost-Shre/Easemnt Prog		
222,000	343,000	427,000
Env Qual Incent Prog		

130,000	200,000	200,000
Farmland Prot Prog		
15,000	2,000	18,000
Conserv Farm Option		
0	2,000	15,000
Wildl Hab Incentive Prog		
0	20,000	30,000
Wetlands Reserve Prog		
77,000	119,000	164,000
Total		
1,085,000	1,176,000	1,248,000

FSA ($000)

FY96 Final	FY97 Estimate	FY98 Request
Conserv Prog		
1,832,000	1,892,000	1,926,000
Env Qual Incent Prog		
-	200,000	200,000
Conserv Reserve		
1,727,000	1,857,000	1,926,000
Emerg Conserv Prog		
30,000	25,000	0
Total		
17,840,000	18,458,000	20,603,000

The NRCS is the result of a merger in FY94 of most of the conservation cost-share grant programs within the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and the Soil Conservation Service. The agency is responsible for program and policy direction, management and delivery of most of the department's conservation programs. Funding for the NRCS would increase $72 million over FY97 levels to $1.2 billion. The agency's conservation operations, which include technical assistance to farmers, soil surveys, and other programs would get a $15 million boost in FY98. The Forestry Incentives Program, which provides cost-sharing for environmental benefits through tree planting on 111,273 acres, timber stand improvement on over 25,000 acres, and forestry site preparation on an estimated 1,970 acres, would receive level funding at $6 million. The president's budget places a major emphasis on increasing wetland protection easements through the Wetlands Reserve Program, which would receive a $45 million increase in FY98. The FY98 budget includes $164 million to enroll 212,000 new acres of wetlands in the program. With that additional acreage, total enrollment at the end of FY98 will top 655,000 acres. The program calls for enrollment of 975,000 acres by the end of the year 2000. The FSA administers most farm commodity and income support programs, including the Agricultural Conservation Program and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The Clinton Administration's budget increases by $69 million funding for the CRP, which provides annual rental payments to farmers who remove ecologically sensitive cropland from production. The FY98 budget projects a 36.4 million acre enrollment by 2002.

EPA ($000)

FY96 Final	FY97 Estimate	FY98 Request
Oper Prog		
2,800,000	3,109,148	3,402,037
Sci/Tech (R&D)		
525,000	552,000	614,269
Water Infrastructure		
1,700,000	2,236,000	2,078,000
Superfund		
1,200,000	1,394,245	2,094,245
Leaking Undergrnd Tanks		
45,327	59,423	71,210
Total		
5,700,000	6,799,393	7,645,493

Much maligned in the budget crises of the 104th Congress, the EPA has risen unscathed. In fact, the agency once again is slated to receive a major boost, $846 million, in new spending. The bulk of that spending, $736 million, will go toward the Clinton Administration initiatives to expand Right-to-Know provisions about local pollution, cleaning up the worst toxic waste dumps by 2000, redeveloping urban brownfields, and toughening enforcement against criminal polluters. Spending on water quality programs would be $274.9 million in FY98, essentially level funding. Much of that will be used for "common sense, place-based approaches to preserving water quality," with a continued focus on supporting local efforts to protect watersheds. The president's budget seeks $5 million to support non-point source control efforts. Drinking water programs would get $105.3 million under the president's plan, an increase of $10.8 million over the FY97 enacted level, much of which will go toward implementing the provisions of the new Safe Drinking Water Act, which created nationwide safeguards for drinking water and establishes federal enforcement responsibility. Water infrastructure programs would decrease by $158 million from current funding. Research and development spending, now called science and technology, would get $614.3 million in FY98 an increase of $62.3 million. Multimedia programs, representing the administration's attempt to address environmental problems on an ecosystem basis, would receive $307.4 million, an increase of $32 million. More than half of the agency's $7.6 billion budget is transferred to state, local and tribal governments through various grant programs.

Source: Land Letter, Special Report, Vol. 16. No. 6

TU Lauds Clinton Budget

Trout Unlimited (TU) commended President Clinton on 2/6 for the many positive elements of his Administra-tion's FY98 budget plan, but urged the Clinton Administration and Congress to focus on augmenting the Clinton budget proposal in several key areas:

Elwha River - Dam Removal and Fisheries Restoration - TU praised Clinton for proposing to fund the Elwha River dam removal and restoration project at $25 million, but said that a major boost in funding ($38 million) is badly needed to enable the National Park Service and other partners to move quickly to begin work on dam removal design and to complete acquisition of the dams. The dams have nearly eliminated the once robust runs of Elwha trout and salmon - ten different runs of an estimate 380,000 fish, including some of the largest Chinook salmon specimens ever recorded.

Forest Service (FS) Fisheries Conservation - TU said the Clinton proposals to boost the FS's Inland Fisheries Management program by $2.5 million and Anadromous Fisheries Management program by $1.5 million are positive steps, but considerably more funds are needed in each category to offset disproportionate cuts inflicted on these

and to do an adequate job of conserving the valuable fish resources that inhabit FS lands. TU pointed out that FS Lands contain about ½ of the trout and salmon habitat in the nation, including many critical remaining habitats for the many species of trout and salmon that are at a high risk of extinction in the western U.S. TU pointed out that fisheries on FS Lands yield an estimated $2 billion annually, and said that instead of the proposed $2.5 million and $1.5 million, increases of $10 million and $5 million for inland and anadromous programs respectively are needed in FY98 to do a good job of managing fish on FS lands.

Key Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Fisheries Programs - TU supports the Clinton proposal to seek modest, new funds for three critical FWS programs and encouraged increased funding for the whirling disease program. The three newly funded programs include:

- $1 million in new funds for aquatic nuisance species control to help boost the FWS' unheralded but important efforts to work with states to control invasive, environmentally destructive exotic species such as the zebra mussel;
- $578,000 for Great Lakes Fisheries Restoration, including funds for coaster brook trout restoration, a program jointly supported and funded by TU, states and tribes in the region. FWS estimates that a restored coaster brook trout fishery could yield 20,000 angler days of recreation and $1 million in angler expenditures annually; and
- $750,000 for boosting FWS efforts to develop and include fisheries restoring conditions to dams up for relicensing under the Federal Power Act. Since licenses often are for 50 yrs., FWS has a once in a generation opportunity to work with utilities, FERC and conservation groups to enhance fisheries where dam licenses are being renewed over the next several years. Fisheries in OR, CA, MI and ME stand to gain much from this increase because of the large number of dams under review in these states.

Appalachian Clean Streams Initiative - According to TU the Office of Surface Mining's (OSM) *Appalachian Clean Streams Initiative* needs much more funding. Established in 1994 within the Abandoned Mine Land Program the *Clean Streams Initiative* has sparked considerable action focused on restoring Appalachian streams damaged by acid mine drainage. It's a big job: OSM estimates 7,500 miles of streams are damaged by acid mine drainage in the region.

For The Sake of Salmon - TU strongly supports the Clinton proposal to provide $2 million to the *For The Sake of Salmon* program for salmon watershed restoration through the National Resource and Conservation Service budget. These funds will yield up to 50 watershed councils in WA, OR and CA. The councils, constituted by state and federal resource agencies, tribes, industry and conservation groups, will develop and implement cooperative watershed- based restoration work to recover salmon in the region.

Contact: Peter Rafle, TU Director of Communications, (703) 284-9412

Streams Handbook/Video

The *Izaak Walton League of America* (Ikes) has released a *"Save Our Streams Handbook for Wetlands Conservation and Sustainability"* for use by citizens, planners, government agencies and businesses interested in taking a more active role in restoring wetlands. The 235 pg. book details the various features that are unique to wetlands and their importance, as well as offering options for monitoring and restoring wetlands and waterways.

The *Ikes* also released a new video entitled, *"Restoring America's Streams"*. This new video is designed to help people learn how to stabilize eroding streambanks and restore degraded stream side forests. The 28 minute video is part of the League's *Stream Doctor Project*, which helps volunteers diagnose stream problems, write a prescription for recovery and institute a long-term care program. It is a companion to *"A Citizens Streambank Restoration Handbook."*

The book was produced with grants from the *Moriah Fund* and the *David and Lucille Packard Foundation*. To order the book ($18) or video ($20), send checks made payable to: *Izaak Walton League of America*, Save Our Streams Program, 707 Conservation Lane, Gaithersburg, MD 20878-2983 or call 1-800-BUG-IWLA for an order form.

The Rivers Project

The Rivers Project located at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville is accepting applications for two summer training programs on July 20-25, 1997 in Chicago or August 3-8, 1997 in Edwardsville. Participants will be interdisciplinarily trained in six curriculum areas that relate to river study - chemistry, biology, earth science. geography, mathematics, and language arts. This National Science Foundation (NSF) developed training will be conducted by experienced staff and Rivers curriculum writers, who are also past participants. Lodging, meals, and materials are available. Cost for the training is $200 for the week. Graduate credits may also be earned.

A set of six curriculum guides have also been developed by *The River Project*, through an NSF grant to introduce water quality and river study into the nation's high schools. The six units are specifically designed to enable students to work together in learning about the environment and gain valuable hands-on experience while exploring on-going projects in their local communities. The six curriculum unit guides are for river chemistry, geography, earth science, mathematics, language arts, and biology. Direct inquiries to *The River Project* at (618) 692-2446, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, Box 2222, Edwardsville, IL 62026 or E-mail requests to rivers@siue.edu. or http://www.siue.edu/OSME/river

Freshwater Fauna Posters

Full color 24" x 36" posters of America's nongame fishes, pearly mussels, and crayfishes depict the diversity and beauty of native species for the lay public, nature enthusiasts, and professional biologists. Each poster features original photographs by accomplished photographers of a sample (25-41 species) of each faunal group, showing

species) of each faunal group, showing the richness of colors, shapes, and varieties inherent in these seldom seen species. A brief narrative relates the value and plight of each group, and the need for conservation. To order, send $5.00 (plus $2.50 postage and handling) per poster to: Extension Distribution Center, 112 Landsdowne Street, Blacksburg, VA 24061-0512. Checks should be made payable to the Uirginia Tech Treasurer. For bulk orders, call (540) 231-6192. All proceeds from poster sales will be usedto reprint and distribute free posters to secondary schools throughout the U.S.

Green Thumb Video

Rutgers University Cooperative Extension Service has released a video entitled *"A Greener Thumb: How to enhance your home lawn, landscape, and environment."* The video provides how-to tips and techniques to customize a plan for an environmentally friendly lawn and landscape.

The video discusses:
- the types of groundcovers that can be used to replace grass,
- what mulches can enhance landscape plants,
- when soil testing pays off,
- what fertilizer formulas are best,
- what "low-input" grasses can save money on fertilizers and pesticides,
- how to diagnose a lawn problem,
- what native plants attract beneficial wildlife,
- how compost improves the health of your soil and plants,
- how to reuse rain water and reduce water use, and
- when and when not to apply pesticides for two common lawn problems.

Based upon several years of educational outreach to homeowners the video provides a straightforward, flexible approach to minimize the useof fertilizers, pesticides, and water toimprove the health of lawns and landscapes. Homeowners can pick and choose what tips they want to implement since the "greener thumb" approach is flexible.

In addition, video purchasers receive a bonus "Greener Thumb Guide" of Extension fact sheets that explains the greener thumb concepts in detail, a $2.00 off coupon for a Cooperative Extension plant diagnosis, and a pocket-size directory of Extension agents and services to assist them with lawn and landscape-related questions.

Cost of the complete video package is $19.95 plus $3.00 for shipping and handling. Make checks payable to "Rutgers, The State University" at: A Greener Thumb, The Video; DEENR, ENRS Bldg.; PO Box 231; Cook College; New Brunswick, NJ 08903; ATT: Michael Olohan.

Meetings of Interest

June 1-6; Society of Wetland Scientists 18th Annual Meeting, MT State University, Bozeman, MT. Contact: SWS, P.O. Box 1897, Lawrence, KS 66044, (913) 843-1221, FAX (913) 843-1274.

June 3-4: Pathogens and Diseases of Fish in Aquatic Ecosystems: Implications in Fisheries Management, Portland, OR. Contact: Ray Brunson, Olympia Fish Health Center, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 3704 Griffin Lane, Suite 101, Olympia, WA 98501, (360) 753-9046, FAX (360) 753-9403

June 3-5: **Fisheries Management under Uncertainty - International Symposium, Bergen, Norway.** Contact: Ann Gro Vea Salvanes, Dept. of Fisheries and Marine Biol., Univ. of Bergen, Bergen, Norway, Anne. Salvanes@ifm.uib. no.

June 6-9: Society for Conservation Biology 1997 Annual Meeting, University of Victoria, Victoria, B.C., Canada. Contact: Pat McGuire, Conference Management, Div. of Continuing Studies, University of Victoria, Box 3050, Victoria, BC, Canada VOW 3P5, (604) 721-8774, e-mail:SCB97@ uvcs.uvic.ca.

June 29-July 3: Annual Symposium of the American Water Resources Association and the Universities Council on Water Resources, Keystone Resort, Summit County, CO. Contact: AWRA, 950 Herndon Parkway, Suite 300, Herndon, VA 22070-5531, (703) 904-1228; or UCOWR, 4543 Faner Hall, Mailcode 4526, Southern Illinois University -Carbondale, Carbondale, IL 62901-4526, (618) 536-7571

July 10-13: 3d Annual Mississippi River Conference, St. Louis, MO. This year's theme will be *"Health of the River: Health of the People"* Contact: Mississippi River Basin Alliance, Box 3878, St. Louis, MO 63122, (314) 822-4114, FAX (314) 821-4292.

July 14-15: Rocky Mountain Symposium on Environmental Issues in Oil and Gas Operations, Colorado School of Mines, Golden, CO. Contact: Ms. Sherri Thompson, U.S Bureau of Land Management, Lake-wood, CO 80215, (303) 239-3758, FAX (303) 239-3799.

July: III International Symposium on Sturgeon, ENEL Training Centre, Piacenza, Italy. Contact: Dr. P. Bronzi, ENEL spa - CRAM via Monfalcone, 15-20132 Milan (Italy) phone: + +39-2-72243412 or 3452, FAX: + +39-2-72243496,E-mail:bronzi@cram.enel.it.

August 18-20: Wild Trout VI, "Putting the Native Back in Wild Trout", Montana State Univ., Bozeman, MT. Contact: Robert Gresswell, U.S.Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station, 3200 SW Jefferson Way, Corvallis OR 97456, (541) 750-7410, gresswer@ccmail.orst.edu

August 24-28: 127th Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society,

Monerey, CA. Contact: Paul Brouha, (302) 897-8617, Ext. 209.

Early November 1997: Ecological Restoration as a Key Element of Regional Conservation Strategies - 9th Annual Society for Ecological Resto

ration Conference , Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Contact: SER, 1207 Seminole Highway, Suite B, Madison, WI 53711, (608) 262-9547

May 23-28, 1998: First International Ictalurid Symposium - Catfish 2000,

Davenport, IA. Contact Steve Eder, Missouri Dept. of Conservation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65109-0180. (573) 751-4115, FAX (573) 526-4047.

Congressional Action Pertinent to the Mississippi River Basin

Agriculture

H.R. 246 (Peterson, D/MN) to restore the authority of the Agriculture Secretary to extend existing and expiring contracts under the **Conservation Reserve Program.**

H.R. 247 (Peterson, D/MN) to allow for a one-year extension on **Conservation Reserve Program** contracts expiring in 1997.

H.R. 640 (Hostettler, R/IN) amends the wetland conservation provisions of the **Food Security Act of 1985 and the Clean Water Act** to permit the unimpeded use of privately-owned crop range and pasture lands that have been used for the planting of crops or the grazing of corn in at least 5 of the preceding 10 years.

H.R. 861 (Moran, R/KS) authorizes a farmer or rancher whose bid for reenrollment of land into the **Conservation Reserve** is rejected to unilaterally extend the contract for a final year.

Fish and Wildlife

S. 361 (Jeffords, R/VT) amends the **Endangered Species Act** to prohibit the sale, import, and export of products labeled as containing endangered species.

H.R. 374 (Young, R/AK) amends the **Sikes Act** to enhance fish and wildlife conservation and natural resources management programs.

H.R. 478 (Herger, R/CA) amends the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to improve the ability of individuals and local, state and federal agencies to comply with that act in building, operating, maintaining or repairing flood control projects.

H.R. 752 (Chenoweth, R/ID) amends the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to ensure that persons that suffer or are threatened with injury resulting from a violation of the act or a failure of the Interior Secretary to act in accordance with that act have standing to commence a civil suit on their behalf.

Flood Insurance

H.R. 230 (McCollum, R/FL) to ensure that insurance against the **risk of catastrophic natural disasters**, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, and volcanic eruptions, is available and affordable, and to provide for expanded hazard mitigation and relief.

Forests

H.R. 101 (Baker, R/LA) amends the National Forest Foundation Act to extend and increase the matching funds authorization for the foundation, to provide additional administrative support to the foundation, to authorize the use of investment income, and to permit the foundation to license the use of **trademarks, trade names, and other such devices** to advertise that a person is an official sponsor or supporter of the Forest Service or the National Forest System

Government Affairs

S. 34 (Feingold, D/WI) to phase out federal funding of the **Tennessee Valley Authority.**

Grazing

H.R. 547 (Nadler, D/NY) requires the Interior and Agriculture secretaries to establish grazing fees at fair market value for **use of public grazing lands.**

Mining

S. 325 (Bumpers, D/AR) to repeal the percentage depletion allowance for certain **hardrock mines.**

S. 326 (Bumpers, D/AR) to provide for the reclamation of **abandoned hardrock mines.**

S. 327 (Bumpers, D/AR) to ensure federal taxpayers receive a fair return for the extraction of **locatable minerals on public domain lands.**

Parks

S. 301 (McCain, R/AZ) and H.R. 682 (Kolbe, R/AZ) authorizes the Interior Secretary to set aside up to $2 per person from **park entrance fees** or assess up to $2 per person visiting the Grand Canyon or other national parks to secure bonds for capital improvements to the park.

H.R. 104 (Bartlett, R/MD) authorizes the **private ownership and use of National Park System lands.**

H.R. 302 (Skaggs, D/CO) a bill entitled the **"Rocky Mountain National Park Wilderness Act of 1997".**

H.R. 901 (Young, R/AK) to preserve the sovereignty of the United States over public lands by requiring that **United Nations heritage designations** be subject to congressional approval.

Public Lands

H.R. 919 (Miller, D/CA) establishes **fair market value pricing** of federal natural assets, and for other purposes.

Refuges

H.R. 511 (Young, R/AK) to amend the **National Wildlife Refuge System Ad-**

ministration Act of 1966 to improve the management of the refuge system.

H.R. 512 (Young, R/AK) to prohibit the expenditure of funds from the **Land and Water Conservation Fund** to create new National Wildlife Refuges without specific authorization from Congress.

H.R. 952 (Miller, D/CA) to clarify the mission, purposes and authorized uses of the **National Wildlife Refuge System** and to establish requirements for administration and conservation planning of that system.

Takings

H.R. 95 (Solomon, R/NY) to ensure that federal agencies establish the appropriate procedures for assessing whether federal regulations might result in the **taking of private property**, and to direct the Agriculture Secretary to report to the Congress with respect to such takings under programs of the Dept. of Agriculture.

Water and Wetlands

H.R. 128 (Crapo, R/ID) to preserve the authority of the states over waters within their boundaries, to delegate the authority of the Congress to the **states to regulate water**.

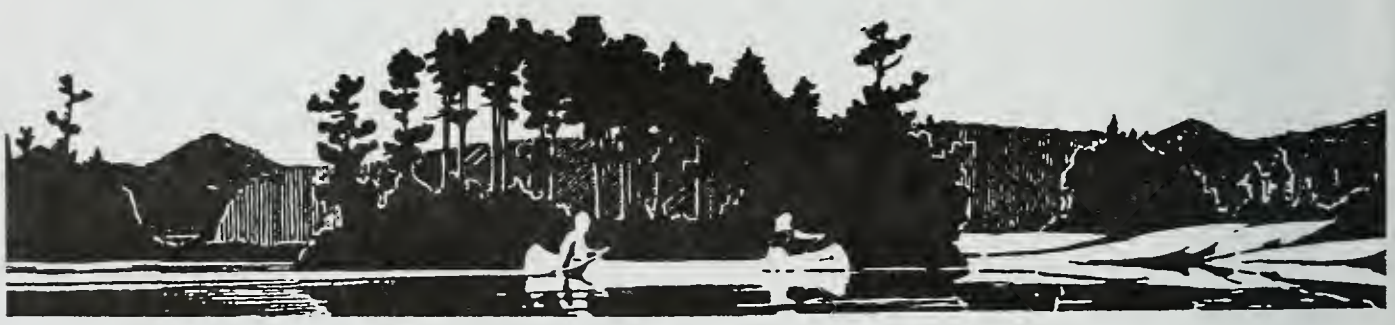
H.R. 227 (McCollum, R/FL) directs the Secretary of the Army to conduct a study of **mitigation banks**.

H.R. 238 (Robert Menendez D/NJ) to **amend the Oil Pollution Act of 1990** to make the act more effective in preventing oil pollution in the nation's waters through enhanced prevention of, and improved response to, oil spills, and to ensure that citizens and communities injured by oil spills are promptly and fully compensated, and for other purposes.

H.R. 550 (Oberstar, D/MN) amends the **Clean Water Act** to establish requirements and provide assistance to prevent nonpoint sources of water pollution, and for other purposes.

H.R. 640 (Hostettler, R/IN) amends the wetland conservation provisions of the **Food Security Act of 1985 and the Clean Water Act** to permit the unimpeded use of privately-owned crop range and pasture lands that have been used for the planting of crops or the grazing of corn in at least 5 of the preceding 10 years.

Sources: Land Letter, STATUS REPORT, Vol.16, No. 2, 5 and 8; and NOAA Legislative Informer, Jan. 1997, Issue #2



River Crossings

Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Association
P.O. Box 774
Bettendorf, IA 52722-0774

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BETTENDORF, IA
PERMIT NO. 83

Address Correction Requested

"When you are finished with this document, please pass it along to another reader, a school/public library, or appropriate club."