

What We Have Learned From The Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee?

Missouri River Natural Resources Committee
Conference and BiOp Forum

March 15, 2012
Pierre, South Dakota



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Objectives

- Who is MRRIC?
- What do they do?
- What have we learned after 4 years?

Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee

- WRDA 2007 Section 5018
- **Collaborative** forum
- Helps guide the **prioritization, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation** of recovery actions
- Includes broad stakeholder representation to ensure a comprehensive approach



Recommendations by Consensus

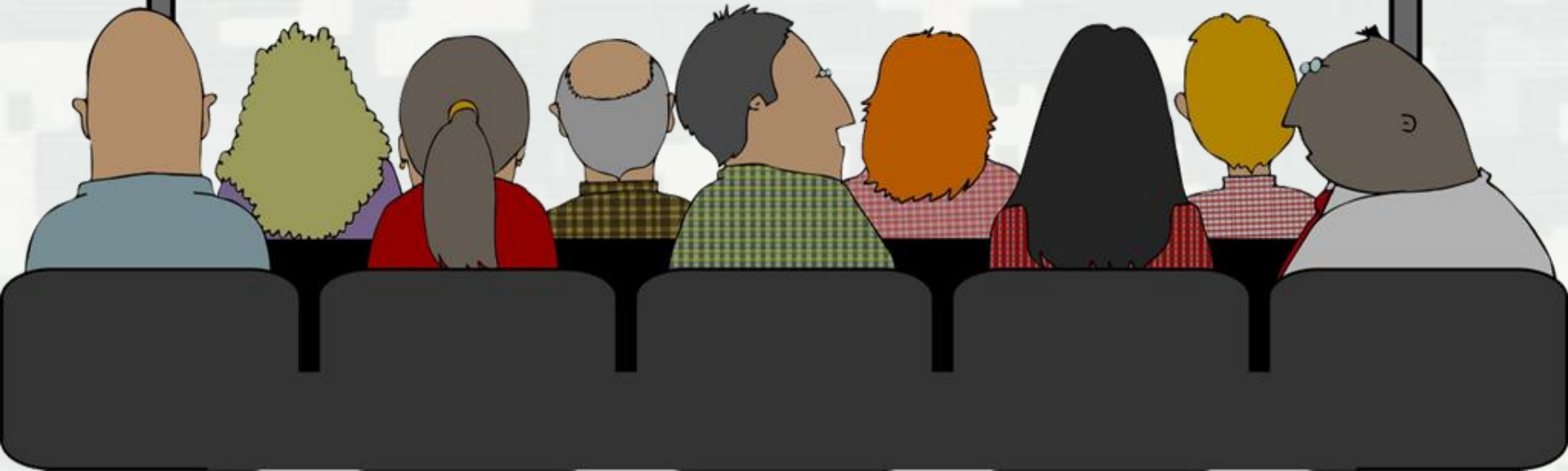
- MRRIC provides recommendations to the Agencies
- Recommendations are agreed to by consensus of the full committee
- Consensus means that all MRRIC members can at least “live with” the recommendation.
- Sometimes consensus doesn’t work and can be abused.

What have we learned?



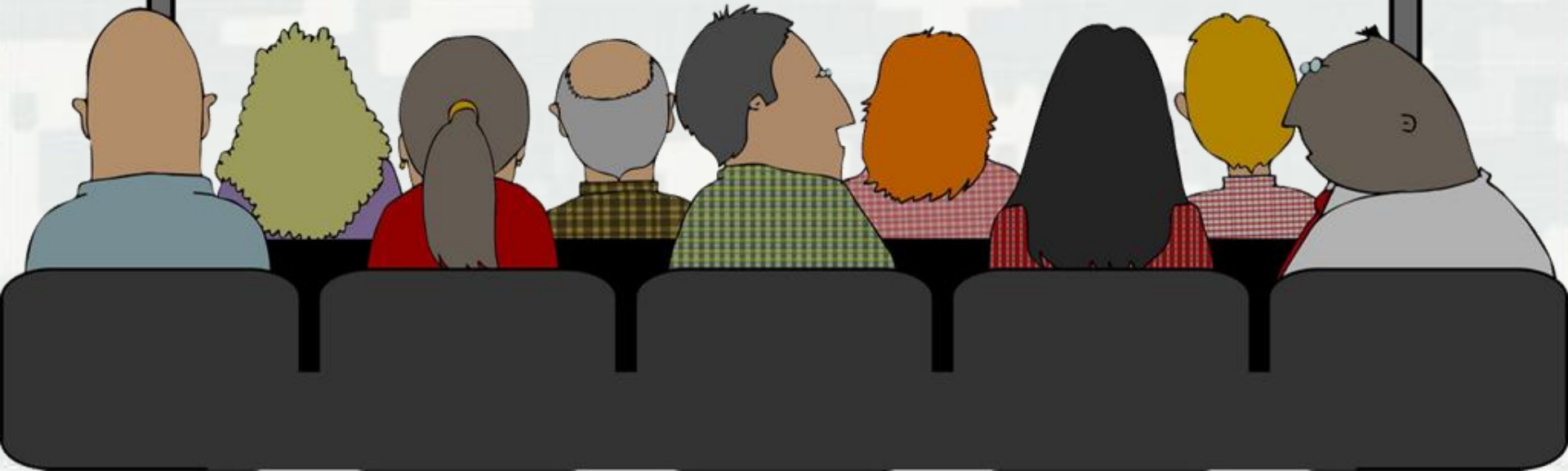
Benefits of Participating in MRRIC

- Improve decision quality
- Clarify problem
- Identify alternatives
- Identify interests
- Gather information
- Evaluate expected outcomes
- Identify decision criteria
- Monitor results
- Improve decision legitimacy
- Understanding other interests



Challenges of Participating in MRRIC

- Takes more time, more resources
- Political manipulation
- May disrupt the agency timeline
- May create or increase conflict.
- Lack of consensus of goals
- Conveying agencies constraints
- Trivial or undesirable results
- Costs of participation are high
- Tribal participation
- Getting more people interested in becoming members



Shared Goals and Clarity of Purpose

- Shared goals need to be developed, understood, and agreed-to by all
- Goals should match what can be implemented
- Clear set of objectives
- Members are not that far apart in their interests and commonalities.



Agency Commitment

- More successful when agency responsible for decisions is committed to process and takes the results seriously.
- Agency commitment at all levels is key to understanding and being open to actually being swayed by input.
- The agencies are forced to be more introspective and accountable of their decisions.
- Clarifying how and by whom the inputs will be used.
- Skilled and enthusiastic staff is vital to program success
- Continuity of agency personnel is beneficial.
- Agencies should listen to and learn from stakeholders.
- Slow down planning process to work with the stakeholders.



Collaboration

- Large scale Collaboration is hard, but worth it.
- Needs to be a fair and transparent process.
- Trust takes a very long time to develop, but gone in seconds
- Some members compromise for the good of the group
- Collaboration training for staff and MRRIC members is helpful
- Large scale collaboration and a consensus recommendation is important to Congressionals



Process

- Diversity of representatives
- Better process than public meetings
- A balance between work group and committee efforts.
- Find time to **discuss substantive issues** and focus on stakeholders' interests.
- **Focus discussions on Implementation** and how it relates to policy decision making.
- Face to face meetings are better
- Stakeholders group process vs. agencies' process, conflicts in timelines.
- Continuously seek feedback and make course corrections.



Clear Messages

- Some members feel they are not being heard.
- Fear of an impact to an interest is a real constraint on getting things done.
- Agencies should:
 - ▶ let the committee know what they need from the start and where the committee input can be more effective.
 - ▶ explain things clearly and where the scientific evidence is really strong and why they are doing what they are doing.
 - ▶ be clear about the decisions to be made, who will make them, when.
 - ▶ make resource constraints clear to the committee so that a realistic set of objectives can be set.

Structure

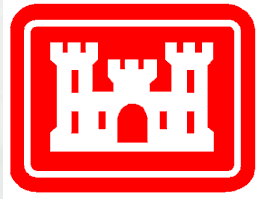
- Huge time commitment
- Need travel funding
- After meeting socials, tours, breaks, and receptions at the meeting allows the members to learn from each other and build relationships.
- Meetings have been designed to allow more time to discuss substantive issues.
- Mondays of the meeting week are designated for training, i.e. New Members, Collaboration



Knowledge

- Commitment to Learning
- Level of knowledge improved by the presentations, webinars, and websites
- Self-assessment and design correction
- Interaction strategy for the ISAP and other scientists enhances learning.
- Science Forum for stakeholder education.
- Stakeholders need meeting time to discuss each others issues.





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