



OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

SHEILA SIMON – LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Illinois River Coordinating Council Quarterly Meeting

October 16, 2012
Illinois Sustainable Technology Center
Champaign, Illinois
1:30 PM

Minutes

Call to Order and Attendance

Lt. Governor Simon called the meeting to order and welcomed members and guests. She invited members of the Council to introduce themselves.

Citizen Members

Daphne Mitchell; Wendell Shauman, the Illinois Farm Bureau; and Richard Worthen.

State Agency Members

Michael Falter, Kevin Irons, and Michael Ziri, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources; and Terry Weldin-Frisch and Ryan Warner, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

Ex-Officio Members

Nani Bhowmik, the Illinois State Water Survey; Ivan Dozier, the US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Steve Rumble, the US Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District; and Doug Yeskis, the US Geological Survey.

Advisors

Misagnaw Demissie, the Illinois State Water Survey; Bill Kruidenier, the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center; and Manohar Kulkarni, the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center.

Absent Members

Doug Blodgett, The Nature Conservancy of Illinois; Tom Brooks, the Illinois Department of Transportation; Lee Bunting, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts; Margaret Frisbie, Friends of the Chicago River; Reggie Greenwood, the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association; Randy Grove, the Illinois Department of Agriculture; and Marcia Willhite, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

Absent Ex-Officio Members

Bob Barry, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois River; Colleen Callahan, the US Department of Agriculture, Rural Development; Louise Clemency, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Chicago Office; Scherrie Giamanco, the US Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency; Colonel Christopher Hall, the US Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District; Tim Henry, the US Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5; Captain Steve Hudson, the US Coast Guard, Sector Upper Mississippi; Don McKay, the Illinois

Geological Survey; Colonel Vincent Quarles, the US Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District; and Lieutenant Doug Salik, the US Coast Guard, Sector Lake Michigan, Marine Safety Unit Chicago.

Absent Advisors

Brian Anderson, the Illinois Natural History Survey.

Approval of Minutes

Lt. Governor Simon invited a motion to approve the Illinois River Coordinating Council (IRCC) minutes from August 8, 2012, in Lewistown.

The motion was made by Worthen and seconded by Weldin-Frisch.

The motion passed without opposition.

As quorum was not met at this meeting, the vote to accept the August 8 minutes as recorded is ineligible. This vote will be recompleted during the following IRCC meeting.

Chairman's Remarks

Lt. Governor Simon informed the Council members that two special meeting IRCC phone conferences were recently held to discuss the potential sand mine near Starved Rock State Park. The first special meeting phone conference was held on August 7, prior to the quarterly IRCC meeting which was held on August 8. Another special meeting phone conference was held on October 2. Lt. Governor Simon voiced her belief that these special meeting phone conferences were beneficial to the Council, in that they gave Council members and members of the public the ability to ask questions relating to the sand mine permitting processes and to receive the applicable answers from the state and federal agencies that oversee the processes.

Lt. Governor Simon introduced Manohar Kulkarni, Director of the Indoor Climate Research and Training Facility at the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center, to give an overview of the facility.

Overview of the Indoor Climate Research and Training Facility – Director Manohar Kulkarni

The Illinois Sustainable Technology Center (ISTC) is part of the Prairie Research Institute, which also houses the Illinois State Water Survey, the Illinois State Geological Survey, the Illinois State Natural History Survey, and the Illinois State Archaeological Survey. The Illinois Sustainable Technology Center is organized into four programs: Indoor Climate Research and Training; Emerging Technologies and Assistance; Applied Research on Industrial and Environmental Systems; and Sponsored Research, Public Engagement, and Communications. Offices for the ISTC are located in Champaign, Chicago, Peoria and Godfrey.

The ISTC is mandated, by the State of Illinois, to research and work toward waste reduction and waste management. The ISTC aims to be an advocate for energy and for the environment, and also works to advance sustainability. Further, the ISTC features advanced laboratories that allow the center to be both a leader and a partner in the field of sustainable research.

The ISTC focuses on several project areas, including: materials use and reuse, technical assistance, pollution prevention, water use and reuse, public engagement, and technology demonstrations. The

ISTC also promotes sustainable practices through on-site technical assistance, applied research, training, and client engagement.

The Illinois Climate Research and Training (ICRT) Program began with the goal of operating one of the Weatherization Training Centers funded by the Department of Energy. In December of 2009, the ICRT program was contacted by the Office of the Governor Pat Quinn, which showed interest in helping to fund 20% of the cost-share agreement which would be necessary to receive the Training Center grant through the Illinois Jobs Now! bill. The Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program at the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity agreed to be the weatherization partner for the Training Center grant, and the grant was awarded to the ICRT Program in August, 2010. In October, 2011, the ICRT was able to sign the lease on its new building, and the first class was offered at the new center in November, 2011. The official grand opening celebration for the facility was held prior to this meeting, on October 16, 2012.

The ICRT Program focuses on research that is mainly residential, and deals with energy efficiency, health and safety, and building durability. Further, the ICRT offers training for energy auditors and contractors, which helps to ensure that new buildings in Illinois are built to energy efficiency standards.

One research project hosted by the ICRT Program, Health-V, studies the energy retrofitting process and the use of different ventilation sizing strategies. The program asks the following questions:

1. When energy retrofits are done and different ventilation sizing strategies are used, what is the impact on Indoor Air Quality?
2. When energy retrofits are done and different ventilation sizing strategies are used, what is the impact on health outcomes?

Other major research projects for the ICRT Program include the Building America Research Project, the National Weatherization Evaluation Project, and evaluation of the Illinois' Get the Lead Out Program. Further, the ICRT Program has taken several smaller research projects, including the study of unvented gas fireplaces, wall-ceiling junctions, and pipe bursting.

The ICRT Program also includes a heavy emphasis on training, primarily related to residential retrofitting. The ICRT training program focuses on building diagnostics, building science, cost-effectiveness, and health and safety. There are two portions to the training program: classroom learning and hands-on experience. Curriculum for the ICRT training program was developed through collaboration with architectural contractors, HVAC contractors, and assessors, and included the program rules required to be a Department of Energy Weatherization Training Center. The training facility is a 6,700 square foot center, which features an HVAC Mobile Training Laboratory and an Insulation Training Truck.

The training program has been open for five years, during which time around 600 individuals have taken 2,500 different classes. In 2011, around 300 individuals took 900 different classes, highlighting the program's growth. The ICRT Program is part of a larger effort undertaken by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, entitled the Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program (IHWAP). Over the past three years, the IHWAP has weatherized over 42,000 homes. Of that number, nearly 20,000 homes were weatherized in the past year. According to the Illinois Department of Economic Opportunity, weatherization typically reduces household energy consumption by 12 to 25 percent and improves indoor environmental health and safety.

In the future, the ICRT will seek to receive the Interstate Renewable Energy Council accreditation for its Training Center. The ICRT also hopes to expand its building science curriculum to increase its level of comprehensiveness. Finally, the ICRT would like to expand its research efforts, possibly to study radon, combustion and Indoor Air Quality, and ventilation and health.

The PowerPoint for this presentation may be accessed [here](#).

Questions for Kulkarni

Worthen asked if there has been a study done to show the amount of money that the ICRT Program has saved through weatherization, in contrast to the dollar amount that has been spent on its research and training programs. Kulkarni noted that he did not have that data available, but that he would try to find the data for the program and provide it to the Council.

Lt. Governor Simon asked how individuals would get in touch with the ICRT Program to see how its work might impact their home or business. Kulkarni noted that the best contact information for his program is featured within the PowerPoint for this presentation.

Lt. Governor Simon introduced Kevin Irons, Aquaculture and Aquatic Nuisance Species Program Manager at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, to discuss Asian Carp in the Illinois River.

Aquatic Nuisance Species (Asian Carp) in Illinois – Kevin Irons, Aquaculture and Aquatic Nuisance Species Program Manager, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources

One of the most important reasons to discuss Asian Carp is to note the benefits in keeping them from entering the Great Lakes region. It is estimated that over \$7 billion has been saved for the Great Lakes region by keeping Asian Carp from entering that waterway. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) is working to continue this trend.

When imagining Asian Carp, many in Illinois picture only a jumping fish. However, a variety of Asian Carp species exist in Illinois' waterways. One species, colloquially called the Grass Carp, is a herbivorous fish that is often used to maintain water quality by controlling aquatic vegetation. The Grass Carp spread from southern river basins into the Lower Mississippi River, from which it reached the Ohio and Illinois Rivers. Another species, the Bighead Carp, can often be found in urban ponds near Chicago, where they were shipped from regions in Southern Illinois. These fish moved in their migration patterns from Southern Illinois, where they were used in aquaculture, into the northern portions of state waters. Bighead Carp have been found as far as the upper regions of the Great Lakes. Finally, Silver Carp are the jumping fish that many individuals equate with the concept of "Asian Carp." These fish are somewhat more restricted in their distribution; however, their migration patterns are expanding rapidly. Since about 2000, these fish have been found along the Illinois River.

While Asian Carp tend to live in smaller, backwater lakes, they require larger rivers to reproduce, as they spawn within the main channel. Further, spawning occurs at multiple points throughout the year, meaning that Asian Carp are not limited to the main channels of large rivers during a specific time frame. Invasive Asian Carp feed along the waterways that they inhabit and travel through for spawning, taking food from the native carp species within the Illinois River. This contributes to the overall impacts

that these fish are having on the ecosystem of the Illinois River, including the decline of several native fish species.

Question for Irons

Worthen asked if the water was cleaner in the Illinois River, due to the increase in the species of Asian Carp that are commonly used to control aquatic vegetation. Irons responded that it is difficult to tell if vegetation has improved overall. Because Bighead and Silver Asian Carp eat the plankton which typically eat the smaller forms of algae, there has actually been an increase in some types of algae within the Illinois River. This increase can contribute to a greener water color and a “soupy” appearance.

Illinois develops an annual plan to combat the spread of Asian Carp and other invasive species. The 2012 plan is a 120-page document that outlines the eight largest projects that will be used to control fish near Chicago. The IDNR has numerous local, state and federal partners, as well as international partners, that help with this effort. One significant outcome of these plans has been the electric barrier which is used to keep Asian Carp from entering the Great Lakes region. From 2002 to the present day, that barrier has been continually updated and improved. Currently, data from the IDNR shows that while adult Asian Carp have been spotted near the electric barrier, no young fish or eggs have been found past the barrier. This gives the IDNR, and other partners, a good chance of stopping and reversing the spread of the Asian Carp species.

The IDNR has three basic strategies for halting the spread of Asian Carp along the Illinois River:

1. Ensuring the Asian Carp do not spread into the Chicago area by utilizing the electric barrier and intense monitoring and response;
2. Detecting and monitoring the populations of Asian Carp in lower regions of the Illinois River to ensure that they are not moving further up the mainstem; and
3. Removing fish from the waterways, through the use of both contracted removals and commercial fishing.

The IDNR publishes a report each calendar year which provides information on the progress of the strategies, data from the studies and research, and updates on the projects.

From 2011 to 2012, the IDNR strategies as outlined in the annual plans have remained largely the same. Major strategies in the plan include: focusing on increased monitoring of smaller Asian Carp to verify that their progress is slowing, locating and removing Bighead Carp from urban ponds, updating equipment and processes, utilizing increased random sampling, utilizing Asian Carp DNA to determine where fish may have been, and focusing on maintenance of the electric barrier.

The IDNR recently began rapid response to the Calumet area, due to three instances of Asian Carp DNA being found in that area. The IDNR, as well as numerous state, federal, and local agencies and private fisherman, have begun searching that area for live Asian Carp.

The partnership between the IDNR and federal, state, local and private organizations in the effort to contain the Asian Carp along the Illinois River is demonstrative of a change in the way that the state of Illinois is choosing to undertake scientific projects.

The PowerPoint for this presentation may be accessed [here](#).

Questions for Irons

Worthen asked which entities are paying for the research and implementation of strategies for the containment of Asian Carp. Irons responded that Asian Carp containment strategies are being paid through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which is a federal program sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Mitchell asked for clarification as to the amount of Asian Carp that were removed from the Illinois River within the past year between the electric barrier and Starved Rock State Park. Irons responded that over 620 tons of Asian Carp were removed from that area of the waterway. Irons also noted that the IDNR has seen a decrease in the amount of Asian Carp within that section of the Illinois River.

Mitchell asked if there is a growing market for the commercial fishermen who are working with the IDNR to capture and remove Asian Carp to sell their products. Irons noted that five to ten millions of pounds of Asian Carp are removed from the Lower Illinois River annually and that those fish were going to numerous types of products, including food for both humans and pets. Irons also commented that the IDNR recently worked with Southern Illinois University to remove three million pounds of Asian Carp from the Lower Illinois River to create meal.

Mitchell asked when the three million pounds of Asian Carp were removed from the Lower Illinois River by Southern Illinois University and the IDNR. Irons responded that the fish were removed from January to June of 2012. He also mentioned that that the large number of Asian Carp removed by this partnership was in addition to the Asian Carp removed by the partnership between the IDNR and commercial fishermen.

Weldin-Frisch noted that at one time, the Illinois Department of Corrections had considered purchasing Asian Carp to use as a source of food for its facilities and asked if that purchase has since occurred. Irons responded that it had not, because at that time, many individuals considered Asian Carp to be unhealthy. Since that time, he noted, the opinion of the public on these species of fish has begun change, which might reopen that discussion. Irons mentioned that a similar initiative has recently begun which calls for the utilization of Asian Carp as a food supply for breadlines and food pantries.

Worthen noted that a new Asian Carp processing plant was being built near Grafton. He asked if the IDNR has baseline numbers on the quantity of Asian Carp in that area which could be used to determine whether the new processing plant leads to a significant decrease in the invasive species. Irons noted that because surveys are being completed along all portions of the Illinois River to discover and monitor Asian Carp, the IDNR will have two years of baseline data.

Demissie asked if the IDNR had established that Asian Carp species would be able to survive within Lake Michigan. Irons said that yes, he believed they could survive there. However, he noted that scientists were unsure if the rivers surrounding the Great Lakes would be large enough to support the reproduction cycles of the Asian Carp if they began to migrate further. Further, Irons commented that Asian Carp would be better supported by some of the other Great Lakes, such as Lake Erie.

Worthen noted one of the slides indicated that Asian Carp, specifically the Bighead Carp, previously inhabited Lake Erie. Worthen asked if that was still the case. Irons responded that he did not believe there were currently Bighead Carp within Lake Erie. However, he noted that DNA from Silver Carp had been detected by commercial fishermen within Lake Erie, meaning that Asian Carp may have been swimming through that area.

Worthen asked if there is an uncontrolled connection between Lake Erie and Lake Michigan that Asian Carp could potentially breach. Irons responded that there are some minor connections, but the USACE is working to contain those connections.

Shauman noted that Irons informed the Council that one portion of the Illinois River was found to hold 6,000 fish per square mile. He asked how that number has changed from previous data. Irons noted that over the last twenty years, there have been some declines, but no crashes in numbers of Asian Carp within the Illinois River. He commented that the river system is extremely dynamic, and that while it has been affected by the recent flood and drought cycles, the system will rebound. Irons noted that an issue that might present a significant impact to the system is increased pressure on food sources.

Shauman asked if entities such as the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity might be able to start promoting Asian Carp fishing as a commercial industry, specifically to markets in China. Irons responded that there are a large number of the Asian Carp, and that they are a probable source of industry for Illinois. Irons noted that the current struggle for the industry is determining the price point for the sale of Asian Carp through negotiated discussions on trade with China.

Mitchell noted that Irons had mentioned at a previous meeting that one of the issues with marketing Asian Carp as food and shipping the fish to other locations was in finding affordable and available transport. Mitchell asked if this issue was still a concern for the industry. Irons responded that he understood that some of the imports coming from China arrive in transporting crates that return empty, so it would seem that the industry should be able to move the product in existing conditions. However, he confirmed that transporting the fish by implementing a new, refrigerated transportation system would be costly.

A member of the public asked if there were concerns about the long-term implications of encouraging the growth of the market for commercial Asian Carp fishing. Irons noted that there are concerns, which should be mitigated by industry practices and the broad spread of commercial fisheries.

A member of the public asked if the goal of the IDNR was to fish the Asian Carp out of the Illinois River, or simply move them down the Illinois River. Irons responded that the IDNR would prefer to remove the Asian Carp entirely by fishing them out of the waterway. Irons noted that while the Asian Carp appeared to be extremely sustainable, Asian Carp are putting increased pressure on other species that are not as sustainable. Removing the fish from the waterways would alleviate some of this pressure and benefit the ecosystem.

Lt. Governor Simon introduced John Marlin, the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center, to provide the Council with an update on the Mud to Parks 2012 program.

Mud to Parks 2012 Update – John Marlin, the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center

A study done by the Illinois State Water Survey shows that from the period of 1903 to 1985, sediment in the Peoria Lakes has increased significantly across the system. Peoria Lake used to be 6-8 feet deep only a few decades ago, whereas today, it is difficult to find an area more than two feet deep. The steady increase of sedimentation causes significant upstream issues, including: loss of reservoir capacity, decrease in recreation and navigation, lowered water supplies, loss of habitat, and decrease in native species populations.

Sedimentation increase is not only a problem for larger rivers which erode their streambanks. The Illinois State Water Survey has studied water supply reservoirs within Illinois and has found that they all are anticipated to accumulate heavy sedimentation between 1990 and 2030. In total, all water supply reservoirs within the state of Illinois are anticipated to see a total increase of 153 million cubic yards of sediment within this forty year period.

The soil deposited by sedimentation, however, can be extremely valuable. Bagged soil is mainly undefined, unregulated, and used as a loss leader in stores. At the same time, topsoil is often mass graded at construction sites, where workers scrape off the top layer of soil and sell it, rather than keeping it nearby for future use. This means that pure soil is a valuable commodity.

The Illinois State Water Survey has done several research studies on the sediment found within Peoria Lake. They have found that it does not contain contaminants, nor does it contain invasive species that do not exist in the Chicago area or Louisiana, which are two areas requiring uncontaminated soil. This makes the sediment within the Peoria Lake extremely valuable.

The Mud to Parks program was granted an \$8 million appropriation by Governor Quinn to use sediment from areas such as Peoria Lake to help build parks and recreational areas. Currently, there are five active Mud to Parks projects to which funding has been allocated. These projects are hosted by the City of Decatur, the Litchfield Park District, the City of East Peoria, the City of Chicago, and the Fox Waterway Agency. In total, these projects will account for nearly \$5.4 million of the Mud to Parks appropriation. Of this amount, the largest portion – nearly \$4.5 million – will go to the City of Chicago to renovate industrial areas and older park systems.

Main entities involved in the Mud to Parks programs are: the City of Chicago, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Chicago Park District, U.S. Steel Corporation, Chicago Lakeside Development, the City of East Peoria, the Fon du Lac Park District, ARTCO Fleeting, and ADM.

There are significant advantages to using Peoria pool sediment as topsoil. These advantages include:

1. Restoring river habitat and recreation channels;
2. Providing soil to restoration projects;
3. *Not* removing soil from farmland, subdivisions, or construction sites;
4. *Not* trucking soil long distances over highways or through neighborhoods; and
5. Utilizing consistent soil quality throughout the project.

Another project suggested by Mud to Parks was to remove topsoil from Walton Lake in Litchfield, Illinois. The lake was drained due to a failure at the nearby dam, and there was about 3-4 feet of pure topsoil within the lake. Mud to Parks suggested finding the funding to remove the 3-4 feet of topsoil to

store it and sell it at a later date. While Mud to Parks was unable to immediately find a donor or sponsor for with the available funding required for this project, the City of Litchfield was able to raise around \$7,000 to hire a contractor to remove a portion of the topsoil from the lake for use at the city's baseball fields. Further, Mud to Parks was later able to secure a grant for the City of Litchfield, and another portion of Walton Lake's topsoil will be harvested for use at the city's water treatment plant.

While standard dredging techniques are economical, the mud that is removed is highly watered and has the consistency of a liquid. For this reason, these operations require utilizing a large area of land to allow the water to settle and drain into useable topsoil. Mud to Parks offers solutions for interested parties who are unable to acquire the equipment needed to dredge in this manner, or the space required to allow the watered-down soil to drain.

Millennium Reserve is the major project for Mud to Parks, which will rehabilitate old industrial areas and revitalize parks in Chicago. Over 3,500 acres in Chicago need topsoil, which will come from a number of sources from along the Illinois River and even the Mississippi River.

The future of programs such as Mud to Parks will be based on the involvement of interested researchers, who must look at ways to economically transport topsoil removed from waters in Illinois. These types of programs will allow Illinois to use the topsoil trapped in water reservoirs, rather than purchasing lower quality soil from external sources.

The PowerPoint for this presentation may be accessed [here](#).

Questions for Marlin

Mitchell asked if other states or other countries had begun to adopt similar programs. Marlin responded that the program was still in its beginning stages and that it did not appear to be adopted, as of yet, in many other areas. However, Marlin commented that he has received numerous questions and comments which show interest in the program. Marlin noted that two delegations from China visiting Illinois specifically asked to see the work being done by the Mud to Parks program. Unfortunately, transportation costs for moving the topsoil remain high, and might be a barrier to the spread of the Mud to Parks program. Further, Marlin commented that many of the potential sites that could be considered for this type of project have contaminated sediment, which should not be used as topsoil.

Dave Utter, citizen, noted that several citizens in Beardstown were interested in dredging the Beardstown Marina. He asked what the city would need to do to become involved in the Mud to Parks program. Marlin responded that Beardstown would first need to find a use for the soil and ensure that it is quality topsoil, rather than sand.

Lt. Governor Simon moved to a discussion of the potential sand mine near Starved Rock State Park.

Discussion of Potential Sand Mine

Lt. Governor Simon thanked members of the Council for being active and involved in the permitting processes for the potential sand mine near Starved Rock State Park. She noted that in looking at the permitting processes for this particular sand mine, she felt that the area that required the most

discussion would be the fact that the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) held two distinct and conflicting roles as both the owner of the Starved Rock State Park and one of the agencies responsible for permitting the potential sand mine. Lt. Governor Simon commented that the Office of the Lt. Governor is currently looking into the rules and regulations behind this scenario and considering where adjustments might be made to allow the IDNR to fully participate in both of its roles related to this type of sand mine.

Mitchell voiced her agreement with Lt. Governor Simon's comments on the IDNR's role in the permitting processes of this potential sand mine. Mitchell also commented that the multiple timelines which arise from each individual permit required by all involved agencies – the IDNR, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – seemed to be confusing for the individuals interested in monitoring and participating in the permitting processes. She voiced her opinion that the fact that the permitting processes are separate and distinct for each of the agencies was problematic, as it made it difficult for individuals to become involved in the processes. Further, Mitchell voiced her concern that although each agency maintained that it was following its regulatory requirements during the permitting processes, the law did not always appear to serve the interests of the public. She voiced her belief that the state and federal agencies involved in the permitting processes for sand mines should do more to listen to the members of the public who live in the area surrounding the potential mining location. Mitchell thanked the Lt. Governor and the IRCC for providing an area in which members of the public could speak on the issue.

Lt. Governor Simon thanked Mitchell for her comments on the issue.

Worthen noted that the IRCC was brought together to confront issues along the Illinois River. He commented that the Illinois River constituted a public commons and reflects the health of the land around it. Worthen voiced his opinion that the environment is degrading and voiced his concern that not enough is being done to confront issues related to the environment. Worthen commented that there are many areas that individuals could work together to address these issues and create a common vision for improvement. Worthen urged the Council to think in terms that are as large as the accomplishments made by Marlin on the Mud to Parks program in order to solve these environmental issues.

Lt. Governor Simon opened the meeting for members of the public to make comments.

Public Comment Period

Lt. Governor Simon introduced Dave Utter. Utter played a short film which described sedimentation in the Mascouten Bay area, its causes, and its effects.

Film on Sedimentation in the Beardstown Marina – Dave Utter

Mascouten Bay and the Beardstown Marina were once thriving entryways into the Illinois River that promoted many types of recreational activities, commercial fishing operations, and river-based businesses. Now, Mascouten Bay and the Beardstown Marina have been almost completely inundated with sedimentation flowing downstream from the Sangamon River, which has cut off the city's access to the river.

The 1936 Flood Control Act authorized the USACE to move the mouth of the Sangamon River from a spot near Browning, Illinois to an area in which siltation would be directly deposited into the Beardstown area near Mascouten Bay and the Beardstown Marina. This has caused filling of Mascouten Bay and nearly complete filling of the Beardstown Marina with sediment. This has ended many of the opportunities previously available in the area and impacted the fish and wildlife species in the Mascouten Bay.

The film argues that the USACE knew of the damages that would be caused to Mascouten Bay, and that the USACE ignored the urgings of local communities, environmental and conservation organizations, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to discontinue the project. The film argues the USACE purposefully planned to use Mascouten Bay as a stilling basin to keep sediment from reaching the Illinois River, even though an independent study provided to the USACE showed that the bay would completely fill with sediment in 20-30 years.

The film also suggests that the USACE has been negligent in addressing the issue and attempting to alleviate the sedimentation problem. It discusses only two attempts to address the issue: the construction of a bedload rock diversion dike in the early 1980s and the creation of a settling pond which was used to store dredge material from a project completed in the 1990s. The film further suggests that the settling pond was abandoned by the USACE, and has now become a stagnant pool which acts as a mosquito breeding ground and traps fish in times of high-water, leaving them to die when the water recedes.

The film suggests two potential solutions that members of the public would like to see implemented within the Beardstown Marina and Mascouten Bay: maintenance dredging and the construction of more dikes and levees to protect the city's riverfront area.

Lt. Governor Simon thanked Utter for his comments and complemented his work on the video.

Lt. Governor Simon asked if Steve Rumble, Project Manager for the USACE, Rock Island District, had any comments to make on the video.

Comments Regarding Mascouten Bay – Steve Rumble, Project Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District

Rumble noted that while he did not work specifically within the Mascouten Bay area, he was a part of several projects along the Illinois River. He thanked Utter for his comments and the time he spent filming and producing the video.

Rumble noted that he could not speak directly to the decisions made 60 years ago to authorize the original project which altered the course of the Sangamon River, but that he would attempt to comment on the ability of the USACE to work within the area. He noted that the funding for USACE differs from that of many other agencies, in that the USACE does not get a lump sum of funding each year to delegate to projects as it chooses. Rather, Rumble noted that the funding provided to the USACE is allocated to specific projects by Congress and the USACE may only do what Congress has authorized. At this point in time, the USACE has not been given the authority to remove sediment from within the Beardstown Marina. Further, Rumble noted, most of the work completed by the USACE requires a cost-share agreement with federal, state or local

partners in the project area, which the USACE does not have in the Beardstown area at this time.

Rumple informed the Council that as far back as 2009, the USACE worked to produce legislative drafts that could potentially be authorized by Congress, which would provide funding to a project in Beardstown. That wording was originally sponsored by Congressman Aaron Schock, whose office brought the issue forward to the Rock Island District. Congressman Schock was then partnered with officials within the district office to work toward formally drafting the legislation. However, Rumple noted, the draft legislation did not move forward in 2009 and new drafts have not been created in recent years.

Rumple commented that there is a great deal of history to this issue and that many potential solutions have been considered and tried. However the USACE's main responsibility is to the maintenance of the main river channels in support of navigation, which is why other projects have taken precedence over the dredging of the Beardstown Marina.

Rumple reiterated that for the USACE to be able to move forward on this issue, Congress would have to authorize funding for the project.

Rumple noted that Marc Ayers, Office of the Lt. Governor, had provided Rumple with a summary of Utter's film prior to the meeting, which Rumple passed to his superiors. He also mentioned that he would be briefing Marshall Plumley, Project Manager for the USACE, Rock Island District on what had occurred at the meeting. Plumley has previously been involved in the discussions on Mascouten Bay and the Beardstown Marina, and would likely be the best point of contact for further questions on the issue.

Lt. Governor Simon suggested that Ayers work to facilitate the sharing of contact information between Utter and members of the USACE Rock Island District.

Utter mentioned that Ayers had been extremely helpful, prior to the meeting, in keeping Utter informed. He also noted that he was grateful to the Council for allowing his group to come to speak at the meeting.

Mitchell asked if an update could be provided to the Council on the permitting processes for the potential sand mine near Starved Rock State Park, as this meeting is the final quarterly meeting of the year. Lt. Governor Simon noted that the Council should stay in touch through contact with Ayers, who would provide the Council with updates on information received by the Office of the Lt. Governor concerning the potential sand mine.

Lt. Governor Simon invited Tracy Yang, Illinois Sierra Club, to speak regarding the potential sand mine near Starved Rock State Park.

Comments Regarding the Potential Sand Mine – Tracy Yang

Yang noted that the purpose of the Illinois Sierra Club is to protect and preserve natural resources, including land, air, and water. In consideration of its mission, the Illinois Sierra Club is

opposed to the potential sand mine which would be in operation near the East entrance to Starved Rock State Park.

Yang voiced her concern that the mine may have a negative environmental impact on:

1. Land, through the mining process;
2. Air, due to the silica sand dust emitted by the mining process; and
3. Water, due to the discharge water that would enter Horseshoe Creek.

Yang noted that the air permit and the storm water construction permit required for the potential sand mine were recently approved by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). A NPDES discharge permit is still pending approval from the IEPA, and a mining permit for the site is still pending approval from the IDNR. Yang voiced disappointment in the fact that the storm water construction permit was approved as a general NPDES permit, despite comments made by the Illinois Sierra Club urging the IEPA to require an individual NPDES permit, which is site-specific. She voiced her belief that the individual NPDES permit would have been an important addition to the permitting processes, as one of the requirements of an NPDES permit is a public comment period. Yang voiced her opinion that the NPDES discharge permit which is still pending for the site should be approved only as an individual permit.

Yang thanked Lt. Governor Simon and the IRCC for allowing the Illinois Sierra Club to have a voice in the permitting processes during the Council meetings.

Yang informed the Council that the Illinois Sierra Club would be holding a public meeting to discuss the potential sand mine on October 28 in LaSalle County. The day-long event will feature hikes through the Starved Rock State Park, a discussion with adjacent land owners who have concerns about the potential sand mine, and an open meeting at the Grizzly Bear Lodge in North Utica, Illinois. Yang invited members of the Council and the public to contact her for further information on the meeting at Tracy.Yang@sierraclub.org.

Mitchell asked Yang if the Illinois Sierra Club still had outstanding Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests concerning the permitting processes for the potential sand mine. Yang confirmed that there were still FOIA requests pending. She noted that the outstanding FOIA requests include: (1) a request sent to the IEPA for their chemical and biological analyses on Horseshoe Creek; (2) a request sent to the Illinois Historical Preservation Agency (IHPA) for a full copy of the memorandum of agreement between the IHPA, IEPA and the mining company concerning the artifacts at the mining site; (3) a request sent to the IHPA for a full copy of the archaeological survey completed at the potential mining site; and (4) a request sent to the IDNR for a list of all active mines within LaSalle County.

Lt. Governor Simon thanked the members of the Council for attending the meeting.

Lt. Governor Simon invited any additional comments from members of the Council or members of the public.

Mitchell asked to read letters from the Calhoun family of LaSalle County who could not be in attendance at this meeting. Lt. Governor Simon noted that the members of the Council each had copies of the letters in their meeting materials, and asked if Mitchell would allow the members to read those letters after the meeting. Mitchell confirmed that the members could read the letters outside of the meeting.

Mitchell noted that some issues, regarding the pending permits from the IDNR and the IEPA and the outstanding FOIA requests from the Illinois Sierra Club, are still outstanding. She asked if the Office of the Lt. Governor could keep the Council informed concerning these remaining issues. Lt. Governor Simon responded that the Office of the Lt. Governor would monitor the remaining issues and attempt to provide information to the Council and any interested members of the public.

Adjournment

Lt. Governor Simon asked Ayers if dates were scheduled for the next year's Council meetings. Ayers responded that dates and times have not yet been scheduled. Maria Capoccia, Office of the Lt. Governor, noted that the next meeting would be after the start of the new calendar year, in 2013.

The meeting was adjourned.