



Table Discussion Report

March 15, 2017

Question 1. What are the benefits or disadvantages of recreation and tourism in the watershed to:

- a. cities and towns
- b. farmers and other landowners
- c. the natural environment

a) Benefits to cities and towns:

- Businesses and economic opportunities
- Increases economic diversity and tax value
- Increases traffic/visibility which expands opportunity for small businesses & arts
- Revenue
- Physical activity
- Increases tourism
- Provides resources to enjoy (put energy into it, brand it)
- Recreation-keep kids close (St. Charles-lake-play)
- Promotes access to nature
- Event tourism
- Creates jobs

b) Benefits to farmers and other landowners:

- Leasing for recreation
- Economic benefits
- Can boost farmers markets which increase awareness and appreciation for food
- Awareness of natural environment, perspective
- Direct marketing and farm to table (small farms)
- Land value
- Possible highway improvements
- Conservation options
- Bring purchases to pumpkin patches/corn maze
- Trails keep bicyclists off motor vehicle roads
- Ownership of roads (need safety for cars and bikes)

c) Benefits to the natural environment:

- Protects and add value
- Preserves use and cultural assets,
- Increases awareness of ongoing enrichment issues
- Creates connections and accessibility to expose people to Mother Nature
- Promotes stewardship
- Mental health benefits because recreation improves learning and physical health
- Can increase communication of people involved in the watershed because paddlers, motorboats, barges, speed boats, barge companies talking to each other and educating groups of people about the River

a) Disadvantages to cities and towns:

- Waste and litter
- Increases traffic which could lead to infrastructure challenges
- Crime
- Fear of the unknown,
- Property damage via abuse
- Residential area conversion to B&B (B&Bs take money away from places to live in town)
- Roads not safe bikes + cars

b) Disadvantages to farmers and other landowners:

- Nuisance
- Trespassing
- Security/vandalism
- Potential fire hazards
- Property damage
- Erosion issues from trails
- Fear of the unknown
- Trash
- Need to honor private property rights
- Tourist on road not alert to car/truck use

c) Disadvantages to the natural environment

- Littering and waste
- Population increase
- Disrespecting the environment
- Stress on environment from over use
- Erosion/general degradation
- Harm to wildlife or the ecosystem

Question 2. What impacts can water quality have on recreation, tourism and economic development?

- Aesthetic quality, appearance, smell, pollution

- Use as a “brand” perception of water quality on community quality
- Water quality can affect all of a community if not addressed as a whole
- No improvements to tourism or economy will occur
- Who determines what is clean? Must understand the competing interests, understand that the better the water quality, the better the experience of recreation, tourism and economic development
- There is a cost benefit analysis to confirm “improvements” are economically attainable/feasible
- Discussion on the degree of water quality needed
- Everyone wants to be around clean water, 43% of population get water from the Missouri River
- Costs to clean up waste and urban storm drains, drop in tourism if poor water quality
- MO River actually has good water quality; perception is MO River is dirty. Education is needed to promote the river
- MO River underutilized for recreation.
- It’s important for people to know it takes a lot of funds to treat wastewater. Poor water quality increases bills of local people to pay
- Catfish of MO River attract anglers and economic development
- Visual quality of MO River can negate desire to fish
- Concerned about algae blooms, trash/appearance, invasive species like honeysuckle and carp
- Perceptions, real or imagined, about health concerns- e. coli issues, bad water quality means people won’t want to come
- Money would have to be used to fix water quality issues which is a deterrent to economic development. Less cost to treat water means more money to invest in the community
- Over regulation - regulating businesses so they don’t want to stay or develop in the area
- More tourism means notoriety so clean water provides opportunities for return visitors and economic development.
- Poor water quality is a disincentive for economic development
- Poor water quality presents increased health hazards to humans and wildlife, livestock, increased risk/damage to existing ecosystem, increased cost of treatment and loss of additional opportunities to invest in the community

Question 3. How can communities in urban and rural parts of the watershed play a role in improving water quality and ensuring recreation, tourism and economic development meet local communities’ needs?

- Identify common ground
 - Mission clean stream can bring all groups together
- A regional group can assist with continually engaging
- Bridge the gap - groups need to understand each other’s perceptions
- Help people understand the value of watershed groups and stakeholders
 - be inclusive
 - be respectful
 - listen to each other
- Communication/education
- Conservation practices

- Operation Clean Stream- demonstrable involvement
- Watershed awareness, education, outreach
- Small efforts in own yard
- Large efforts at community level
- Representation from a diverse range of interests, willing to openly communicate
- Educate young people
- Enforce regulatory requirements
- More opportunities for disposal of hazardous substances-businesses could provide information at time of sale
- Better landscaping and land practices
- Keep the public informed
- Better signage and wayfinding
- Make sure local residents have access to jobs and access to amenities
- Keep the water clean and meet all necessary regulations
- Farmers are blamed for nitrogen but fertilizer plants are likely a point source of pollution
- Educate people about lawns and fertilizer, promote natural alternatives
- Conservation easement requires 10 year maintenance which could be detrimental to people trying sell property
- Point source pollution from wastewater and urban waste bypassed into storm drains - need to ensure sewer systems are up to date
- Communities don't focus on issues that are out of site
- Awareness- don't litter/pollute
- Community service- trash pick-ups, pet waste control
- Developing riverfront events/connecting people to their environment and resources
- People need to view the rivers as an asset, not just be aware of it when it floods

Question 4. How can Our Missouri Waters facilitate communication between and action among communities and interest groups within the watershed?

- Highlight good practices and share those innovative attempts with other groups to inform and educate possibilities. Be a large voice for the small groups so upward change can begin.
- Reach out to other kinds of organizations like churches, service organizations. Work to overcome misunderstandings between urban and rural interests and build understandings.
- Involve MoDOT
- More watershed conferences to help facilitate communication between river stakeholders
- Social media and press releases. Come speak to boards of aldermen and chambers of commerce.
- The question needs to be expanded to add the words "landowners." Reduce the perception of exclusion. Make sure communication continues to state "your opinion matters and will be considered."
- People have to realize our common interest in the watershed. Need outreach between and representation from all the groups that have interest in the watershed. Perhaps this group needs to coordinate between all those interested.

- Meetings focused on presenting different ideas from various groups where there is no right or wrong answers and present everything as voluntary solutions.
- Broaden the invitations to all attendees/panelists, all cities, counties, etc. Use email list with “opt out” to communicate.
- Need to keep everyone continuously engaged. Or at least a representative of everyone coming to Missouri River Country meetings.
- Provide information to the various municipalities (managers/aldermen). Public involvement in schools, churches.
- Promote the successes.
- Agriculture is misunderstood among many of the “interested parties.” MO water should facilitate agricultural education with the support of the agriculture industry.
- Better communication between the interested folks on the next steps of the project would be helpful. Finding ways to talk/discuss about this project at the meetings with common interest groups would help too.
- After have general focus, invite municipalities, general public, environmental groups and special interest groups to meetings to invite participation to develop a plan. Then continue to have meetings and continue to develop plans and alternatives.
- Come up with specific projects to get involved in so we can see some actual results of activity.
- OMW should remind all groups to which they speak – that we all want the same thing: healthy, abundant, sustainable natural resources for now and the future. Whether you are a farmer, an urbanite, a bicyclist, a canoeist – find that common ground.
- Continue to meet, discuss the issues. Find common ground. Be open/inclusive, respectful to each other’s views/perspectives.