Upper Mississippi River Region Inter-League Organization

Action Committee Video Conference 2-27-2023 at 4:00 P.M.

**Present:** Gretchen Sabel (MN), Kay Slama (MN), Lonnie McCauley (MN), Catherine Franczyk (IL), Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins (WI), Sue Wilson (IA), Tamara Prenosil (IA)

The participants of this meeting included six MRR-ILO Board members.

**Old Business:** Kay Slama moved, and Sue Wilson seconded that the minutes of the 1-23-2023 be accepted. Motion carried.

**Affiliate Reports:**

Minnesota: The legislature approved the bill for 100% Clean energy for 2024. However, power plants can apply for waivers. Kay Slama reported the Inflation Reduction Act includes a lot of money for carbon capture therefore it encourages extraction of fossil fuels. A Minnesota group is developing a market for Kernsa.

Illinois: LWV had an issues briefing regarding the CO2 pipelines. There is a coalition of non-profits to begin to phase out some plastics.

Iowa: The legislature is talking about guidelines for foreign companies to buy farmland especially for non-farm activities. There is considerable discussion against CO2 piplines. Black Rock is one pipeline investor

Wisconsin: Some farmers have taken more water from wells than their permits allowed. A company in Bayfield wants to get a permit to take water from artesian wells to sell.

**Update on LWVUS regarding the policy on advocacy permission**:

The bill number has been taken off MRRRI. Carolyn Mahlum- Jenkins was hoping to use a sample letter regarding MRRRI to use with other UMRR-ILO requests. Until we get permission from LWVUS we cannot ask membership for action. (However, as individuals we can write our federal legislators.)

The Upper Mississippi River Basin (UMBR) includes Missouri as well as Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin. The group continues to discuss water quantity issues (ethanol and beer take a lot of water to produce.)

**Actions by member States:**

Minnesota will have a MRN ‘Celebrate the River’ event in conjunction with their state convention in New Ulm. They will give away copies of the book For Love of a River by Darby Nelson aas well as seed packets. The LWVMN promoted an article from the Izaac Walton League ‘Think like a Watershed’.

Iowa will have an exhibitor table for UMRR-ILO at its state convention.

Wisconsin LWV is asking for more members to join its natural resources committee.

**Announcements/Other:** States should submit a very short report for the annual meeting.

Submitted by Tamara Prenosil