

Groups team up to assess Missouri River

By Travis Gulbrandson

travis.gulbrandson@plaintalk.net

The floods along the Missouri River and elsewhere this past summer caused untold damages in multiple states.

Now, several groups are working together to find out just how the river was affected, both above and below the water.

Steve Mietz, superintendent of the Missouri National Recreational River – a unit of the Wild and Scenic River System managed by the National Park Service – discussed this post-flood assessment during a presentation in the W.H. Over Museum Tuesday night.

“We teamed up with the Missouri River Institute here at the (University of South Dakota), and also with the Corps of Engineers,” Mietz said. “We’ve gone up and down the entire river – we actually just completed that study last week. We looked at all shoreline, took photographs of every mile of shoreline and every place that needed clean-up. ...

“We documented every type of geomorphic change in the river that we could see,” he said.

The results of the assessment have only just been completed, and have not

yet been made public, but eventually will be placed on the Missouri National Recreational River’s Web site.

Two of the major focuses of the assessment are clean-up and bank stabilization.

Volunteers now are being sought to help with some of the clean-up, but some of the materials now in the water are hazardous, requiring the assistance of the Environment Protection Agency.

“There’s all types of material – there are propane tanks, all types of hazardous material up and down the river that we’re going to have to deal with,” Mietz said.

Two of the larger items featured in the presentation were a refrigerator, and a full-size Airstream trailer submerged in the mud.

In some cases, clean-up and stabilization go hand-in-hand. Many people along the shoreline erected their own barriers against the floodwater using items such as rock and broken chunks of concrete.

These, however, were unpermitted.

“Folks that want to stabilize their banks anywhere are required under the Clean Water Act and the River and Harbors Act to seek a permit through the Corps of Engineers to alter that

waterway,” Mietz said. “Within the Wild and Scenic River, the Corps of Engineers is then required to seek our consultation on whether it is appropriate, and if it is appropriate, what kind of stipulations the people must do to maintain the wild and scenic areas of the river. ...

“Where we do see bank stabilization that is not permitted, or has not been permitted yet, we will be talking to the Corps and telling them to contact the landowner in seeking a permit, and then we’ll go through that regulatory process,” he said.

When a permit is given, it usually is done so because the barrier will be created using “natural” materials.

Mietz said piling chunks of concrete on the shore “is not good stabilization,” and can result in those concrete pieces being swept in the water should they become submerged.

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STEVE MIETZ

“All it’s doing then is polluting the river,” he said.

Historic and archeological sites in several states also are being affected, with some having to partially shut down due to flooding.

“Some of the archeological sites are being threatened right now, so the superintendent (in those areas) is issuing an environmental impact statement to look at how they can best save those archeological sites,” Mietz said.

This can be done in several ways, including riverbank stabilization or removing site materials and placing them in a museum.

The second solution is not as likely, though.

“The park service generally prefers to leave archeological materials in place, and not remove them,” Mietz said.

Despite all the destruction, there have been some positives, he said.

For one, visitation was up, even though parts of the river were closed.

A number of sandbars and chutes also were created by the increased transport of sediment, which will be beneficial to several endangered species of birds and fish, Mietz said.

“You get all these wonderful geomorphic features,” he said. “I would expect ... that there will be a boom in the fisheries this next year. The productivity will blossom not only because of all the materials that have been churned up and put into the river, but because all this great shallow-water habitat has increased.”

Tuesday’s presentation was sponsored by the Living Group of the South Dakota Sierra Club.

For more information, visit www.nps.gov/mnrr.

PARADE

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weather and the wind so that we can see how they will react and make any last minute adjustments that we need before parade day.”

Julius, Piper noted, is over 60 feet long. “Sonic is in a very fast, sort of running pose, so he’s taller but not as long,” he said in the video. “Julius’ arm-span is 39 feet wide; he’s going to have this wonderful glide as he comes down the parade route.”

It takes a lot of manpower not only to design and build the balloons, but also to get them off the ground on parade day and help them safely glide high over the streets of New York City on Nov. 24.

“All of the giant balloons will have about 50 lines – maybe a little less, maybe a little more,” Piper said. “But we’ll recruit over 70 handlers so that we make sure that we have extras and can double-up if need be. You’ve got the 70 people as handlers, you’ve got a pilot, two co-pilots, a captain, two assistant captains, and three people each with the two vehicles.

“That’s a group of 14, plus you have the inflation team and the de-netting team of about another 30 people surrounding the balloon to take everything off to get it prepped and get the

balloon up in the air,” he said. “Our folks at command that are up at the corner telling them when they get in. It takes a lot of folks to get one balloon up in the air and marching down the parade route.”

“It’s the 85th anniversary of the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade, and the parade itself is a cultural icon,” said Kule. “Every year, people look forward to seeing this parade make its way down the streets of New York, bringing the best of America’s high school and college marching bands, the biggest floats, and the most wonderful balloons. It is the kick off of the holiday season.”

Kule said she and others involved with the parade get to see the various pieces of the event as they are put together each year. Her favorite part of the entire process is seeing the reaction of people when they view all of those separate pieces put together as part of the parade.

“There is nothing like parade day when you see a fan look up in the sky and marvel at one of the magnificent giants taking to the sky during the parade,” she said.

The parade will kick off at 9 a.m. Nov. 24, and will feature 15 giant character balloons; 44 novelty/ornament balloons, balloonicles and balloonheads; 27 floats; 1,600 cheerleaders, dancers and performance group members; 800 clowns; 11 marching bands; a host of celebrity performers, and Santa Claus.

delusion because I think it’s a wildly inaccurate picture of how human interaction actually works,” he said.

Emanuel said people are affected in positive and negative ways by elements over which they have no control, including where and to whom they are born, as well as the people they encounter.

“If I take advantage of the opportunities that come my way, then good for me,” he said. “I deserve something out of that. But pretending that everything that I’ve achieved is a result of my hard work alone is delusional. ...

“No man is an island, no woman is an island, and any economic system that pretends that they are an island is fundamentally disconnected from the way the world works,” he said.

When the system itself is “disconnected” and only takes account of those who earn the most, it is going to affect society at large, Emanuel said, citing as examples drilling in the Gulf of Mexico by British Petroleum, and investment companies making decisions “that directly affect millions of people.”

Mike Myers, an associate professor at the USD School of

Law who also has done extensive work in the field of health care, said decisions on a smaller scale also can be affected.

Myers said he used to host a radio program on Saturday mornings where he would make observations about the health care system — until the show was promptly canceled one week.

A year later, he said he learned that a donor from Catholic Health Care Systems had complained about the program to the station manager.

“In a true marketplace, (the station manager) did exactly what I would have done, or you would have done. He said, ‘Myers, you’re done.’”

Emanuel said these decisions, large and small, “have consequences not just for corporations, but for society at large. I come to the question, why don’t the rest of us get a chance to participate in making these decisions, even when they intimately affect us? ...

“It is in effect taxation without representation. And that, I think, is what this movement is about. Or what it could be about, at least,” he said.

The forum was moderated by Dr. Benno Wymar.

JANKLOW

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providing lots of assistance to different individuals who have problems.”

He said one of the things he is doing is establishing a foundation at the University of South Dakota to fund scholarships for students who can’t afford to pay for school.

Janklow was elected governor in 1978 and served two four-year terms. He lost the Republican Senate primary in 1986 to the incumbent, Jim Abdnor, and then joined an investment firm and later a law firm.

He served another two four-year terms as governor beginning in 1994. He was elected in 2002 to the U.S. House, but his career was cut short after he sped through a stop sign and killed Randy Scott of Hardwick, MN, in an Aug. 16, 2003, accident in Moody County north of Sioux Falls.

Janklow talked about his legacy – “I gave a damn about what I did” – and said his only

regret is the 2003 accident.

“If I had to do it over, I’d do everything I did, but I’d stop at a stop sign,” he said as he broke down in tears.

Janklow was returning to his Brandon home after attending an event in Aberdeen when he ran the stop sign. Part of his defense was that as a diabetic, his senses and reflexes were dulled from low blood sugar. He said he had no clear memory of the collision.

A jury convicted Janklow of second-degree manslaughter and three other charges. He was sentenced to 100 days in jail.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard, who served in the Legislature during Janklow’s last six years as governor, said Janklow did a lot to shape the modern South Dakota, including making the state a leader in connecting classrooms to the Internet.

“It’s certainly very unexpected and very sad. He certainly has a long history of public service for which South Dakota should be grateful,” Daugaard told The Associated Press.

During his first two terms as governor, Janklow engineered the state’s purchase of a rail line, worked to change state laws on interest rates in a successful effort to lure Citibank and other credit-card companies to South Dakota, and persuaded the Legislature to convert the University of South Dakota-Springfield campus into a prison.

He also negotiated a deal to sell Missouri River water to a company that wanted to use it in a pipeline that would have shipped Wyoming coal to southern states, but the project failed.

After returning to the governor’s office in 1995, Janklow persuaded the Legislature to pass his plan for cutting property taxes. He also won approval for building a new women’s prison and facilities for juvenile offenders.

“He was always leaning forward for the state, and he left a mark,” said South Dakota Sen. John Thune. “I think he’s certainly impacted South Dakota and will continue to impact it for generations.”

FORUM

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as part of the regular International Forum, which took place in Farber Hall.

Paraphrasing poet Allen Ginsberg, Wilson said, “We’ve got to put our shoulders to the wheel. We’ve got to do all we can to reform the system. We need to learn more about the world’s largest casino, Wall Street.”

Wilson said that wages as a share of the national income are at their lowest level since the Great Depression, that the number of Americans living in poverty is at an all-time high and that 16.5 percent of Americans are unemployed or under-employed.

She suggested that the Federal Reserve could step in to help solve these problems.

“The Fed acted urgently to save Wall Street when it was on the verge of collapse. We need the Fed to act with the same boldness to combat unemployment,” she said. “The Federal Reserve has a responsibility to ensure the safety and soundness of financial institutions. Should a bank that is ‘too big to fail’ be allowed to exist in the first place? ...

“We deserve a Federal Reserve that works for us, not just the CEOs on Wall Street. Unregulated capitalism has the potential to destroy the environment and the future of the human race. We cannot allow that to happen,” she said.

Tom Emanuel, political science major and Truman Scholar at USD, said he has been thinking about the idea of the capitalistic system since the Occupy Wall Street movement started earlier this year.

“The way I see it, our capitalist system revolves around a central idea, which is that those who work harder will have better economic success, and so conversely, those who have greater economic success must have worked harder to get it. And because they worked harder to get it, they deserve to do what they like with the fruits of their labor,” he said.

This is the basic principle behind the American Dream, he said, although he added it could be more accurately described as the “American delusion.”

“I call it the American

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