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June 16, 2010

### FROM STEVE'S DESK Taylor

by Steve

#### Focus on Transportation



At the MO-AG Summer Meeting last year, we focused on issues that specifically impacted the grain industry. At this year's Summer Meeting, the focus is on an issue that impacts us all - transportation. In agribusiness, whether it is getting input products to the field in the spring or getting production off

the farm, everything we do requires a good transportation system.

We do have several transportation concerns. Missouri seems to be in an on-going struggle to maintain our roads and bridges. The railroads are forever hiking rail rates. And, just as disturbing, the railroads are attempting to shift all liabilities to the shipper. We continue to push for reform of the Surface Transportation Board (STB). We need an STB that will demand transparency regarding rates and that will prevent railroads from shifting liability. We need reform that strengthens the railroad's common carrier obligation. We should even review the need to possibly eliminate the railroads' anti-trust exemption to bring more accountability to railroads.

For our Summer Meeting, I have invited Daren Coppock, President & CEO of Agricultural Retailers Association (ARA), to be our guest speaker during our dinner banquet Thursday night. Daren and his staff at ARA are doing an excellent job promoting our transportation

**Shawnteetown Feed & Seed**  
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interests in Washington. I can attest to this first-hand. While in Washington earlier this year, your MO-AG Chairman Rex Martin and I, along with ARA staff, visited with our Congressional Delegation on transportation issues. With assistance from ARA, Missouri Congressmen Blaine Luetkemeyer and Sam Graves have led the way in the United States Congress for agricultural transportation issues, such as maintaining the hours of service (HOS) exemption. (See related HOS article below)

I am looking forward to having Daren as our guest.

I have also invited Dr. Ernie Perry to speak to us during the Members' Meeting Friday morning. Ernie is the Administrator of Freight Development at the Missouri Department of Transportation in Jefferson City. Currently, he is working on projects to re-establish freight traffic on the Missouri river and to develop dedicated truck lanes on the major interstates. I'd invite you to take a look at the articles below concerning current Missouri River issues. Recreational interests in the upper basin states have been successful in getting Congress to approve yet another study of the Missouri River management. Supporters of this study, called the Missouri River Authorized Purposes Study (MRAPS), hoped to use it to kill navigation on the Missouri River. The work Ernie is doing will demonstrate the tremendous potential we have in the Missouri River for economical, safe, and environmentally friendly transportation.

I hope you will come and hear Dr. Perry.

Finally, I hope I don't have to remind you that the MO-AG Summer Meeting is about having a good time with friends and colleagues. You can always count on a good round of golf, trap shooting, and other fun in the beautiful Lake Ozarks area. If you haven't registered yet, I'd urge you to do so right now. You can register by mailing the registration form found in the registration brochure or by going to the MO-AG website ([click here](#)). You need to reserve your room at the Country Club Hotel & Spa by Friday July 2, 2010 to access our special rate of \$102 per night. The deadline to pre-register for the meeting is July 14, 2010. After July 14th, you can register at the event.

See you at the Lake.  
*Steve*

## REMINDERS

### **2010 MU Crop Injury Diagnostic Clinic - July 27-30**

The 2010 MU Crop Injury Diagnostic Clinic has been scheduled for July 27-30, 2010. This clinic is designed to train or update agricultural professionals in the management of crop health and field crop diagnostics. This program is sponsored by University of Missouri College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources and University Outreach and Extension. Register by calling 573-884-7945. Registration help can be obtained from Thresa Chism at the above number or by e-mail to [ChismT@missouri.edu](mailto:ChismT@missouri.edu).

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

### **Statements Made at MRAPS**

The Missouri River Authorized Purposes Study (MRAPS) meetings were held recently to garner comments on the uses of the Missouri river. More information on MRAPS and the scoping meetings can be found at the MRAPS website ([click here](#))

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Omaha and Kansas City Districts) is hosting 30 public scoping meetings and 11 Tribal-focused meetings this summer. The first six scoping meetings were recently completed in South Dakota and Missouri. Officials from Missouri defended Missouri's interests in these meetings. Here are just a few of the comments:

Comments made at the Jefferson City Scoping Meeting by Bill Bryan, Deputy Director of MDNR:

*The Missouri River is a vital resource to the State of Missouri. Any attempt to change the management of the Missouri River that is detrimental to the interests of the State of Missouri will not be taken lightly.*

*Navigation opportunities in Missouri offer a competitive transportation option that has positive*

*economic impacts.*

Comments made at the Kansas City Scoping Meeting by Mike Wells, Deputy Director of MDNR (representative of Governor Jay Nixon on interstate water issue):

*The Corps must develop alternatives that optimize both navigation and flood control benefits on both the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers; especially given that flood control and navigation are the two dominant purposes established by Congress in the 1944 Flood Control Act.*

*MRAPS provides an opportunity to evaluate the potential to increase economic benefits to both Missouri River and Mississippi River interests by operating the Missouri River in a manner that truly optimizes national economic development. Any analysis must fully consider the importance of Missouri River flows to Mississippi River navigation interests.*

Comments made at the St. Joseph Scoping Meeting by John Drew MDNR State Hydrologist:

*Shipping rates [for navigation] are lower than other modes of transportation due to the competitive advantage of navigation. These benefits have been estimated at \$100 million per year.*

*We heard from a person last night that said that if he had to shift his product from navigation to truck, he estimated it would add \$8 million to his operating costs. That is his costs, and does not include impacts to roads, traffic congestion, air emissions, and other impacts if navigation were not available.*

## **River Navigation on the Upswing**

Farmers stand to benefit from lower freight rates if more grain and fertilizer moves along the Missouri River again after an eight-year hiatus caused by low river levels.

Ernest Perry, freight development administrator at the Missouri Department of Transportation, leads an effort to study ways to increase freight travel along the Missouri, create jobs and promote an

environmentally friendlier way to transport goods. "We're having a transportation capacity crisis," Perry said. "We have too many vehicles on our highways, and it's only going to get worse. The only capacity we have left is the waterway. The river is a tremendous transportation asset that can help relieve freight-related highway congestion. It provides environmental benefits in that it is the most fuel efficient, and is an economic engine for the state."

Perry maintains that Missouri needs the MoDOT navigation study to represent the state's interests in light of the five-year Missouri River Authorized Purposes Study (MRAPS) launched in 2009. While the responsibility for MRAPS has been assigned to the Corps, "This appears to be an effort driven by the upstream states to re-evaluate the river's authorized purposes with the intention to downgrade the priority of navigation, as well as other downstream uses," Perry said.

Private companies like AGRIServices of Brunswick, LLC, continue to move grain along the Missouri River, but on a more limited basis than in the past. "We located along the Missouri so we could use barges to move grain out and fertilizer into this community," said Bill Jackson, manager of this operation that operates in the central part of the state. Last year, his company brought in 70 barge-loads of fertilizer from the Lower Mississippi, selling much of it wholesale to dealers. It also shipped 35 barges of grain downriver to New Orleans export markets.

Jackson is a member of the MoDOT project coordination team. "I support Dr. Perry's project because it promotes rational understanding of the Missouri River resource," Jackson said. [*Source: Today's Farmer, May 2010 edition*]

## **Hours of Service Exemption Study**

The U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration released the study "Agricultural Commodity and Utility Carriers Hours of Service Exemption Analysis." The purpose of this study was to assess the safety performance of agricultural commodity and utility service carriers that are exempt from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations regarding hours

of service or record-of-duty-status requirements in comparison to those that are not exempt.

The study showed mixed results. On the positive side, it showed that crash rates were actually lower for agricultural carriers operating during 2005-2008 within a 100-air-mile radius than those operating beyond this radius, except for 2008, when there was no difference in the crash rates. However, it also showed that agricultural carriers exempt from HOS had higher violation rates than non-exempt agricultural carriers for regulations pertaining to driver qualifications, vehicle maintenance, and improper loading and securement.

To see the complete study, go to the MO-AG website ([click here](#)). [Source: U.S. Dept of Transportation]

### **EPA Presents Draft Permit for Pesticide Application**

CropLife America (CLA) sees a mix of positives and areas of uncertainty in the draft National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on June 2, the permit is currently open for a 45-day public comment period. CLA intends to work closely with stakeholders and the agricultural community before submitting comments to EPA during this short timeframe. The current draft permit specifically addresses four unique situations that call for the application of crop and health protection products to water: mosquito and other flying insect pest control, aquatic weed and algae control, aquatic nuisance animal control and forest canopy pest control.

CLA's main concern is with what is not mentioned in the draft permit, specifically inadequate mention of U.S. agricultural exemptions. This opens the door for varying interpretation by a myriad of environmental and conservation organizations, and still potentially allows for farmers to fall victim to costly lawsuits and litigation. [Source: CropLife America]

### **Resolution to Stop EPA GHG**

## Regulation Fails

The Senate Republican resolution to stop the EPA from regulating greenhouse gas emissions under the Clean Air Act has failed, mostly along party lines. South Dakota Republican John Thune argued that farming and ranching - energy-intensive industries - would suffer under such regulation. "Forty-five percent of a farmer or rancher's costs are going to be increased by this back door energy tax imposed by the EPA." Fellow Republican Mike Johanns of Nebraska - a cosponsor of the Murkowski resolution - says the millions subjected to the regulations will suffer devastating costs ... "They're commercial buildings, they're hospitals, they're ethanol plants and you can keep naming business after business that will get caught up in this." Johanns says consumers will pay much higher energy costs as a result.

Senate Democrat John Kerry argued that Congress created the law upon which the finding is based ... and the Supreme Court has dictated the policy as a matter of health ... "Not as a matter of some bureaucratic rule. We don't have a rule in front of us right now Mr. President. We have a process by which the EPA is gonna go through - determine what they may or may not do." Kerry, who co-sponsors the latest Senate climate change bill, pounced on comments made by Senator Thune, "Now I heard my colleague from South Dakota come to the floor and say 'Well, all we're trying to do is delay this so Congress can act.' This is going to be the great hypocrisy test resolution." Kerry says the test will be how many lawmakers voting to stop EPA will vote for climate change legislation. "How many of them are going to be on the front lines, trying in fact to make the things happen that have to happen in order to restrain greenhouse gases?" Six Democrats, including Senate Ag Chairwoman Blanche Lincoln, voted for the resolution which failed 47 votes to 53. [Source: *Brownfield*]

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### JUNE, 2010

MO

### **JULY, 2010**

6 Missouri Pork Association's Pork Classic  
Golf  
Tournament; Columbia, MO

7 Missouri Soybean Association's Annual  
Golf Tournament;  
Shirkey Golf Course; Richmond, MO

**21-23 MO-AG Summer Meeting; Country  
Club Hotel;  
Lake Ozark, MO**

**27-30 MU Crop Injury and Diagnostic Clinic;  
MU Bradford Farm;  
Columbia, MO**

### **AUGUST, 2010**

12-22 Missouri State Fair; Sedalia, MO

### **OCTOBER, 2010**

5 MU CAFNR Career Fair; Columbia, MO

6-8 Missouri Seedmen's Association Annual  
Meeting;  
Resort at Port Arrowhead, Lake Ozark,  
MO

### **JANUARY, 2011**

**5-7 MO-AG Convention; Lodge of Four  
Seasons;  
Lake Ozark, MO**

Note: Items in **red** are new postings since the last  
Wrap-Up issue.

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**Letters to the Editor**

*Do you have a response to the Missouri Agribusiness Wrap Up? Let us know! The Missouri Agribusiness Wrap Up is a bi-weekly publication of the Missouri Agribusiness Association (MO-AG). MO-AG is a member-owned association based in Jefferson City, Mo. which protects members' interests in state legislation and provides educational opportunities.*

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