



Missouri Sedimentation Action Coalition
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Lewis and Clark Lake sediment to be discussed at MSAC's annual meeting March 31

Researchers are taking a closer look at the sand and sediment accumulating in the delta at the headwaters of Lewis and Clark Lake.

The Nebraska Water Science Center of the U.S. Geological Survey has been involved in several research activities focused on sediment in the Niobrara River and Lewis and Clark Lake areas in the past year. The public is invited to hear more about these projects at the Missouri Sedimentation Action Coalition's 14th Annual Membership meeting set for 7 p.m. March 31 at the Fire Hall in Niobrara, Neb.

Topics that USGS staff will present include: outcomes of the Large Rivers Initiative workshop held in Yankton in August of 2014, study of the sediment flush through Spencer Dam on the lower Niobrara River, and channel and riparian changes in the Niobrara River upstream from the Spencer Dam that may affect sandbars nesting habitat. The Center, located in Lincoln, operates local and statewide networks to collect high-quality data that define natural and human-induced hydrologic conditions. Staff analyzes hydrologic processes through investigations and research to increase understanding of important water-resource issues and to promote informed decision making.

This spring the Center will begin research to characterize the delta sediment deposits at the head of Lewis and Clark Lake. In March, the USGS met with stakeholders to give an overview of the planned work. The suitability of this deposited material for potential use as fracking sand will be explored. High-purity quartz sand is one of several materials used by the petroleum and natural gas industry to improve the flow of hydrocarbons in the rock fractures induced by the hydraulic fracturing process.

"Finding a suitable use for dredged material from Lewis and Clark Lake has always been a topic of conversation as one avenue to address the problem of accumulating sediment. It's one way to maximize resources and generate support for sediment management," said Sandy Stockholm, MSAC executive director. "Definitively answering these questions brings us closer to finding solutions."

All MSAC members, potential members, and the general public are invited and encouraged to attend the meeting. Brief business items are on the agenda including the election of two individuals to the board of directors for three-year terms. The following two directors have terms which are expiring, Pete Jahraus, representing governmental units, and Jeff Peters, representing organizations.

The public is invited to join MSAC March 31 at the Niobrara Fire Hall for the annual meeting at 7 p.m. and the board of directors meeting at 4 p.m. Off-street parking is available to the west near the funeral home and churches. MSAC also will update attendees on the organization's activities, future goals and recent developments involving sedimentation.

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