

Approved 11-05-08



## SAN JUAN RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

**Biology Committee Conference Call**  
**Monday, July 28, 2008**  
**9:00 am – 12:00 am**

### Meeting Summary

**Members and Alternates:**

Paul Holden, Chair  
Bill Miller  
Mark McKinstry  
Vince Lamarra  
Tom Nesler  
David Propst  
Yvette Paroz, Alternate  
Tom Wesche  
Absent  
Absent  
Absent  
Absent

**Representing:**

Jicarilla Apache Nation  
Southern Ute Indian Tribe  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Navajo Nation  
State of Colorado  
New Mexico Department of Game & Fish  
New Mexico Department of Game & Fish  
Water Development Interests  
U.S. Bureau of Land Management  
U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Reg. 2  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Reg. 6

**Program Management:**

David Campbell  
Sharon Whitmore

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Albuquerque  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Albuquerque

**Interested Parties:**

Steven Platania

American SW Ichthyological Researchers

A quorum of seven members was present.

**Approve May 7, 2008, Meeting Summary** – Whitmore said all comments received were incorporated into the summary. The summary was approved with one correction, i.e., McAda's name spelled correctly throughout.

**Review Action Item List** – Holden noted that the listed LRP action items (Items 10-12) are done except for completion of a final plan which has been delayed. He also noted that the waterfall inundation assessment (Item 14) is on hold until the new Program biologist is on-board. McKinstry said information collected during his recent trip with UDWR below the waterfall should be incorporated into the assessment.

A new item was added on the backwater and secondary channel construction proposal McKinstry submitted to the NM Surface Water Quality Bureau (Item 23). He said he should hear in August if the grant is awarded. He said this would not replace the 2009 AWP item, *Feasibility/Pre-planning for Improving Flow Effectiveness using Mechanical Augmentation*, but would supplement it by helping to fund implementation. He said the almost \$500,000 project would involve creation and restoration of backwater habitat and secondary channels at six sites along the river in NM using mechanical manipulation and vegetation removal.

McKinstry gave a brief update on the status of IDIQ contract (Item 19). He said he is currently working with the contracting officer on re-editing the draft and still expects to award the contract by the end of year. He said there would be an announcement when it comes out.

Propst asked about the standard format for fish capture data (Item 15). Campbell explained that the NNF removal crews and Dale Ryden met with Kevin Bestgen back in November to discuss recapture data. Shortly thereafter, Jason Davis sent out a standard format for recording pit tag data developed by Ryden. Propst said he did not receive it. The Program Office will make sure it gets redistributed. It was noted that the need to standardize habitat categories was discussed at the last meeting. An action item will be added for Paroz to get with the habitat mapping field crews to work this out. The point was made that the upcoming fish/habitat monitoring workshops will revisit these issues.

**FY2009 AWP/Budget** – The following AWP items were discussed.

Database Management – Miller asked if zeroing out the Program Database for FY09 could delay the integration process. He also asked about the accessibility of Program data for integration. Campbell said all data received to-date at the Program Office is available (i.e., though 2007). He said the original data is in CD format provided by Bliesner. Campbell pointed out that the geo-referenced interface that UNM developed was removed because it did not function correctly and was problematic. He said the data, in spreadsheet format, include river miles. Propst suggested a checklist of all information that is available on an annual basis be compiled. Campbell said the Program Office can do this without additional funding in FY09.

Estimated Annual 2009 Annual Base Funds – Miller asked if a 4% increase in base funding was realistic. McKinstry answered in the affirmative and said he thinks it will likely be higher.

Integration of Biological/Habitat Data – Miller questioned if reducing the total amount for data integration by \$100,000 will leave enough funds to carry the project through to the hydrology model run phase. Campbell explained that additional funds would be allocated each year of the three-year project. He said the first two years will focus on integrating the biologic and habitat data and that integration with the hydrology model will not occur until the third year. Miller said he was concerned that \$200,000 may not be enough for the first two years of the project. Campbell said that if the BC finds after the fish/habitat monitoring workshops in 2009 that it is not enough, projects/budgets for 2010 may need to be adjusted to free up additional funding for the second year of the project. He said there is no additional money for data integration in the 2009 budget.

Whitmore said that Bliesner, who could not be present for this meeting, conveyed in an email that the draft flow recommendation revision proposal should be revised to reflect the changes in project

scope. Holden pointed out that development of project details will be needed for an RFP. The group discussed the options for doing the Integration Report, i.e., RFP, IDIQ with limited contractors, and sole sourcing to Program participants. McKinstry said his preference is to handle it through the IDIQ contract. He said estimating costs for the out-years in an RFP would be difficult. Campbell said he thinks there will be resistance from the CC if the contract is not handled through the RFP process. He said that if the BC wants to use the IDIQ or sole source options, they need to provide good rationale and justification to the CC. He emphasized that any BC recommendations for handling new projects such as this should accompany the annual AWP/budget so the CC can consider it during their approval process.

McKinstry gave a brief of the IDIQ contract. He said it is basically an umbrella contract that lists multiple work skills and tasks that will likely be needed over a certain time period, e.g., biologist, geomorphologist, heavy equipment operator. A geographic area is specified as well as a maximum funding amount that can be allocated under the life of the contract. The contract can be awarded to multiple contractors and each one is guaranteed a minimum yearly amount of work/funding. Once an IDIQ is awarded, Reclamation simply has to develop annual Task Orders with each of the listed contractor(s) that specify the work to be done, skill categories needed, hours, fees, etc. One advantage over an RFP is that the details for the out-years of a multi-year project do not need to be determined upfront. The types of work skills/tasks listed for the SJRIP IDIQ are geomorphology monitoring, habitat mapping, water temperature monitoring, fish sampling, etc. He said a data integration task could be included, which would allow the Integration Report task to be easily covered by the IDIQ. He said one stipulation of SJRIP IDIQ will be that the contractor must have permission to work on Navajo lands. He said this will arguably limit the number of contractors that qualify and ultimately the contractors that can do work for the Program under the IDIQ. Campbell said that the Integration Report will not require actual work on Navajo lands so limiting the contractors to only those on the IDIQ could be problematic for the CC. McKinstry said he will provide a similar report on the IDIQ to the CC at their meeting on August 14 and 15.

The BC voiced general support for handling the Integration Report through a separate RFP but recognized that project details need to be better defined. There was agreement that the BC should take an active role in defining what is needed for the Integration Report and in identifying what needs to go into the RFP. Campbell said there are no specific requirements for the Integration Report. It could include integration of all data or be more focused on specific areas such as fish/habitat relationships or on the monitoring program. McKinstry, Campbell, and Whitmore will develop a draft RFP for BC review.

Miller moved that the 2009 AWP/budget be forwarded to the CC. Propst seconded. The motion carried.

**BC Review of Razorback Sucker and Colorado Pikeminnow Recovery Goals** – Holden said that in his cursory review of the revised recovery goals, he noticed a few minor edits/errors, e.g. still says a fish passage is needed at Cudei. It was decided that BC members would send comments to the BC list serve by August 22. Paul will compile and send consolidated comments to the BC by August 26 for comment. A final BC response will be sent to the Program Office by August 29 for submittal to the Service by the September 2 deadline.

**FY09 Monitoring Workshop** – Holden recommended that two workshops be held in 2009, one on fish monitoring and one on habitat monitoring. They would be held during the February/March timeframe shortly after the February BC meeting. He said this would allow the BC to review

results of the 2008 field season and would accommodate any changes to the monitoring protocols for the 2010 field season. He said planning and preparation needs to begin as soon as possible. The group discussed who should be present at the workshops. Miller said the person(s) doing the data integration should be present. Campbell agreed as long as their involvement does not result in a delay of that process. Involvement by the Program's peer reviewers was identified. The group agreed outside experts should be brought in. Propst mentioned Bill Fagan at University of Maryland as a possible participant.

The group discussed the subject matter/objectives of the workshops. Campbell said the Integration Report will address the utility of the Program's current data set and may get into evaluating methods. The focus of the workshops will be on evaluating the sampling methods used for the Program's long-term monitoring program to determine if the scope, scale, and frequency of data being collected is adequate to answer important questions (e.g., are stocked fish successfully recruiting into the population?). The group agreed that the first step should be to identify those important questions. Whitmore will lift the identified objectives out of the SJR Monitoring Plan and Protocols document and send to the BC for review. The BC will identify important questions/objectives the monitoring plan needs to address and send to the Program Office for consolidation prior to the next meeting. McKinstry, Campbell, and Whitmore will also put together preliminary workshop proposals for BC review prior to the November meeting. BC members should also provide names of potential experts to participate in the workshops.

**November 5-6, 2008, BC meeting in Farmington** – Holden explained that the meeting was originally scheduled to go from 1 to 5 p.m. on November 5 and 8 a.m. to noon on November 6. To accommodate a full agenda, the end time on November 6 was extended to 3 p.m. McKinstry said he contacted the four peer reviewers and they all indicated they could attend. He noted John Pitlick said he can only be there on the second day. The following agenda items were identified:

- LRP
- Report from Kevin Bestgen
- Discussion of peer reviewers' May comments (e.g., augmentation program)
- Monitoring workshops planning
- Water quality discussion (report from Lusk/Omundsen)
- Integration Report
- Election of new BC Chair

The BC Chair was discussed briefly. Jason Davis was mentioned as a possible candidate. Campbell and McKinstry both agreed he would do a great job but they said a non-federal representative would provide better across-the-board coverage of Program representation. Tom Wesche's name was mentioned. He said his sponsors would likely not support his involvement at that level. Holden said nominations should be submitted one month prior to the meeting in November.

A comment was made that the 2007 Annual Reports had not been posted on the website yet and that the last annual reports posted are from 2003. Campbell said the website has gone through some changes recently and still needs work. He said the Program Office will get the 2007 reports posted and will check into the status of the other reports. Propst said the BC should consider giving the peer reviewers some type of a formal thank-you for their involvement.

Holden gave a brief legislative update. He said he listened in on a recent conference call of non-federal Program participants from the Upper Colorado River and San Juan River Programs. A

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decision was made to remove the annual budget part of the legislation because some outstanding issues were impeding the bill from moving forward in 2008. Plans are to put it back in or resubmit that part next year. McKinstry emphasized the significance of this change. He said that waiting until 2009 to get the legislation passed will be problematic because the majority of senior congressional representatives will be leaving office at the end of the year. If the re-authorization does not go through, the Programs will lose their ability to use Program funds on most currently funded activities after 2011.

**BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM LOG**  
(Updated May 7, 2008)

Item #	Action Item	Meeting/Originati on Date	Responsible Party(s)	Due Date	Revised Date	Date Completed
1	Provide RBS/CPM stocking/capture/recapture data		P.I.'s to the Program Office	Annually before Jan. 1		
2	Provide Preliminary Draft Report Presentations		Project Leads (authors)	Annually at Feb. meeting		
3	Provide Draft Final Reports		Project Leads (authors) to Program Office	Annually by end of March		
4	Provide Final Reports		Project leads (authors) to Program Office	Annually by end of June		
5	Annual Data Delivery		BC to Program Office	Annually by June 30		
6	T&E Species Data		BC to Program Office	Annually by Dec. 31		
7	Compile T&E data and Program progress into summary to address overall Program recovery goals/objectives for presentation at annual meeting		Program Office/BC	Annually by Annual Meeting in April/May		
8	Distribute Data Consolidation Report		Program Office to BC	Annually by Jan. 31		
9	Coordinate CPM stocking closely with Reclamation to avoid negative impact due to high flows/releases		Project Leads	Annually		
10	Provide LRP Draft	05/08/07	SWCA to Program Office, BC, CC	07/09/07	4/15/08	Done
11	Comment on Draft LRP	06/25/07	BC to Program Office	07/23/07	5/16/08	Done
12	Provide Final LRP	07/23/07	SWCA to Program Office	08/06/07	5/23/08	

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(Updated May 7, 2008)

Item #	Action Item	Meeting/Originati on Date	Responsible Party(s)	Due Date	Revised Date	Date Completed
	Review LRP		Annually at fall meeting			
	Review Peer Review Comments from the February and May meetings		Annually at fall meeting			
13	Develop razorback sucker production and stocking plan for NAPI ponds	06/25/07	Davis lead	09/15/07	7/31/08	
14	Waterfall Inundation Whitepaper – review past meeting summaries, determine what is needed, and provide report at the next meeting.	05/18/07	Program Office	12/07/07	11/5/08	
15	Distribute Standard format for recording fish capture data	2/20-21/08	Program Office	5/15/08		
16	Pursue NNF Stocking Procedures for SJR Basin	2/20-21/08	McAda lead	11/5/08		
17	Provide verbal report on Bestgen’s population estimate work at fall meeting. Re-send scope of work to BC.	2/20-21/08	McKinstry	11/5/08		
18	Develop Colorado pikeminnow production and stocking Plan	5-7-08	Davis lead	7/31/08		
19	Complete IDIQ contract and award	5-7-08	McKinstry	11-08		
20	2009 Scopes of Work to Program Office	5-7-08	Project Leads	5/30/08		
21	Develop proposal for new study - Mechanical Augmentation of Flow Effectiveness	5-7-08	Program Office	11/5/08		

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**BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM LOG**  
(Updated May 7, 2008)

Item #	Action Item	Meeting/Originati on Date	Responsible Party(s)	Due Date	Revised Date	Date Completed
22	Standardize habitat categories	7-28-08	Paroz and Habitat Mappers	11/5/08		
23	Submit proposal on backwater/secondary channel construction to NMDEQ	7-28-08	McKinstry	6/12/08		6/12/08
24	Compile list of annual data collected and available in the Program's database	7-28-08	Program Office	11/5/08		
25	Develop RFP for Data Integration and send to BC for review/input	7-28-08	McKinstry, Campbell, and Whitmore	11/5/08		
26	Send objectives identified in San Juan River Monitoring Plan and Protocols to BC for review. BC identify important questions that need to be answered by the monitoring program	7-28-08	Whitmore/BC	11/5/08		
27	Develop preliminary fish/habitat monitoring workshop proposals	7-28-08	McKinstry, Campbell, Whitmore	11/5/08		
28	BC provide comments on RBS and CPM Recovery Goal Revisions. Holden will compile and resend to BC for review by August 29 to meet FWS submission deadline of Sept. 2	7-28-08	Holden/BC	8/22/08		