



Final Summary
San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program
Biology Committee Meeting
Conference Call 26 January 2009

Attendees

Biology Committee Members:

Bill Miller, Chair – Southern Ute Tribe
Paul Holden– Jicarilla Apache Tribe
Ron Bliesner – Bureau of Indian Affairs
Jason Davis – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2
Mark McKinstry – Bureau of Reclamation
Chuck McAda – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6
Tom Nesler – State of Colorado
David Propst – State of New Mexico
Gregory Gustina – Bureau of Land Management
Tom Wesche – Water Development Interests
Absent – Vincent LaMarra – Navajo Nation
Marilyn Myers – Alternate, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2
Dale Ryden – Alternate, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6
Yvette Paroz – Alternate, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

Program Management – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2:

David Campbell
Sharon Whitmore
Scott Durst

Interested Parties:

W. Howard Brandenburg – American Southwest Ichthyological Researchers
Darek Elverud – Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

Introductions; Changes to agenda; Approval of 5-6 November meeting summary:

- There were no additional items to the conference call meeting agenda.
- Miller indicated that the wording in the first bullet under *Monitoring Workshops and Integration Report* needs to be revised to reflect that flow recommendations do not trigger the Integration Report; it is based on when monitoring protocols are due for integration. An outcome of this

process is a review of the flow recommendations. Miller will send revised wording to the Program Office.

- Under the seventh bullet of the same section, need to clarify that the RFP versus IDIQ process is for the Integration Report.
- The summary of the 5-6 November meeting was approved with these changes.

Review of action log (note that action items were renumbered following updates):

- Group clarified that the Action Item, *Develop razorback sucker production and stocking plan for NAPI ponds* (now completed Item 4) is specifically related to production and stocking of razorback suckers at NAPI. Item 13 will be out before the February meeting. A new action item (# 14) was added for the review of these two production and stocking plans (due 2/18/2009).
- McAda talked about Item 16, *NNF Stocking Procedures for the SJR*. He said the only need appears to be for a screen at Morgan Lake where bass are being stocked. McAda will send out draft procedures prior to the February meeting. An agenda item will be added to the February meeting to discuss non-native fish stocking in the San Juan River Basin.
- Wording for item 17 was modified to reflect that it is for revising the augmentation plan for razorback sucker and Colorado pikeminnow. The responsibility for this task falls to the Fish and Wildlife service, Fisheries Offices and Program Office. This task will be done after Kevin Bestgen's results are received (due 5/13/2009).
- The completion date for the IDIQ contract, Item 18, was revised to May 2009. McKinstry said the completion of the IDIQ is delayed because the RERI project is being included. He said the existing contract for the detailed reach study can be extended or can be conducted under a blanket purchase order.
- The SOW for Completed Action Item 7, *Mechanical Augmentation of Flow Effectiveness*, was approved by the CC. TNC is making a few modifications as requested by the CC. It will be forwarded to McKinstry when done.
- Item 20, *Integration Report RFP*, is in progress.
- Barb Osmundson is coordinating with Bliesner on item 23 to obtain samples and conduct analysis for selenium and mercury. Bliesner will proceed with his sampling and Osmundson will perform analysis. Funding for the Desert Rock project will delay any analysis by Bliesner. Bliesner will revise selenium sampling analysis for the coming year as appropriate.
- Items 32 and 35 in the previous Action Item Log were consolidated into a new Item 24 to produce a list of questions from the LRP and monitoring plans to guide monitoring workshops. It was assigned to The Program Office and Miller with a Feb. 18 due date.
- Propst reported that Item 27, developing an outline for San Juan River Recovery Program case history manuscript, is in progress.
- Durst reported that the Program Office's his GIS software was recently updated and is online to get new field maps (Item 28) out by March 2009 before the start of the field season.
- Item 29 – McKinstry reported that costs for a lower river fish barrier will be extremely high. The initial estimate is somewhere around \$10,000,000 to \$20,000,000. The CC will decide whether to go any further with this idea. He said a potential alternative to a permanent barrier could be a floating weir setup that Leisa Monroe, UT Dept. of Natural Resources, presented at the Upper Colorado Researchers' meeting. Miller suggested that Monroe make this presentation at the

Annual Meeting in May (to the CC). McKinstry will send out details of the cost estimate of a permanent fish barrier on the lower river to the BC.

February Meeting:

- The format of the meeting will be like last year with presentations on Day 1 and updates on Day 2. The updates will include a presentation by Bestgen, a discussion of the upcoming workshops, and Program updates. A draft agenda for review will come out of the Program Office by Friday.
- Hatchery and Navajo Nation operation reports will be at the annual meeting. Holden suggested that structure of the annual meeting should be discussed at the February meeting.
- The group also indicated the importance of initiating a broader discussion of where the Program is going at the February meeting that would continue to the annual meeting.
- The schedule of meetings for the remainder of the year should be set at the February meeting.

Peer Review Guidelines:

- McKinstry explained that during a meeting with Miller and the Program Office, it was decided that providing peer review guidelines to the Peer Reviewers could help focus attention more on the bigger picture of where the Program is going rather than smaller issues. He said he volunteered to put together a draft with the intent that the guidelines would make assessing project presentations easier and quicker. The idea was that the sheets would be distributed to the individual researchers and peer reviewers for use in providing constructive criticism on project presentations freeing up the Peer Reviewers' report so it could focus on programmatic issues.
- The group generally thought that the current peer review process has been productive and expressed concern that the sheets are not consistent with reaching the goals as intended.
- Campbell detailed the importance of consistency in the peer review process to satisfy the Data Quality Act. Campbell said the Program Office will pursue developing peer reviewer guidelines that are consistent with these requirements.
- The discussion emphasized the importance of having a "big picture" discussion at the February meeting that continues to the annual meeting.

Workshops

- The habitat workshop will be held for two days during 6-8 April with the fish workshop covering two days during 27-29 April. Another workshop, possibly for one day, to integrate these two workshops should also be held after the workshops are completed. The workshops will be in Albuquerque.
- The Program Office is searching for a facilitator for the workshops and for a possible outside adaptive management or programmatic expert.
- The exact format and content of the workshops will be discussed at the February meeting. Miller and the Program Office will work on coming up with an outline for the workshops.
- Miller suggested that researchers for individual monitoring elements make a presentation of what they have done to date and detail the overall objectives and goals of existing protocols followed by a discussion of what is working and what needs to be changed.
- The group agreed that it would be useful to take Bliesner's list and line that up with current protocols to see where there are gaps that need to be addressed.

Approved -2/18/09

BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM LOG						
(Updated January 27, 2009)						
Item No.*	Action Item	Meeting/Origination 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	Review LRP		BC	Annually at fall meeting		
4	Review Peer Review Comments from the February and May meetings		BC	Annually at fall meeting		
5	Provide Draft Final Reports		Project Leads (authors) to Program Office	Annually by end of March		
6	Scopes of Work		Project Leads to Program Office	Annually by end of March		
7	Provide Final Reports		Project Leads (authors) to Program Office	Annually by end of June		
8	Annual Data Delivery		BC to Program Office	Annually by June 30		
9	T&E Species Data		BC to Program Office	Annually by Dec. 31		

BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM LOG

(Updated January 27, 2009)

Item No.*	Action Item	Meeting/Origination Date	Responsible Party(s)	Due Date	Revised Date	Date Completed
10	Annually compile T&E data and Program progress into summary to address overall Program recovery goals/objectives for presentation at annual meeting		Program Office/BC	By Annual Meeting in May		
11	Distribute Consolidated Data and list of annual data collected and available in the Program's database		Program Office to BC	Annually by Jan. 31		
12	Coordinate CPM stocking closely with Reclamation to avoid negative impact due to high flows/releases		Project Leads	Annually		
13	Develop Colorado pikeminnow production and stocking Plan	5-7-08	Davis/Program Office	11/30/08	2/15/2009	3/2/2009
14	Review RBS production and stocking plan for NAPI ponds and CPM production and stocking plan	1/26/2009	BC	2/18/2009	RBS – 2/28/09; CPM – 4/3/29	
15	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	Not a current priority	
16	Pursue NNF Stocking Procedures for SJR Basin	2/20-21/08	McAda lead	11/5/08	2/18/09	2/18/09

BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM LOG

(Updated January 27, 2009)

Item No.*	Action Item	Meeting/Origination Date	Responsible Party(s)	Due Date	Revised Date	Date Completed
17	Revise CPM and RBS Augmentation Plans	5/7/08	FWS Fisheries/Program Office	11/30/08	5/13/2009	
18	Complete IDIQ contract and award	5/7/08	McKinstry	Nov. 2008	May 2009	
19	Standardize habitat categories	7/28/08	Paroz/Habitat Mappers	11/5/08	Feb 2009	2/18/09
20	Develop RFP for Data Integration and send to BC for review/input	7/28/08	Program Office/McKinstry	11/5/08	5/13/09	
21	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	Program Office/BC	11/5/08	2/18/09	2/18/09
22	Develop preliminary fish/habitat monitoring workshop proposals	7/28/08	Program Office/McKinstry	11/5/08	2/18/09	2/18/09
23	Provide specifics of selenium sampling procedures and analysis	1/26/09	Bliesner/Osmundson	2/18/2009	5/13/09	
24	Produce list of questions based on LRP and monitoring plans to guide monitoring workshops	1/26/09	Program Office/Miller	2/18/09		2/18/09

BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM LOG						
(Updated January 27, 2009)						
Item No.*	Action Item	Meeting/Origination Date	Responsible Party(s)	Due Date	Revised Date	Date Completed
25	Provide report on Bestgen's results of population estimate study	1/26/09	Bestgen	2/18/09	4/6/09	
26	Update on investigations into floating/stationary PIT tag detectors	11/5/08	McKinstry	2/18/09		2/18/09
27	Develop a detailed outline for San Juan River Recovery Program case history manuscript	11-5-08	Propst/Miller			
28	Coordinate with staff GIS specialist to produce updated field maps (20 sets)	11-05-08	Program Office	March 2009		
29	Update on feasibility of a fish passage barrier in the lower portion of the river/floating weir.	11-05-08	McKinstry			2/18/09
30	Update on NMED RERI project	11-05-08	McKinstry		5/13/09	

* Items were re-numbered after changes were made