

July 13, 2001

**Summary of the  
San Juan River Basin Recovery  
Implementation Program  
Coordination Committee Meeting  
January 30, 2001  
Farmington, New Mexico**

**Welcome and Introductions:** Joy Nicholopoulos, Committee Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Committee members and the audience introduced themselves. Members in attendance included:

Joy Nicholopoulos, Chairman	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2
Henry Maddux	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6
Ron Bliesner, for Bob Krakow	U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
Joel Farrell	U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Brent Uilenberg	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Christine Karas	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Susan Jordan	Jicarilla Apache Tribe
Stanley Pollack	Navajo Nation
Scott McElroy	Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Tom Pitts	Water Development
Randy Seaholm	State of Colorado
John Whipple	State of New Mexico

**Review and Approve Agenda:** Several items were added to the agenda including the Long Range Plan, an update on the San Juan flooding problems, the Navajo Dam EIS and the Navajo/Gallup EIS, and the positive population response criteria that the Bureau of Reclamation is preparing.

**Approval of September 19, 2000, Meeting Summary:** The committee discussed several suggested changes to the meeting summary. The summary was approved as amended.

During discussion of the meeting summary, questions arose regarding the use of Program money to fund work on roundtail chub. It was decided that future work on native fish, including the roundtail chub, would be reviewed on a case by case basis before funding is allocated.

**Coordination Update:** Shirley Mondy provided a quick run through of the action items from the September 19, 2000 meeting. New actions that came from discussion are shown in bold italics.

- The Service hasn't developed a Congressional tour yet, but has received some ideas from the Biology Committee and the Bureau of Reclamation. It was suggested by the Coordination Committee that the tour be held in the summer (July/August time frame). ***Shirley is to coordinate with the FWS - Region 2 Regional Office to figure out the necessary lead time. By the next meeting, an outline of the tour is expected.***
- We are still waiting for a breakdown of costs incurred at the Hogback and Cudei diversion dams from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Ron Bliesner estimated that the costs at Hogback are \$4 million and at Cudei - \$1½ million. ***BIA will submit a breakdown of costs associated with fish passage, irrigation diversion and maintenance of the old diversion structures versus costs of the new diversion structures.*** This will be submitted to the Bureau of Reclamation for review and comparison with other fish passage structures.
- The public listserv should be ready to go within a couple of weeks. All that remains is to finish the security and list options. ***Shirley will send out a notification to committee members when the public listserv is available.*** There was a question as to why we had separate listservers for each of the committees. The original intent of the listserv was to allow the committees to have internal discussion. The public listserv will contain meeting notices and any other relevant information.
- A format for future work plans hasn't been developed yet, but Shirley is working on it. She is reviewing the Upper Basin's schedule and formats for preparing scopes of work. ***Shirley will draft a schedule based on the Biology Committee's time frames that were developed at their November meeting and a preferred format for the scopes of work.***
- A letter from the FWS, Region 2 to the Washington Office requesting a reduction in overhead charges has been drafted, but not completed.

Shirley has been invited to participate in the Congressional briefings in March along with Upper Basin participants. The Coordination Committee supported her attendance at the briefings.

It was requested that the Program Coordinator keep a list of action items in an appendix to the

meeting summary so they can be tracked easier.

**Biology Committee Update:** Jim Brooks briefly discussed items from the November 28, 2000, Biology Committee meeting. At that meeting, there was a lot of work and discussion on the Long Range Plan. The committee discussed the positive population response criteria that the Bureau of Reclamation is working on to comply with their Animas-LaPlata Biological Opinion. In addition, the Biology Committee discussed monitoring in the lower part of the San Juan, especially in Utah, the rearing pond proposal, propagation needs, rearing results in the razorback sucker ponds, and results of nonnative removal of striped bass.

The Biology Committee is meeting February 5 - 7, 2001, in Farmington to discuss possible work plan proposals, research efforts, the positive population response criteria, the perturbation assessment, and a revised proposal for fish passage at the Public Service Company of New Mexico weir.

**Hydrology Committee Update:** Errol Jensen reported on the November 14, 2000, Hydrology Committee meeting. At that meeting, the Committee tried to figure out who would do the work specified in the 2001 work plan. They have not gotten too far because the work was delayed due to the funding uncertainty. Bureau of Reclamation funds have been used to work with Colorado and New Mexico to get information for the modeling efforts.

The Bureau of Reclamation has been working with the U.S. Geological Survey to get the gaging system improved. The Bureau of Reclamation made a plot of all four gages (Farmington, Shiprock, Four Corners and Bluff) on a real time basis and it appears that the Farmington gage is off. The Bureau of Reclamation is working with the USGS on options for improvements in the gaging efforts.

The Hydrology Committee only needs representation from the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. Dan Israel may be that representative, but we have don't have formal documentation at this time. Dale Wirth will represent the Bureau of Land Management and Bill Miller will represent the Southern Ute Indian Tribe.

**Hydrology Committee Proposal:** Randy Seaholm passed out a revised version of the document which incorporated everyone's comments. The proposal is to be inserted into the Program document. There were some edits of the document made at the meeting. *Everyone should review the document and provide comments to Randy by February 28. Randy will have a final version ready for a vote at the next meeting.*

**Section 7 Update:** Tom Pitts discussed the latest version of the Section 7 Guiding Principles. The version included comments from the Ad Hoc committee, the Service and the Service's Solicitor. There were some minor edits at the meeting. *Comments are due to Tom by February 28. It was suggested that all comments go on the listserver.* The document will then be finalized and ready for a vote at the next meeting.

**PNM Fish Passage:** The Bureau of Reclamation went through an internal review of the proposed fish passage at the PNM weir. During that review, questions were raised about the alternatives that were dismissed due to sediment loads. The panel provided more information and options about the dismissed alternatives and this information will be taken to the next Biology Committee meeting for further discussion.

**Capital Projects:** The fish passage on the Hogback diversion is approximately 80% complete. The entire Hogback diversion structure is about 35% complete. Work at Cudei has not started yet.

**Update on Nonnative Stocking Policies:** Colorado, New Mexico and Utah biologists haven't been able to meet yet, but they expect to have an agreement similar to the Upper Basin program. The NM State Game Commission has eliminated the bag limit on striped bass and catfish on the San Juan River. It is hopeful that a nonnative bait fish policy will be developed in New Mexico. It was suggested that we work with the Tribes to change their nonnative stocking policies too. Jim Brooks stated that he is already working with the Navajo Nation and will work with Vince Lamarra to further those conversations.

**Update on Roundtail Chub efforts:** Right now, Colorado and New Mexico are looking for money to work on this effort. Since efforts to enhance roundtail chub efforts have not been funded through this Program to date, Colorado and New Mexico will assume responsibility for the work and oversight of the efforts.

**Long Range Plan:** There was a lengthy discussion about the Long Range Plan, how it should be developed, what level of detail should be included, and how and when things will be accomplished. The LRP is intended as the broad guidance of the Program and the scopes of work are how we accomplish things. It was suggested that a task force of members from each of the committees get together and define the format and level of detail needed for the LRP. After the task force meets, then the Hydrology Committee and Biology Committee will work on filling in the information needed. Coordination Committee representatives that will be on the task force include, Tom Pitts, Brent Uilenberg and Randy Seaholm. *Tom Pitts will provide the task force with an example of the detail he would like to see in the document.*

*Any comments on the present LRP should be sent to Jim Brooks.*

**San Juan River Flooding Update:** The Bureau of Reclamation is currently only working on one ditch (Turley) that has flooding problems. Citizens Ditch was approached but didn't seem interested in their assistance. The Bureau is looking at alternatives and pointing out ways to mitigate high spring runoffs. They only do design and recommendations, not implementation. The low flows may affect other ditches but that will be addressed during the low flow test that is proposed for this summer.

**Funding Situation:** Shane Collins of the Western Area Power Administration presented

information on the power revenues that are supposed to fund the Program as provided in the legislation passed in the fall. Because of higher operating costs and energy demands, WAPA is in a financial crisis and not able to provide the level of funding that was expected in Fiscal Year 2001. WAPA is looking at different ways to solve the problem, including power rate increases. WAPA has appeared before the Colorado Water Conservation Board and asked for a loan in 2002 to cover their costs. The Bureau of Reclamation has agreed to use other funding sources before WAPA funds are used.

The operating funds are covered for this fiscal year, but capital outlay has been reduced. The States are going to go ahead and pay their funds and WAPA will fund their agreed upon amount in FY 2002. According to Brent Uilenberg, the only departure from the approved 2001 work plan is that the Bureau of Indian Affairs will not be reimbursed in 2001. The payment to BIA will be delayed until 2002.

**National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Agreements:** Brent Uilenberg reported that the four States involved in the San Juan and Upper Colorado programs met in November with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. They met to discuss options for depositing money with NFWF to allow cost sharing as outlined in the funding legislation. Wyoming is the only one with a draft agreement so far. Colorado has an internal draft document, but is not ready to share it with everyone yet. Randy hopes to have it reviewed internally very soon. New Mexico is not that far along yet. There have been internal discussions, but New Mexico may have to have limits on the use of funds and may have to pay after work is performed.

**Recapture Pond Proposal:** Jim Brooks discussed the proposal for a rearing pond near Bluff, Utah, which was submitted by Bill Miller, former Coordination Committee member. The proposal is draft at this time. The Biology Committee is requesting to spend up to \$5,000 on water quality sampling at the pond site to determine if it is feasible as a rearing pond. The money would come from the City of Durango funds that were deposited with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

There was discussion on the cost of the ponds at Bluff compared to ponds constructed on NIIP lands and elsewhere. The costs of the Bluff proposal seem high. NIIP has the capability to handle all of the pond needs. It was pointed out that there are outreach possibilities at Bluff due to the high recreational use in the area.

After much discussion, it was decided that the Biology Committee is authorized to spend up to \$5,000 on the water quality study. ***The Biology Committee should develop a plan to meet the overall pond needs. Shirley and Henry will handle the disbursement of funds from the NFWF to cover the water quality study. BIA will assess their capability to handle the rearing pond needs and develop a cost estimate. The Bureau will assist in reviewing cost estimates and planning.***

**Recovery Goals Update:** Henry Maddux provided an update on the recovery goals process. Region 6 of the Service is getting ready to brief several different groups on the draft recovery

goals. The goal is to publish the Notice of Availability of the recovery goals in the Federal Register by mid-March. The current numbers of Colorado Pikeminnow and Razorback Sucker in the draft goals haven't changed for the San Juan.

*Henry offered that if anyone wanted a briefing, to let him know and it would be arranged.*

**Navajo Dam Environmental Impact Statement:** Because of the inability to conduct a low flow test last summer, there has been a 14-month delay in the process. A Record of Decision is now anticipated in August 2002.

**Navajo-Gallup Pipeline:** The present schedule anticipates that the Record of Decision will be complete in February 2003. Right now they are looking at feasibility design and alternatives. They don't know where the water is going to come from yet, but they are looking at several options. The Navajo Nation and the City of Gallup have come to the Bureau of Reclamation to get started on the contracts for water. There are ongoing discussions with the Jicarillas about possible use of their water.

**Positive Population Response Criteria:** Larry Crist is working on the positive population response criteria as outlined in their Biological Opinion for the Animas-LaPlata project. The criteria are being developed for concurrence with FWS with input from the Biology Committee. The Bureau of Reclamation is keeping it consistent with Program activities and monitoring activities so it should not affect the Long Range Plan. They are also trying to keep the criteria consistent with the recovery goals.

**Review of Action Items:** see appendix A.

**Set New Meeting Date:** The next meeting of the Coordination Committee will be held June 19, 2001, in Farmington, New Mexico.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

## Appendix A

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	DUE DATE
Coordinate with the FWS - Region 2 Regional Office to figure out the necessary lead time for a Congressional tour. Draft an outline of the tour.	Shirley Mondy	June 19, 2001
Submit a breakdown of costs associated with maintenance of the old diversion structures versus costs of the new diversion dam for Hogback and Cudei.	Bureaus of Indian Affairs	June 19, 2001
Draft a work plan schedule based on the Biology Committee's time frames and a preferred format for the scopes of work.	Shirley Mondy	June 19, 2001
Review the Hydrology Committee proposal and provide comments to Randy Seaholm.	Coordination Committee	February 28, 2001
Prepare a final version of the Hydrology Committee proposal.	Randy Seaholm	June 19, 2001
Submit comments on the Section 7 Guiding Principles to Tom Pitts. All comments should be put on the listserver.	Coordination Committee	February 28, 2001
Provide the Long Range Plan task force with an example of the detail needed for the document.	Tom Pitts	ASAP
Comments on the present Long Range Plan should be sent to Jim Brooks.	Coordination Committee	ASAP
Develop a plan to meet the overall rearing pond needs.	Biology Committee	ASAP
Disburse the funds from the NFWF to cover the water quality study of the rearing pond at Bluff.	Shirley Mondy and Henry Maddux	as appropriate
Assess the capability of NIIP to handle the rearing pond needs and develop a cost estimate.	Bureau of Indian Affairs	ASAP
If anyone wants a briefing on the draft recovery goals, let Henry Maddux know.	Coordination Committee	ASAP