



**SAN JUAN RIVER BASIN RECOVERY
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (SJRIP)
COORDINATION COMMITTEE
Thursday, October 17, 2019**

Draft Meeting Summary

COORDINATION COMMITTEE (CC) MEMBERS:

Jason Davis, Chair
Catherine Condon
Jenny Dumas
Michelle Garrison
Patrick McCarthy
Crystal Tulley-Cordova
Absent
Absent
Absent
Absent
Absent
Absent

REPRESENTING:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service), Region 2
Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Jicarilla Apache Nation
State of Colorado
The Nature Conservancy
Navajo Nation
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 6
Water Development Interests
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
State of New Mexico
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)

PROGRAM OFFICE (PO):

Melissa Mata, Program Coordinator
Scott L. Durst, Science Coordinator
Eliza Gilbert, Program Biologist

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 2
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 2
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 2

OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES:

Jojo La, CC Alternate
Lee Traynham
Kathleen Callister, CC Alternate
Christina Noftsker, CC Alternate
Nathan Franssen
Colleen Cunningham

State of Colorado
Bureau of Reclamation
Bureau of Reclamation
State of New Mexico
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 2
New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission

1. *Introductions/changes to agenda – Davis*

Only 5.5 voting CC members were present. The CC members present decided to proceed with an informational, non-voting meeting without a quorum.

2. *Recap of Joint Management Committee (MC)/CC Post-2023 Meeting in Denver, CO – Pitts*

Pitts was not present. However, Pitts sent a summary of outcomes from the MC/CC Post-2023 Meeting to the SJRIP CC listserve on October 16, 2019. Mata briefly summarized those outcomes attached to that email (attached). McCarthy asked for clarification about the purpose of this CC meeting, Mata stated that it is the CC's responsibility to provide a final recommendation for post-2023 activities and associated costs to UCRIP-SJRIP Group 1. Garrison concurred that the CC should provide the final recommendation to Group 1.

3. *Post-2023 recommendations of annual (base) funds (identified by activity number) – PO*

a) Clarification of activities with 56% Biology Committee (BC) Recommendations

Mata stated she contacted all BC members who the PO believed had ambiguous recommendations for post-2023 activities and asked them to clarify their positions as “decrease”, “maintain”, or “increase” effort for each activity. After these clarifications, only two activities were not recommended with a 2/3 support by BC members. These included Activity #25: “Provide PNM passage and limit entrainment in the San Juan River” with BC responses of 56% “maintain”, 44% “increase”, and Activity #29: “Annually sample small-bodied fishes using seines via one trip in the fall between Bloomfield, NM and Mexican Hat, UT – every five years from Bloomfield, NM to Clayhills, UT” with BC responses of 22% “decrease”, 44% “maintain”, and 33% “increase”.

Mata stated there was no cost estimate for an increase in Activity #25 because the majority of BC members (56%) were not recommending an increase in effort. However, she calculated an increase in Activity #29, which would result in an additional \$33k to the annual budget if the CC chose to support that change. No CC support for increasing the effort of this activity was voiced.

One ‘capital funds’ project also did not receive a 2/3 recommendation by the BC. Activity #50: “Assess feasibility of installing a temperature control device on Navajo Dam for use during peak flow releases” had BC recommended support responses of 56% “yes” and 44% “no”.

b) Consider cost increase for Nonnative Fish Management (26) and Operation and Maintenance (43)

Mata stated Ryden had suggested at the last MC/CC meeting that the SJRIP's effort directed at nonnative fish control post-2023 may be too low given, 1) The recent cost of nonnative fish removal has been abnormally low compared to past recent years due to the catfish diet study and, 2) we may want to increase that budget as a buffer if there are any new problematic nonnative fishes that become established in the future. No CC comments were voiced.

Mata noted the operation and maintenance (O&M) of previously constructed capital projects is currently set at 50k annually from 'base funds'. Mata also stated that the Program should also plan for O&M of future capital projects that would be paid from the annual budget. A new excel spreadsheet populating post-2023 capital project's O&M was constructed and will be emailed to CC members. O&M costs were computed by Christianson (BOR) based on best estimates from similar projects constructed in the Upper Basin.

c) CC recommendation for post-2023 annual (base) funds

Mata then reviewed all BC recommended 'base funds' projects and stressed that all of these activities have been prioritized by the BC as actions needed for recovery of the species in the San Juan River.

McCarthy recommended the CC members present approve the BC's annual activity recommendations 'as is' and present them to the Group 1 after consideration by other CC members not present. Condon and La both stated they were not comfortable approving the O&M costs of future capital projects without reviewing them. La suggested she would support moving forward with the recommended base fund activities (3.4M) with no change to the proposed nonnative fish efforts as well as the inclusion of the following caveat:

"All annual activities listed in post-2023 for base funds are conceptual in nature, and inclusion or selection of any action does not commit the Program or any partner to future action. All actions implemented by the Program will be considered by the Coordination Committee and assessed through an adaptive management process and will be in accordance with all State and Federal laws and regulations."

Other CC members expressed their support for this suggestion. No CC member objected. Because there was no quorum, the CC subsequently approved this recommendation via email.

4. Post-2023 recommendations of capital funds response to comments and discussion (identified by activity number)-PO.

Mata reviewed responses of the PO to comments made by CC to the proposed capital project expenditures post-2023. These responses were emailed to CC members on October 9, 2019.

Mata noted the BC recommended all the capital projects with 2/3 support of members except for the Temperature Control Device (TCD; only 56% supported it). Condon stated the TCD was discussed a long time ago but BOR was absolutely against it. Cunningham voiced concern that the TCD costs a lot of money with little certainty of positive outcomes towards recovery.

Mata reviewed the capital projects spreadsheet with the group and committed to emailing the file to CC members. Mata noted three changes to the last version of the file, 1) Total project design and construction were separated into two separate columns (one for design and one for actual construction), 2) Estimated annual O&M, and 3) Estimated rehabilitation

of each structure (estimated at 75% of estimated actual construction cost). Condon stated she could support the capital project recommendations but without the TCD. McCarthy suggested the PO take another round of revisions to the estimated costs and give a ‘reality check’ in regards to costs (with BOR) and the potential for actually completing all the projects in a 15-year period. Mata wanted to acknowledge that the recommendations provided are from the BC not including PO and the PO will refine the capital project recommendation per their request. The CC members were in general agreement and Mata confirmed the PO could construct a 15-year plan for potential capital projects with additional review of costs and have it completed within a week (or so). Mata confirmed that all CC members will receive the latest version of the excel file proposing capital projects.

5. Ongoing agenda items

a) Discussion of Ranchman-Terrell Ditch Improvement project section 7 consultation

Mata stated the Service is currently in Consultation with the project proponents. The federal nexus for the project is with NRCS and BOR who are aiding the revamping of two weir structures at the site. Pitts had previously voiced concern via an email to the group dated September 25, 2019 about the installation of the PIT antenna at the site. Mata stated monitoring and reporting of Reasonable Prudent Measures is often required for projects like these. However, the Service is now working with the project proponents to reach an agreement on monitoring requirements. Mata also noted that a few other ditch associations have asked about improving their water diversion structures to help fish passage. Mata stated the Service is still working to reach the project’s deadline and there still is a possibility of installing a PIT antenna at this site because the BC thinks it would be good for the Program.

b) Process for Trap and Transport SOW review and approval for NFWF capital funds

Mata stated there is a SOW that will investigate potential options for trapping and transporting endangered fishes above the waterfall that the PO is proposing, to be paid using NFWF capital funds. The PO asked if the SOW could get a technical review by the BC outside of normal SOW submissions and then to the CC for possible approval for funding this year by NFWF. Condon asked for clarification of when the project would occur, Mata stated FY2020 and completed in FY2021. No concerns were voiced and the PO will proceed with a technical review of the SOW by the BC.

c) Approval of May 16, 2019 Meeting Summary

No discussion due to lack of quorum

d) Approval of July 30, 2019 Meeting Summary

No discussion due to lack of quorum

e) Augmentation plan and processes of approval

No discussion due to lack of quorum

f) Process for voting BC Alternates

Mata indicated concern regarding BC Member Alternates not being voted in by the committee and were just being appointed. The PO was seeking guidance from the CC on whether or not BC member alternates should go through the voting process given that they may make recommendations to the PO. The current process is not specifically defined in the Program Document. No CC member voiced opposition to the proposed change of all BC Members and their Alternates be voted in by the BC with 2/3rds approval. This will include any current alternates that have not been vetted by the BC. No vote was conducted on this topic.

g) Path forward for Peer Reviewers

Davis asked if New Mexico was still interested in discussing this issue. Cunningham affirmed but no NM CC member was present. The BC is currently recommending keeping three Peer Reviewers. The CC decided to keep this topic on the agenda for the next meeting.

6. Next Coordination Committee Meeting

Mata will send out a doodle poll with a two-week slot in November with a 4 hr meeting duration to cover items not covered here.

**ACTIONS ITEMS FROM 17 OCTOBER 2019
COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

1. The PO will develop a quick reference of BC and CC responsibilities/processes with specific examples.
2. The PO in coordination with Region 6 will summarize the contribution of Lake Powell to recovery
3. The PO and BOR work to provide the \$25,000 to fix the Hogback Variable Frequency Drive pumps.
4. Clarification on any proposed future stocking will be proposed as amendments to SJRIP augmentation plans.
5. The PO will reevaluate proposed capital projects (in conjunction with BOR) before sending back to CC for review and comment.

12/20/2019

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR Mail - [EXTERNAL] Coordination Committee October 17 Agenda Item: Post-2023 Planning: Septe...



Mata, Melissa <melissa_mata@fws.gov>

[EXTERNAL] Coordination Committee October 17 Agenda Item: Post-2023 Planning: September 30-October 1, 2019 Joint Committee Meeting

1 message

Tom Pitts <tpitts@waterconsult.com>

Wed, Oct 16, 2019 at 11:17 AM

To: sjrp-coordination@fws.gov

Cc: sjrp-biology-comments@fws.gov, Tom Chart <tom_chart@fws.gov>, Julie Stahli <julie_stahli@fws.gov>



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TO: Coordination Committee, San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program

cc: Biology Committee, Tom Chart, Julie Stahli

FROM: Tom Pitts

SUBJECT: Post-2023 Planning: September 30-October 1, 2019 Joint Committee Meeting

On September 30 and October 1, 2019, a joint meeting of the Coordination Committee and the Management Committee, Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program took place in Denver, Colorado. The general objectives of the meeting were 1) to develop a common understanding among representatives of both programs on the programs' background, participating entities, activities, funding, and projected post-2023 activities and costs, 2) to discuss post-2023 issues for both programs, 3) develop an understanding of the source of hydropower revenues and limitations on those revenues in the future for funding of the programs, and 4) establish a path forward for development of the draft report on post-2023 activities and costs to the Secretary of Interior in September, 2020 that will be forwarded to Congress no later than September, 2021. These objectives were accomplished. The agenda for the meeting is attached.

The meeting was well attended by representatives of both programs. A summary of the meeting is being prepared and will be provided to the Coordination Committee as soon as available. The summary will provide a much more complete report on the discussions at the meeting.

Outcomes:

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?ik=461e5616b8&view-pt&search=all&permthid=thread-f%3A1647571206227511073&simpl=msg-f%3A16475712062...> 1/3

The significant outcomes of this meeting were as follows:

1. The continuing and common goal of the programs post-2023 is recovery of the endangered fish.
2. The draft outline of the report to the Secretary the Interior will be revised to reflect comments at the meeting. A timetable and assignments for completion of elements of the the draft report will be developed by the staffs of the recovery programs.
3. The Joint Committee reviewed the projected post-2023 activities and costs prepared by both programs. Both programs were charged with reviewing and refining activities and cost estimates.
4. Western Area Power Administration staff provided a presentation on how the Colorado River Basin Fund works. Staff informed the two programs that continued annual funding with hydropower revenues at current levels is not sustainable. WAPA and Reclamation will develop an estimate of sustainable funding and provide that to the programs to be used in post-2023 planning. Alternate sources of funding will have to be found for both programs to offset the loss of some level of hydropower annual funding. Annual funding of the recovery programs activities is critical to the success of the programs and is essential for maintaining ESA compliance for 2,500 water projects by the programs. Current sources of funding generally include hydropower funding, Congressional appropriations for capital projects, the states, water depletion fees paid by water users on new depletions (Upper Colorado program only), voluntary funding by some program participants including the tribes, water users, and environmental organizations, and Congressional appropriations to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to support hatchery operations and staffing.
5. A subgroup of the Joint Committee that includes representatives of both programs was established. The subgroup is charged with developing recommended final activities lists and costs for both program and recommended post-2023 sources of funding both programs, once the information is obtained from WAPA/Reclamation regarding sustainable hydropower funding and final review of activities and costs by the recovery programs. Subgroup recommendations will be provided to the Joint Committee for development of final recommendation to the governing committees of each program. Once the governing committees come to agreement, it will be necessary to obtain funding commitments from the various sources so that funding recommendations can be incorporated into the draft report to the Secretary the Interior.
6. The Joint Committee discussed institutional options including whether or not to have one program or two programs post-2023, and staffing arrangements for one or two programs. The unanimous decision of the Joint Committee is to recommend continuation of the two programs as separate entities. The directors of the two programs were charged with reviewing program activities and determining areas where efficiencies could be achieved both internally and across the two programs.
7. The Upper Colorado Program and Service will determine the feasibility of developing an updated draft recovery plan for the Humpback chub prior to submittal of the Secretary's report to Congress in FY 21.

12/20/2019 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR Mail - [EXTERNAL] Coordination Committee October 17 Agenda Item: Post-2023 Planning: Septe...

8. The cooperative agreements for both programs expire at the end of FY 23. New cooperative agreements for each program involving the respective tribes, federal agencies, and states will be needed to extend the programs post-2023.

9. Reclamation will make a determination regarding the level of NEPA compliance required due to federal agencies signing the post-2023 cooperative agreements.

10. A time table will be developed for completion of all activities needed for the draft report to the Secretary of the Interior in September, 2020.

The above list represents my interpretation of the significant outcomes of this critical meeting. Program staff and other participants my wish to correct or add to the list.

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