



**SAN JUAN RIVER BASIN RECOVERY
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (SJRIP)
COORDINATION COMMITTEE
Wednesday 4 November 2020**

COORDINATION COMMITTEE (CC) MEMBERS:

Jason Davis, Chair
Steven Whiteman
Natasha Cuylear, CC alternate
Michelle Garrison
Patrick McCarthy
Stanley Pollack
Dale Ryden
Tom Pitts
Leland Begay
Rudy Keedah, CC alternate
Colleen Cunningham, CC alternate
Ryan Christianson
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
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)
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

PROGRAM OFFICE (PO):

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

Service, Region 2
Service, Region 2
Service, Region 2

OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES:

Jojo La, CC alternate
Kathleen Callister, CC alternate
Crystal Tulley-Cordova, CC alternate
Adam Barkalow, BC alternate
Dave Speas, BC alternate
Jacob Mazzone, BC member
Mark McKinstry, BC member
William Miller, BC member
Benjamin Schleicher, BC member
Stephen Davenport, BC member
Ben Zimmerman, BC alternate
Brian Westfall, BC member
Nathan Franssen
Susan Behery
Pamela Norris
T. Kim Yazzie
Tom Chart
Melissa Trammel
Manuel Ulibarri

State of Colorado
BOR
Navajo Nation
State of New Mexico
BOR
Jicarilla Apache Nation
BOR
Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Service, Region 6
Service
Southern Ute Indian Tribe
BIA
Service, Region 2
BOR
Arizona Public Service
Navajo Nation
Service, Region 6
National Park Service
Service, Region 2

Wade Wilson
Ben Shockey
George Bowen
Henry Schlitzer

Service, Region 2
City of Farmington
Service, Region 2 IT
Service, Headquarters IT

Introductions/Updates to the Agenda – Davis

Approve draft summary from 27 July 2020 CC meeting

Durst received comments from Pitts, Condon, and Noftsker on the draft CC meeting summary. A revised draft that incorporated comments was sent to the CC via email on 17 September, 2020. Pitts motioned to approve the summary, Ryden seconded. With no opposition, the meeting summary was approved.

Review Action Item list – Mata

Action items from previous meeting:

- 1. The PO will develop a quick reference list of BC and CC responsibilities/processes with specific examples.**

Mata reported that this action item is ongoing. This quick reference will be based on guidance in the Program Document. Mata will provide a recommendation in the quick reference guide about how to address projects and recovery activities funded outside of the SJRIP. Davis asked if there was an anticipated date for completion. Mata indicated potentially January, 2021.

- 2. A draft synthesis providing a chronology of work completed in Lake Powell will be shared with the BC by 30 July 2020.**

Completed - The synthesis was provided to the BC for review. The PO did not receive comments from any BC members. Davis asked if the CC could see the document, Mata said she would send it out. It is still unclear where the document will be housed for future reference.

- 3. The Service will update the SJRIP Section 7 Principles and provide a draft to the CC for review by 7 August 2020.**

Ongoing – Mata will provide an update later in the meeting.

- 4. The PO in coordination with Region 6 will summarize the contribution of Lake Powell to recovery. Mata will review Service documents re: the role of Colorado Pikeminnow in Lake Powell in recovery and report back to the CC – ongoing. CC will write a memo to the Service requesting the Service’s opinion of the contribution of Lake Powell in recovery.**

Ongoing – Mata reported on the role of Lake Powell in recovery during the last CC meeting. La will coordinate the draft memo with the CC.

5. Behery will respond to City of Bloomfield's release request.

Behery reported the BOR was not able to meet the water release request due to low water availability. The City was understanding and the event was cancelled due to COVID-19.

6. Mata, McKinstry, and Christianson will explore options for O&M on Navajo Nation projects.

Christianson reported they have had meetings with Navajo Nation and he will give an update later in the meeting.

7. Mata will finalize and post the 14 May 2020 CC meeting summary.

Completed – Mata reported the meeting summary was finalized and posted to the website.

8. Mata will finalize and post FY 2021 Annual Work Plan (AWP) with a clarification on 2020 capital funding being used for SOW-32b and a revised header clarifying the annual funds column.

Completed – Mata reported the FY 2021 AWP was finalized and posted to the website.

BC Update – Mata/BC Members

Mata presented the BC agenda from their 29 October 2020 meeting. This was not a usually scheduled meeting as the BC is trying to have more frequent, but shorter meetings to address larger topics that have been difficult to get through. The primary purpose of the meeting was to prioritize diversion structures in the San Juan and Animas Rivers that may be hindering recovery. Mata reported a small group was tasked with creating a draft prioritization of structures. This group included: Zeigler, Miller, Mazzone, Davenport from the BC, and Gilbert, Durst, and Franssen from the PO. The group presented their first draft to the BC and it is currently in review with them. Mata noted this task is just in its infancy, and the BC will continue to work to get this completed.

The BC also saw a presentation by Franssen on results from a Razorback Sucker flow-conditioning study the PO and Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources Recovery Center (SNARRC) conducted over the last 4 years. Results showed a doubling of first overwinter survival of flow-conditioned fish compared to control fish, highlighting the potential of hatchery enrichment practices to increase the efficiency of our stocking programs. The PO is going to reach out to our hatchery partners and ask about their abilities to start flow-conditioning Razorback Sucker prior to stocking.

Alyssa Richmond, the Program Coordinator for the San Juan River Watershed Group gave a presentation to the BC about work they have conducted in the San Juan River watershed to

improve water quality in the basin. She wanted to reach out to the Program to allow for their input into future planning. She would likely try to be involved in future BC meetings.

Miller also noted that the BC discussed the Trap and Transport Report by Dr. Tyler Pilger from FishBio, and FY2020 projects that were impacted by COVID-19, specifically Demographic Monitoring.

Pitts asked about an update on the attempts to increase genetic diversity of the Colorado Pikeminnow broodstock held at SNARRC. Mata said American Southwest Ichthyological Researchers (ASIR) helped with collections this fall due to COVID-19 limitations placed on the Federal partners. The PO has also been having conversations with SNARRC about hatchery options for Colorado Pikeminnow. SNARRC can hold the recently-collected age-0 fish for 3-5 years, but then they will need a new home due to space limitations at SNARRC. Wilson gave update on fish that were collected this past fall. They are still sorting through the fish for non-target species, but reported the numbers looked good from the October sampling with 434 Colorado Pikeminnow from the Colorado River and 510 from the Green River. No fish were collected from the Middle Green River by Chris Smith (Service Vernal Office). Fish do not mature for 5 or 6 years, so it will take some time before they can be used for production. Speas reported the last two trips in the lower Green and Colorado Rivers had similar success in collecting fish but didn't have any exact numbers. Wilson stated they are still sorting through non-target species and he would get an email out to the group with final numbers soon.

BC Trap and Transport Recommendation (CC recommendation) – Gilbert/BC Members

Davis reminded the CC that Zeigler (BC Chair) had sent email out with the Trap and Transport feasibility report by FishBio with the BC's recommendation to proceed with 2 or 3 options. Mata stated this investigation was conducted because the National Park Service had asked if we had considered other fish passage options (i.e., trapping and transporting over the waterfall) other than a permanent structure. BOR's Technical Services Center (TSC) is still working on their design options for structures to improve fish passage at the waterfall and that should be completed by December, 2020.

The BC had discussed the report at their August meeting and decided on their recommendations at that time. The report has been finalized after revision based on comments received by the BC. There were a total of 5 options, but the BC settled on 2 or possibly 3 they would like to see developed further through specific Scopes of Work (SOW). The BC highly recommended the 2 options because they were deemed realistic and feasible solutions. Miller stated the recommended options were basically 1) a fyke net with leads that would direct fish to a seining corral and 2) a fyke net with leads to a mobile trap. Both options have directional leads to guide fish into the holding areas and they seemed like good ideas because these traps can be set in place, increasing the amount of time fish are being captured. The third option was a dobble net that has a base placed on shore and a net on a boom that is submerged and then retrieved manually. The downside of this option is that it covers a relatively smaller area and debris loads may make it more difficult to operate. These new trapping practices would serve

as a ‘proof of concept’ while the Program is awaiting structure designs from TSC and may inform efficiency questions about increasing fish passage.

Franssen asked if Miller could remind the group why we are concerned with moving fish past the waterfall. Miller said it is mainly a connectivity issue where increasing fish passage would likely increase genetic diversity and increase the numbers of spawning fish in the river. Trammel asked if transportation of fish after capture had been discussed. Miller stated they mainly focused on the trapping part, but would need to look into transportation further at a later date (e.g., how far upstream should fish be moved?).

La asked if options 1 and 2 resolve issues with seining in sand and silt. Miller said the BC discussed that issue and noted that these options would improve efficiency of seining because they would be placed in areas with lower silt loads and known water depths. Although the second option does not include seining due to the mobile trap. La asked if these were the final designs and if there would be any additional costs. Miller stated the range of potential costs for construction are included in the report and operational costs have been provided in Table 1. It has not been decided who would do the construction or operation at this time.

Barkalow noted that the BC wants to pursue both options simultaneously so they can evaluate their efficiency more easily.

Pitts asked if fish are being moved currently. Yes, we have been moving fish for several years but it has mostly been research-oriented or conducted opportunistically. Ryden mentioned that fish were collected in the early 90s by cast net and relatively large numbers were moved above the waterfall. He did note that some fish return over the water fall after being moved, but it is well documented that fragmentation of habitats is particularly deleterious for endangered fishes. Durst mentioned that allowing fish access to the river to spawn is also important, regardless if they subsequently return to the inflow area of Lake Powell.

Pitts asked what the process was for moving forward with the Trap and Transport report. Mata stated they wanted CC approval to proceed with SOW development for both construction and operation of the 2 options recommended by the BC. La asked if capital funds would be used for construction. Mata said capital funds would be used for construction but annual funds would be used for operation. Christianson stated BOR could use capital funds for their construction. Pitts stated he could support moving forward but still wanted to see the TSC report on longer-term solutions. Pitts was ok with developing specific SOW to assess design and operational costs. Whiteman stated the rationale seemed sound and supports the need for evaluation of the options to make informed decisions.

Davis summarized and stated it sounded like the CC supported moving forward with SOW development. Pitts motioned to approve the SOW development, Whiteman seconded, no one opposed. Motion passed. The BC will move forward with development of SOWs exploring the Trap and Transport options recommended by the BC.

Davis will draft a response to Zeigler’s email from the BC and carbon copy the CC on the response email by the middle of next week.

Razorback Sucker Augmentation Plan (review and comment) – Mata/Durst

Mata stated the Augmentation Plan authored by Furr and Davenport was emailed to the CC on 23 October 2020. This is the CC's opportunity for comments on the final version of the plan, and it has gone through several BC reviews. Comments are due back on November 13 to Durst. Mata noted the largest changes to the Plan included language changes about ESA and propagation. Furr was asked to explain the purpose of the document. Furr responded that the Plan is to see if we can create a self-sustaining population of Razorback Sucker in the San Juan River. Additionally, the Plan also includes estimates for stocking would be needed after fish are spawning and recruiting. Davenport noted that its structure is based on the Recovery Plan and Long Range Plan. The PO provided comments and indicated that this revised Plan was guided by previous Plans. Mata noted that implementation of the Plan will be approved by the CC through the annual work plan process.

Navajo Nation Agricultural Industry (NAPI) did stock Razorback Sucker this year, and thanks to the CC for approving stocking fish <300 mm total length below the waterfall. Pitts asked if we have genetic issues with Razorback Sucker broodstock similar to Colorado Pikeminnow. Wilson responded in the negative. Davis stated the Augmentation plan is a guidance document that summarizes the intent of stockings, but it is not prescriptive and annual SOWs will drive implementation.

Alternative strategies for stocking Colorado Pikeminnow in the San Juan River Basin (Vote to adopt) – Mata/Barkalow

Mata stated a revised version was sent to the CC on 18 August 2020. New Mexico Department of Game and Fish had addressed comments by the CC and this is the second draft. We are asking the CC to adopt the plan but not approve it because it is just a guidance document. Presently, the Program is moving forward on Alternative 4 (stocking 12,000 PIT tagged age-1 Colorado Pikeminnow) by approving the FY2020 annual work plan (AWP). Changes to the plan included a title change to better reflect the scope of the document (this is not the Colorado Pikeminnow Augmentation Plan), and now explicitly states the goals of the document differ from the Augmentation Plan, and an addition section about uncertainty in tag loss, and stocking numbers. They also changed wording about 'prey training' to 'hatchery enrichment' to better capture the breadth of potential hatchery practices. This document will likely be included as an Appendix to the Colorado Pikeminnow Augmentation Plan. Implementation of the plan will occur through the annual SOW process.

Pitts motioned to table this topic because his comments were not addressed in the last version. Barkalow stated he thought all comments were addressed, but he has a 'response to comments' document that describes how each comment was addressed. Barkalow thought most comments confused this document with the Colorado Pikeminnow Augmentation Plan, but he would be happy to send that "response to comments" document and have further discussions with Pitts about his comments.

Davis asked if adoption of this document is holding up stockings. Mata responded 'no', the CC approved stocking age-1 fish versus age-0 fish for FY2020 but it may delay development of the Colorado Pikeminnow Augmentation Plan. Davis recommended Barkalow work with Pitts on his comments and the CC will conduct a vote to adopt the document over email. Ryden

approved of this process but encouraged people to move relatively quickly to have vote before January. Pitts agreed and thought it could occur much earlier and asked if other CC members wanted to be involved. Cunningham and Whiteman indicated they didn't have any further comments. Pitts withdrew his motion to table the subject.

Long Range Plan-Appendix A (review and approval)– Gilbert

Gilbert stated Mata had spelled out the changes to the Long Range Plan (LRP) in the email sent to the CC. The reason for changes was to add two tasks: 1) Change from stocking age-0 to age-1 Colorado Pikeminnow, and 2) the inclusion of Ranchmans-Terrell ditch and PIT antenna. Accomplishments from 2019 were updated and reviewed by BC and their comments were incorporated. The PO needs comments before it can be uploaded to the website and the appendix will note the date changes. Davis said there were no 'no side by side comparisons' in the LRP, but Eliza noted the major changes. Mata stated there were two new rows and an entirely new column for updated accomplishments for each task. Davis asked if they still wanted comments. Mata said comments are welcome. Pitts asked how the number of age-1 Colorado Pikeminnow stocked annually came to be at 12,000. Gilbert stated it was the amount SNARRC could produce and remain budget neutral. Pitts stated he was in favor, but the stocking plan needs to include how long to get to de- and downlisting of the species. Mata said we are already planning on stocking this number of Colorado Pikeminnow and the CC previously approved it. However, those questions will be addressed in the Colorado Pikeminnow Augmentation Plan. Gilbert reported that the PO conducted preliminary analysis on the change and indicated the change should not reduce the numbers of fish in the river but will likely increase them. The change will also allow us to track wild-spawned fish, which we can not do currently.

Pitts voiced concern about providing Program funds to the Ranchmans-Terrell PIT antenna due to the piecemeal approach being done in the Animas River. He was concerned with the large number of diversions in the Animas, the lack of habitat assessment in the system, and didn't think conducting work at one structure at a time was an efficient way to approach the potential problem. Mata stated Pitts had previously asked for the project to be included in the LRP. She stated Ranchmans-Terrell's diversion is the next upstream diversion of Penny Lane, where endangered fish have been detected. We wanted to use the PIT antennas at Ranchmans-Terrell to see if fish are using that next reach upstream of Penny Lane. This was articulated in the Biological Opinion for the project. Mata also noted that the diversion prioritization being conducted by the BC should also help with further planning. Pitts stated there was limited information on the Animas about how it could contribute to recovery or reasons to modify the 26 structures on the Animas River. Pitts would provide comments by November 13th, and Davis stated the CC will have further discussion at a later meeting.

Covid-19 Impacts on FY20 Project – Mata/Durst

Mata recounted how COVID-19 disrupted Program activities since March 2020. Federal, State, and Tribal health guidelines reduced the ability to conduct some field work. The BC and PO had worked with some Primary Investigators (PIs) on how some SOWs could be modified to at least complete some of the planned work. Questions about this process came from the CC when Mata sent an email out informing the CC on changes to the Demographic Monitoring SOW. The CC wanted to know how they were involved in the process and how were SOWs

going to be revised. Mata is requesting guidance on how the CC wants to resolve the issue of modified SOWs due to COVID-19 restrictions. Mata proposed an addendum to the FY2021 AWP that briefly describes modifications instead of revising all SOWs. She presented a 3-page document that summarized projects that were changed, mostly modified in their spatial extent (e.g., sampling outside of Navajo Nation), or numbers of personnel to reduce interaction among agencies. It also noted that some projects were canceled but they could use those funds to complete the projects in FY2021 at no additional cost, however, some projects still needed to use some FY2020 funds to pay staff, regardless if the project was completed or not.

Tulley-Cordova asked who at Navajo Nation were we trying to get permission to access the Nation? Mata responded: Jeff Cole, Jerrod Bowman, Gloria Tom, and Dr. Rudy Shebala. They did give approval for all of our stockings as well as nonnative fish removal scheduled to be conducted in November and December. When the PO didn't get approval, or did not hear back from people at the Nation, the PO didn't proceed with those field activities. Whiteman asked if future projects could be impacted. Mata reply it is not clear yet, we will likely have to see if the pandemic subsides or not. Other issues like camping rates versus hotel rates (some field crews that originally planned on camping ended up staying in hotels) were not factored in the original budgets so she does not have all the information about how much funds for each project could potentially be held over for next year. Mata is requesting that the CC decide how they would like to proceed with a path forward.

Davis commended work to get some of the projects conducted in light of the problems posed by the COVID shutdowns. Ryden noted that changes to proposed work demonstrated that work could safely continue, but he is currently going through the hiring process and therefore changes to FY2021 projects may also need to be altered. Davis supports the idea of making a compiled list and description of projects that have been impacted and add it as an addendum to the FY2020 AWP: Mata wanted feedback from the CC before she continued with this solution.

McCarthy, Whiteman, and Ryden supported the proposed solution. Speas stated that as long as the changes were relatively minor and they still have their objectives met, BOR would be fine and wanted those decisions to made 'on the ground' rather than by him. Davis wanted assurance that any changes to projects would also be documented in their annual reports. Mata assured annual reports will also document any changes. Cunningham asked if Mata had enough information about carryover-funds PIs could use for FY2021 and if she could include them in the addendum? Mata said she had some information and would include what she had. Action item: the PO will update the FY20 AWP Addendum to include a table of estimated carryover funds and upload updated version of FYAWP to the website.

Section 7 Principles Update – Mata/Gilbert

Mata reported that she was given this task over a year ago when questions arose about how the Program was implementing ESA Principles during the Ranchmans-Terrell Diversion's BO. Her draft revision was sent to the CC and she received comments back from Pitts, Callister, and Condon. She stated she had talked to everyone who gave comments the week before. The path forward will be another revision of the document with responses to specific comments and how they were addressed. She will check with the Regional Office to make sure the document is in line with their guidance.

Most edits were related to wording but New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission wanted discussion about depletions in baselines. Mata noted that language will be incorporated that includes discussion about historic depletions not consulted on that are covered by the Program and existing depletions that have been consulted on but still need to follow to make sure mitigation is occurring and that BOs are being followed. A revised document will be sent to the CC by November 13, 2020. La missed the original comment period but will comment on the newly revised document. La also asked if the summary of minor depletions can be shared with the CC. Mata stated she would supply the requested material. Due date for comments on the revision will be noted in the email. Pitts asked if we are currently following ESA principles, Mata assured the Principles have been followed and this is a living document.

Short Film Development Update – Mata

Mata described work with the Upper Colorado Recovery Program Information and Education (I&E) committee that is investigating the potential for 2 short films (one for the Upper Colorado Recovery Program and one for the San Juan) to be developed. The Upper Colorado Recovery Program approved \$5,000 to develop a ‘storyboard’ that would describe the messaging, purpose, target audience, potential life-span of the films, and distribution. Mata is requesting approval from the CC to develop a storyboard for the San Juan Program with the biggest message highlighting the Program’s recovery efforts. Up to 5 people from Program partners may be asked to star in the films and discuss how the Program has benefitted their organizations. Cunningham noted the film would be important for informing people in the communities where work is being conducted. La asked how much money would be required of the Program to complete a storyboard. Mata thought she could get initial funds from the Service, but may eventually ask up to \$5,000 if she can’t get Service funds. Ryden like the idea but questioned the life-span of films given the rapid changes in technology today and asked if this would be a one time commitment. Mata thought 5 years would be a reasonable guess for lifespan and thought it would only be a commitment for one video. La noted that the cost seemed very reasonable and Mata noted the company that would produce the video would likely make substantial in-kind contributions. Davis and Pitts were supportive but asked for more specifics about the target audience, how the message will be shaped, and how will success be evaluated. Mata responded that the goals of the films would be to increase public and political support for the Program, especially for more local communities. No opposition was voiced about proceeding with development of a storyboard for the SJRIP. Mata will continue to work with Melanie Fischer from the Upper Colorado Recovery Program to iron out more details. She will keep the CC informed of any progress.

Capital Project Update – Christianson

Christianson presented BOR’s proposed capital project budget table and noted there would be nearly \$25 million unallocated under the cost ceiling for both programs by the end of 2023 given current project planning. The Fruitland diversion project was funded with an interagency agreement with BIA and BIA agreed to fund the remainder required to complete the project. Work on this diversion will likely be completed in fall 2021. BOR’s Technical Services Center is working on designs to improve fish passage at the APS weir and that design should be presented to the CC this December. Capital funds could be used for construction of traps to be used at the Piute Farms waterfall. There are no specific plans currently on what, if anything, should be done at Jewett and Farmers Mutual ditches and the CC is waiting for the

prioritized list of diversions by the BC. However, we need to get these on the list ASAP if we want to fund construction at these sites by 2022 or 2023. Not all of the remaining authorized funds under the cost ceiling will be appropriated between now and 2023 and we should expect ~\$5 million between both recovery programs in appropriations for 2022 and 2023.

Mata gave an update on the Phase III wetland project. The grant was awarded to Navajo Nation and this project should be completed this winter. Christianson noted PIT antennas were purchased for the Ranchmans-Terrell project and some hatchery improvements at NAPI ponds have been discussed but the CC has yet to see those SOWs. Mata stated she has a SOW from Aquatic Consultants Incorporated (ACI) for the NAPI ponds that she will pass to the CC for review and potential funding.

La asked if BOR has already budgeted out for 3 years, Christianson said yes, and all these projects at the top of the list have been included. However, he noted the Program would be competing with the Upper Colorado Recovery Program for those funds so it would be good to get list of capital projects finalized. Pitts reminded the group that BOR runs a three-year budget cycle and the Congressional authorization expires in September 2023. Christianson concurred and explained that's why his budget table only extends to 2023. Davis asked what the prioritization process will be for these projects. Mata explained that the BC has previously provided a prioritized list that included Jewett and Farmers Mutual ditches, others like Hogback, APS weir, Fruitland, and PNM weir were all outlined in the LRP. Mata also noted that the Jewett and Farmers Mutual ditches will be assessed on threats to recovery when the BC provides a revised prioritized list. Davis said the CC will then wait for the prioritization before being asked for funding. Mata replied 'yes'.

Christianson stated BOR is asking the CC to approve funding to repair and replace components at Hogback. The CC already approved funding to replace Variable Frequency Drive pumps and replace the server for the electronics. Replacement of the pumps has been delayed due to COVID and getting agreements in place between NFWF and ACES still needs to be done. In addition, the batteries need replacement and the charging system needs repairs and he is asking the CC for ~\$19,758 to fix those issues. Mata said the total ask is \$45,000 to fix both issues. The CC approved the funds.

Christianson also mentioned it has been difficult to get Operation and Maintenance (O&M) performed at previously-constructed capital projects on Navajo Nation lands. They have been in discussion with Navajo Nation about a solution, stating funding a single entity to conduct all O&M would be ideal, but the talks are ongoing.

FY21 Funding Update – Callister

Callister reported the federal government is still operating under a Continuing Resolution (CR) through December 11. There is still no news from the Senate on the bill that was passed by the House. BOR has not received funding yet from the CR as there is no language about funding the environmental programs in the Colorado River Basin. We will have to wait and see if the Senate includes language for funding the programs. Western Area Power Association (WAPA) has cited the Dingell Act in not providing hydropower funding to the recovery programs. BOR has briefed this up their chain-of-command but no guidance has been passed down yet. Mata clarified that the CR provides funds through Dec. 11, but no

funds after that. She stated there is nonnative fish removal planned for this winter by New Mexico Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation Office (NMFWCO) but they should have carryover funds to complete that work. Mata further asked if there has been any guidance after Dec. 11 about projects? Callister responded “no”. Mata asked Callister to please contact our PIs about projects that should or should not continue if the budget is not resolved by then. Callister replied she would.

Pitts wanted clarification that the CR does not have funds for the recovery programs. Callister stated that it usually does, but the H.R. 7617 does not. La wanted further clarification on WAPA and Dingell act. Callister reported that WAPA was concerned with the language removed in Section 3 of P.L. 106-392 section D regarding base funding that addressed using non-reimbursable funds. Pitts added that it removed the authority to provide hydropower revenues to fund the environmental programs and added authority for BOR to fund up to \$10 million a year from appropriations through 2023.

Post-2023 update

a. Funding Group Status – Garrison/Pitts

Garrison reported that the Funding Group is meeting regularly. At the last meeting the Group was given ‘homework’ to look into other funding options for the Programs. There were a range of potential sources that included small grants from other entities like the States, and entities seeking appropriations like the National Park Service, Service, and BOR. Most of the grant sources would likely contribute to capital funding, while Federal funding options are deemed more suited for annual funding. The Group continues to struggle to find funding to make up for loss of hydropower revenues, however, it is still unclear what the shortfall will likely be. They will continue to explore other funding avenues.

The report to Congress by the Secretary of the Interior is due in September 2021 but it is unclear if the group is on schedule to meet that deadline. It may be necessary to ask for an extension. There is still a lot left to do, but the group is working so things can move forward. The biggest unknowns are coming from our non-federal partners whose budgets have been hit hard by reduced revenue due to COVID-19. Pitts added that the impact of COVID-19 on States funding has been substantial. In the original Public Law, States contributed \$17 million for capital projects, but now cannot make financial commitments and they may need a few years before they can contribute. Therefore, we may need to rely on federal funding for first few years post 2023. Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming likely can continue annual funding to the Upper Colorado Recovery Program. States do not contribute to annual funding to the SJRRIP specifically but have identified other means of contribution not yet recognized.

b. Report to Congress – Stahli/Mata/Pitts

Pitts stated that the report to Congress is currently due by September 2021. We will have a better idea if we can meet this deadline by March, 2021. If it doesn’t look like we can make the September deadline, we will likely ask for an extension. Mata added that herself, Durst, and Don Anderson (Upper Program) are currently working on a rough draft of the report, but they may need to ask for more time.

Other Topics – Mata/Anyone

Mata reported on disturbance to a recently-constructed secondary channel that was part of a BO mitigation from a project with BIA and Navajo Nation. Apparently, a new hemp farm constructed a sandbag weir into the San Juan River to direct flow into the secondary channel, and then dammed the secondary channel further downstream to pool the water so they could pump water to their crops. The Service was unable to get directly involved because they are not the Action Agency for the project. There was an injunction filed in September to remove the obstructions, but due to safety concerns, it has been difficult to assess the response by the hemp farm. On first visit by Navajo Nation employees, there were unidentified fish using the pooled secondary channel.

McCarthy stated that this news is concerning as the Program has invested a lot of money in keeping secondary channels flowing in the river, and to date, these actions seem to be effective. McCarthy urged to let The Nature Conservancy (TNC) know if they could do anything to help.

Keedah reported that BIA is having monthly meetings with the Shiprock Irrigation Office and the topic came up. They had asked the Dineh water users to open the channel but there were safety concerns so they did not make it to the site. Francis Johnson from Shiprock Irrigation went to the site to investigate and was subsequently locked in from a gate across the road. He had to call the Navajo Nation police to come and cut the chain to get him and his vehicle out. Keedah said he would keep the group apprised via email with any further updates.

Davis asked what river mile the secondary channel was located. Westfall said it was only about 1,000 ft downstream of the Shiprock bridge on river left. Davis further asked if any endangered fishes have used the channel. Mata thought there were some Colorado Pikeminnow detected on the PIT antennas previously, but those antennas are not currently active for some unknown reason.

Gilbert brought the groups attention to a Federal Energy Regulation Commission (FERC) Application for a preliminary permit for hydroelectric storage facility in the San Juan River Basin. It proposes a closed-loop water system about 20 miles southwest of Shiprock, NM. They are asking for 2,000 acre-feet of water to fill the facility and then an additional 1,200-1,300 acre-feet annually to account for evaporation. There will also be transmission lines crossing both New Mexico and Arizona borders incorporated into the project. We do not know from whom they are acquiring the water rights. The permit application was published September 23 in the Federal Registrar. The Service Albuquerque Ecological Services Field Office plans to make comments to make the applicants aware of the Program, our hydrology model, and potential ways they could minimize effects of the project. Davis asked if the applicants had considered issues with nonnative fishes in their holding facility. Gilbert noted that it was a closed system so the only way to lose fish to the river would be from a flood, but the Section 7 process would likely have to consider that possibility. La asked who were the owners of the proposed project. Gilbert thought Kinetic Power, LLC out of Santa Fe, New Mexico. Callister noted the project was on Navajo Nation lands and asked if we know how Navajo Nation stands on the project? Mata has not heard anything and Tulley-Cordova said this is the first time she has heard about it. Gilbert will send the FERC application out to the CC.

Ryden mentioned that the road down to the boat ramp at the Shiprock bridge has been barricaded off so there is not currently access to the river for crews. No need for discussion here, but the issue will need to be addressed soon.

Schedule next CC meeting(s)

The PO will send out a doodle poll to find a date for the next CC meeting in January or February. We can discuss post-2023 proposals and diversion issues in the Animas River during that meeting.

The May annual meeting will be scheduled during our January or February meeting.

Upcoming Meetings to Note:

- a. Biology Committee Meeting December 15-17, 2020
- b. Researcher's Meeting January 12-13, 2021

**ACTIONS ITEMS FROM 4 November 2020
COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

1. The PO will develop a quick reference list of BC and CC responsibilities/processes with specific examples – ongoing, due January 2021.
2. The PO will update the FY20 AWP Addendum to include a table of estimated carryover funds prior to the next CC Meeting.
3. The PO will send updates to the Section 7 Principles out to the CC by November 13 for review and comment.
4. Davis will draft a memo to the BC about the approval by the CC to continue to develop SOWs for the Trap and Transport options.
5. Comments on the Long Range Plan and the Razorback Sucker Augmentation Plan are due back to the PO by November 13.
6. The PO will send the summary of the History of Endangered Fishes in Lake Powell to the CC.
7. The PO will send a SOW detailing potential infrastructure improvements to the NAPI ponds to the CC.
8. PO will send the FERC application out to the CC.
9. The PO in coordination with Region 6 will summarize the contribution of Lake Powell to recovery. Mata will review Service documents re: the role of Colorado Pikeminnow in Lake Powell in recovery and report back to the CC – ongoing. CC will write a memo to the Service requesting the Service’s opinion of the contribution of Lake Powell in recovery – ongoing.
10. Mata, McKinstry, and Christianson will explore options regarding O&M for Navajo Nation projects.