



**SAN JUAN RIVER BASIN RECOVERY
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (SJRIP)
COORDINATION COMMITTEE
Monday 8 March 2021**

Approved Meeting Summary

COORDINATION COMMITTEE (CC) MEMBERS:

Jason Davis, Chair
Steven Whiteman
Jennifer Dumas, CC alternate
Michelle Garrison
Patrick McCarthy
Stanley Pollack
Dale Ryden
Tom Pitts
Leland Begay
Absent
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
Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

PROGRAM OFFICE (PO):

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

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

OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES:

Crystal Tulley-Cordova, CC alternate
Jojo La, CC alternate
Christina Noftsker, CC alternate
Kathleen Callister, CC alternate
Matt Zeigler, BC member, chair
William Miller, BC member
Brian Westfall, BC member
Benjamin Schleicher, BC member
Adam Barkalow, BC alternate
Tom Chart
Nathan Franssen
Ed Warner
Susan Behery
Katherine Duncan
Pamela Norris

Navajo Nation
State of Colorado
State of New Mexico
Reclamation
State of New Mexico
Southern Ute Indian Tribe
BIA
Service, Region 6
State of New Mexico
Service, Region 6
Service, Region 2
Reclamation
Reclamation
State of Colorado
Arizona Public Service

1. Introductions – Davis

2. Meeting summary 26 January 2021 – Gilbert (seeking approval)

Gilbert received comments from Pitts, Noftsker, La, and Callister on the draft CC meeting summary. Comments were incorporated in Track Changes. Garrison motioned to approve the summary; Ryden seconded. There was no further discussion and the meeting summary was approved unanimously.

3. Action items from 26 January 2021 meeting – Davis (review)

- 1. The PO will develop a quick reference list of BC and CC responsibilities/processes with specific examples.**
Completed and on today's agenda.
- 2. 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. CC will write a memo to the Service requesting the Service's opinion of the contribution of Lake Powell in recovery.**
Ongoing. La will coordinate writing a request but post-2023 has been a bigger priority.
- 3. Mata, McKinstry, and Christianson will explore options regarding O&M for Navajo Nation projects.**
Ongoing. Christianson will provide an update today.
- 4. Callister will provide a funding update to the PO and CC within the next week.**
Completed.
- 5. Durst will send information on past partner contributions for both Recovery Programs.**
Completed. Updated information was passed along to Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.
- 6. Partners will identify items they think should or could be included in the briefing booklet and send that information to Durst.**
Completed. Information was passed along to Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.
- 7. Christianson will work with the Navajo Nation to determine their plans for replacement of the pumps at Hogback and get an accurate cost estimate to help rehabilitation work for use at the next meeting.**
On today's agenda.
- 8. Gilbert will organize a small group to incorporate Section 7 Principle comments.**
Ongoing. A team of PO, Water Users, New Mexico, and Colorado met on 2 March 2021 and have scheduled another meeting on 13 April 2021.

9. Durst will send a final draft of the 2020 long-range plans' appendix A for CC approval.

Completed.

10. The PO will develop an initial draft clarifying appendix A of the long-range plan and send that to the BC for development of the 2021 long-range plan appendix A.

Ongoing.

11. Durst will send Doodle polls to organize the next two meetings.

Completed.

4. Additional agenda items from CC members

Pitts asked about the format of the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting has been scheduled and is included at the end of this agenda

5. Fiscal year 2021 funding – Callister (update)

The FY2021 funding issues have been resolved and Reclamation is waiting for the transfer of power revenue from WAPA. Those funds will be dispersed to partners and PIs as soon as possible. Callister reported that she doesn't have information on how the funding issue was resolved. Clarity on FY2022 funding should come with the release of the President's budget in April. Upcoming SJRIP work is proceeding as planned.

6. Capital projects – Christianson (update)

Christianson shared his capital projects spreadsheet. There are funds available under the cost ceiling but it may be difficult to get projects implemented prior to 2023 to spend all of those funds. Hopefully the timeline is extended in a new authorization that will include a new cost ceiling. The Phase 3 wetland project was completed this winter. Equipment for Ranchman's has been purchased and is awaiting installation. Capital funds for NAPI infrastructure improvements have been approved and efforts to complete this work are ongoing. The SJRIP is only covering the cost of the weir wall (\$972,000) out of the total capital cost of the Fruitland Diversion Dam rehabilitation project (~\$7.7M). Fish passage work at APS and Piute Farms waterfall is ongoing with Reclamation's Technical Service Center (TSC) report. The report has been provided to the BC and will be finalized at the end of the month.

Modifications to PNM fish passage are still on the table. It appears that the PNM intake will become part of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project. This project will use existing facilities and will not require modification. The fish passage is owned by PNM but it could be transferred to the Navajo Nation. The SJRIP would continue to be responsible for Operation and Maintenance (O&M) at this facility. A water cannon has been installed at the fish passage to address issues with sediment buildup at the upstream side of the passage.

An O&M agreement is needed with the Navajo Nation that would cover all existing facilities located on the Navajo Nation (PNM, Hogback, Fruitland, Phase 3 wetland, NAPI ponds, and future passage and habitat projects). Christianson thinks a single agreement would be best and has been working with Navajo Nation to get this in place. Jeff Cole indicated Navajo Nation Water Resources or Navajo

Nation Fish and Wildlife are both options to carry out O&M. Pollack indicated that he's not aware of these discussions. PNM has stepped back from its previous O&M agreement and this work has fallen to Navajo Nation although they are not being reimbursed for their efforts. A new O&M agreement is needed soon so O&M work for SJRIP projects on the Navajo Nation can be performed and reimbursed by the SJRIP.

a. Previous Hogback Canal pump cost estimate

Christianson shared a Keller-Bliesner cost estimate to repair the irrigation pumps at Hogback from 2018 for ~\$1,000,000. These pumps interfere with the operation of Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tag antennas associated with the Hogback facility making assessment of entrainment and movement impossible when the pumps have running during the irrigation season over the last five years. Some equipment that was part of this 2018 cost estimate has already been purchased and is available for installation. Repairing these pumps is not currently a Navajo Nation priority. Repair of these pumps was part of the proposed action in the Fruitland Biological Opinion. The group discussed a possible cost-share for the project between the SJRIP and Navajo Nation. Previously the CC showed interest in covering the entire cost of the project. Tulley-Cordova indicated the project is basically "shovel-ready" and could likely be completed next winter. Pitts motioned that the SJRIP fully fund the pump replacement so the PIT tag antennas will operate, Ryden seconded, and the motion was approved with no opposition. Christianson will provide an updated cost estimate.

7. BC 17-18 February 2021 meeting – Zeigler (update)

The first day of the BC meeting focused on reporting from 2020 activities and Zeigler indicated a surprising amount of work was completed given the challenging circumstances. Larval razorback sucker were detected at the most upstream location to date, river mile 184.3 on the San Juan River, indicating a spawning bar upstream of that location. Wild Colorado pikeminnow juveniles were collected despite the low water year. Monitoring for wild age-0 razorback sucker was conducted in place of Demographic Monitoring. However, all age-0 fish identified in the field as razorback sucker were found to be flannelmouth-razorback sucker hybrids upon genetic analysis. The BC did not recommend a management action to address this but discussed a need to learn more about the reproductive ecology of razorback sucker. The flannelmouth sucker population in the San Juan River is large. Ryden expressed concern about the presumed wild age-0 razorback sucker in the Upper Colorado River Basin that looked similar to the ones confirmed to be hybrids in the San Juan River. Genetic work to confirm the identity of those fish in the Upper Basin has not been conducted. In the San Juan River, tissue from all untagged razorback sucker will be collected for genetic analysis. Colorado pikeminnow broodstock collection from the lower Green and Colorado Rivers was successful and resulted in ~1,200 fish being sent to Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center (SNARRC). The winter channel catfish management had high removal rates. The BC accepted TNC's nomination of AJ Keith as their BC representative. He will serve a similar role in the Upper Basin. The BC discussed plans for a nonnative fish symposium that will develop a nonnative fish adaptive management plan. Finally, the BC discussed the TSC reports on fish passage at APS and the Piute Farms Waterfall. These reports will be finalized at the end of March and the BC will recommend an option for fish passage at APS during its May meeting.

8. Navajo Gallup Depletion Guarantee – Pollack

Pollack asked if the Navajo Gallup Depletion Guarantee is still needed since all Tribal water is accounted for in the baseline. Furthermore, Pollack asked why the Depletion Guarantee is in the Gen 4 Hydrology Model since the Depletion Guarantee was identified in the Gen 2 model and comparisons between the two models are "apples to oranges." Pollack views the Depletion Guarantee as unfair to

the Navajo Nation because Navajo Nation foregoes its own water use to develop other's water uses. The hydrology model can be run with and without the Depletion Guarantee. Mata noted that running the Gen 4 model without the depletion guarantee does not trigger a section 7 Consultation. The CC recommended Reclamation's optimization modelling for FY2021 not include the Depletion Guarantee. Reclamation will provide a report of that modeling effort to the SJRIP. An action item will be added for the Service to work with others on when and how to include Depletion Guarantee in future section 7 consultations.

9. Quick reference of SJRIP responsibilities from Program Document – PO

The roles and responsibilities were excerpted and summarized from the Program Document and distributed to the CC. The PO was unclear on the intent of the request and asked if this met the CC's expectations. New Mexico thought that some detail from the Program Document was lost in the summary. Any changes to the roles and responsibilities would need to be reflected in the Program Document. The origin of this task was the previous stocking of razorback sucker in McElmo Creek. The quick reference did not resolve the responsibility for approval of actions in the San Juan River Basin funded outside of the SJRIP. An action item will be added for the PO to work with New Mexico on their comments and follow up with the CC at the May meeting. In general, the CC thought the quick reference was fine.

10. Post-2023 update

a. General update – Garrison, Pitts, and Mata

Garrison reported that the meeting scheduled for 3 March was cancelled because there was no new information to discuss at that time. The next meeting is scheduled for 31 March. During this meeting a proposal on the proportional allocation of reduced WAPA funding will generate a fruitful discussion. Pitts indicated that there will be lots of work to complete the draft report to Congress by September.

b. Discussion on NPS participation in SJRIP – PO/Cunningham

Mata reported on the NPS's potential interest in joining the SJRIP. The NPS expressed the ability to potentially contribute funds to the Upper Basin in post-2023 and if the NPS became signatory to the SJRIP, those funds would be split between the San Juan and Upper Basin Recovery Programs. Previously when the NPS expressed interested in joining the SJRIP they did not offer to contribute funding and the CC thought adding NPS would make the SJRIP too heavy on Federal participants. NPS is the land manager in the lower San Juan River and downstream of the waterfall where the SJRIP has been conducting substantial work over the last several years. Cunningham suggested that NPS would be a good SJRIP partner especially if they are willing to contribute funding. An action item will be added for Mata to work with NPS to gauge their interest in joining the SJRIP and will bring a proposal to the CC at the May meeting.

11. Schedule next CC meeting(s)

The next BC meeting will be held 4 May 2021. The joint Annual Meeting will be held the morning of 5 May 2021 and a CC meeting will be during the afternoon of 5 May 2021.

Pitts reported that the Water Users hope to have a BC representative nominated for the May meeting.

**ACTIONS ITEMS FROM 8 March 2021
COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

1. 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. CC will write a memo to the Service requesting the Service's opinion of the contribution of Lake Powell in recovery.
2. Mata, McKinstry, and Christianson will explore options regarding O&M for Navajo Nation projects.
3. Gilbert will organize a small group to incorporate Section 7 Principle comments.
4. The PO will develop an initial draft clarifying appendix A of the long-range plan and send that to the BC for development of the 2021 long-range plan appendix A.
5. The Service will make an assessment on using the Navajo Gallup Depletion Guarantee in Hydrology Modelling for future section 7 consultations – report to CC on 5 May 2021.
6. The PO will work with New Mexico to resolve comments on the quick reference SJRIP roles and responsibilities – report to CC on 5 May 2021.
7. Mata will coordinate with NPS to gage their interest in joining the SJRIP and provide a written proposal to the CC as appropriate – report to CC on 5 May 2021.