

June 12, 2001

San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program Hydrology Committee Conference Call May 1, 2001

MEETING SUMMARY

Members present on the conference call:

Member	Representing
Errol Jensen, Chairman	Bureau of Reclamation
Steve Cullinan	Fish and Wildlife Service
Ron Bliesner	Bureau of Indian Affairs
John Whipple	State of New Mexico
Dave Frick	Jicarilla Apache Nation
Ray Alvarado	State of Colorado
Steve Harris	Water Development Interests
Randy Kirkpatrick	Water Development Interests

Others participating in the call:

Dave King	Bureau of Reclamation
John Simons	Bureau of Reclamation
Brian Westfall	Bureau of Indian Affairs
Randy Seaholm	State of Colorado
Rick Cox	Water Development Interests
Pat Page	Bureau of Reclamation
Nancy LeMascus	City of Farmington
Shirley Mondy, Program Coordinator	Fish and Wildlife Service

Errol Jensen, Chairman, outlined the agenda as follows:

1. Review the minutes.
2. Low Flow test, including USGS and gages.
3. Action items from last meeting.
4. Progress Reports and Tables that were sent out.
5. Timeline for FY 2002 budget submission.

March 21 Meeting Summary: Steve Harris made a motion to accept the minutes as sent out on April 26, 2001. The March 21, 2001 meeting summary was accepted by the Committee.

Low Flow Test: The low flow test is still scheduled to occur this summer, but it is dependent on the Animas River and how much it flows. The test will probably be the first or second week in July. The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is trying to avoid the July 4th weekend, but if they have to do the test then, they will. Reclamation is hoping to start the test on July 9.

Reclamation has finalized the cooperative agreement with USGS for stream gaging. They are funding the normal gaging with an additional trip at each gage (Archuleta, Farmington, Shiprock and Four Corners) for a total cost of \$21,670. Funding from the Program covers the additional gaging trip and for moving the Four Corners gage. The cost for moving the Four Corners gage is \$7,060. The additional trip to adjust the gages will be done right before the low flow test. It is unlikely that USGS will move the Four Corners gage before the low flow test.

Funding was not approved for moving the cableway at the Shiprock gage, at an estimated cost of \$17,000. That cableway has been used for 30 -40 years and probably won't affect the test.

The Committee asked Reclamation about the water supply in the San Juan Basin. Reclamation reported that the current snowmelt-period runoff forecast showed 109 percent of normal. An updated forecast is expected in the next few days. The runoff forecast for the Animas River at Durango is about 96 percent of normal. Based on the forecast and past experience, Reclamation is expecting enough water in the Animas River to be able to do the low flow test

Some Committee members indicated that they have heard that there are going to be pushes to end the low flow test at the first sign of problems. Members stated that they would like to see the low flow test proceed as it is critical to obtain information.

Action items from last meeting:

- Model documentation - Still in progress. Authors haven't been contacted for their buy-off and haven't finalized the documentation. ***Reclamation and Keller-Bliesner will complete incorporation of comments and let the commentors know how the comments were or weren't incorporated.***

- Pat Page sent the Committee's comments to Randy Seaholm on the Hydrology committee proposal.
- Policies were attached to the November 14 meeting summary.
- ***Errol Jensen needs a final copy of the Hydrology Committee proposal from Randy Seaholm.***
- ***Reclamation has not written to the water districts about their ability to run the model. This still needs to be done.***
- Reclamation has taken the lead on the FY2002 budget. They have a good start on this, but more work is needed. ***Reclamation will develop a draft FY2002 budget.***
- ***Progress Report - Errol will draft a Progress report using what Dave King sent out and the tables that were sent out. A draft will be completed in May.***
- Log modifications are not completed yet. Dave King has consolidated all previous text files, but they haven't been put in compatible format with the current model. ***This will be completed in May.***

General discussion on model issues: Dave King has discussed some model modifications with Ron Bliesner. The RiverWare portion is done, but we need to get to Brian to analyze the data.

1. There is a small bug in the implementation of forecast.
2. The code is in TCL, but it is not in the bridge rule set. There needs to be an adjustment to the hydrograph after flushing.

These do not really involve decisions by the committee. The modelers are just trying to make the model more efficient and looking at what the effects are of having these two items included. The effects and impacts will be reported to the committee after they are done.

Steve Harris would prefer that John Simons analyze the data. Reclamation stated that they do not have the time to do it right now and these are things that Keller-Bliesner could do while they are waiting for the new model. Reclamation thinks it is a short term crunch and a lot of the issues will go away with the new model. Colorado water users are concerned about Reclamation not having the staff to do the work.

Resolution of outstanding issues:

San Juan-Chama linkage – Do we need to have San Juan-Chama in the model? Do we need to have some criteria dealing with shortages. We do not have in the model sharing of shortages between projects.

In the current model, NIIP and the San Juan-Chama Project receive a full allocation of water in all circumstances. There was a question on whether we need to operate Heron Reservoir within the model? We probably have to simulate Heron Reservoir somehow because they cannot divert if Heron Reservoir is full. We need to verify what is in the model for San Juan-Chama and Heron Reservoir and need to make sure New Mexico is comfortable. We have run this to date without imposing water shortages on water users. The Committee discussed shortages and the manner in which they may affect water supply. It is beyond the purview of the Committee to determine shortage criteria. ***Dave King will get a response out to the committee on how we are currently dealing with Heron Reservoir in the model.***

In the future, for minor model modifications, Keller-Bliesner and Reclamation will brief the Committee on each of the issues and make recommendations on how to deal with it.

Instream flows on Blanco – Randy Seaholm will provide information on how Colorado would like instream flows on the Blanco to be handled.

Reclamation and New Mexico meeting – John Simons met with John Whipple on April 5. New Mexico gave their GIS coverages of the irrigated land that were field verified in 2000 and compared with the information in the model. Twelve minor things are going to be looked at further. It looks like they are in good shape. They will look at the physical diversions and allocate return flows at those sites. There were some reductions of acreages irrigated from 1994 along the San Juan River mainstem. ***John Simons will give Dave King and Ron Bliesner the allocations from these changes, a map and acreages covered by the nodes.*** The Hydrology Committee needs to see it after the discrepancies are worked out.

Modeling of return flows will only impact the modeling of river flows downstream from Farmington at Navajo Dam releases down to 250 cfs. New Mexico intends to go back and come up with irrigated acreages from 1929 through 1999. Acreage estimates will be more reliable for some years than for others. They will do projections of depletions on irrigated acreages, and industrial and municipal uses, but they don't know when it will be done.

New Mexico was requested to give an anticipated time frame for completion of their data? New Mexico received approval of another position, starting in July. They have completed review of surface diversion records that are on file with the Office of the State Engineer. By the end of July, acreages and cropping patterns can be expected.

FY 2001 Work Plan

Costs projections have not changed much from the original Work Plan, but it is spread out over a longer time now. Are New Mexico target dates shown in the tables realistic? Items 12, 13, and 14 will be pretty close to those shown on the schedule.

Item G/15 indicates October of this year. Colorado can't recompute naturalized flows if they don't have all of New Mexico's data. Is New Mexico obligated to use original Blaney-Criddle method? New Mexico uses the original Blaney-Criddle method to account consumptive uses in the Gila River Basin consistent with the method that was used to derive New Mexico's consumptive use limits adopted by the U.S. Supreme Court in its 1964 Decree in Arizona v. California. New Mexico has tried to be consistent in the state and has concerns about the derivation of empirical coefficients for the modified Blaney-Criddle method and about issues of finality in the adjudication of water rights. The Bureau of Indian Affairs will not allow the original Blaney-Criddle method to be used on NIIP. They do not have any problem using the original Blaney-Criddle for what it was designed for, but not for new modern sprinkler-irrigated projects.

As of 4/23/01, we have spent \$60,000 of Program funding. Anything that is contracted by the

end of the fiscal year is considered obligated and can be carried over. Western Area Power Administration funds that are not used will be turned back in and then we have to get next year's money to cover it. As we get closer to 2002, we can change the split of what needs to be done in 2002 and what has been obligated in 2001.

It was suggested that the tables can be left the same to show progress to the Coordination Committee. *Errol Jensen will review the Work Plan and determine how much can really be obligated by the end of fiscal year 2001.*

We need to redraft the work plan. We need something more than this to go to the Coordination Committee. *Errol Jensen will draft the budget for FY 2002. It will describe items 1 - 24 in further detail.*

Progress Report: - Errol Jensen needs information from Colorado and Keller-Bliesner on what they have accomplished so he can draft the Progress Report that is due to the Coordination Committee by the end of July. *Colorado and Keller-Bliesner will provide information to Errol Jensen for the Progress Report.*

Long Range Plan - Errol Jensen has not heard from Jim Brooks about the Long Range Plan. *Shirley Mondy will follow up with Jim Brooks and have Jim get back with Errol on what is happening on the task force that is supposed to meet.*

The next meeting will be a conference call on June 1, from 9 am - 12 noon.