



San Juan River Basin Recovery
Implementation Program
Coordination Committee
9 February 2022

Final Meeting Summary

Coordination Committee (CC) Members:

Debra Hill, Chair alternate
Steve Whiteman
Absent
Absent
Crystal Tulley-Cordova
Ali Effati, CC alternate
Michelle Garrison
Rudy Keedah
Ryan Christianson
Dale Ryden
Tom Pitts
Absent
Joseph Trungale

Representing

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

Program Office (PO):

Melissa Mata, Program Coordinator
Eliza Gilbert, Assistant Program Coordinator
Scott Durst, Science Coordinator
James Sykes, Program Support Assistant
Kayla Kelley, SJRIP Intern

Representing

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

Other Interested Parties:

Colleen Cunningham, CC alternate
Emily Halvorsen
William Miller, BC member
Jacob Mazzone, BC member
Mark McKinstry, BC member
Tom Chart, BC member
Cathy Callister
Melissa Trammel
Nathan Franssen
Tildon Jones
Kevin McAbee
Pam Norris

Representing:

State of New Mexico
State of Colorado
Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Jicarilla Apache Nation
Reclamation
Water users
Bureau of Reclamation
National Park Service (NPS)
Service, Region 2
Service, Region 6
Service, Region 6
Arizona Public Service

Introductions and changes/additions to agenda – Hill

No changes or additions to the agenda were made or requested.

Review of Action Items identified during 9 November 2021 meeting – Mata

1. Badame will provide an update from Utah on participation in the SJRIP.
Chris Kelleher informed Mata that the request is in the Utah Governor's office for signature to the Cooperative Agreement. Mata suggested Utah submit recommendation letters for CC and BC representatives when they sign the Cooperative Agreement.

Pitts indicated Utah does not need to be voted into the SRJIP to become a signatory nor is a 2/3 vote needed for them to assign a representative to the CC. The Program Document states, "On all issues except Program participation, the Committee will function by two-thirds vote of the committee membership". Hill and Cunningham requested the Program Document be clarified. Pitts motioned to have this included as an addendum to the Program Document with the clarification that a 2/3 vote is NOT needed for signatory participation in the CC. The motion was approved.
2. Mata will address comments received on the NPS invitation letter. Mata addressed comments and updated the NPS invitation letter prior to emailing for CC approval.
The updated draft was emailed on 8 February 2022 for approval. Votes are due by 18 February. Votes from Colorado and New Mexico have not been received but for NPS to be invited as a signatory participant, the vote must be unanimous.
3. The CC will provide comments on the revised the Section 7 Principles to Gilbert by 23 November. Comments will be incorporated by 7 December 2021 for CC approval via email.
The final version was emailed, and a vote requested by 7 December.
4. Mata will draft an email to the BC for technical input on various Reclamation scenarios related to the "shape" (i.e., magnitude and duration) of the delayed DROA 20,000 af release.
A recommendation was not made because a DROA release was not scheduled.
5. Mata will coordinate with outstanding parties on participation in the Nonnative Fish Stocking Cooperative Agreement.
Mata has been working with Tulley-Cordova and discussions are ongoing.
6. The PO will send Doodle polls to set up upcoming CC meetings as topics for discussion are identified.
Completed.
7. Gilbert will email the diversion prioritization presentation by Mazzone.
Completed.
8. The PO will update the CC roster
Completed.

Approve 9 November 2021 meeting summary (vote) – Hill

Ryden motioned to approve; Whiteman seconded, and the summary was approved.

Preview: Colorado Pikeminnow Recovery Plan – McAbee and Jones

McAbee reviewed the Service's recovery planning process. Recovery plans must be developed and shall include three components: 1) measurable criteria, 2) actions, and 3) time and cost. These plans are Service guidance documents rather than regulatory documents. Because recovery plans must be submitted for public comment and officially approved, the Service developed an approach that provides for flexibility in determining what actions are implemented to reach recovery. This Service call this approach recovery planning and implementation and it is composed of three aspects: 1) Species Status Assessment (SSA), 2) Recovery Plan (required), and 3) Recovery Implementation Strategy (RIS).

Jones provided an overview of the Draft Colorado Pikeminnow Recovery Plan. It needs to be reviewed at least one more time before it and the RIS are sent to the CC for input. Jones indicated that input will be especially useful for the portion of the document(s) concerned with recovery activities and estimates of time and cost. Prior to drafting the Draft Colorado Pikeminnow Recovery Plan, the 2020 SSA was modified because of data gathered since 2002 and input from Colorado River Basin fish species experts. This version of the SSA has not been released yet but the modification was to combine larval production and recruitment to age-0 juveniles into one category that measures wild age-0 juvenile recruitment. This version of the SSA was then used to develop the Draft Colorado Pikeminnow Recovery Plan. The recovery vision is to have three populations with two in high resiliency (Green and upper Colorado) and one in moderate resiliency (San Juan). Recovery guidance for downlisting and delisting are based on demographic (adult abundances, wild recruitment, and reproduction) and threat-based criteria (e.g., flow management plans are in place and there is legal protection of flows in accordance with relevant laws). The priorities listed in the recovery actions do not indicate one aspect is more important than another but are listed as what needs to be done first to stabilize the species and then what needs to be done to advance recovery.

Cunningham asked how climate change played into the development of the recovery plan. Jones said it was incorporated into the section on flows. He said the SSA was more specific in addressing this stressor. Jones indicated the Colorado Pikeminnow Recovery Plan team used the term "mimic a natural hydrograph" thoughtfully to recognize that historical flows could not be replicated but that they should provide the features of the hydrograph necessary to support the fish and its habitat.

Approval of BC online voting process (CC vote) – Mata

At its last meeting, the BC agreed on adopting an email voting procedure for all activities. In general, the process would be very similar to that laid out for in person voting. Whiteman motioned to approve this process for both the BC and CC; Ryden seconded, and the process was approved. The process will be drafted as an addendum to the Program Document and sent to the CC for review before it is officially added.

Fiscal year 2022 Recovery Program Funding re: continuing resolutions – Mata

Mata, Callister, Pitts, and Garrison thought the continuing resolution of the federal budget for fiscal year 2022 is likely to continue. This has the potential to affect funding for a number of scopes of work that are scheduled to start in the early spring. Some agencies will be able to carry over funds but entities that are under contract do not have this flexibility. Garrison thought Reclamation could request funds through a temporary loan program for high priority scopes of work and the Colorado Water

Conservation Board (CWCB) has the ability to provide temporary non-interest loans to Reclamation. Mata thought the CWCB loan program should be considered but McKinstry was unsure if that could be done in time. Callister said Reclamation received approval to provide discretionary funding for fiscal year 2022 and was assured they that the recovery programs would receive full funding through this channel for priority scopes of work. Callister will contact Mata to begin the process.

2022 Washington, D.C. Briefings – Pitts

Pitts said recovery program briefings with Congressional offices, committees, and administration officials will occur in late March. He indicated that these briefings are essential to obtain funding and support for the recovery programs. Miller will be participating for Southern Ute Indian Tribe to provide technical support and respond to technical questions during the briefings. Pitts reiterated his request that non-federal CC members identify representatives who will participate in these briefings and submit those names to him.

Status of Recovery Program Legislation – Pitts

A bill will be introduced in the Senate to assure funding of the recovery programs through fiscal year 2024 with appropriations. The bill also includes an amendment to transfer \$5 million of SJRIP's capital projects cost ceiling to the cost ceiling for the Upper Colorado Endangered Fish Recovery Program. Effati said New Mexico and the Jicarilla Apache Nation had voiced their opinion in support of this transfer but did not want it to become a precedent. Pitts said it was a temporary solution and will only occur through fiscal year 2023.

Post-2023 Planning – Mata

- Secretary of the Interior Report
- Funding Discussions with Federal Agencies

The Secretary of Interior Report is currently in draft form. The Program Office is addressing and incorporating comments. The final draft should be available in a couple of weeks. Mata said three funding proposals have been submitted to the post-2023 group and the Department of Interior Regional Directors have been exploring them. The Regional Directors hope to have a response to the post-2023 funding group prior to the non-federal partners' briefings with U.S. Congressional and administration officials.

Next meeting

Mata said the next meeting has not been scheduled but will be in May. She will put out a Doodle poll in late February for a May meeting. The BC will be meeting 22-23 February 2022.

ACTIONS ITEMS FROM 9 FEBRUARY 2022 COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING

1. The CC is in the process of voting to invite the NPS as a signatory participate.
2. The CC is in the process of approving the draft Section 7 Principles for review by the Service's Solicitor.
3. Mata will coordinate with outstanding parties on participation in the Nonnative Fish Stocking Cooperative Agreement.
4. The PO will draft an addendum to the Program Document to clarify signatory participation and email voting procedures. This will be sent to the CC for review and comment.
5. Mata and Callister will develop methods to fund priority fiscal year 2022 scopes of work.
6. Mata will send a Doodle poll in late February to schedule a May CC meeting.