

RECOVERY PROGRAM
FY 2018-2019 SCOPE OF WORK for:
Price River Flow Enhancement

Recovery Program Project Number: _____

Note: Recovery Program FY18-19 scopes of work are drafted in May 2017. They often are revised before final Program approval and may subsequently be revised again in response to changing Program needs. Program participants also recognize the need and allow for some flexibility in scopes of work to accommodate new information (especially in nonnative fish management projects) and changing hydrological conditions.

Lead agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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<u>Category:</u>	<u>Expected Funding Source:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing project	<input type="checkbox"/> Annual funds
<input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing-revised project	<input type="checkbox"/> Capital funds
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requested new project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (no funds requested)
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsolicited proposal	

I. **Title of Proposal:** Collaboration in Review of Price River Water Management Activities Potentially Benefitting Endangered Species

II. **Relationship to RIPRAP:**

Green River Action Plan: Mainstem

1.C Price River

I.C.3 Work with State of Utah and local water users to develop a plan to provide and enhance summer base flows (either increase average daily flows thresholds or increase the frequency that those flows occur) in the lower Price River that are conducive to pikeminnow use. For example, consider securing an emergency pool of water to avoid periods of dewatering in the lower Price River.

I.C.4 Implement plan to provide and enhance summer base flows (in the lower Price River).

III. **Project Background/Rationale and Hypotheses:**

The lower Price River provides two important roles in the recovery of endangered fish: (1) seasonal habitat and presumably beneficial foraging opportunities, based on the high

percentage of native species, for juvenile and adult Colorado pikeminnow, and (2) year-round habitat for all life stages of several species of native fish, which provide a forage base for the Colorado pikeminnow. Native flannelmouth sucker and bluehead sucker are commonly found in the Price River. They are the subjects of a Range-wide Conservation Agreement and, together with the roundtail chub, constitute the *Three Species* which the State of Utah recognizes as meriting special conservation attention (UDNR 2006). Thus, the Price River provides a direct role in the conservation the Colorado pikeminnow and two of the *Three Species*, and the protection or enhancement of beneficial flows in the river could reduce the likelihood of future listings of native fishes under the Endangered Species Act.

In its 2012 position paper, *Role of the Price River in Recovery of Endangered Fish and the Need for Minimum Flow Management*, the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program (Recovery Program) recommended securing an emergency pool of water to avoid periods of dewatering in the lower Price River. Water for the native fish would need to be delivered to the Green River to avoid periods of dewatering, most typically in July and August. As an example, the paper noted that an emergency pool of 600 acre-feet would provide 5 cfs for 60 days. The paper also provided a summary of July-September flow conditions that are presumed to support Colorado Pikeminnow use, including a 90% flow exceedance of 15 cfs, and a 50% flow exceedance of 37 cfs.

The white paper concluded by recommending that the Recovery Program work with Utah Water Users, the State of Utah, and local groups (e.g., the Price River Enhancement Committee) to maintain summer base flow conditions that support current levels of Colorado pikeminnow seasonal use of the lower Price River.

IV. Project Goals, Objectives, End Product:

Project Goal: To support efforts by the State of Utah, local water users, environmental interests, and cooperating Federal agencies to identify, evaluate, and implement protections and/or enhancements to flows in the lower Price River for the benefit of Colorado pikeminnow and for state fishes of concern (target fishes).

Project Objectives:

1. Provide a Recovery Program point-of-contact for updates on water development or water management activities being considered in the Price River basin which could be implemented in a manner beneficial to the target fishes.
2. As appropriate, update the Recovery Program and its technical committees as relevant water-related proposals are conceptualized and formulated in the Price River basin (e.g., changes in operations and/or design improvements associated with Olsen Reservoir, or strategies and designs being considered for the proposed “Garley Wash Reservoir”).
3. Coordinate Recovery Program input regarding proposed water management strategies or projects in the Price River basin supporting instream flows, including the potential to provide Recovery Program technical or financial support for selected activities.

- V. **Project Area:** Price River, Utah, with a focus on some or all of the lower 88 miles of this tributary to the Green River where endangered fish captures have been documented.
- VI. **Project Methods/Approach:** The Service Hydrologist, in coordination with Utah Ecological Services Office staff, will serve as a point-of-contact, conduit of updates to Recovery Program participants, and coordinator of feedback from the Recovery Program regarding proposed water management projects and activities affecting Price River instream flows. Opportunities will be sought to promote the enhanced quantity, quality, frequency, and/or certainty of instream flow in the lower Price River from April through October in general, and from July-September in particular.
- VII. **Schedule:** The activities described above will be performed on an as-needed basis as opportunities arise.
- VIII. **Deliverables, Due Dates, and Budget by Fiscal Year:**

The activities described under Project Methods/Approach would be one of the Service Hydrologist's responsibilities on an as-needed basis. No Recovery Program dollars are specifically requested for this activity at this time.

IX. **Budget Summary:** N/A

X. **Reviewers:** Tom Chart, Angela Kantola

XI. **References:**

Cavalli, P. A. 1999. Fish community investigations in the lower Price River, 1996 – Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Publication No. 99-21, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Chart, T. and J. Mohrman, 2012. The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program's Position on the Role of the Price River in Recovery of Endangered Fish and the Need for Minimum Flow Management. Prepared for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Service, Utah Field Office. 42 pp.

Tyus, H.M. and J.F. Saunders 2001. An Evaluation of the Role of Tributary Streams for Recovery of Endangered Fishes in the Upper Colorado River Basin, with Recommendations for Future Recovery Actions. Final Report, Upper Colorado Endangered Fish Recovery Program Project No. 101. Center for Limnology, Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Studies, Univ. of Colorado at Boulder. 121pp.

Walker, C.A., P. Badame, and P.W. Birdsey, Jr. 2007. Minimum flow recommendation for passage of Colorado pikeminnow in the lower Price River: Farnham Diversion to the Green River confluence. Draft Final Report Submitted to the Upper Colorado River Basin Endangered Fish Recovery Implementation Program Project No. 108. Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Salt Lake City, Utah.