

BIOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 27-28, 2000
Utah Department of Natural Resources
Salt Lake City, Utah

Attendees: Tom Pitts, John Hawkins, Tom Chart, Art Roybal, Kevin Christopherson, Tom Nesler, Paul Dey, Tim Modde, Frank Pfeifer, Pat Nelson, Kevin Bestgen, Tom Pruitt, Larry Crist, Chuck McAda, Tom Czaplá, Bob Muth, Angela Kantola, Henry Maddux, Mike Hudson, Rich Valdez, and Matthew Andersen.

Tuesday, June 27, Convene 10:15 a.m.

1. Approval of May 3, 2000, meeting summary - No changes were made, so the summary stands approved as final.
2. Proposal to stock approximately 500 6-8" 1999 excess (backup) Green River razorback broodstock from the Page golf course pond into San Juan River - The Committee approved this proposal. >Tom Czaplá will post a message to the listserver to make sure there are no other upper basin needs for these fish.
3. Draft Final Report - Flow Recommendations to Benefit Endangered Fishes in the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers - Chuck McAda gave a presentation on this report. The recommendations emphasize the importance of keeping sediment moving through the system. Recommended spring peak flows should occur between May 15 and June 15 with a duration of at least 2 days at target flow and at least 2 days at 90% of the target flow. Committee discussion and comment: Tom Pitts asked >Chuck to provide a comparison graph between the flow recommendations and the 1966-1997 flow regime. Chuck agreed that these recommendations manage more directly for the Gunnison River than they do for the Colorado River at Cisco. The recommendations do not attempt to match the peak on the Colorado. They do address maintaining the minimum 300 cfs at the Redlands fish passage. The Committee discussed review time. Larry Crist said he doesn't think Reclamation will publish a notice of intent until this report is finalized. >Comments on the report are due to Chuck by Friday, July 28. Tom Pitts said some of the water users initial concerns regard flooding at Delta, uncontrolled spills at Crystal, flushing flows releasing selenium bound up in the sediment, how we're addressing the Colorado flow recommendations, and impacts on recreation and the power pool at Crystal and Blue Mesa. Tom will provide detailed comments on these. In addition, Art Roybal stated that Western would like to determine what the effects of the flow recommendations will be on Aspinall operations. Some of these comments will have to be addressed in the EIS, not in the biological report.
4. Overdue Reports List - Todd Crowl was never funded for maintenance of the IMO model, so this will be dropped from the list. Bruce DeMaris has apparently moved to Seattle and is no

longer working in the scientific field. Final payment will not be made on his contract. >The Program Director's office will send the Biology Committee the draft report with the peer review comments. The new revised due date for Utah's White River report revisions is September 5, 2000. >Henry will talk to Bruce McCloskey about the intensive culture technique manual. >Henry also will send out reminders to Todd Crowl about his reports. Henry said Robert King wants to talk to the Management Committee about submitting the mosquito report as a memo. Apparently they did not find any connection between flows for the fish and mosquito abundance. The tracking list needs to identify reports that are approved by the Biology Committee but not yet finalized and distributed. >If anyone knows of reports that have been approved but not finalized, please e-mail those titles to Angela. Two are: 1) White River and Endangered Fish Recovery: A Hydrological, Physical and Biological Synopsis. UDWR report (approved at the Feb.10,1999 meeting); and 2) Channel Narrowing of the Green River near Green River, Utah: History, Rates and Processes of Narrowing. UDWR report (approved at the July 16,1999 meeting). The Biology Committee agreed that authors should finalize reports within 45 days of the date they're approved by the Committee. >Angela will add this to the report review process.

5. FY 2001 Scopes of Work: All scopes of work need to identify report due dates (when the report will go out for peer review, and the projected dates for Biology Committee review and final report). >The Program Director's office will see that all the FY 2001 scopes of work identify these dates. Henry Maddux outlined the process the Program Director's office followed to produce the draft FY 2001 work plan. Henry explained that he's provided two budget tables this year: one assuming that the long-term funding legislation passes, and one assuming it does not pass. (The legislation has been moved to the floor of both the House and Senate and hopefully will be taken up for a vote in both shortly after the July 4th recess.)

1. **Instream Flow Identification and Protection**

Tom Chart said they believe we need thermographs in the lower part of Lodore Canyon and also at the upper end (either here or in the larval drift scope of work). Bestgen has included that in the larval drift scope of work (22f), but this should be part of **19B**.

Bob Muth introduced the channel monitoring scopes and distributed a replacement scope of work for **85c** (which now includes a task for invertebrate sampling). Pitlick is looking at fine sediment deposition right after peak flow. Osmundson is looking at depth to embeddedness after peak flow then throughout the summer. These channel monitoring projects may be re-evaluated as part of the basinwide channel monitoring program (draft due from the Program Director's office in December 2000). The Committee put \$16.3K for 18c on the list of projects they'd like to fund.

>Henry's office will update the details of the **CAP-9** scope of work (right now it just addresses the Yampa). The stream gages are covered in a different scope of work and don't need to be listed in this one.

Price River - The Committee discussed whether it would be better to work from existing hydrology and geomorphology information to develop flow recommendations for the Price River (as opposed to gathering more information about seasonal use). The Committee generally agreed the SOW should be revised to gather existing hydrology and geomorphology information. The Committee recommended that >Pete Cavalli, Matt Andersen, Keith Rose, Yvette Converse, and Bob Muth discuss this scope of work and the Biology Committee's concerns and post a revised scope to the listserver by July 14th.

2. **Habitat Restoration**

The Biology Committee agreed that >The Program Director's office will host a meeting of the floodplain restoration workgroup this fall (when the levee removal report is completed). The purpose will be to develop a long-term strategy for overall floodplain management and use of the various sites. (>This task will be added to the **CAP-6** umbrella SOW.)

3. **Reduce Nonnative Fish and Sportfish Impacts**

87b - Tim Modde suggested that northern pike from the Uintah basin (Kevin Christopherson's proposal) is a higher priority than cyprinid removal from the Colorado River basin (northern pike removal isn't funded in the without legislation scenario).

98 - If pike removal proves successful and is continued, then CDOW should begin funding the cost of translocating the pike.

Razorback monitoring and pike removal - Kevin said they'd have to reduce their effort to do this work for \$40K (the multi-species monitoring portion is mostly reporting, so eliminating that doesn't save too much money). The Committee discussed this, but generally concluded the highest priorities could be accomplished within the \$40K. The Committee put \$40K for this on the list of projects they'd like to fund even if the legislation doesn't pass. Frank and others noted that funding this long-term would deviate from our previous plan to develop a basinwide razorback sucker monitoring program. This is not the beginning of the razorback monitoring, that program still needs to be developed.

Yampa River catfish removal - The Committee discussed whether or not this project is premature, since the report on experimental catfish removal hasn't been provided yet. Tim Modde maintained that in the experimental project angling was much more effective than electrofishing in removing catfish from the Yampa.

4. **Propagation and Genetics Management**

25 - The Committee discussed floodplain sites for stocking bonytail and agreed to look for options to stock bonytail in appropriate floodplain sites.

Adult razorback collection - The Committee agreed not to collect razorback suckers from the bar in 2001. The remaining family lots will be created from razorbacks that Utah may collect as part of the pike removal project and the pikeminnow population estimate, and also from the Green River fish in Grand Junction that haven't yet been used.

Coded wire tags - The Committee discussed concerns about false readings on coded wire nose tags. An analysis of the error rate is needed. Also, we probably need to buy one unit so we always have one available when we have large numbers of fish to tag. >Tom and Henry will work with Bob Norman and try to buy one or two of these large tagging units.

5. **Research, Monitoring, and Data Management**

Database management - SOW #16 was revised to include #22a1, per Program Director's request. Chuck reminded the group that data are due when reports are finalized. >Discussion of database management will be on the agenda for the next Biology Committee meeting that's held in Grand Junction.

22b - Collection of YOY pikeminnow (ISMP) in Colorado - Colorado doesn't want to do the YOY sampling if they're not going to do the adult work. The Service's Grand Junction office is willing to do this work for \$5K, so the Committee put \$5K for 22b on the list of projects they'd like to fund.

22c - Based on their agreement with the Biology Committee's previous decision, the Program Director's office has recommended only the YOY sampling, but Utah would like to gather trend data for management purposes in the years when we don't do population estimates. The Committee may discuss this again next year.

Westwater humpback chub monitoring - Utah said that they needed funds to complete the report in FY 2001 and this is not reflected in 22c, so the Committee put \$25K for 22c on the list of projects they'd like to fund (later changed to \$20K).

22f - Kevin maintained that additional funds are needed, so the Committee put \$20K for 22f on the list of projects they'd like to fund.

Lower Green CPM pop. est. - >Tim and Kevin C. and Kevin B. will prepare a revised, combined SOW by the end of July.

Monitoring stocked fish - The Committee believes they would like to receive a scope

of work on this, so they put \$15K on the list of projects they'd like to fund.

Population estimate scopes of work - Annual population estimates need to be in each annual report. And in the second year, the survivorship estimates also should be included in the annual report if it's available. >Tom Czapla will make sure this is noted in each population estimate scope of work.

(Miscellaneous - The Program office mentioned that a habitat monitoring program draft proposal will be written this fall/winter for Committee input.)

The Committee discussed the items they'd put on the list of projects they'd like to see funded. Henry Maddux offered to recommend spending \$4,320,300 in annual and O&M funding for FY 2001, leaving \$1,000,000 for commitment to future O&M activities. That would make an additional \$77,000 available for 2001. With the \$10,700 available from 22a1, the Committee ranked the following projects from highest to lowest for ~\$87K (as is reflected in the Biology Committee's version of the with legislation budget table):

<u>Project</u>	<u>Cost</u>
19b	7.5
22f	20
22c	20
22b	5
85c	16.3
Green & Co. River sed.	3.3
Monitoring stocked fish <u>15</u>	
	\$87.1K

(Yampa catfish removal for \$102.9 ranked last. However, the Biology Committee agreed this needs to go on the contingency list, but Tim would need to work with Tom Nesler and Bob Muth to revise the SOW.)

If the funding legislation isn't passed, the Biology Committee highly recommends that the **pike removal** from the Uintah basin (\$40K) be funded.

6. **Next Meeting:** September 5, 9:00 - 5:00 at a meeting room near DIA (>the Program Director's office will arrange a meeting room). Agenda items will include: review of the Colorado/Gunnison River flow recommendation report and an update on public comment on recovery goals.

Adjourn Wednesday, June 28, 2:30 p.m.