

WATER ACQUISITION COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY
9/25/97

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September 25, 1997, Water Acquisition Committee Meeting Notes and Assignments

Prepared by George Smith, Chairman

In attendance: Randy Seaholm, Angela Kantola, George Smith

1. Coordinated Reservoirs 1997 Peak Augmentation:

Malcolm Wilson was not in attendance to present a report on the 1997 peak flow augmentation effort. In Malcolm's absence the discussion centered around the Coordinated Reservoirs Operations Study Teams review of the channel monitoring scope of work (SOW) for the 15 and 18 mile reaches. The Chairman reported the SOW had been discussed in detail at the Coordinated Reservoirs Operations Study Group (CROS) meeting and that CROS did not feel the work as presently proposed meets their monitoring needs. CROS is looking for a more focused monitoring effort to measuring cross-section and monitoring changes using air photos. Malcolm Wilson will be preparing a letter to the Management committee describing the CROS's needs and expectations in regard to channel monitoring for the coordinated reservoir's effort.

2. Update on Grand Valley Water Management:

Bob Norman was not able to attend the WAC meeting but updated the chairman on the status of the Grand Valley Water Management project by phone prior to the meeting. Bob mentioned that Reclamation has produced an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the construction of the check structures. The EA is currently undergoing an internal review by Reclamation, which is scheduled to be completed and released by November. Bob indicated that the Recovery Program needs to start making progress in getting agreements in place for the transfer of the O&M money from the CWCB to the Service, so it can then be forwarded to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. These agreements need to be completed by the end of the year.

At the WAC's request Bob also has incorporated many of the WAC's projects into the list for long term. (Funding List attached)

3. Update on Colorado and Yampa River Flow Filings:

Colorado River - Randy Seaholm reported that the CWCB flow filings were not moving, awaiting the outcome of the Programmatic Biological Opinion for the 15-Mile Reach. The Colorado Department of Natural Resources is committed to the concept of the Programmatic Opinion, but recent meetings have brought into focus a problem with the concepts being used to analyze alternatives. The current working proposal is somewhat different from the way the CWCB water right was filed. The issues will need to be worked out before the Programmatic Opinion can move forward. In the mean time Colorado is moving forward with refinements to CRDSS input data and scenario development.

Yampa River - Randy Seaholm Reported that the Colorado Attorney General's office has requested a stay until August 1998 to allow the NEPA scoping to continue on the Yampa Operation and Management Plan. The judge's ruling on the stay is uncertain but stays are usually granted in order to get all the issues resolved prior to water court action.

4. Future Flow Filings:

Below Flaming Gorge - Some of the studies funneling in the draft technical synthesis report are behind schedule, which will cause a delay in the synthesis report and the Biological opinion. A week long meeting of the Flaming Gorge BO team is scheduled for mid November to review the status of studies develop a new schedule and to begin to prepare the synthesis report.

Below Aspinall - The draft technical synthesis report is not yet behind schedule but a delay is expected because many of the principal investigators are involved in the Flaming Gorge Biological Opinion. There is no firm date of when a draft BO will be out but it is expected to go beyond the March 1998 date in the RIPRAP. Work on flow filings is scheduled to begin beyond 2000 when filings have been completed on the Yampa, White, and Colorado Rivers.

Below Redlands - Current plans are to extend the current contract for delivery of 300 cfs to the Redlands fish letter for an additional 5 years. Work on flow filings are scheduled for beyond 2000 when filings have been

completed on the Yampa, White, and Colorado Rivers.

5. Begin discussions/development of a peer review panel for geomorphology work. The chairman indicated that the peer review and the Biology Committee review have advised that a river ecologist be included as one of the panelist. There was also a recommendation that the project be handled by the Instream Flow Coordinator. In the absence of the Instream Flow Coordinator, WAC chairman offered to begin implementing the panel in the antrum. The identification of qualified people for the panel is going to be difficult task. John Shields by E-mail offered the names of Stan Schumm and Dick Marston. Stan was formerly with CSU and RCI, and Dick Marston is at the University of Wyoming and teaches a geomorphology class. Please contact me if anyone else has any suggestions.

6. Randy Seaholm offered the suggestion that the Recovery Program should begin to apply for a water right for the fish passage at GVIC. The structure is not covered by the existing filings, and a filing for 100 cfs may be needed. The item was put forward as informational, and warrants discussion at a future WAC meeting. Randy also indicated that the contract for Ruedi water for this year is not being pursued since it is likely that the water will not be needed this year.

7. Next Meeting? The next WAC meeting was tentatively scheduled for December 10, 1997, at 9:30 a.m. in the Regional Office of the Fish and Wildlife Service in Lakewood, Colorado.

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