

June 23, 2015, Water Acquisition Committee Conference Call Summary

Participants: Jared Hansen, Melissa Trammell, Eric Knight, Michelle Garrison, James Greer, Tom Pitts, Jana Mohrman, Tom Chart, Bart Miller, and Angela Kantola.

Assignments are indicated in the document in bold, preceded by a ">".

CONVENE 9:00 a.m.

1. Introductions, review/modify agenda – The agenda was modified as it appears below.
2. Approve June 4, 2015, revised draft webinar summary – Revised draft meeting notes were sent by email this morning and will be changed to July 23, 2015 revision. The Program Director's office made some minor edits and clarified that the CBD protest letter claimed the BLM's RMPA was, in their opinion, not as protective as it should have been. If the Committee has any additional comments on the summary, please submit them by Wednesday, July 29. Otherwise, the revised summary will be considered final.
3. Review draft FY 2016 -2017 work plan

8 Gages – Costs went down a little due to reduced inflation.

19 Hydrology support – no major changes from last year, although some of the personnel checking and maintaining thermographs has shifted somewhat.

Draft SOW to complete CFOPS pending (will use Section 7 funds); hopefully work could begin in August. Tom Pitts said it will be reviewed by WAC and MC.

>Michelle will provide a SOW on instream flow protection soon; CWCB needs to review what CRDSS work currently falls under the Recovery Program and will provide something on that in the near future.

Aerial photography – no additional planned work for FY 16 and beyond. USBR completing their work with previously provided funds.

The Elkhead net will be added when that SOW is done (to be added to the Elkhead O&M SOW, which the River District hasn't submitted yet; >the PDO will check with the River District).

OMID O&M – Brent Uilenberg e-mailed draft budget estimates; SOW pending. >PDO will ask that OMID in-kind of \$100K annually be clearly identified in the SOW so that it may be credited as a water user contribution.

SOW for Gunnison and Colorado River depth to embeddedness will wait until we know more about the success of Doug Osmundson's 10 years of depth-to-embeddedness data collected beyond an original 1984 annual report (85c Upper CO R. Channel Mon.) collected, but hasn't been analyzed (and Doug Osmundson doesn't have time to do it at this point). Tom Chart said he thinks we can consider this after we complete the Peak Flow technical supplement (which will provide insight as to whether analysis of the depth-to-embeddedness data is needed)

4. Updates

- Lease of Ruedi water from Ute Water Conservancy Dist. to CWCB – Michelle said concerns were raised about indemnification which they are completing a risk assessment to address; CWCB hopes to complete the contract this week. The contract is for this year, but is renewable. Ute's next Board meeting is August 12, so that's probably as soon as the contract can be signed and water can be used in 2015. Linda Bassi is investigating whether they would have authorization to use this water in the spring (they don't have an instream flow right for the spring), in the event of another "April Hole" Jana said Tim said that this year we may be able to use the Ute water first (for augmenting base flows) and save the "fish pool" water in case it's needed in April (thus would similar to the CFOP approach to "fish pool" management). The water leased from Ute can be used in August this year and July-September in future years (prior to availability of HUP water, for example).
- White River Management Plan SOW contract – >Michelle said when CWCB finishes year-end work in a couple of weeks, they move ahead again on contracting for the White River Management Plan.
- GRUWAT - >James Greer's (Division of Water Rights) office is reviewing a draft White Paper now and hopes to have a draft out by the end of next week. The next step will be looking at how flows can be protected (Robert King lead, Division of Water Resources). James said Robert's group has already begun looking at this. Tom Pitts asked if using Flaming Gorge releases for the St. George pipeline is still an option for protecting green River flows; James said it is, a contract is being pursued between Reclamation and Utah. Jana asked about "Ultimate Phase"; James said that when CUP was completed to bring water from Uintah basin to Wasatch Front, the "Ultimate Phase" was to replace the water from Uintah Basin by bring water from the Green River into the Uintah basin from Flaming Gorge. The consumptive use portion of this water right was deeded over to Utah's Board of Water Resources with some conditions that a service contract would be needed if there was benefit from the storage from flaming gorge. The State is working on using the majority of this water right for the St. George (Lake Powell) pipeline (86K acft). Utah is working out what a service contract would look like to deliver that water. An additional 72K acft of water was part of the ultimate phase which has been allocated to a group of other users on the Green River. Mostly to the Uinta WCD and the Duchesne WCD. The "Ultimate phase" was the last part of the CUP and the major reason why Flaming Gorge was built. The pipeline from Flaming Gorge to the Uintah basin was not completed and eventually that portion of the project was decommissioned, however the water right was granted.
- Coordinated Facilities Program for the 15-Mile reach (CFOPS) SOW for a contractor to complete the CFOPs report by the end of this year – >Tom Pitts will return a revised draft scope

of work to Jana by the first week of August.

- Reservoir update (Red Fleet treatment, Elkhead net, and Ridgway tournament) – Tom Chart said that Red Fleet chemical treatment is scheduled for the week of October 5. UDWR is purchasing more rotenone than originally anticipated due to higher water volume. The Elkhead net project is back on track after some potential contracting issues. The River District has a contract with an engineering firm and plans to draw down the reservoir in late summer for net installation. They expect a final design and estimate for the net soon. The River District has expedited work with the Dam Safety Office for approval within ~6 weeks of addressing their concerns. A draft lake management plan is expected from CPW by the end of this month. Ridgway Reservoir has not spilled yet this year. CPW liberalized harvest regulation and just completed a fishing tournament there this past Sunday. The tournament was a resounding success with >2,000 smallmouth bass removed (estimated at ~36% of the smallmouth bass population). At least two tagged fish were recovered by anglers for prizes. As part of the outreach, Kevin McAbee sent out a well-written article the Ouray County Plain Dealer newspaper wrote about the Recovery Program, nonnative fish management, and the Ridgway tournament. Michelle Garrison said Trout Unlimited and Tri-County both contributed to the prizes for the Ridgway tournament and Trout Unlimited also provided some volunteer assistance. Tom Chart said CPW is interested in promoting harvest incentives (like the Ridgway tournament) at Elkhead Reservoir, also.
- Opportunity to fly Lidar of the Green River floodplains. Utah is coordinating a contract with NPS for 1' contour intervals from the town of Green River to Flaming Gorge (this fall). The Program Director's office is working to determine if that will incorporate Green River floodplain sites and provide additional funding if not. Contour intervals created from this quality Lidar below (Level 1) is expected to be >95% accurate at the 1 foot contour interval. Contour lines from USGS topo maps, in many places, are 10-20 ft intervals and the accuracy is typically unknown.



- Jana said the Program did not obtain the DOI funds for USGS quasi-3D model and field experiment to define razorback sucker larval drift as it relates to razorback entrainment in Green River floodplains. USGS and PDO are looking for alternate funding. >Jana will send the proposal to Melissa Trammell (and also brief the Biology Committee next week if there's time).
 - 2015 assessment for the 15-MR PBO – The Colorado River PBO spreadsheet will serve as the outline of the 15-MR PBO status review. The Program Director's office will draft the report and not contract out any parts (hopefully in October or November – PDO will discuss timing with FWS on August 6 to be sure we can complete the review in 2015 in compliance with the PBO). It was suggested the 2015 Colorado River PBO review address in more detail flow protection to date and whether it's realistic to be able to do anything further. The Management Committee suggested the 2015 review discuss the probability of meeting the 810 cfs baseflow recommendation in the driest years. Jana asked Michelle about the status of depletion accounting; >Michelle said they'll have an estimate as to when they can complete the depletion accounting soon. Michelle thinks the modeling will go through at least 2013 (>she'll let Jana know for sure). Tom Chart said that a letter from CWCB providing an update on progress on the depletion accounting and indicating where depletions are related to the PBO threshold would help the Service's PBO review. Tom Pitts said he expects the CFOPs report will be completed by the end of 2015. Tom Pitts also said he'd like the Service to complete the review by December 31, 2015. Tom Chart agreed.
5. Remaining instream flow needs – Jana sent out a first draft spreadsheet to the Committee this morning, but that e-mail apparently was too big, she sent a .pdf after the meeting.

The table identifies these categories:

Description of River Reaches and corresponding USGS gage

Science which defined the flow recommendations

Limitations of existing flow recommendations

Current protection

Limitation of current protection

The table also has tabs that describe legal protections, etc. Jana welcomes comments on this status review table. Tom Pitts said that in order to delist the species, we have to have legal protection of instream flows to assure those flows will persist into the future. This table will help us develop recommendations as to how legal protection might be achieved where it is still lacking.

6. Schedule next meeting, webinar, or conference call – Jana will send a Doodle poll to schedule the next webinar when needed.

ADJOURN 11:00 a.m.