

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

November 20, 2006, Denver, Colorado

CONVENE: 10:00 a.m.

1. Introductions, review/modify agenda and time allocations, and appoint a timekeeper – The agenda was modified as it appears below.
2. Approve August 8-9, 2006 meeting summary and review assignments – The summary was approved as written. Assignments were reviewed and carry-over assignments are noted at the beginning of the assignment list for this meeting.
3. Nonnative fish workshop – Pat Nelson reviewed the draft agenda for the December 11-13 nonnative fish workshop. The ad hoc committee organizing the workshop will discuss this agenda tomorrow and the final agenda (pending Biology Committee review on Nov. 27) should be posted by Wednesday. The workshop will be organized slightly differently this year, with each researcher providing brief written summaries of their results rather than making a lengthy presentation. Break-out sessions for each basin will be structured so that researchers move among groups to share ideas. Pat reviewed possible control methods beyond mechanical control, noting that their potential use is fairly limited at this point. Pat said the most successful fish control effort he knows of is integrated pest management for sea lamprey in the Great Lakes, which he has been following closely. Two important features of lamprey control are strong public support and recognition that control will be ongoing in perpetuity. In addition to discussing control methods at the December workshop, the group will focus on developing specific criteria for nonnative and native fish response. Tom Iseman mentioned that the first two pages identifying outcomes, etc., which were included on the first draft of the agenda were very helpful and recommended including those in the final agenda. Bob Muth said this workshop will focus mostly on smallmouth bass, with less time spent on northern pike. Tom Pitts asked if Tom Blickensderfer had heard anything further from the Colorado Wildlife Commission regarding their concerns about our nonnative fish management efforts; Tom B. said he hadn't. Bob Muth asked >Tom B. for copies of the package the Commission was provided on this issue. >The Program Director's office will post a summary of both last year's smallmouth bass summit and nonnative workshop to the listserver.
4. Bringing Yampa Canyon humpback chub into captivity – Tom Czaplá reviewed the history of this proposal, noting that Sam Finney's report on declining catch rates of adult humpback chub in Yampa Canyon (within Dinosaur National Monument) recommended immediately bringing some of these fish into captivity to preserve their genetics. The Biology Committee agreed this was a good idea, but several steps are required before it can happen. The Service is working on the necessary disease clearance and developing a captive propagation plan. The National Park Service believed NEPA might be required; however, right now the Program is only proposing a research project to determine our ability to capture, transport, and maintain young *Gila* sp. at both the Mumma and Ouray hatcheries (which likely would receive a categorical exclusion under NEPA). The proposal is being revised and we may be able to begin the research by March 2007. Bob Muth said that the Program would not contemplate bringing adult fish into captivity for broodstock development until after we determine that we can successfully capture,

transport, and maintain young fish as described in this research proposal. Melissa Trammell and John Reber noted Park's concerns about public notification; Melissa added they also want to be sure the States and counties fully support this effort. Tom Czapl said he understood both Krissy Wilson and Sherm Hebein had expressed their support. Tom Pitts asked if we should simultaneously be determining effectiveness of other methods, e.g., streamside spawning and transport of fertilized eggs to a hatchery. Melissa replied that it's very rare to catch a ripe humpback chub in the wild. Bob Muth added that the Douglas report on humpback chub throughout the basin will soon be available (the second draft has been submitted to Glen Canyon for review), which should help guide our efforts. Gary said he's heard that the report shows Little Colorado River humpback chub are genetically unique, but hasn't heard results for other populations. The Program Director's office will continue to provide updates on this at future meetings.

5. Funding/Budget

- a. Report to Congress (All) (10 min) - P.L. 106-392 states: "No later than the end of fiscal year 2008, the Secretary shall submit a report on the utilization of power revenues for base funding to the appropriate Committees of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives. The Secretary shall also make a recommendation in such report regarding the need for continued base funding after fiscal year 2011 that may be required to fulfill the goals of the Recovery Implementation Programs." Bob Muth noted that the Implementation Committee agreed that the report to Congress should cover the whole scope of the Recovery Programs, and should be framed in terms of the recovery goals. The Program Director's office will draft the report, using the cross-links document provided to OMB last year as a template. The recovery goal revisions (and consideration of time and cost estimates) will provide some of the information for this report. The Management Committee plans to provide an outline of the schedule and process for the report to the Congressional delegation this spring. Bob Muth said he hasn't considered the process beyond the expectation that it will be closely tied to recovery goal revisions. Tom Pitts suggested forming a subcommittee of the Management Committee and the San Juan Coordination Committee to begin to draft the schedule and process, as well as an outline of content. Dave Mazour, Tom Iseman, John Shields, Tom Blickensderfer, Tom Pitts, Heather Patno, Robert King, Brent Uilenberg, and Robert Muth will serve on this subcommittee (additional San Juan participants to be determined, but Dave Campell and John Whipple would certainly need to participate). >The subcommittee will begin work on this in January and provide an update to the Management Committee on February 8. Tom Pitts said he believes we also may need to consider additional authorization for capital costs for facility repair and replacement (then if it was needed, the authorization would be in place, but funds would still need to be requested). The intent was for maintenance costs to be covered under operating costs), but perhaps a contingency fund would be appropriate to cover potential catastrophic events (e.g. significant flood damage). We also will probably need to extend the period of performance on San Juan capital construction by 2 years. With regard to the report to Congress, >the subcommittee will look into whether a similar report was required of the Central Utah Project. Dave Mazour said he believes the report needs to provide information supporting extension of the

authorizing legislation (see item b., below), and noted that the cross-links report likely would not fully provide enough of that information; Bob Muth agreed.

- b. Extending authorizing legislation and purposes for which power revenues will be needed – The recovery programs’ authorizing legislation (P.L. 106-392) states: “The utilization of power revenues for annual base funding shall cease after the fiscal year 2011, unless reauthorized by Congress; except that power revenues may continue to be utilized to fund the operation and maintenance of capital projects and monitoring.” The Committee discussed the need to extend the authorizing legislation beyond 2011 and purposes beyond capital project O&M and monitoring for which power revenues are anticipated to be needed after 2011 (see discussion under item a., above). The Committee will consider these two items as one in the future since they are so closely tied together.
 - c. Work plan/budget status – Angela Kantola distributed an updated FY 06-07 table of annual contributions and an updated FY 07 budget summary, reviewing recent changes and available funds. Items which may require portions of remaining available funds include: Clifton growout ponds, nonnative fish projects, Green River study plan projects, and potentially others. In Section 7 funds, we anticipate potential need for funding for the Myton townsite diversion (approved in FY 06) and some additional work on the Grand Valley Water Management project.
 - d. Capital funds – With regard to reporting of in-kind State capital funds expenditures, Brent Uilenberg said he has not received anything further from Colorado, but recommends accepting the \$251.8K Colorado reported spending on pond reclamation in FY 2001. The Committee agreed, noting that Colorado has clearly fully met its capital funds obligation. Brent Uilenberg will make a formal annual request for Wyoming and Utah’s remaining capital contributions.
6. Recognition of Gary Burton – Chairman John Shields expressed the Committee’s appreciation to Gary Burton for his dedication and many years of service to both the Management and Biology committees, and presented Gary with a plaque from the Recovery Program. Gary will retire from WAPA in early January.
 7. Capital Projects
 - a. Price-Stubb fish passage – Brent Uilenberg said he believes the easement issues have been resolved with Palisade (although they haven’t yet signed the necessary documents), and other permits are falling into place. Bids for both schedules are due November 21 and the evaluation process will begin the next week. Once the cost difference between the two schedules is known (in mid to late December), Reclamation will notify the Town of Palisade (which would have 30 days to deposit that amount with NFWF if they wish to build the whitewater park).
 - b. Elkhead Reservoir enlargement – Dan Birch reported via e-mail to the Program Director’s office that as of November 11, the project was substantially complete. (Meaning some work remains, but the reservoir is ready to store and release water). Substantial Completion begins the start of the two-year period within

which the Program needs to complete its financial obligation. Over the course of the next couple months, the District will update their financial information and hopes to provide a budget update at the next Management Committee meeting. Remaining expenses in 2007 are mostly wetland plants and planting and completing engineering record documents (as-built drawings). The District tentatively plans to celebrate completion of the project next August after the reservoir has filled and the recreation improvements are complete. The extensive invitation list will include the Congressional delegation and the Secretary of Interior. With completion of construction, the District will now begin to focus on operational matters, many of which will involve Program staff. Ray Tenney will be the lead on operations with Dave Merritt's oversight. Dan will be assuming other responsibilities within the River District and anticipates minimal future involvement with Elkhead. Dan said it has been satisfying to see this important project come to fruition and that he has enjoyed working with the Management Committee, the Program Staff, and everyone else associated with the Project. Brent emphasized that the Elkhead contract requires the Program to make full payment on Elkhead by November 11, 2008. In order to meet all our construction deadlines, these funds must come from Reclamation's FY 09 appropriation, which is a real concern given Federal appropriations timing. >Brent Uilenberg will discuss this concern with the River District Board.

- c. Others – Brent said the automated Obermeyer gate has been installed and is operating on the GVIC fish passage. The Redlands screen performed almost flawlessly, and Reclamation will proceed to retrofit the GVIC screen by spring. The Grand Valley Project screen also should be fully functional next spring. The Redlands manager has resigned and hasn't been replaced yet. Operation of Grand Valley Water Management improved in September. Brent distributed the annual report showing water savings from 2002-2005 (2006 numbers are still being tabulated by the State Engineer's office). Brent also distributed graphs of 2006 Green Mountain HUP operations and impact of late irrigation season reservoir releases in the 15-Mile Reach. Brent summarized by saying he thinks the releases were very successful this year; George Smith agreed, noting GVWM seems to be the best thing the Program has done to provide water for the endangered fish. With regard to the interim solution to the 10,825 af requirement; Brent noted that it will be very difficult to build new storage in the remaining timeframe, but it would be possible to build a project similar to GVWM on the Orchard Mesa Irrigation District. Tom Pitts said he believes the Colorado, Platte and Arkansas basin roundtables will recommend funding a \$200-300K study of alternatives to meet the 10,825 af agreement. Brent described otter predation problems at the razorback broodstock ponds at Horsethief, noting that the pond will be fenced.

8. Flow protection

- a. Upcoming meeting with Grand Valley irrigators – Bob Muth distributed a draft agenda for the December 14 meeting. >George Smith will make sure Mesa County and Palisade irrigation districts were invited.

- b. Yampa River water administration – Regarding to the ~7,000 af/year to be released from Elkhead for the endangered fish, there are ~60 diversions between the release and delivery points. The Yampa River has never been administered. In August, State Division Engineer Erin Light informed diverters that she will begin to administer the river and require they install measurement devices by April 1, 2007. In late October, Erin Light called a meeting in Maybell of the ditch owners. Ray Tenney, Colorado River Water Conservation District and Tom Pitts attended. Tom informed the ditch owners that the Recovery Program could not pay for these measurement devices. Ray Tenney discussed the River District grant program that will provide up to \$15,000 in grants for to help the ditch owners, although total costs are expected to be much higher. Tom reported that there may be some flexibility in the deadline, given the need to work out some details on transfer of the water rights to the Colorado Water Conservation Board.
 - c. Status report on extension of municipal recreation contract for delivery of water from Green Mountain Reservoir – The contract expires this December; Brent Uilenberg said at least one of the three municipalities (Grand Junction, Fruita or Palisade) need to sign a renewal, and he understands Grand Junction has agreed to sign, so everything should be in place when the contract is needed next August.
 - d. Status report on River District request for additional 5,000 af of water from Ruedi Reservoir to back-up Wolford Mountain Reservoir augmentation water – Brent Uilenberg said this had been moving slowly, but hydraulic modeling is now complete, an EA/FONSI is anticipated in February 2007, and Reclamation hopes to execute this in March 2007.
 - e. Protection of Green River flows – George Smith said he and Bob Muth had a conference call with Boyd Clayton in Utah last week to discuss year-round flow protections related to completion of the Flaming Gorge ROD and biological opinion. Boyd said similar flow protection proposals in the legislature don't appear likely to pass and thought there might also be opposition to extending a policy similar to the one done in 1994 (copies distributed). However, little water development is likely in the subject area. Robert King said Utah has concerns about guaranteeing flows unless they're guaranteed the water will be delivered to their border from Colorado and Wyoming. Bob Muth said >the Water Acquisition Committee needs to discuss this soon to develop solutions (>The Program Director's office will send them a summary of the conference call).
9. Washington, D.C. Trip – The meetings were previously scheduled for March 19-23 (Monday-Friday), but Tom Pitts and others proposed changing this to March 21st – 27th (with 20th and 27th/28th as travel days), pending approval by Utah. >Kathy Wall will lock-in the new dates with the hotel. >Dave Mazour is still trying to find out if we can have the luncheon in the Library of Congress. Given new staff assignments, the briefing book will need to cover more basics than it has in the past, and include (within the book) a 1-2 page synopsis on the Program. >John Shields will begin working on scheduling meetings. Trip participants are reminded that they need to submit their information to Kathy Wall no later than February 1, 2007, and she will make hotel reservations.

10. Updates

- a. Aspinall EIS process – Brent Uilenberg apologized for delays, but said that until the Black Canyon reserved water right is resolved, it won't be sensible to move forward aggressively on the Aspinall EIS (the judge ruled the Federal agencies need to re-quantify the right and the status of any appeal by DOJ is unknown). Meanwhile, Reclamation continues to work on technical aspects and the hydrology subcommittee meets again on November 28. Heather asked if the Park Service will use the work Reclamation has already done in preparing an EA if that's the direction this takes; John Reber said he doesn't know at this point. Brent recognizes this is a sufficient progress issue (specifically for spring peak flow releases from Aspinall). Bob Muth said it also affects our ability to move forward with a Gunnison River PBO. Meanwhile, the Program needs to be very involved in the triannual operation meetings to improve coordination as the Service has asked (and updates on this provided at future meetings).
 - b. Sufficient progress – The letter was signed on November 15 and distributed in both electronic and paper formats; the Service is committed to get this back on schedule in 2007 (finalizing in the spring). The Program acknowledges that the schedule for the Aspinall EIS is primarily out of our control.
 - c. Recovery goal revisions – Bob Muth said the draft a plan has been shared within the region and they're working to discuss this plan with Regions 1 and 2 (this is currently ~1.5 months behind the draft schedule). Independent peer review will be built into the schedule.
 - d. Green River study plan – Bob Muth said the Biology and Water Acquisition committees will discuss the draft plan next week and this will be on the agenda for the next Management Committee meeting.
 - e. Reports status – Angela Kantola distributed an updated reports list.
11. Upcoming Management Committee tasks and schedule next meeting - The Committee previously discussed holding a Management Committee meeting in Grand Junction just before or after the January 17-18 Researchers Meeting in Grand Junction (perhaps scheduling a joint Management and Biology Committee meeting to discuss outcomes/next steps from the nonnative fish workshop), but decided to make this a conference call, instead – on January 3rd from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The next Management Committee meeting will be February 8th near DIA; agenda items will include: any additional discussion of 2007 nonnative fish management plans; Green River study plan & RIPRAP items; and updates on Price-Stubb, timeframe for Elkhead contract repayment, bringing young *Gila* from Yampa Canyon into captivity, and work on the report to Congress by the subcommittee. Angela noted that the Program Director's office continues to investigate web conferencing and should have information on that soon.

ADJOURN 3:30 p.m.

Assignments

Carry-over from previous meetings:

1. **Bob Muth** will draft a letter to the BLM state directors regarding coordination on energy development.
2. **Dave Mazour** will check on the Jefferson Room in the Library of Congress for the Washington, D.C. appreciation lunch and get details to John Shields.
3. **The Service** will prepare a comparison of what a BO under the Recovery Program looks like now and what it would look like using a no-jeopardy approach (*pending*).

New Assignments:

1. **Tom Blickensderfer** will provide Bob Muth a copy of the package the Colorado Wildlife Commission was provided on nonnative fish issues.
2. The **Program Director's office** will post a summary of both last year's smallmouth bass summit and nonnative workshop to the listserver.
3. A **subcommittee** of the Management Committee and the San Juan Coordination will to begin to draft the schedule and process, as well as an outline of content for the report to Congress. Dave Mazour, Tom Iseman, John Shields, Tom Blickensderfer, Tom Pitts, Heather Patno, Robert King, Brent Uilenberg, and Robert Muth will serve on this subcommittee (additional San Juan participants to be determined, but Dave Campell and John Whipple would certainly need to participate). The subcommittee will begin their work in January and provide an update to the Management Committee on February 8. The subcommittee will look into whether a similar report was required of the Central Utah Project.
4. **Brent Uilenberg** will discuss with the River District Board the concern about the Program's ability to make full payment on Elkhead by November 11, 2008.
5. **George Smith** will make sure Mesa County and Palisade irrigation districts were invited to the December 14 meeting with Grand Valley irrigators.
6. The **Water Acquisition Committee** needs to discuss Green River flow protection and develop solutions. The **Program Director's office** will send them a summary of the recent conference call.
7. **Kathy Wall** will lock-in the new dates for the Washington, D.C. trip (March 21st – 27th (with 20th and 27th/28th as travel days) with the hotel. Given new staff assignments, the **D.C. briefing book** will need to cover more basics than it has in the past, and include (within the book) a 1-2 page synopsis on the Program. **John Shields** will begin working on scheduling meetings. **Trip participants** are reminded that they need to submit their information to Kathy Wall no later than February 1, 2007, and she will make hotel reservations.

Attendees
Colorado River Management Committee, Denver, Colorado
November 20, 2006

Management Committee Voting Members:

Brent Uilenberg	Bureau of Reclamation
Tom Blickensderfer	State of Colorado.
Robert King for Darin Bird (via phone)	State of Utah
Tom Pitts	Upper Basin Water Users
John Shields	State of Wyoming
Carol Taylor	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Dave Mazour	Colorado River Energy Distributors Association
John Reber	National Park Service
Tom Iseman	The Nature Conservancy
Gary Burton and Heather Patno	Western Area Power Administration

Nonvoting Member:

Bob Muth	Recovery Program Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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Recovery Program Staff:

Angela Kantola	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Pat Nelson	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Tom Czapla	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Others:

Melissa Trammell (via phone)	National Park Service
George Smith	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service