

Approved October 10, 2006



Biology Committee Meeting Summary
Tuesday, August 29, 2006
8:00 am – 4:00 pm
Farmington Civic Center

Members Present:

Chuck McAda
David Propst
Jason Davis for Jim Brooks
Greg Gustina
Paul Holden
Tom Wesche
Ron Bliesner
Mark McKinstry
Steve Whiteman for Bill Miller

Representing:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 6
NM Department of Game and Fish
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 2
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Jicarilla Apache Nation
Water Development Interests
U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Southern Ute Tribe

Program Management:

David Campbell

Program Coordinator
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, NM Ecological Services
Program Support Assistant
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, NM Ecological Services

Joann Perea-Richmann

Interested Parties:

Steven Platania
Viola Willetto
Marilyn Myers
Yvette Paroz
Steve Lynch

Representing:

University of New Mexico
Navajo Fish and Wildlife, Arizona
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, NM Ecological Services
NM Department of Game and Fish - Santa Fe, NM
Bureau of Land Management, NIIP, Farmington, NM

Welcome and Introductions

February meeting notes addition: Discussion and votes described below were for the purposes of addressing the funding ceiling in 2006. The votes were not intended to be reflective of the merits of the different studies.

Review and approval of July 25, 2005 minutes- edits provided by Tom Wesche

Review action items -- See attachment to minutes approved with corrections.
Adjustments to agenda

Program Coordinator's Report (David Campbell)

Program Document – David stated the Coordination Committee (CC) met August 15, 2006 and have finalized the document. They will now be taking it to their signatories for approval.

- Biology Committee (BC) will still be able to vote and approve a nominee to sit on the BC. If the BC does not approve a nominee, a letter of explanation must be written to the CC explaining why they did not accept the individual nominated. Then the CC

member who nominated the individual would ask the CC to review and accept their nominee based on exceptional circumstances and present to the CC why that person should sit on the BC. The CC would then have to vote and it must be 2/3 majority.

- CC agreed to retain general voting process to be 2/3 majority; 2/3 of the membership are quorum; 2/3 of the membership are necessary to pass a vote. Any issue that comes to the CC for approval needs to be presented 7 days prior to the vote.
- A CC member can call a line item veto for the removal of a project in the budget with a 2/3 majority vote.

Contracting Issues Update (Mark McKinstry)

Contracting has proposed possible changes to recent contracting procedures, but waiting for written opinion from Dept of Interior in Washington DC

Potential changes: new scopes of work can be funded under grants. Hub zones no longer required. RFPs not necessary, but still possible.

State or federal agencies or Indian nations with management authority may be considered for certain types of projects without competition because the work is considered Inherently Governmental. Projects may be sole sourced.

Program Updates

Propagation:

NAPI pond management

Several ponds are being emptied in preparation for using fish from Dexter NFH

East Avocet was drained. 6,400 razorbacks were PIT tagged and stocked. About 1,500 were stocked without tags. Some Fish were lost. A number of smaller fish were collected that suggested that successful spawning had occurred in the pond. Dave Propst questioned if we should be concerned about genetic issues related to fish spawning in the ponds ie. stocked siblings may be spawning and producing young that were subsequently stocked into the river.

Hidden pond will be drained and all fish will be harvested the following week.

Moving forward with the transition of pond management to the Navajo Nation.

Dexter will be bringing about 10K razorbacks to stock in ponds in fall. Another 10K will be stocked in ponds in spring.

Stocking to date

About 1,700 400-500 mm long CPM were stocked into the San Juan from an Arizona Hatchery. About 300 of these fish were held at Dexter and will be stocked in a few weeks. Total = 2,000 CPM

About 7,500 CPM (150 to 250 mm long) were also stocked. Excess' from Upper Basin to Mumma hatchery will no longer be available. Mumma can raise fish for San Juan if desired. Committee will consider this at future date.

Future plans

Dexter will provide 300,000 YOY and 3,000 age-1 CPM to stock into San Juan this fall: They will stock 10,000 200 mm razorback suckers into NAPI ponds.

YOY/Juvenile CPM marking trips (Jason Davis, Paul Holden)

- Paul Holden reported they marked 346 pikeminnow

Population model review, need for schedule change (David Campbell)

- Peer Reviewers meeting is targeted for November sometime
- Need modeler and practitioner point of view

What is needed for the Model?

- 1) Population goals
- 2) Determining carrying capacity
- 3) Identifying limiting factors

Is the data that is driving the model adequate?

Is the data that is being collected appropriate to populate the model?

Is it the right model?

Conceptually and platform

Are we using the right assumptions?

What would we need to do to develop or refine the model to address the questions of the Program?

Proposal to reduce size of annual reports (Dave Propst)

- Have annual reports become excessively long? We need to strive for brevity.
- We need to have a summary document developed by the PC. We need to do a true integration report.

Final Discussion of additional work for temperature white paper (Biology Committee)

At the urging of Tom Wesche, the BC agreed to send the report back to Vince to complete without any additional funding?

- Tabled until next meeting for further discussion.

Discussion of three future projects (David Campbell/Mark McKinstry)

1. Habitat restoration strategy and feasibility analysis for the removal of nonnative vegetation in reaches 3, 4 or 5.
 - a. Elements to include in development of SOW
2. Feasibility, design and cost analysis for the development of 4-6 experimental enhancements in reach 6 to aid in the retention of stocked Colorado pikeminnow.
 - a. Elements to include in development of SOW
3. Program Evaluation Report.
 - a. Elements to include in development of SOW and RFP

Navajo Biological Opinion-requirement to monitor incidental take of larval fish (Mark McKinstry)

Committee recommends using existing projects to make estimate rather than developing entirely new project.

Revised Long Range Plan Document – Discussion/ incorporation of Comments

Continue Long Range Plan discussion

Set next meeting date

Tentative dates – October 10-11, 2006, (subsequently confirmed) LRP Workshop, FWS (NMESFO) in Albuquerque

or October 30-31, 2006 (times 1:00 pm-5:00 pm 1st day and 8:00 am – 4:00 pm 2nd day)

Adjourn ~4:30 pm

BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEMS
(Updated August 7, 2006)

	<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Meeting/ Origination Date</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Date Completed</i>
16	BC feels Vince Lamarra should work with Amy Cutler on Water Temperature and submit to BC with analysis.	02-23-06	BC	On going	04-01-06	
18	Long Range Plan comments due to David Campbell	02-23-06	BC/David C	On going	03-31-06	
19	SOW on development of SOW for removal of vegetation removal for Feasibility Evaluation Restoration Options using capital monies.	02-23-06	David C & Mark M	On going	05-08-06	
22	BOR to perform feasibility/design study for nonselective passage improvements for APS.	02-23-06	Mark McKinstry	On going	05-08-06	
23	David will check with Mark on status of whether the BC still needs to take 2.6% budget cut.	07-25-06	David C/Mark	On going	08-15-06	
24	Bill Miller will provide David Campbell with a list of outside peer reviewers to do an evaluation Population Model	07-25-06	Bill/David C	On going	Sept mtg	