

Approved August 29, 2006



**Biology Committee Meeting
February 23, 2006
Farmington Civic Center, 200 W. Arrington
Farmington, New Mexico**

Members Present:

Chuck McAda
Ron Bliesner
Jim Brooks
David Propst
Mark McKinstry
Paul Holden
Bill Miller
Vince Lamarra
Tom Wesche
Greg Gustina
John Pitlick
Steve Ross

Representing:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 6
U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, NM Fishery Resources
New Mexico Department of Game & Fish
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Jicarilla Apache Nation
Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Navajo Nation
Water Development Interests
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Department of Geography, Peer Reviewer
University of New Mexico, Peer Reviewer

Program Management:

David Campbell

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

Joann Perea-Richmann

Interested Parties:

Dale Ryden
Manuel Ulibarri
Melissa Trammell
Julie Jackson
Ernie Teller
Steven Platania
Steve Harris
Randy Seaholm

Representing:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 6
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Dexter Hatchery
NPS, Salt Lake City
UDWR – Moab
BIA – NIIP
University of New Mexico
Water Development
Colorado Water Conservation

1. Introduction; review/modify agenda (Chuck McAda)

- ❖ Review and approval of conference call minutes for November 9 meeting and December 9 (McAda)
- ❖ November 9 meeting summary approved
- ❖ December 9 conference call approved

2. Action Item Log (Chuck McAda)

- Item -12--Ron Bliesner will provide updated protocol to David Campbell by the end of March; David will compile and send out protocols by end of May.
- Other actions items are reflected on the attached log sheet.

3. Program Update (David Campbell and Mark McKinstry)

- David explained the issues with the Program Document are still unresolved. Development and approval of work plan and budget by the Biology Committee (BC); selection of BC representatives and Coordination Committee (CC) line item veto.
- RFP Process: Mark McKinstry explained the Bureau of Reclamation HUB zone contracting issue that is affecting the geomorphology; temperature, and habitat mapping FRP and the five (5) possible solutions to fix this issue. It is proposed that the Navajo Nation approach the Program with sole sourcing this work since the work take place on Navajo land.
- Mark McKinstry announced that technical evaluations of four hatcheries were performed by a sub-committee established by the Coordination Committee (Ram Dhan Khalsa, Mark McKinstry of BOR, Jim Brooks, FWS; and David Campbell, FWS) the week of February 13-17, 2006 to Ouray, CO River Fishery, Uvalde/Dexter and Willow Beach Fish Hatcheries. The recommendation from the technical evaluation group is to use both Uvalde/Dexter and Ouray and to split the number of fish to be produced between these facilities. This was approved by the Coordination Committee and added to the 2006 Work plan.

4. Discussion of Final Reports and Next Steps -- Biology Committee (BC)

❖ Water Temperature Modeling For the San Juan System

- The temperature model report does not provide the level of detail or the data to support a conclusion on a TCD. The BC recommends that Amy Cutler address the comments that have been provided. The BC will review the final report and provide final comments.

❖ San Juan Fishery Response to Thermal Modification

The BC will accept the final report.

Next Steps:

How does water temperature affect staging, spawning, incubation, etc... and how would a TCD change the temperature in those areas critical to expand usable habitat.

Amy's model provides the tools.

Recommended Action: The BC would like Vince to provide a SOW for the analysis to address the biological questions related to temperature and how does the SJ conditions compare with spawning conditions in other systems (~\$10,000) this is needed by June.

❖ San Juan River Population Model

Next Steps:

Final report due March 31 2006; BC recommends the model be funded in 2006.

❖ Feasibility Evaluation of Restoration Options

Discussion on the River system restoration vs small scale creation of habitat (at irrigation returns) for enhancing stocking.

The BC decided there is a need for:

1. Long term plan to address Russian olive within the river basin.
 2. To explore short term enhancements to aid retention of CPM in system.
- The Committee recommends that \$2,000,000 be earmarked for the development of a SOW for large scale vegetation removal in reaches 3, 4 or 5. (Mark M.; Ron B., and Dave C.)
 - The Committee recommends that \$400K be earmarked for the development of 4-6 experimental enhancements to aid in the retention of CPM in reach 6. (RFP).

❖ **Trophic Relationships Among Colorado Pikeminnow**

- Report is considered final.

Next Steps:

Consider funding when 2006 and 2007 budgets are evaluated.

❖ **Evaluation of the Need for Fish Passage at the APS and Fruitland Diversions**

- For APS: BOR to perform feasibility/design study for nonselective passage improvements. BOR needs to coordinate with the BC on design criteria and for design review.
- For Fruitland: this structure is not considered a barrier and a passage is not needed.

5. Capital Project Outlook and Recommendations for 2007

❖ **Need for passage at APS or Fruitland.**

- BOR to perform feasibility/design study for nonselective passage improvements at APS.
- BOR needs to coordinate with BC on design criteria and for design review.

❖ **Need for habitat restoration in San Juan River.**

- The Committee recommended that \$2,000,000 be earmarked for the development of a SOW for large scale vegetation removal in reaches 3, 4 or 5. (Mark McKinstry; Ron Bliesner and Dave Campbell will work this)
- The Committee recommends that \$400K be earmarked for the development of 4-6 experimental enhancements to aid in the retention of CPM in reach 6. (RFP)

❖ **Capital costs associated with razorback sucker production.**

- Capital costs for Uvalde and Ouray approved
- Continue funding of improvements for NAPI grow-out ponds

❖ **Recommendation for need for temperature modification.**

The BC would like Vince to provide a SOW for the analysis to address the biological questions related to temperature; and how does the San Juan conditions compare with spawning conditions in other systems (-10,000) needed by June.

❖ **Artificial Barrier at Clay Hills**

- The invasion of nonnative fish from the lake is a problem. Does it limit recovery? It doesn't happen often enough and the river temp precludes colonization.
- The BC does not support the construction of a barrier. Other methods of control, such as intensive fish removal during periods of higher lake levels would be a more reasonable approach.

6. 2006 and 2007 Budgets and Fiscal Outlook

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.

❖ Hogback Fish Screen Operation and Maintenance

- A design is underway: O&M contract being negotiated with Navajo Nation O&M fund will come out of base funds beginning in 2008; approximate cost is \$80,000.

❖ Larval Cyprinid Key

- The Biology committee agreed that this project should not be funded.

❖ NAPI Ponds

The Biology Committee discussed ways of consolidating and reducing costs associated with NAPI pond management support. The management of the ponds should be transferred to the Navajo Nation. Chuck McAda, Dale Ryden, Jim Brooks, Manuel Ulibarri and Vince Lamarra would work together to develop a process for transferring the management to the Navajo Nation DFW.

❖ Trophic Relationships Among Colorado Pikeminnow

- Discussion and recommendation.
 - Paul Holden made a motion to cut this project, Tom Weshce second the motion a vote was taken 6 FOR 3 AGAINST. Motion failed as it did not have the 2/3rd majority to pass.

❖ San Juan River Population Model

- Discussion and recommendation.
- Jim Brooks made a motion to cut this project, Chuck McAda second the motion a vote was taken 6 FOR 3 AGAINST. Motion failed as did not have the 2/3rd majority to pass.
- Paul Holden called for a motion to cut the Trophic Relations and Model Population projects for 2006 and re-submit in 2007 budget, Tom Wesche second the Motion failed: committee voted 4 ½ FOR and 4 ½ AGAINST.

❖ Update on San Juan Isotope Study

- Discussion and recommendation.
- Approved for funding

7. 2006-2007 Work Plan Final Recommendations

- 2006 Work Plan. Based on discussions above, the Committee voted without objection (with one abstention) to approve the 2006 work plan, including the Trophic Study, Population Model, and increased razorback sucker production.
- 2007 Work Plan. Discussion and recommendation

A motion made by Bill Miller for a 2.6% reduction in costs to balance the 2007 budget. Vince Lamarra seconding the motion. Committee voted 8 YES and 1 NO.

The BC agreed that the CPM stocking evaluation study would be on the bubble for FY 2007, pending completion of a final report and agreement by the committee that the study should continue.

Conclusion: The BC agreed to take a 2.6 % reduction in 2007 SOW to balance the budget. Not affected will be Razorback Sucker augmentation SOW, peer review SOW, program management SOW, Hydrology Committee SOW and non-native fish removal. Revised SOWs are due to FWS program office by March 10, 2006.

8. Available/Additional Colorado Pikeminnow from Arizona

- ❖ 2500 at 1 pound a piece are available and can be stocked.
- ❖ Pit Tagging - Jim Brooks will discuss details with Roger Sorenson, Arizona Game and Fish Department and will coordinate bodies from his office will pit tag fish.

9. Next Meeting

May 8, 2006 – Conference Call 9 am - 11 am

Discussion items: Assessment of Colorado Pikeminnow Augmentation monitoring program and where do we go from here.

(Updated March 17, 2006)

BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEMS

	<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Meeting/ Origination Date</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Revised Date</i>	<i>Date Completed</i>
2	The BC needs to establish and submit monitoring protocols to David Campbell.	7-18-05	BC	03-01-06		03-01-06
3	Final Draft of Population Model report needs to include information on model development, data sources, and data development, assumptions used in the model, model uses and limitations. BC to receive 3-1-06.	7-18-05	Bill Miller	03-31-06		
16	BC feels Vince Lamarra should work with Amy Cutler on Water Temperature and submit to BC with analysis.	02-23-06	BC	04-01-06		
17	BC to send revised SOW with 2.6% cut to program office.	02-23-06	BC	03-10-06		03-17-06
18	Long Range Plan comments due to David Campbell	02-23-06	BC/David	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. , Ron B. & Mark M	05-08-06		
20	Tagging and transporting of additional Colorado Pikeminnow will be discussed by Jim. Brooks and Roger Sorensen. Jim will report discussion.	02-23-06	Jim Brooks	05-08-06		

(Updated March 17, 2006)

BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEMS

	<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Meeting/ Origination Date</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Revised Date</i>	<i>Date Completed</i>
21	Peer reviewers were asked to review and provide comments to revised SOWs and submit to David.	02-23-06	PR/David	04-15-06		
22	BOR to perform feasibility/design study for nonselective passage improvements for APS/Fruitland.	02-23-06	Mark McKinstry	05-08-06		
23	BOR needs to coordinate with the BC on design criteria and for design review for APS/Fruitland.	02-23-06	Mark McKinstry	05-08-06		

(Updated March 17, 2006)

BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEMS
BIOLOGY COMMITTEE COMPLETED ACTION ITEMS

	<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Meeting/ Origination Date</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Revised Date</i>	<i>Date Completed</i>
1	Create an Action Item Log for the Biology Committee (BC).	07-18-05	Joann	12-09-05		12-15-05
4	BC members should review the Integration Report and distribute comments to prior to the Dec 9 conference call.	7-18-05	BC	12-09-05		11-9-05
5	Copy FY2007 Scopes of work for BC members	07-18-05	Joann	12-09-05		11-09-05
6	Comments need to be sent to Melissa Stamp for Hogback and Fish Passage report.	07-18-05	BC	11-25-05		12-9-05
9	Joann will send out UNM website password.	07-18-05	Joann	12-09-05		12-12-05
10	The New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office will develop a SJRRIP FTP Site.	07-18-05	David Campbell	12-09-05		11-23-05
11	Complete and post RFP for Pit Tag purchase. Award contract for pits tags	07-18-05	Mark McKinstry	11-9-05		12-23-05
12	Complete and post RFP for water temperature monitoring geomorphology, and habitat mapping.	07-18-05	Mark McKinstry	11-9-05		12-23-05

	<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Meeting/ Originatio n Date</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Revised Date</i>	<i>Date Completed</i>
13	Will provide a current Isotopes study proposal to the BC to review and submit comments.	12-09-05	Keith Gido	01-15-06		12-09-05
14	White paper from Vince Lamarra to BC by 1-1-06. BC to review and comments by 1-31-06.	12-09-05	Vince Lamarra/BC	01-31-06		02-01-06
15	Comments on Amy Cutler Temperature report on this by 1-13-06.	12-09-05	BC	01-31-06		02-01-06