



**Approved Summary**  
**San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program**  
**Biology Committee Conference Call**  
**7 April 2014**

**Attendees:**

**Biology Committee Members:**

Bill Miller, Chair – Southern Ute Indian Tribe  
Jacob Mazzone - Jicarilla Apache Nation  
Brian Westfall – Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Jason Davis – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2  
Mark McKinstry – U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
Benjamin Schleicher – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6  
Vincent Lamarra – Navajo Nation  
Harry Crockett – State of Colorado  
Eliza Gilbert – State of New Mexico  
U.S. Bureau of Land Management – absent  
Tom Wesche – Water Development Interests  
Dave Gori – Conservation Interests

**Program Office – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2:**

David Campbell  
Sharon Whitmore

**Interested Parties:**

Howard Brandenburg – American Southwest Ichthyological Researchers  
Steve Platania – American Southwest Ichthyological Researchers  
Brian Hines – Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
Carl Woolfolk – APS  
Henry Day – APS

**Approve 26-27 February 2014 draft meeting summary:**

- Wesche moved to approve the meeting notes, Gori seconded, and the meeting notes were approved.

**Discuss Draft 2014 LRP:**

- Whitmore made revisions to the LRP based on comments received and sent out to the BC on April 3 along with a list of some comments/questions received for group consideration.
- Management of the native fish community - specific actions and tasks are still missing. Miller will come up with some and provide to Whitmore.
- Sucker hybridization tasks - there is no quantification or benchmark to indicate when, or if, this could be a problem. Hybridization has always appeared to be low in the San Juan. Some fin clippings have been taken of suspected hybrids. Observed anomalies are noted in field notes but are not necessarily recorded in annual reports. To better track hybridization, P.I.'s will include a brief description of any fish anomalies observed in their annual reports.

- Water quality/contaminants tasks – Campbell said this is being addressed outside the Program in conjunction with section 7 consultations. Nothing specific can be reported yet.
- Minimizing the risk of hazardous spills - Actions and tasks are all labeled critical but do not have start dates. Wesche suggested developing a table of all threats to recovery so progress toward reducing them can be better tracked. Whitmore will work on this.
- Lake Powell survey – McKinstry pointed out this work is currently being funded by Reclamation outside of both Programs. Whitmore said the status should still be updated. She will get an update from Dale Ryden and make sure it is clear that outside funding is being used.
- Mark-recapture monitoring for population estimates – Wesche said the description of tasks related to doing populations estimates is confusing. Whitmore will try to make it clearer.
- Nonnative fish removal status – The status section of Task 4.1.3.1 in Table A4 needs to better distinguish between results from nonnative fish removal in the upper and lower sections.
- RERI habitat restoration site monitoring - Gori asked if a separate SOW should be developed for monitoring the RERI sites. Is the current level of monitoring being done via existing projects (larval fish, small-bodied fish, and habitat mapping) adequate and long-term? Gilbert and Lamarra included new tasks to cover this in their current SOWs. Platania said the larval study was also enhanced /expanded both spatially and temporally. Westfall asked if new tertiaryes are opened up, regardless of how it happens, wouldn't they be sampled under current protocols? Restored habitat would not be treated differently. Miller pointed out Goal 4.3 (Monitor and Evaluate Restoration Strategies and Projects) gives the BC the ability to come up with a new SOW, if needed. The 2015 SOWs are being done right now. If monitoring and evaluation of the RERI sites is not adequately covered by existing SOWs, then something else is needed.
- Identification and prioritization of new projects, activities, questions, and information needs (Task 4.2.4.1) - The list needs updating. Two items on the list, sampling the effectiveness of Hogback fish weir and determining how to distinguish stocked fish from naturally produced fish (ASIR's project), will be made into tasks. No new items were identified.
- Whitmore will make the changes discussed and send a draft final 2015 LRP to the CC at least 2 weeks prior to their May 23 meeting for review and approval. She reiterated the LRP is a dynamic document and the BC can provide input at any time. She keeps an ongoing list so if a change cannot be made this year, it can be included in next year's version.

#### **Discuss fish passage and entrainment issues:**

- Miller sent out a draft memo to the BC for review on April 4. The memo is from the BC to the Program Office, Service, and CC and states the BC is again recommending that Reclamation complete, in a timely manner, evaluating and modifying structures previously identified for fish passage to assist in the recovery of the listed species in the San Juan River. The summary Whitmore put together of related BC meeting discussions and decisions on the subject is attached to the memo.
- Davis said a citation is needed for the Animas River study. Whitmore said it was done by Michael Francis with Reclamation and she will send the report out.
- Wesche said abbreviations need to be clear (e.g., APS is Arizona Public Service on the SJR and Animas Pumping Station on the Animas).
- Whitmore said none of the structures previously identified are mentioned in the memo. Whoever reviews the summary might come up with a different set of priority projects than the BC.
- Miller will make changes based on comments. No additional BC review of the draft is needed before he sends it out.

- Further BC discussion on entrainment is needed. Platania did a 2005 study on entrainment. Campbell said Arizona Public Service's pump station will be made compliant through the Navajo-Gallup consultation process.
- An agenda item on entrainment will be added to the agenda for the next BC meeting.

#### **Other issues:**

- McKinstry reported the necessary gate repairs were made at PNM fish passage and it is operational again. The PIT tag detector is picking up fish. A remote detector system was installed at Hogback Fish Weir. Whitmore will send out a report McKinstry did on the installation.
- Campbell reported Reclamation has requested a waiver to forego doing a spring peak release this year. He said there will probably be enough water in the reservoir to do a one-week peak release but it will set the reservoir up to get lower and lower prompting shortage sharing again. He asked for BC input. Is there a priority between peak releases and base flows? Miller asked that Whitmore send out background information on the waiver and BC members can respond to that. BC members will need to respond ASAP. Reclamation waiting to finish their annual operation plan until they get the Service's answer.
- Davis informed the group they are having a difficult time filling out the crew for their nonnative fish removal trip next week. If they do not have enough people by the trip, they will have to cancel.
- Gori said TNC has a proposal into the Climate Adaptation Section of the Wildlife Conservation Society for \$250,000 to do restoration work on the river. They should find out soon if they get it.

#### **Test of remote meeting technology and consistency of field/data protocols:**

- Gori initiated a WebEx meeting to discuss field/data protocols for the upcoming field season and BC members joined in. The P.I.'s will continue to use Durst's template for recording data in the field. Comments relevant to data/results (i.e., suspected hybrids, conditions that may affect results such as high flows occurring in the middle of a trip, etc.) should be recorded by field crews and included in annual reports.
- The Webex test proved to be a viable way to conduct meetings especially for tasks that require BC review of documents such as the Long Range Plan. It will be used in the future.

#### **Schedule next meeting:**

- Next scheduled BC meeting is May 21 (BC) and May 22 (Annual Meeting).
- No other meetings were scheduled.

## BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM LOG

(Updated 4 March 2014)

Item No. *	Action Item	Meeting/O rigination Date	Responsible Party(s)	Due Date	Revised Date	Date Completed
1	Provide RBS/CPM stocking/capture/recapture data		P.I.'s to the Program Office	Annually before Jan. 1		
2	Provide Preliminary Draft Report Presentations		Project Leads (authors)	Annually at Feb. meeting		
3	Review LRP		BC	Annually at fall meeting		
4	Review Peer Review Comments from the February and May meetings		BC	Annually at fall meeting		
5	Provide Draft Reports		Project Leads (authors) to Program Office	Annually by end of March		
6	Scopes of Work		Project Leads to Program Office	Annually by end of March		
7	Provide Final Reports		Project Leads (authors) to Program Office	Annually by end of June		
8	Annual Data Delivery		PIs to Program Office	Annually by June 30		
9	T&E Species Data		BC to Program Office	Annually by Dec. 31		

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(Updated 4 March 2014)

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10	Annually compile T&E data and Program progress into summary to address overall Program recovery goals/objectives for presentation at annual meeting		Program Office/BC	By Annual Meeting in May		
11	Distribute Consolidated Data and list of annual data collected and available in the Program's database		Program Office to BC	Annually by Jan. 31		
12	Recapture analysis on PIT tagged fish		Durst	Annually by March		
13	Coordinate CPM stocking closely with Reclamation to avoid negative impact due to high flows/releases		Project Leads	Annually		
14	Waterfall Inundation Whitepaper – review past meeting summaries, determine what is needed, and provide report at the next meeting.	05/18/07	Program Office	12/07/07	Not a current priority	
15	Revise RBS Augmentation Goals (based on the outcome of experimental stocking)	5/10/10	FWS Fisheries/Program Office	5/2011 – provide update and extend as needed	ongoing	
16	Develop a detailed outline for San Juan River Recovery Program case history manuscript	11-5-08	Propst/Miller			On hold
17	Pursue Non-native fish stocking procedures	11/5/09	Crockett and Gilbert	12/1/09	1/2/14	

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18	Pursue effects study on Hg/pikeminnow with other groups/programs	1/14/10	Program Office lead	ongoing		
19	Discussion of what is the appropriate number of fish to stock	3/23/10	BC	ongoing		
20	Southern Ute funding of Population Model	5/10/10	Miller	11/2010	ongoing	
21	Work with I&E Coordinator to determine feasibility of brochures and signs	11/10/10	PO	2/24/11	Ongoing	
22	Prepare memo to CC conveying BC recommendation to conduct a feasibility study on removing fish barriers in the lower Animas River	7/9/12	PO	8/20/12	3/31/14	
23	NNF workshop recommendations to Davis	2/21/13	BC	3/18/13		
24	Complete Threats Assessment draft	5/7/13	TNC	6/28/13		
25	Determine if past flows met intended purposes of the flow recommendations	11/19/13	Lamarra	2/26/14		
26	Review of Environmental Flow Recommendations for the San Juan River SOW	11/19/13	BC and Peer Reviewers to PO	1/13/14	5/21/14	
28	Memo on fish passage and fish entrainment issues	2/27/14	Miller to PO to Reclamation	4/7/14		4/7/14

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(Updated 4 March 2014)

Item No. *	Action Item	Meeting/O rigination Date	Responsible Party(s)	Due Date	Revised Date	Date Completed
29	Testing remote meeting technology in conjunction with pre-field season protocol and data meeting	2/27/14	Miller, Davis, Gori will coordinate	4/7/14		4/7/14
30	Review of LRP	2/27/14	BC and Peer Reviewers to Whitmore	3/15/14		4/7/14

\* Items were re-numbered after changes were made

Yellow highlight indicates annual action items

Green highlight indicates new action items

Red highlight indicates completed action items that will be removed from the next iteration of the Action Item Log

Date	Annual Tasks	PO	CC	BC	P.I.
Oct.	Reclamation administers contracts	X			
Nov.	BC Meeting (peer reviews typically do not attend this meeting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review data integration results from previous year</li> <li>• Identify questions for annual data integration</li> <li>• Discuss Program priorities</li> <li>• LRP review and provide recommendations (with pros and cons) to PO</li> <li>• Appoint new BC Chair (every two years)</li> </ul>	X		X	
Dec. 31	RBS/CPM stocking/capture/recapture data to Program Office				X
January	Notification/update of Program rosters/mailling lists	X			
January	Executive meeting (Program Office; Reclamation Fund Manager; CC and BC Chairs) to do preliminary planning for upcoming year	X	X	X	
January	Updated LRP to BC and CC for review	X	X		
January	Reclamation provides a determination of perturbation for BC Review.	X			
Jan. 31	Distribute consolidated PIT tag data and post other data	X			
February	BC Meeting (peer reviewers are expected to attend this meeting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for Annual Meeting</li> <li>• Provide preliminary results; draft report presentations</li> <li>• Final review of updated LRP</li> <li>• Review annual data integration priorities</li> </ul>	X		X	X
Feb/Mar	Final updated LRP to CC (with explanation of input included/not included)	X			
March	CC approval of LRP				
March	Annual guidance/solicitation for SOWs based on LRP/list of prioritized projects	X			
March 31	Draft final reports and SOWs due to Program Office			X	X
April	Preliminary draft Annual Workplan and Budget	X			
May	Annual Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program overview</li> <li>• P.I. presentations</li> <li>• Review preliminary draft AWP</li> <li>• Committee reports</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X
May	Annual hydrology meeting to review and solicit information regarding the San Juan River Basin Hydrology Model	X			
June/July	Draft Annual Workplan and Budget	X			
June 30	Provide final reports and data sets to Program Office				X
July	Final reports posted on website	X			
August	Tech review of draft AWP; recommendations with pros and cons to Program Office			X	
August	Revise AWP based on input and transmit final draft to CC with documentation of all input	X			
Sept.	Review and approve final AWP		X		
Sept.	Post final AWP to website	X			