



**SAN JUAN RIVER BASIN RECOVERY
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (SJ RIP)
COORDINATION COMMITTEE
Tuesday 26 January 2021**

Meeting Summary

COORDINATION COMMITTEE (CC) MEMBERS:

Jason Davis, Chair
Steven Whiteman
Jennifer Dumas
Michelle Garrison
Patrick McCarthy
Crystal Tulley-Cordova, CC alternate
Dale Ryden
Tom Pitts
Absent
Absent
Colleen Cunningham, CC alternate
Ryan Christianson
Absent

REPRESENTING:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service), Region 2
Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Jicarilla Apache Nation
State of Colorado
The Nature Conservancy
Navajo Nation
Service, Region 6
Water Development Interests
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
State of New Mexico
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

PROGRAM OFFICE (PO):

Scott Durst, Acting Program Coordinator
Eliza Gilbert, Assistant Program Coordinator

Service, Region 2
Service, Region 2

OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES:

Jojo La, CC alternate
Adam Barkalow, BC alternate
Ali Effati
Christina Noftsker
William Miller, BC member
Jacob Mazzone, BC member
Jerrod Bowman
T. Kim Yazzie
Kathleen Callister, CC alternate
Lee Traynham
Mark McKinstry, BC member
Benjamin Schleicher, BC member
Julie Stahl
Tom Chart
Stephen Davenport, BC member
Nate Caswell
Nathan Franssen
Deborah Hill
Shawn Sartorius
Leslie James

State of Colorado
State of New Mexico
State of New Mexico
State of New Mexico
Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Jicarilla Apache Nation
Navajo Nation
Navajo Nation
BOR
BOR
BOR
Service, Region 6
Service, Region 6
Service, Region 6
Service, Region 2
Service, Region 2
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Service, Region 2
Service, Region 2
Service, Region 2
Colorado River Energy Distribution Association

Pamela Norris

Arizona Public Service

**AGENDA FROM 26 January 2021
COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

- 1. Introductions /Updates to the agenda -Davis**
- 2. Meeting summary 4 November 2020 – Franssen (seeking approval)**
- 3. Action items – Davis (review)**
- 4. BC 15-17 December 2020 meeting – Zeigler (update)**
 - a. BC recommendation for capital fund expenditure NAPI pond infrastructure (seeking approval)**
- 5. Alternative strategies for stocking Colorado Pikeminnow in the San Juan River Basin – Zeigler (vote to adopt)**
- 6. Covid-19 impacts on fiscal year 2021 projects – Durst (update)**
- 7. Fiscal year 2021 funding – Callister (update)**
- 8. Prioritization of FY 2021 SOWs – Zeigler (path forward)**
- 9. Capital projects – Christianson (update)**
- 10. Hogback and Navajo Nation**
 - a. Ongoing VFD interference with PIT antennas at Hogback – Christianson/McKinstry (path forward)**
 - b. O&M of Navajo Nation facilities – Christianson/McKinstry (update)**
- 11. Navajo-Gallup Depletion Guarantee – Pollack (discussion)**
- 12. Long Range Plan-Appendix A – Gilbert (seeking approval and discussion)**
- 13. Section 7 Principles – Gilbert (discussion)**
- 14. Partner expenditure inclusion into US Congressional briefing book – Cunningham/La (path forward)**
- 15. Post-2023 update – Garrison (update)**
- 16. Schedule next CC meeting(s)**

1. Introductions/Updates to the agenda – Davis

- Pollack asked that agenda item 11 (Navajo Gallup Depletion Guarantee) be tabled until the next meeting due to his inability to attend this meeting.
- La asked for an update on the sufficient progress report. Durst said comments were received from La, Cunningham, and Pitts. Durst is incorporating those comments, and once completed, will begin the process to get Service approval.
- Pitts announced that Dr. Tom Wesche is retiring after serving SJRIP as a Biology Committee (BC) for 28 years. Pitts said the Water Development Interests are in the process of hiring a new BC representative, have sent out the qualifications statement, and would like to hear from anyone that is interested.

2. Meeting summary 4 November 2020 CC meeting – Franssen (seeking approval)

Franssen received comments from Pitts, Christianson, Callister, and La on the draft CC meeting summary. A revised draft was sent to the CC via email on 11 January, 2021. Pitts motioned to approve the summary; Christianson seconded. With no opposition, the meeting summary was approved.

3. Action items – Davis (review)

Action items from previous meeting:

- 1. The PO will develop a quick reference list of BC and CC responsibilities/processes with specific examples – ongoing, due January 2021.**

Ongoing – Gilbert asked for clarification on this item. Cunningham asked that the document summarize the information in the Program Document.

- 2. The PO will update the FY20 AWP Addendum to include a table of estimated carryover funds prior to the next CC Meeting.**

Completed – Gilbert reported that the addendum was added to the FY20 AWP and was submitted for upload to the SJRIP website.

- 3. The PO will send updates to the Section 7 Principles out to the CC by November 13 for review and comment.**

Completed – Gilbert reported that she received comments and the item is on today's agenda.

- 4. Davis will draft a memo to the BC about the approval by the CC to continue to develop SOWs for the Trap and Transport options.**

Completed – Davis reported that the BC reviewed the SOW and recommended it to the CC for funding. He said the CC approved the SOW and work to implement it has begun.

- 5. Comments on the Long-Range Plan and the Razorback Sucker Augmentation Plan are due back to the PO by November 13.**

Completed – Gilbert reported that she received comments and is working to incorporate them. The item is on today's agenda.

- 6. The PO will send the summary of the History of Endangered Fishes in Lake Powell to the CC.**

Completed – Davis reported that this was completed and sent to the CC by Melissa Mata on 20 November 2020.

- 7. The PO will send a SOW detailing potential infrastructure improvements to the NAPI ponds to the CC.**

Completed – Durst reported that the SOWs were sent to the CC on 11 January 2021 and the item is on today's agenda.

- 8. PO will send the FERC application out to the CC.**

Completed – Gilbert sent this out on 4 November 2020.

9. **The PO in coordination with Region 6 will summarize the contribution of Lake Powell to recovery. Mata will review Service documents re: the role of Colorado Pikeminnow in Lake Powell in recovery and report back to the CC – ongoing. CC will write a memo to the Service requesting the Service’s opinion of the contribution of Lake Powell in recovery – ongoing.**

Ongoing – Durst reported that the Colorado Pikeminnow Recovery Plan team has convened and will be accounting for the role of Lake Powell in development of the plan.

10. **Mata, McKinstry, and Christianson will explore options regarding O&M for Navajo Nation projects.**

Ongoing – Davis reported that the item is on today’s agenda.

4. BC 15-17 December 2020 meeting – Zeigler (update)

Zeigler said that the status of the peer review panel was discussed at the last BC meeting. The panel has two members with only one that is consistently able to participate. The BC was asked by the PO for input on this SOW for next year’s work plan. Zeigler reported that a small group of the PO and BC are working on a plan to prioritize work at diversions to increase fish passage and minimize entrainment. The BC commented on the first draft of the plan. Zeigler said the small group is addressing those comments and will be sending an excel worksheet to the BC for prioritization. The BC was given a presentation by BOR engineers from the Technical Service Center (TSC) on two potential alternatives for fish passage at both the Arizona Public Service (APS) weir and the Piute Farms waterfall. A draft report will be provided by the TSC in early February. Zeigler reported that the BC is planning to make a recommendation to the CC on funding a project to modify the APS weir. The BC also discussed planning for a nonnative fish removal symposium to determine a path forward for this management activity. The BC’s next meeting is scheduled for 17-18 February 2021.

- a. **BC recommendation for capital fund expenditure NAPI pond infrastructure (seeking approval)**

Davis reported that the upgrading of West Avocet pond would bring the infrastructure standard up to those at the other two ponds, work which was funded through BIA grants. The SOW provides for a fish processing facility and replacement of water pipe valves. Zeigler said the BC recommended funding it. Bowman said the improvements are important to reduce maintenance especially with valves that are prone to freezing and that often results in fish delivery delays. The total cost is ~\$480,000. Bowman said he was trying to fix the current valves, but it is difficult to get parts because they are obsolete. Christianson said the request was for capital rather than NFWF funds and can be funded through an existing O&M agreement. Pitts moved to approve funding; Ryden seconded. With no opposition, the request was approved.

5. Alternative strategies for stocking Colorado Pikeminnow in the San Juan River Basin – Zeigler (vote to adopt)

Zeigler said that he, Barkalow, and Durst met with Pitts to address his remaining comments. Zeigler reported that this resulted in clarifications including an objective statement, a desired conditions statement, a change to the title of the 3rd section, removal of reference to numbers of fish stocked, and removal of potential stocking at Durango, CO. That version of the document was sent to CC on 11 January 2021. McCarthy moved to adopt; Ryden seconded. With no opposition, the strategies were adopted.

6. Covid-19 impacts on fiscal year 2021 projects – Durst (update)

Durst reported that the “SJR Nonnative Species Monitoring and Control” project, which was to be completed this week, has not been completed because the Navajo Nation is under restrictions. Caswell reported that trips might be rescheduled to the spring. Durst reported that other projects which may be affected soon are the “Spring Age-1 Razorback Sucker Study”, “Facilitated Fish Passage in the San Juan River”, and “Enhancing Channel Complexity and Low-Velocity Habitat”. Durst said the PO will communicate with BC and CC if or when projects are impacted by Covid-19 restrictions.

7. Fiscal year 2021 funding – Callister (update)

Callister reported that the FY21 appropriations bill was signed and included language directing Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) to transfer hydropower revenues to Reclamation to carry out environmental stewardship and endangered species recovery efforts (SJRIP, Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program Program). The funding level is the same as fiscal year 2020. Congress removed Reclamation’s request for appropriations for these programs in FY2021. Callister said BOR is waiting to receive funding from WAPA. McKinstry said that some SJRIP partners have carry-over funds or can be reimbursed if they know funding is coming, however the contracted work may be impacted. McKinstry said that if the larval fish monitoring contract is not awarded by 1 March 2021, early sampling will not occur.

8. Prioritization of FY 2021 SOWs – Zeigler (path forward)

Zeigler reported that the BC asked for direction on whether and how to prioritize implementation of the fiscal year 2021 annual work plan should the delay in WAPA’s transfer of funds continue. Pitts said there might be a resolution in the next week and Callister was asked to keep the CC informed. If Callister did not have an update at the end of the next week, the CC requested the PO develop an initial fiscal year 2021 plan for prioritization of projects and get input from the BC.

9. Capital projects – Christianson (update)

Christianson sent his planning spreadsheet via email to the CC during the meeting. He reiterated that the draft reports from BOR’s TSC on alternative fish passage designs for APS and the Piute Farm waterfall will be sent to the BC early February. Christianson reported there are few capital projects scheduled if plans were initiated soon, funds could be obligated prior to the end of the SJRIP’s authorization in FY 23. He said there were no updates for Fruitland. However, if there was a need to modify PNM Jewett Ditch or Farmer’s Mutual Ditch, planning would need to begin soon to include them for possible funding. The Phase III and Ranchmans-Terrel projects are in process and will likely

be completed this year. Christianson reported that the remaining capital funds ceiling is ~\$18 million (which is unlikely to be fully appropriated by 2023) and if funds for projects are appropriated in 2023 or prior, they may be carried past 2023.

10. Hogback and Navajo Nation

a. Ongoing VFD interference with PIT antennas at Hogback – Christianson/McKinstry (path forward)

McKinstry reported that although the CC approved NFWF funding for a server update and new batteries, the contractor hasn't performed the work due to COVID-19. The funds were approved to replace variable frequency drives (VFD) with soft starts in an effort to eliminate interference with the passive integrated transponder antenna but that work did not occur because the inline pumps at Hogback had failed and rented pumps with integrated VFDs were being used. The CC discussed that the SJRIP had invested significant funds into the Hogback canal weir and the naturalized fish passage, monitoring of the efficacy of these management actions has been prohibited by the pumps, this problem has persisted for many years, and one component of the biological opinion for the weir is monitoring of entrainment. In general, the CC thought fixing this problem was a priority and asked BOR to obtain a quote to fix the system.

b. O&M of Navajo Nation facilities – Christianson/McKinstry (update)

Christianson reported that BOR is losing the assistance of the Public Service of New Mexico (PNM) for O&M due to the decommissioning of PNM's electric plant. McKinstry reported that the Navajo Nation Department of Fish and Wildlife (NNDFW) is interested in taking on the responsibility. He said he and Christianson are working to figure out whether an O&M umbrella contract with NNDFW would work. Christianson said an umbrella contract is needed so that issues at Hogback can be resolved and an O&M contract will also be needed for the Fruitland capital improvements.

11. Navajo-Gallup Depletion Guarantee Pollack (discussion) - tabled

12. Long Range Plan-Appendix A – Gilbert (seeking approval and discussion)

Gilbert reported that comments were received from Pitts, Cunningham, and La and she and Durst had conversations with him, Cunningham, and La. Gilbert is incorporating the comments from Pitts and will ask for a vote to approve the 2020 appendix A over email. Gilbert asked for discussion on Pitts' request to remove the redundancies from appendix A. The CC decided the PO would make an initial revision of appendix A with track changes and send it the BC for their review and recommendation as a 2021 appendix A. Cunningham suggested the Long-Range Plan should be revamped after the SJRIP's reauthorization.

13. Section 7 Principles – Gilbert (discussion)

Gilbert reported that she received comments from Cunningham, La, and Pitts and she and Durst had conversations with each. She said a few more drafts may be needed before it is ready for the CC to recommend to the Department of Interior solicitor for review. Durst reiterated that the existing Principles remain in place until the revisions are finalized.

14. Partner expenditure inclusion into Congressional briefing book – Cunningham/La (path forward)

Cunningham and La reported that in recent conversations there was recognition of inconsistencies in the definition of partner contributions ,i.e., how should non-cash contributions be valued and reported for inclusion into the briefing booklet. Stahli said the development of the briefing booklet would be delayed and there was time for partners to update the information they wanted communicated. After the meeting, a deadline of 15 February was provided to the partners to submit any additional information, which could be for fiscal year 2020 and/or prior years.

15. Post-2023 update – Garrison (update)

Garrison reported that the next meetings will be held on 3 February, 3 March, and 31 March 2021. Garrison said these meetings will wrap up the identification of possible funding sources using the cutsheets. She said a cutsheet from BIA and one or two other cutsheets were in development. Garrison reported that one of the struggles is to find consistent annual funding and a scoping phase is underway to determine whether a public/private partnership would work to provide some funding. Garrison said that there have been similar conversations in regard to defining in-kind contributions. Durst reported that a draft report to congress that included all sections except for the funding piece was distributed to partners for high-level comments. He said comments were due to Donald Anderson at the end of January.

16. Schedule next CC meeting(s)

Durst will send Doodle polls for meeting a CC in mid-March and one for the annual May meeting.

**ACTIONS ITEMS FROM 26 January 2021
COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

1. The PO will develop a quick reference list of BC and CC responsibilities/processes with specific examples - ongoing.
2. The PO in coordination with Region 6 will summarize the contribution of Lake Powell to recovery. Mata will review Service documents re: the role of Colorado Pikeminnow in Lake Powell in recovery and report back to the CC – ongoing. CC will write a memo to the Service requesting the Service’s opinion of the contribution of Lake Powell in recovery – ongoing.
3. Mata, McKinstry, and Christianson will explore options regarding O&M for Navajo Nation projects - ongoing.
4. Callister will provide a funding update to PO and CC within the next week.
5. Durst will send information on past partner contributions for both recovery programs
6. Partners will identify items they think should or could be included in the briefing booklet and send that information to Durst.
7. Christianson will work with the Navajo Nation to determine their plans for replacement of the pumps at Hogback and get an accurate cost estimate to help rehabilitation work for use at the next meeting.
8. Gilbert will organize a small group to incorporate of Section 7 Principle comments.
9. Durst will send a final draft of the 2020 long-range plan’s appendix A for CC approval.
10. The PO will develop an initial draft clarifying appendix A of the long-range plan and send that to the BC for development of the 2021 long range plan appendix A.
11. Durst will send Doodle polls to organize the next two meetings.