



**SAN JUAN RIVER BASIN RECOVERY
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (SJRIIP)
COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
17 February 2023
MEETING SUMMARY**

Coordination Committee (CC) Members:	Representing
Jason Davis (Chair)	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2
Jenny Dumas (Alternate)	Jicarilla Apache Nation
Crystal Tulley-Cordova	Navajo Nation
Lisa Yellow Eagle	Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Michelle Garrison	State of Colorado
Colleen Cunningham (Alternate)	State of New Mexico
Absent	State of Utah
Joseph Trungale	The Nature Conservancy
Absent	U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
Lee Traynham	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Dale Ryden	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6
Absent	US Bureau of Land Management
Peter Ortego	Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
Steve Wolf (Alternate)	Water Development Interests

Program Office (PO):	Representing
Melissa Mata, Program Coordinator	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Eliza Gilbert, Assistant Program Coordinator	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Scott Durst, Science Coordinator	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Raphaela Ware, Program Biologist	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Other Interested Parties:	Representing:
Jacob Mazzone, BC member	Jicarilla Apache Nation
Michelle Yazzie, CC alternate	Navajo Nation
McArthur Stant II	Navajo Nation
Peter Nylander, CC alternate	Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Bill Miller, BC member	Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Kara Scheel, CC alternate	State of Colorado
Harry Crockett, BC Chair	State of Colorado
Sarah Seegert, BC member	State of Utah
Betsy Morgan	State of Utah
Tom Chart, BC member	Water Development Interest
Carrie Padget, BC alternate	Water Development Interest
Melissa Trammell	National Park Service
David W. Speas	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Mark McKinistry	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Abigail J. Lawson	New Mexico State University

Benjamin Schleicher, BC member	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Melody J. Saltzgeber	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Nathan Franssen	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Introductions and Changes to Agenda – Davis

Davis called roll and confirmed a quorum. Davis asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda, and there were no additions. Davis announced that the December 12, 2022 meeting summary was emailed to the Coordination Committee (CC) prior to today’s meeting and comments are due to Mata by February 24, 2023.

Biology Committee (BC) Updates – Crockett

New BC Membership

Crockett informed the CC that the State of Utah nominated Sarah Seegert as State of Utah BC representative and Katherine Creighton as State of Utah’s BC alternate. The BC expressed their appreciation for the history of Utah’s work in the San Juan River Basin. The BC discussed the nominations and with no objections Seegert and Creighton were approved as the BC representatives for the State of Utah.

Hydrology Update

Crockett reiterated Behery message to expect this winter with below average snowpack in the Southwest and San Juan River Basin. For a 21-day spring peak release from Navajo Reservoir, inflows would need to be 135% above average and the current chance of conducting a spring peak release is only 7%. There may be a risk of shortage if Navajo Reservoir elevation falls below 5,990 feet and Navajo Indian Irrigation Project is unable to divert water from the reservoir. Because of the risk of shortage, no maintenance releases are planned for the 2023 water year.

Structured Decision Making primer presentation

Crockett mentioned the BC spent a significant amount of time talking about Structured Decision Making (SDM) approach to develop an adaptive management plan for nonnative fish management, and other topics within the San Juan River. Crockett did not want to go into too much detail as the topic is on the agenda today.

Update on APS Fish passage

Crockett informed the CC that the BC originally recommended Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) Technical Service Center Alternative 1 which was a middle of the channel downstream facing rock ramp. Reclamation shared another document that refined Alternative 1 and provided a new Alternative 2 (a concrete passage on river right with steel baffles like Grand Valley Diversion Dam) and new Alternative 3 (a rock passage with chevron baffles like the Price Stubbs Diversion Dam). After additional review and discussion, the Biology Committee agreed that alternatives on river right would likely need substantial maintenance and not allow for efficient upstream passage. The BC reiterated

their recommendation for the refined Alternative 1 as it represent the best option to prioritize the ability to pass fish. APS would need to support Alternative 1 prior to moving forward with the project.

Fish passage was at PNM

The BC approved the proposal to keep PNM fish passage open during all seasons for one year and will assess changes in numbers of endangered fishes, their passage rates, and potential increased density of channel catfish upstream of the facility to guide future operations. Crockett will draft a memo detailing this BC recommendation to the CC.

BC Recommended Structured Decision Making – Gilbert and Lawson

Gilbert provided background on the work of the BC's nonnative subgroup's recommendation to use a SDM approach to develop an adaptive management (AM) plan for nonnative fish management in the San Juan River. The subgroup recommended SDM because of their difficulty determining what actions the SJRIP should take following the 3–5-year hiatus from nonnative management. Also, the subgroup discussed how SDM could be useful in other SJRIP management actions. The Program Office identified SDM experts that could help guide the SJRIP in this process.

Dr. Abigail Lawson was identified as a SDM expert available to assist the SJRIP. She gave a presentation at the BC meeting, and they recommended the CC see the same presentation as background on the topic prior to the submission of a potential Scope of Work. Lawson's primer on SDM and AM also provided insight to what those processes might look like for the SJRIP.

Increasingly complex decisions require more sophisticated tools and decisions with high stakes and lots of uncertainty can be addressed with a best management practice that's provided with SDM. SDM can be suitable for one-time decisions, but recurring decisions can be best addressed with AM (through SDM). Ideally, goals should define the choices between alternative actions rather than selecting among alternative without first identifying the fundamental objective. Critically, objectives need to be measured to determine if they are successfully attained by implementing management alternatives. Elements of SDM include identifying the problem to be analyzed, developing measurable objectives based on management goals and values, coming up with alternative possible actions that can achieve management objectives, predicting the consequences of implementing an alternative on an objective, making tradeoffs by assessing the relative weight of objectives. When stakeholders have different values, it's a case of competing objectives that can be addressed by examining tradeoffs in an AM framework. AM is a special case of SDM with recurring decisions where management is conducted to learn, and management is informed by learning in an iterative loop. AM is suitable when there's high uncertainty and high controllability in the system (variables of interest respond to management actions). Monitoring should be tailored to address questions specific to the decision being made. Both SDM and AM require articulation of goals and alternatives, prediction of consequences, and reassessment. AM could be implemented through a series of experiments where parameters and metrics are identified in advance. Components of AM include a recurring decision, uncertainty of a key issue, management alternatives with decision alternatives, models that predict the consequence of an action, and data collection following the decision to confront model predictions.

Lawson provided a potential SDM structure for the SJRIP describing the phases of implementation. Starting with the setup phase that can take 1-3 years to complete and would include assessing the problem, designing a management experiment where action considered could include: non-native fish management, habitat management, fish passage, non-native vegetation removal, off-channel wetland improvement, water quality, or altering flow regimes. The iterative/learning phase can be an additional 2 years or more depending on the specific outcomes SJRIP is trying to achieve. The BC and CC will be part of the entire process throughout and based on similar SDM efforts this can be an annual cost of approximately \$125,000-150,000 per year. A few CC members expressed concerns regarding the length of time it would take to implement an SDM and AM process and associated cost. Lawson expressed that the potential structure in this PowerPoint were based on surrogate examples and the process can be tailored to meet specific needs, but the most important component is achieving commitment to the process.

Gilbert reiterated that the purpose of this presentation is to inform the CC based on the BC's recommendation regarding an SDM process for future consideration as a scope of work. Second, to provide a primer on SDM to the CC to help them understand a future scope of work. Lastly, the Program Office wanted to see if there were concerns from the CC prior to submitting a scope of work. CC members should send Gilbert an email of their concerns and if they have suggestion on any bounds the scope of work should consider.

Colorado Pikeminnow RIS Update – Mata

Mata reminded the CC that the Recovery Plan Comment period closed at the end of January and a few comments were received. Another component of the recovery planning process is developing the Recovery Implementation Strategy (RIS). The RIS is a stand-alone document, very similar to the Long Range Plan for the SJRIP, describing action we will take to achieve recovery. The Colorado pikeminnow RIS has been reviewed by the BC and comments have been addressed as appropriate. The next step will be to seek review and comment from the CC member in the coming weeks. There is no approval for the RIS, as it is a Service document. The goal is to finalize both the Recovery Plan and RIS by the end of the fiscal year.

Construction of Fish Passage at APS Update - Mata

Mata mentioned that we are still waiting to hear back from APS regarding the BC recommendation for the refined Alternative 1. APS will need to support an alternative before moving forward. It is anticipated that once an alternative is selected that there will be a request for additional approval of funds for the APS fish passage project.

Recovery Program Funding and Legislation Updates – States

Garrison informed everyone that the funding proposal is almost done and will be shared with each committee representative as soon as possible. The funding proposal will influence the ongoing development of the funding legislation language. There are a few ongoing discussions on whether to edit the existing legislation or create new legislation. The state partners are close to getting comments to Tom Pitts.

Wrap-up – Davis

Key Decision Points and Action Items (Old and new)

Action items from the December 12, 2022 meeting summary.

1. The CC is in the process of voting to invite the NPS as a signatory participant. Colorado is still trying to discuss this with their leadership. Utah recently asked for more information.
2. Garrison will share draft scope of work for Recovery Program economic review to CC. Consulting firm has been identified, and the committee needs to be convened. There is a report back from 2012, that would be good to review. Please stay tuned.
3. Dumas will coordinate with Pueblos tribes to verify depletions from the San Juan Chama Project. Dumas reported that she is still working with the Northern Pueblos on verifying depletions numbers. The contractor associated with the San Juan Chama Project are interested in the SJRIP. There may be a request for a spokesperson to this group.

Action items from today's meeting.

1. Meeting summary for December 12, 2022 comments due to Mata by February 24, 2023.
2. Crockett will write a memo to CC on PNM fish passage change in scope of work.
3. Gilbert will provide Structured Decision Making Primer PowerPoint via email to the CC.
4. CC members should send Gilbert an email of their concerns and if they have suggestion on any bounds the scope of work should consider.

Upcoming Meetings

Annual and CC meeting – 10 May 2023 in Durango, CO

Meeting Concluded.