

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Conference Call Summary
May 30, 2000, 2:30 - 3:20 p.m.

Participants: Robert Wigington, Dave Mazour, Bruce McCloskey, Robert King, Marty Ott, Shane Collins, Rich Valdez, John Reber, Leslie James, Susan Baker, Angela Kantola, Brent Uilenberg, Tom Czapla, Ray Tenney, Henry Maddux, and Tom Pitts.

The Committee convened via conference call to discuss the recovery goals.

Susan Baker said the Service held two internal meetings on the draft goals, but she can't yet predict Region 2's concurrence with the distinct population segment (DPS) approach (they don't believe DPS are adequately justified at this point). (The Service's DPS policy is on the web at <http://www.r6.fws.gov/crrip/tc/recoverygoals/dps.pdf>.) Region 2 is to submit written comments on the current documents within the next week and Region 6 has agreed to supplement the DPS justification by June 9. The Service currently is considering defining criteria only for the upper basin, with an explanation that criteria for the lower basin and the San Juan River will be developed later (much less information is available to develop criteria for the lower basin and the San Juan River). In the Federal Register, the Service would identify the recovery management areas, state the Service's intent to downlist using a DPS approach, and fully justify that approach. Henry said that the Solicitor has said we can't legally declare DPS in the July document, because DPS are normally identified in the listing action. Thus, the Service can't legally declare DPS until they take a downlisting action. According to the criteria, downlisting would take a minimum of 5 years.

If Regions 2 and 6 don't reach agreement after Region 2 reviews the enhanced DPS justification after June 9, then the two Regional Directors will have to go to Washington to present their arguments to Director Jamie Clark. Susan and Henry said they still plan to do everything they can to publish the goals in the Federal Register by the end of July. The only reason that might not happen is if the decision gets elevated to Washington, D.C.

Tom Pitts re-emphasized that the water users and upper basin states believe that the Secretary of the Interior committed to downlist and recover the fish in the Upper Basin when he signed the Program's cooperative agreement. Tom said he has concerns about waiting 5 years before finding out if DPS is a viable approach.

The water users, Colorado and Utah all expressed support for the DPS approach. Robert Wigington said Dan Luecke had some earlier concerns that separate recovery units might "let the lower basin off the hook," but they haven't specifically discussed the DPS approach.

Bruce asked Henry how he thought the recovery team would respond to the current documents. Tom Czapla said he thinks the team may be divided. They've previously discussed "ecologically significant units," but some of the lower basin states' representatives may not support the DPS approach. The team meets to discuss the documents tomorrow. Committee members noted the need to be sure that Domenici of New Mexico doesn't have a problem with the DPS approach.

Tom Pitts noted that Table 5 still includes the San Juan River, which appears to be an error.

Bruce McCloskey said that Tom Nesler expects to have the Colorado recovery goals finalized in draft form within the next couple of weeks, and will share them with everyone at that point. Pitts asked how Colorado will reconcile the differences in the numbers between the Service and the state document, and McCloskey said he didn't know yet.

Next meeting - The next Management Committee meeting is in Craig, Colorado at the Holiday Inn on June 7, beginning at 10 a.m. Craig and the River District are hosting a barbecue for Program participants that evening. Recovery goals will be the second (and main) item on the meeting agenda, with the focus on the upper basin criteria. Each agency needs to make sure they support those criteria from a policy standpoint. A quick status update on the long-term funding legislation will be first on the agenda. The Implementation Committee meeting is still scheduled for July 17, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Salt Lake City.