

MEETING SUMMARY
Colorado River Management Committee, Salt Lake City, Utah
Date: October 30, 2001

Attendees: See Attachment 1

Assignments are highlighted in the text and listed at the end of the summary.

CONVENE - 9:50 a.m.

1. Review/modify agenda and time allocations and appoint a time-keeper - The agenda was modified as it appears below.
2. Approve August 7, 2001 meeting summary - Two typographical errors were corrected.
3. Recovery Program updates
 - a. Recovery goals - Bob Muth reported that the initial comment period ended last week and many comments were received. In response to six requests for extension, Ralph Morgenweck decided to reopen the comment period for 15 days (announcement to appear in the Federal Register next week). Bob said his office has begun reviewing the comments received to date and hopes to finalize the goals by February or March. >The Service will send the Management Committee a list of who has submitted comments thus far. Once the additional comment period closes, the Service will provide copies of all the comments to the Management Committee (perhaps electronically as pdf files). >Susan Baker said she'd like to schedule a brainstorming session to discuss the conservation plans after the draft final goals are out. Prior to that meeting, the Service will develop an outline of what the plans will need to contain.
 - b. Tusher Wash screen - We've still not received word from Thayn Hydropower. >Sherman Hoskins will call the attorney and get back to Bob Muth and Brent Uilenberg with the details.
 - c. Ouray hatchery completion - Brent Uilenberg said that they've spent \$130K of the \$250K approved to develop a more secure water supply at Ouray and have increased the water supply from ~400gpm to ~840 gpm. The hatchery needs ~1700 gpm, so Reclamation and the Service are considering a water re-use system to provide the additional water (a meeting is being held this Friday to discuss that). With the current water supply, the hatchery can probably produce 70-80% of the fish they originally thought possible, but with no impact to meeting stocking plan goals. The biggest concern is the hatchery's ability to adequately treat fish for disease.
 - d. Flaming Gorge EIS process - Kerry Schwartz said Reclamation has hired a new EIS coordinator (Beverly Heffernan). The NOI was published in June of 2000, and was followed by public scoping meetings. Reclamation used the comments received to formulate one no-action (operation under the 1992 opinion) and one

action (meet the flow recommendations) alternative and they've been running hydrologic models for those. Other alternatives may still be evaluated. Reclamation anticipates a draft EIS in June 2002, and a final in early 2003. Committee members discussed the appropriate baseline (1992? 1985?) for the purposes of identifying impacts to power generation. Wayne Cook noted that the NEPA is voluntary in this case. John Shields expressed concern that the EIS process could potentially unnecessarily elevate issues that are already being addressed through the Recovery Program process. Bob Muth and the principal authors of the recommendations are meeting with Reclamation to discuss interpretation of the recommendations, etc. >Kerry Schwartz will post a more detailed EIS timeline to the listserver. >Reclamation will provide regular updates on the Flaming Gorge EIS prior to Management Committee meetings.

- e. Gunnison flow recommendations - Bob Muth is meeting with Chuck McAda, Kirk LaGory, and John Pitlick in mid-November to further examine the Gunnison/Colorado peak flow recommendations for channel maintenance. Then the Service will have another meeting in December with the minority objectors. Shane said Western still has concerns that the Program had approved research done by a geomorphologist, then the geomorphologist's data were used by a non-geomorphologist and changed. In the future, the Biology Committee needs to carefully consider whether that's appropriate.
- f. Grand Valley Water Management and Highline storage - With the facilities which are now in place, Reclamation has been able to reduced irrigation demands by 400 cfs. The pumping plant at Highline and the monitoring/automation system remain to be completed. Reclamation and Colorado are working on a perpetual lease for Highline storage. Brent said the Foundation needs to have all the state capital funding agreements in place in order to contract for the pumping station. The coordinated reservoir operations work is another part of meeting the Colorado mainstem flow recommendations. This is done not by extensive modeling, but by meeting once or twice a week. Susan noted that the draft EA on transferring Highline from Wildlife to Parks will be available for public comment within the next few weeks.
- g. GVIC fish screen - Construction will begin next week.
- h. Steamboat water lease - The lease was extended through November 30, 2001, allowing Colorado State Parks to release water from storage in August and September. A long-term lease will be considered as part of the Yampa Management Plan.
- i. Duchesne River Coordinated Reservoir Operations and biological study

Biology/physical science report status: Tim Modde has received and integrated all chapters of the report, but a few gaps need to be filled with data collected by the Ute Indian Tribe (Uintah and Ouray Agency). Muth sent a letter requesting those data, and there is a follow-up meeting scheduled for October 29. The Program

Director's office expects to receive a copy of Modde's integrated report within the next few days. Modde and the other fish researchers are ready to meet with Reclamation modelers to run coordinated reservoir operations scenarios for the flow recommendations.

Model status: Output from the model is being reviewed by CUWCD; a few minor changes may be needed but it is mostly there. Existing operation of the Strawberry Aqueduct, Upper Stillwater Reservoir Carrant Creek Reservoir and Strawberry Reservoir are in the model. Once it's certain that all constraints are built into the model, alternative scenarios can be run. The modelers will need input from biologists regarding the most helpful scenario. With the extra funds already committed, enough remains to complete two scenarios and produce a report. The model has enough flexibility that additional scenarios shouldn't be very difficult. However, if many scenarios are requested, additional funding may be needed. The model will not be able to predict flows in the lower Duchesne River. >A revised scope of work still needs to be submitted for this project. Brent Uilenberg said any of the additional \$20,000 approved in 2001 that weren't spent didn't carry over (~\$10K), so we will need to add that to our 2002 work plan (annual funds).

- j. Reports status - Angela Kantola distributed an updated late reports list, noting that the Biology Committee has revised their report review process somewhat to improve quality and reduce review time. Bob Muth said the Steve Hamilton reports on the effects of selenium on razorback reproduction were acknowledged as final, but not accepted as Recovery Program reports. Susan Baker said the Service is scheduling another in-house "selenium summit." Tom Pitts complimented UDWR for significantly reducing their backlog of late reports. Sherman Hoskins said the Service should receive the mosquito report this week, so that report should be able to come off the list.
 - k. Elkhead & Yampa River Management Plan - Ray Tenney said the final draft of the Yampa Management Plan has been posted and hard copies mailed out. Gerry Roehm is working to schedule the initial NEPA scoping meetings at the end of November, and is working with the Yampa Basin partnership to keep the public involved. The River District plans to submit a 404 permit application for Elkhead enlargement by the end of December. The District would like to be in a position to bid this project in March of 2003. It may be possible to keep a conservation pool in the reservoir to preserve the fishery during construction, but it will cost ~\$250K more.
4. FY 2002-2003 work plan status and revisions
- a. Update on placeholders and changes - The Gunnison River temperature scope of work is being revised and will be discussed at the December Biology Committee meeting, then come to the Management Committee for approval. The Elkhead and Starvation reservoir nonnative fish escapement scopes of work are also being revised.

- b. Delaying expansion of Yampa pike removal into the main channel (#98b) - Colorado has proposed delaying the expansion of pike removal from main channel habitats between Yampa and Craig. One reason is because the results from the current removal effort won't be discussed until February. Sportfishing interests want to maintain the now well-known pike fishery in the Yampa, so CDOW needs to be sure they can clearly show that expanded pike removal will help the endangered fish. Bruce says CDOW also has concerns that main channel removal would confound the results of the pike spawning habitat enclosure feasibility study. Bob Muth reminded the committee that the decision to move ahead with main channel removal resulted from the northern pike workshop held last spring. Bob said he doesn't think enclosure can completely stop reproduction in the Yampa River, and thus, the main channel removal work may be more important than the enclosure study. The Management Committee agreed to postpone a decision on whether or not to implement expansion into the main channel above critical habitat until after the current removal effort results are available and are discussed at the February nonnative fish workshop. >CDOW will provide an update on off-channel ponds available for relocating northern pike and providing public access (ponds secured to date and potential additional ponds).

5. Funding

- a. Capital funds status report - Reclamation and the Service are both still under continuing resolutions at this point in the Federal fiscal year.
 - b. Status of State agreements with NFWF - Tom Blickensderfer said Colorado is a bit stuck in their negotiations over the Colorado labor preference provision that appears in all Colorado contracts. A waiver to this provision has been requested, but has not yet been granted. The Utah and Wyoming agreements have been completed. The Management Committee again strongly encouraged Colorado to make their funding available as soon as possible so that the Grand Valley Water Management project automation system can move forward.
 - c. Capital funds carry-over - Brent Uilenberg noted again that Reclamation will do what's required under the legislation, but if they carry over significant funds, it will affect their outyear budget requests. Also, obligation no longer counts as expenditure in Reclamation. Tom Pitts suggested that the best solution to this problem will be to go back to Interior and Congress and request changing the capital funds end date past 2005 (but not changing the ceiling amount).
6. Extending the Recovery Program beyond 2003 - On October, 17, 2001, the Implementation Committee unanimously recommended extending the Program's Cooperative Agreement. A formal request has been made for Secretary Norton to participate in a signing ceremony, but we won't have a response for 2 weeks. Wyoming has sent a draft of the extension forward, as has Utah, and both governors are prepared to sign it. Western is having it looked at in their legal department. Wayne Cook said the 7 Basin states have been trying to get an appointment with the Secretary, and there's also a

meeting of the Colorado River Water Users Association coming up in Las Vegas, so those could provide opportunities for a signing ceremony. As soon as we have input from the Secretary, we'll decide how/when/where to schedule the signing (far ahead of the January 21, 2002, deadline).

7. Section 7 update - Angela Kantola provided an updated consultation list. As noted in that list, since 1988 and through September 30, 2001, the Service has consulted on 142 projects with a potential to deplete a total of 1,674,088 af in the Upper Colorado River Basin, of which 1,451,133 af are historic depletions. Three of these "projects" are blanket consultations for depletions under 100 af, up to 6,000 af total. Thus far, these three consultations have covered 387 actual projects depleting a total of 5,697 af (4,049 af in Colorado, 1050 in Utah, and 598 af in Wyoming). Another of these 140 "projects" is the 15-Mile Reach PBO which covers an average depletion of up to 1 million acre-feet per year of existing depletions (through September 30, 1995) and up to 120,000 acre-feet of new depletions (since September 30, 1995) in the Colorado River above the confluence with the Gunnison River. Thus far, the 15-Mile Reach PBO has covered 110 actual projects. In total, then, since January 1988, the Service has consulted on 636 projects depleting water from the upper Colorado River basin.
8. Planning the March, 2002, D.C. Briefing Trip - We can't set a firm date until we know the date of the release of the President's budget and the Congressional calendar, but the Committee tentatively set March 13-19 for the briefing trip. John Shields noted that the Information and Education Committee discussed the briefing book and came up with several suggestions for this year. We should be sure to highlight the accomplishments made thus far in the Grand Valley Water Management project. The scheduling process and meeting formats we used last year were very effective. The box luncheon with committee staffers also went over well, so we might do that again and include an interesting presentation on the fish. Christine Karas should be able to help us set up meetings in Interior. John Shields suggested that we might try to meet with the Western States Water Council since they're having their roundtable meeting in D.C. at the same time. >The Program Director's office will reserve a block of rooms at the Capitol Hill Suites from March 13-18.
9. Management Committee chairmanship - John Shields was unanimously acclaimed as the chair for the next year.
10. Schedule next meeting - January 23, 9:30 - 4 near DIA. >The Program Director's office will arrange a meeting room.

ADJOURN: 3:00 p.m.

ASSIGNMENTS:

The Service will send the Management Committee a list of who has submitted comments on the recovery goals thus far. Once the additional comment period closes, the Service will provide copies of all the comments to the Management Committee (perhaps electronically as pdf files).

Susan Baker will schedule a brainstorming session to discuss the conservation plans after the draft final recovery goals are out. Prior to that meeting, the Service will develop an outline of what the plans will need to contain.

Sherman Hoskins will call the attorney for Thayn Hydropower and get back to Bob Muth and Brent Uilenberg with details.

Kerry Schwartz will post a more detailed Flaming Gorge EIS timeline to the fws-coloriver listserv.

Reclamation will provide regular updates on the Flaming Gorge EIS prior to future Management Committee meetings.

Reclamation still needs to submit a revised scope of work for the Duchesne Coordinated Reservoir Operations project.

CDOW will provide an update on off-channel ponds available for relocating northern pike and providing public access (ponds secured to date and potential additional ponds).

The Program Director's office will reserve a block of rooms at the Capitol Hill Suites from March 13-18 for the D.C. briefing trip.

The Program Director's office will arrange a meeting room near DIA for the January 23 Management Committee meeting.

Attachment 1
Colorado River Management Committee, Cheyenne, Wyoming
October 30, 2001

Management Committee Voting Members:

Brent Uilenberg	Bureau of Reclamation
Bruce McCloskey & Tom Blickensderfer	State of Colorado
Sherman Hoskins & Robert King	Utah Department Of Natural Resources
Tom Pitts	Upper Basin Water Users
John Shields	State of Wyoming
Shane Collins	Western Area Power Administration
Susan Baker	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Dave Mazour	Colorado River Energy Distributors Association
John Reber	National Park Service
Tom Iseman	The Nature Conservancy

Nonvoting Member:

Bob Muth	Recovery Program Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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Recovery Program Staff:

Angela Kantola	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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Others:

Ray Tenney	Colorado River Water Conservation District
Kerry Schwartz	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Brent Rhees	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Wayne Cook	Upper Colorado River Commission
Gene Shawcroft	Central Utah Water Conservancy District