

**Draft Outreach Committee Summary
April 6, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM (MST)**

OC Members: Tonya Kieffer-Selby (Chair, UDWR np), Justyn Liff (BOR), Rachel Gonzales (CPW np), Melissa Trammell (NPS np), Tom Pitts (Water Users), Adriana Zorilla (FWS R6), Erik Skeie (CWCB), Leslie James (CREDA), Colleen Cunningham (NMISC)

Participants: Michael Gross (FWS GV Hatchery), Steve Meisner (Virgin RIP np), Zane Kessler (CRWCD), Faith Jolley (UDWR), Lindsay Schlageter (TNC)

Program Director's Office: Shannon Nelson (UCRP-Outreach Coord), Julie Stahli (UCRP), Paul Badame (UCRP), David Graf (UCRP), Melissa Mata (SJRIP), Raphaela Ware (SJRIP)

CONVENE: 9:00 a.m., Thursday, April 6th

Introductions – Julie Stahli asked the meeting attendees to introduce themselves and mentioned what their program roles are. There are a great diversity of skill sets and capacity among this group. The Upper Colorado Recovery Program (UCRP) Program Director's office (PDO) committed to providing the Committee and all interested participants with a contact list. The PDO will reach out to Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) to see if they have a person to replace Chrystal Dean on the Committee.

Review/modify Meeting Agenda – Melissa Mata asked to talk about a film project the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program (SJRIP) is working on with Freshwaters Illustrated (<https://www.freshwatersillustrated.org/>).

Committee Structure & Purpose Overview – Julie Stahli provided an overview presentation of the two Recovery Programs. Review of how the San Juan and Upper Colorado River Recovery programs came about and evolved relative to conflicts between water use and the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Focus is on the recovery of listed fishes while water development/existing uses can continue. Both set up as long-term programs with multiple elements involved; the result is partners pulling in the same direction in a coordinated way. Julie reviewed elements of the UCRP, followed by a flow chart of committee structure(s), and each Program's relation to the rest of the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and ESA compliance process.

Open discussion of the current state of Recovery Programs' Outreach. Julie acknowledged Melanie Fisher's (previous outreach coordinator) efforts to build the outreach program we currently have. All the Program partners are glad to have an outreach coordinator again and we are now focusing on assessing what we have and then will begin to figure out what we are missing and how to move toward to fill those gaps. The current outreach plan consists of eight strategies which were all the primary responsibility of the Program's Outreach Coordinator.

- **News Media** - Prepare and distribute advance and follow-up news releases to media, members of Congress and Recovery Program partners. Identify and seek support of

partner and other organizations to issue news releases and/or provide supportive statements.

- **Publications & Educational Materials** - brochures, newsletter, Program Highlights document, fact sheets, magnets, rulers, and other schwag
- **Special Events & Public Meetings**
- **Interpretive Exhibits/Signage** - Coordinate production and installation of interpretive signs/exhibits
- **Social Media & Website** - Maintain and promote Facebook page and public website (www.ColoradoRiverRecovery.org)
- **Agency Publications/Websites** - Publish articles in Recovery Program partners' publications and websites.
- **Integrate Certain Outreach Projects with The San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program** - These include the newsletter, Program Highlights document, brochure, exhibit, educational materials such as rulers, and other items as appropriate.
- **Coordinate Messages with All Agencies Involved with Recovery** - Coordinate outreach efforts among agencies to assure consistent and clear messages to target audiences.

This of course is too big of a lift for one individual and the primary areas of focus for the coordinator has been the production of publications, promotional materials, and attendance of public events and conferences. The remaining strategies were implemented as time allowed, but most partners and program offices agree that more coordination is needed in the broad realm of messaging and outreach as well as a renewed effort to integrate the San Juan Program into the plan. Leslie James noted that the Grand Canyon program struggled early on with the division of messaging between resource managing agencies and the 'Program.'

Faith Jolley, Justyn Liff, and Raphaela Ware inquired about the Programs' social media presence; Julie described it as currently nonexistent. She indicated our primary approach thus far has been to provide content for partners to promote on their social media channels. The UCRP Facebook page still exists (1,400 followers) and has seen varied levels of activity but became a low priority due to staff turnover starting around 2019. Julie encouraged further discussion about developing a social media strategy. >**Raphaela Ware** requested that we start a small working group focused on determining how to get social media back up and running for the Recovery Programs and how to integrate both Program and partner social media presence to work together for greater amplification. Justyn Liff offered to be part of the social media working group. Lindsay Schlageter sees opportunities to share and amplify each partner's resources and information as a great way to support each other's needs. There was a request for an Outreach Committee and interested parties contact list >**The PDO** will provide a contact list along with the draft meeting summary.

Melissa Mata mentioned that she would like to meet more frequently than we do now. She also noted that the SJRIP would like to improve their outreach and messaging by focusing on target audiences and developing a set of metrics to assess success.

Julie proposed meeting virtually for now and to consider an in-person at some point in the future. There were no objections.

UCRP and SJRIP – The group had a discussion comparing key aspects of the Recovery Programs. Further discussions are needed to help align the Programs where it makes sense and to work out an optimal way for the Outreach Committee to operate while serving two different programs. One notable difference is how the committees make decisions. The UCRP uses consensus and the SJRIP uses a majority vote. This Committee needs to decide how it would like to operate. Julie Stahlh proposed that the **Outreach Committee operate under consensus, all agreed.**

Melissa Mata said that she would like to work on increased Tribal coordination and will see if the Navajo Nation has either a contact or individual that they would like to have involved.
>**Melissa Mata** to explore Tribal representation on the Committee

Adriana Zorilla mentioned the FWS has Tribal liaisons in both R6 and R2 and they are maintaining media contact lists and building relationships. They would be good starting points for determining participation. >**Adriana Zorilla** will forward Region 6 Tribal Liaison contact information to Melissa.

Introduction to RIPRAP and Work Planning – Julie Stahlh shared a brief PowerPoint presentation about the ‘origin story’ of the Upper Colorado Recovery Program’s RIPRAP (Recovery Implementation Program Recovery Action Plan), and how the RIPRAP and other program components (sufficient progress, bi-annual work planning, and reporting) all fit together in an adaptive management cycle. Melissa Mata noted that the San Juan Program has an annual (not bi-annual) work planning cycle which differs from the UCRP, so some thought needs to be given as to how to better align these different work planning cycles. Julie pointed out that scopes of work (for specific activities or broader inter-program priorities) can be incorporated into future workplans given discussion and approval by the Committee.

2022 Assessment of RIPRAP Implementation: Outreach Element – Paul Badame walked through the 2022 RIPRAP table, focusing on the General Tab, section VI., Increase Public Awareness and Support for the Endangered... He asked the committee to bear with him while he walked through a subjective review of the Program’s implementation of the outreach plan in 2022. He reiterated there are no objective evaluation metrics, so the assessment cells are just a narrative description of what was completed. Adrianna Zorilla brought up several potential metrics the Recovery Programs could use to assess engagement. Paul agreed with Adriana and noted that these types of performance metrics will need to be developed for the next version of the Program’s long-range plan (RIPRAP) which includes a revamp of the outreach portion of the plan. Shannon noted that the PDO is beginning to capture more outreach metrics.

Minor editorial changes were either noted or made directly in the RIPRAP assessment table. David Graf noted a small correction to cell re: CWCB Basin Roundtables, and Colorado River District (CRWCD) outreach activities in western Colorado.

Faith asked about the Programs' technical library and webpage. Julie shared links to existing resources within the Program website, including Program Highlights brochure and other outreach publications.

Expansion of Outreach Activities in the 2024 Workplan and RIPRAP – Shannon Nelson discussed the current steps being taken by the Recovery Programs to integrate and expand outreach activities and underscored the importance of strategic outreach to support and drive recovery goals. The program element and committee name has been changed from 'Information and Education' to 'Outreach' as it is a broader and more encompassing term. Shannon thanked Melanie Fischer for her previous work and laying a solid foundation.

The Outreach Committee plays a vital role in guiding outreach efforts to achieve Program recovery goals for the four listed species. Field offices from all partners have the option to integrate outreach activities into their scopes of work for the first time in the FY 24-25 workplan. This change reflects the increased emphasis that is being placed on outreach at a program level. A current priority is to better track current outreach efforts, measure their impacts as possible, and identify needs and opportunities to help guide future efforts. Related to this, the PDO is requesting that outreach activities and interactions be tracked as part of annual reporting. This includes how many people were engaged, topics of interest, and any significant feedback or response gathered from individuals.

A summary table of outreach actions that were recommended as part of the post-2023 planning workshop in 2019 was shared with the Committee. Shannon denoted the first four rows of the table as points of emphasis for further discussion (these include Communication Plan; Press Releases; Digital Media; Website and Social Media). The recommendations reflect the collective vision of the post-2023 planning process. They are provided for the Committee's consideration as a draft 'Outreach Plan' which will eventually replace the activities list in the RIPRAP.

During the ensuing discussion Adriana Zorilla recommended specifying social media platforms with a conscious decision to either build our own social media presence or use partner channels. She noted a need for materials, like talking points and content that could be public facing. Michael Gross suggested that outreach specific to Tribes is not included and should be more of a focus of the Recovery Programs. This led to discussion on the importance of considering and including underrepresented audiences when developing or updating outreach and communication plans.

A coordinated process is needed among partners for the efficient creation and distribution of media to communicate success stories about the Recovery Programs. Shannon proposed forming a working group to focus on this and for partners to take turns as lead on developing content. A draft communication plan (for news and articles) that was previously started with the FWS Office of Communications was brought up and Shannon inquired if there would be interest in establishing a working group to develop a coordinated process to share success stories, revisit the plan, and potentially generate other outreach materials. **Raphaella Ware** recommended **>forming working groups** for the following topics:

- Social media
- Sharing stories collaboratively

- Digital strategy – various platforms/transition to digital (e.g. podcasts)
- Multi-language accessibility
- Tribal-specific events/involvement
- How to calculate metrics for outreach progress/efforts

Melissa Mata noted that many of the people she engages with are fluent Spanish speakers and commented there are also language barriers with the Navajo Nation. Adriana added that developing materials in preferred languages is important. The New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission (NMISC) planning department has received feedback that includes the need for Spanish language documents. Michael supported targeting underrepresented groups and noted that lots of photographs and other non-text-based tools are useful. Faith Jolley recommended moving away from producing printed materials and putting more effort into digital tools. Adriana noted that many of the underrepresented groups lack good internet connections – particularly in Tribal communities. Colleen Cunningham recommended a cautious approach to a digital move forward based on limited bandwidth and access in some rural areas. Raphaela mentioned that our schwag is very popular, and some items could be readily produced and distributed in multiple languages. Faith asked about podcasting and said that Utah would be interested in hosting a podcast about the Recovery Programs. She also asked if there were any deadlines for this effort. Faith volunteered to develop social media content for Utah and noted that May 13 is Endangered Species Day and that UDWR typically partners with the Utah FWS ES office to host a table at the Living Planet Aquarium in Salt Lake City and said that there is an opportunity to integrate the four listed fish species into this event. Paul wondered if other states have similar events; Melissa related experiences in New Mexico and agreed it is a good outreach opportunity. >**Faith Jolley** will develop a news release for Endangered Species Day which highlighting the UC and SJ Recovery Programs among other things. She will ask for any needed photos or other information and will keep the Committee and interested parties posted so partners can share.

Paul Badame noted that the PDO has a supply of printed materials and promotional products that reside in several offices across the basin and recommended a review of that inventory to determine the usefulness of each product, to start thinking about future needs.

Melissa asked about the timing and process to update the outreach plan for the Recovery Programs. Paul suggested it might be helpful to start with the working group approach for the activities identified as current priorities, social/digital media (which may be different) and a process for sharing success stories. We can then develop similar working groups to address each activity in the new outreach plan. Shannon agreed and asked for interested volunteers to join either working group. >**Raphaela Ware, Faith Jolley, Erik Skeie, Adriana Zorilla, and Shannon Nelson** volunteered to serve on a social/digital media working group. Adrianna offered to help with developing a communication strategy and process for sharing success stories > **Adriana Zorilla, Raphaela Ware, Justyn Liff, Melissa Mata, and Shannon Nelson** volunteered to serve on a working group to develop a coordinated process for sharing partner success stories. Shannon noted that all partners are not present and there will be opportunities to join the working groups later.

Review SJRIP Outreach Scope of Work – Melissa Mata walked through the San Juan Program scope of work for their portion of outreach activities and products. She asked for ways to

improve the scope of work to demonstrate the benefits of outreach in furthering the San Juan program goals.

Melissa shared a film project being developed with Freshwaters Illustrated. The hope is to connect with the FWS '50 years of the ESA' theme. Melissa presented a sneak peek of a short draft video which had excellent quality and room for narration over the visuals.

Next Meeting – June 6, 9 AM – 12 PM (MST). Paul suggested meeting every two months through the process of revamping the outreach plan. Shannon said she will send an email confirming the members of each working group for further coordination outside the full Committee.

Task List as of April 6, 2023 – Previous tasks completed are described in the opening section of the meeting summary. Only remaining and new assignments are recorded below.

1. **Assigned April 6: PDO** will reach out to WAPA to see if there is a person to replace Chrystal Dean.
2. **Assigned April 6: Melissa Mata** will explore Tribal representation on the Committee and **Adriana Zorilla** will provide Melissa with the contact information of the two new Tribal Liaisons in FWS Region 6.
3. **Assigned April 6: Faith Jolley** will develop a news release for Endangered Species Day highlighting the Recovery Programs.
4. **Assigned April 6: PDO** will create an outreach contact sheet and share it with the committee, and all interested parties.
5. **Assigned April 6: PDO** will share the summary table of outreach actions that were recommended as part of the post-2023 planning workshop in 2019.
6. **Assigned April 6: Raphaela Ware** will initiate a working group focused on social media. Participants: Raphaela Ware, Tonya Kieffer-Selby, Shannon Nelson, Faith Jolley, Adriana Zorilla, and Erik Skeie. There's room for one or two more.
7. **Assigned April 6: Shannon Nelson** will initiate a working group to develop a coordinated process for sharing partner success stories. Participants: Adriana Zorilla, Raphaela Ware, Justyn Liff, and Melissa Mata, and Shannon Nelson