

UPPER COLORADO RIVER ENDANGERED FISH RECOVERY PROGRAM

FY 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

PROJECT: 2

Project Title

Reclamation Program Management

Bureau of Reclamation Agreement Number:

n/a

Project/Grant Period:

Start date: n/a

End date: n/a

Reporting period end date: 9/30/2022

Is this the final report? No

Principal Investigator:

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Abstract:

Program management funds are used to provide Reclamation participation in general Recovery Program activities not covered by specific scopes of work. Examples of these types of activities include administration of “base” or annual project funding agreements (i.e., not inclusive of capital projects), work planning, monitoring project progress and performance, and other general program management and administration.

Study Schedule: Ongoing

Relationship to RIPRAP:

General Recovery Program Support Action Plan, Provide Program Planning and Support (Program Management), Task No. VII.

Accomplishment of FY 23 Tasks and Deliverables, Discussion and Shortcomings:

Task 1: Work with Recovery Program participants to coordinate work plans

In FY23, Reclamation participated in the Biology, Management, Implementation and Outreach committees. We participated in RIPRAP revisions, review and completion of final reports, sufficient progress letters, flow request letters, and other issue papers pursuant to Task 1. We continued to participate in planning exercises for post-2023 capital and annual projects and funding strategies. We provided technical reviews of most Recovery Program technical documents and projects. We worked with the Program Director’s Office to discuss streamlining scopes of work and annual reports while ensuring Reclamation receives the necessary information for grant and contract reporting.

UPPER COLORADO RIVER ENDANGERED FISH RECOVERY PROGRAM

We participated in the Flaming Gorge Technical Working Group to implement the 2006 ROD, which involved close coordination with Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to develop and implement spring peak (Larval Trigger Study Plan, LSTP) and summer base flows. We attended the Flaming Gorge Working Group (FGWG) meetings (March 17, April 19). We worked closely with dam managers to operate the Flaming Gorge Dam selective withdrawal system to meet Green River endangered fish water temperature objectives.

We presented updates on Upper Colorado River basin recovery activities to the Desert Fishes Council (November 2023). We participated in the new hatchery sub-group (August and November 2023) and a new sub-group to update LTSP. We met several times with managers of the Ouray National Fish Hatchery to review plans for renovation using Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding. We briefed the PDO on future PIT operation and maintenance needs, and planned and began permitting processes for a dozen new PIA sites in the Upper Basin. We continued work on a manuscript on bonytail stocking success in coordination with the Program database manager and investigators from Ohio State University and Utah State University. We attended Stewart Lake coordination meetings. We created and distributed press releases related to Recovery Program news and accomplishments and participated in Information/Education committee conference calls.

As a response to their labor shortages, we assisted the USFWS Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (Vernal, UT) with their White River bass removal trips (May 23-26) and again for Colorado pikeminnow broodstock collection (September 26-29). We organized and participated in an upgrade to the White River PIA at Bonanza Bridge (August 28-September 1). We coordinated with Program Partner field offices to ensure their PIT equipment and supply needs were being met.

Task 2: Administer funding for Recovery Program projects. Accomplishments, Discussion, and Shortcomings

The Recovery Program FY23 work plan required us to create or modify several funding agreements between cooperators and Reclamation pursuant to Task 2. Each agreement required multi-faceted administrative maintenance, including requests for Federal assistance for Recovery Program-approved projects, justifications for federal assistance to Program partners, communication with Recovery Program Director's office on funding issues, preparation of determination and findings documents, review and approval of project budgets, requests for obligations to cover funding agreements, agreement or contract awards, maintenance of agreement and contract filing systems (including agreement instruments, invoices, and accruals), tracking of budgets, review and approval of invoices, performance of periodic site visits to monitor project performance, filing of advanced procurement reports, tracking project performance and status of deliverables, filing project monitoring reports, filing recipient performance reports, answering agreement inquiries from auditors, closeout and deobligation procedures, and other related tasks.

We issued a new grant (totaling about \$3M in BIL funds) to the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources for improvements to the Wahweap State Fish Hatchery near Big Water, UT. We also issued a new interagency agreement (totaling about \$1M in BIL funds) to the Fish and Wildlife Service for renovations at the ONFH Randlett and Grand Valley units. We purchased equipment (about \$800K) for a dozen new PIAs and about 50 portable submersible PIT readers for use in Upper Basin projects. About \$213K in deobligations was recovered and made available for Program use in FY24.

UPPER COLORADO RIVER ENDANGERED FISH RECOVERY PROGRAM

Recommendations:

- Continue this project in FY24 using staffing levels proposed in the FY24-25 scope of work as guidance.
- Continue to evaluate and revise Reclamation's labor and funding requirements for program management support to the Recovery Program in future years.

Project Status:

On track and ongoing.

FY 2023 Budget Status

Funds Provided: \$252,844

Funds Expended: about \$252,844

Difference: 0

Percent of the FY 2023 work completed, and projected costs to complete: 100%

Recovery Program funds spent for publication charges: \$0

Status of Data Submission

n/a

Signed:

Dave Speas

Principal Investigator

12/12/2023