

Upper Colorado River



Endangered Fish Recovery Program

Outreach Committee Summary July 25, 2023, 9 am – 12 pm (MST)



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

Participants: Michael Gross (FWS GV Hatchery), Steve Meisner (Virgin River Program), Al Barrus (FWS R2), Faith Jolley (UDWR np), Lindsay Schlageter (TNC np)

Program Director's Office (PDO): Shannon Nelson (UCRP-Outreach Coord), Julie Stahl (UCRP), Paul Badame (UCRP), David Graf (UCRP), Tildon Jones (UCRP) Melissa Mata (SJR np), Raphaela Ware (SJR np)

***np** denotes "not present"*

CONVENED: 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, July 25th

Introductions – Everyone briefly introduced themselves. The complete meeting attendance is shown above.

Review/modify meeting agenda – There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

Consent Agenda – The Committee approved the June 6, 2023, meeting summary. It will be marked final and posted on the Program website this week.

Outreach Committee Vice Chair – Shannon Nelson and Tonya Kieffer-Selby led a discussion about the time commitment and responsibilities of the vice chair position. Outreach Committee meetings will likely occur every 3-4 months during 2024 and the vice chair role is open to anyone from the Upper Colorado River or San Juan Programs. The vice chair supports the chair and becomes the next chair in the new calendar year. Michael Gross from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Ouray National Fish Hatchery voiced his interest and was selected as vice chair. >**Tonya, Shannon, and Michael** will set up a call to discuss details of the vice chair role.

Roles and Responsibilities in the Recovery Program – Julie Stahl gave a presentation covering the roles and responsibilities of partners and committees for both Recovery Programs. >**The PDO** will share a copy of the presentation with the final meeting summary. Julie described that while outreach responsibilities were traditionally buried as 'other duties as assigned' in Principal Investigator scopes of work, under the new model outreach is included in scopes as an explicit and essential Program component. Julie shared organization charts for both Recovery

Programs and explained the role of each committee and certain positions. She expressed appreciation for the time and dedication that committee members contribute in helping to guide the Program and hopes that by explaining some of these roles, we may be able to move outreach into the limelight as a Program element. She highlighted the benefits of the adaptive management work planning cycle and pointed out that specific outreach activities can be included in annual work plans.

In-person Outreach Committee Meeting – Tonya suggested holding an in-person meeting in early 2024, and proposed Grand Junction, Colorado, as a central location. >Tonya will look up when other significant conferences and meetings are scheduled to help find a time for an in-person Outreach Committee meeting. Michael suggested the Palisade High School Hatchery annual fish release event on May 4 may be a good time to convene. Shannon voiced support for an in-person meeting immediately before or after another meeting or event and brought up the Researchers Meeting in Grand Junction on January 30-31, 2024, as another opportunity. Colleen Cunningham liked this idea but expressed concern about driving conditions that time of year. The Committee will finalize a decision at the next meeting.

Review of June 6 meeting action items –

1. **Melissa Mata and Adriana Zorilla** – will reach out to Tribes to develop a list of outreach contacts and organize a meeting to ask our Tribal partners what kinds of outreach they are interested in for their organizations. *Ongoing*
 - a. Adriana noted they are working through FWS Region 2 and 6 Tribal Liaisons to facilitate Tribal outreach efforts. Shannon asked about the status of possibly hosting a summit with Tribal partners of both Recovery Programs this fall.
>Raphaela will ask Melissa Mata for an update on hosting a summit with Tribal partners.
2. **Shannon Nelson** – will share links to the Service’s ESA 50-year anniversary outreach resources <https://www.fws.gov/esa50> with Faith Jolley and follow up about a news release distribution strategy. *Complete*
3. **Faith Jolley** – will develop a news release from the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) for the Endangered Species Act (ESA) 50-year anniversary highlighting the Recovery Programs. *Complete*
 - a. Link to final news release published on August 2, 2023:
<https://wildlife.utah.gov/news/utah-wildlife-news/1716-fiftieth-anniversary-of-the-endangered-species-act-and-how-the-dwr-and-partnering-agencies-are-helping-listed-fish-species-recover.html>
4. **Raphaela Ware** – will follow up on outreach contacts and social media channels shared during the June meeting. *Ongoing*
 - a. Raphaela needs to identify the Facebook administrator for the New Mexico Department of Fish & Game.

- b. Tonya brought up the possibility of using Hootsuite for social media and Shannon suggested the Social Media Working Group could best evaluate this option.
5. **Michael Gross** – will organize an Events Working Group and schedule a first meeting. *Complete*
 - a. Raphaela and Michael are current members of the group and welcome any others who would like to join. Michael created a Recovery Program Outreach Event Tracker and is looking for the best platform to share it (for further details see the Outreach Events Working Group Update below).
6. **Paul Badame** – will set up a Google Drive that is accessible and editable by all partners to house outreach resources as a central hub. Individuals will need a Google account (not Gmail) for full access. For federal employees - to sign up for an account using your existing agency email just go to this link [Sign in - Google Accounts](#) and fill in the basic information and use your existing work email instead of signing up for Gmail. *Complete*
 - a. Link to shared Google Drive:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/17Obv2J5_WMMHXI2JSZS7RdzvhduMIFin?usp=drive_link
7. **Shannon and the PDO** – will develop a draft Outreach Study Plan outline. *Ongoing*
 - a. The process of developing a draft Outreach Study Plan outline was stepped back to developing a conceptual framework of ‘outreach pillars’ which Shannon presented after the break. A diagram showing the draft outreach pillars was provided to the Committee for review along with the agenda for this meeting.

Outreach Pillars – Shannon presented and welcomed feedback on the new draft outreach pillars which represent the foundation and primary building blocks of the Outreach Program. The pillars are Public Awareness, Community Engagement, and Stakeholder Involvement. Collectively the pillars work to advance the fish and habitat conservation goals of the Recovery Programs. Shannon emphasized that outreach intersects with all the other program elements and is an important management tool. She recapped the Outreach Committee’s role per Julie’s presentation is ‘to provide expertise that guides management actions to support recovery of the threatened and endangered fishes.’ Michael highlighted the importance of building trust to improve community perceptions about the Recovery Programs. Adriana underscored the significance of Tribal engagement and the nation-to-nation relationship. Paul said he liked the framework’s forward-looking focus on program purposes as opposed to looking back at what was done (i.e. reporting) which has been the traditional approach for Program outreach.

San Juan Program Update – Raphaela updated the group on three events that were recently attended in the San Juan River Basin: World Ocean’s Day, Earth Day, and Riverfest. She mentioned that FWS Junior Ranger notepads and patches were very popular outreach items and that people also seemed to enjoy coloring books. Raphaela emphasized the importance of providing information that is accessible to people of all abilities at events and shared that the New Mexico School for the Deaf offers American sign language classes in person and online,

and can sometimes provide interpreters: <https://www.nmsd.k12.nm.us/o/nmsd/page/asl-classes>. Tonya shared a link to effective communication resources and requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act: <https://www.ada.gov/resources/effective-communication/>.

Shannon brought up the previously expressed need by some Committee members to develop bilingual outreach materials and asked if the Events Working Group would be willing to explore the topic of accessibility at events and report back to the full Committee with recommendations for possible action, to which they agreed. >**The Events Working Group** will explore ways to improve accessibility, identify priority needs, and provide recommendations for possible action to the full Committee.

Success Stories Working Group Update – Shannon provided highlights from the Success Stories Working Group’s first meeting on June 26. Summary notes from that meeting were provided with the agenda for this meeting and are appended below (Appendix A). The overarching purpose for sharing success stories is to increase visibility of the Recovery Programs which aligns with the Public Awareness outreach pillar. Shannon briefly reviewed action items from the meeting and indicated the group is making great progress towards the goal of developing a coordinated process for sharing Recovery Program success stories, with several partners volunteering to take the lead on articles and podcasts in the coming months. The group discussed various approaches to branding and distributing stories with multiple partners involved and will continually learn, adapt, and fine tune the process. The first pilot story is the upcoming news release featuring the Recovery Programs and 50-year anniversary of the ESA led by Faith Jolley. Shannon is developing a shared distribution list for success stories and invited everyone to provide her with media and other contacts they would like added. The Success Stories Working Group plans to meet again on August 7.

Outreach Events Working Group Update – Michael created an Outreach Event Tracker including current and potential events for both Recovery Programs in Excel. >**Paul and Michael** will transfer the Outreach Event Tracker to a Google Sheet that can be accessed and edited by everyone via a direct link. >**Tonya** will connect Michael with UDWR’s Event Outreach Specialist who is based in Vernal, Utah, and works in the Northeast Region. Adrianna suggested regularly updating the Recovery Programs’ website calendar with links to specific events.

Work Plan Update – After a brief discussion of budget uncertainties in fiscal year 2024, Julie described recent work planning changes to streamline scopes of work and incorporate outreach as a separate activity with its own budget. She added that each field office should designate an outreach point of contact to communicate directly with Shannon and that annual work plans briefly describe any anticipated outreach activities for the year. This change is expected to be implemented in the FY24 work plan where we hope to have more information regarding outreach activities throughout the basin. The Outreach Committee supported moving forward with the FY24 work plan as written.

Colorado River Listserv Membership – Everyone currently on the Outreach Committee is a member of the listserv. Please let Paul or someone else in the PDO know if you or someone in your agency wants to be added.

Next Meeting – the PDO will send a Doodle poll to the Committee to schedule the next meeting most likely in early October or early December.

Task List as of July 25, 2023 – Previous tasks completed are described in the opening section of the meeting summary. Only remaining and new assignments are recorded below.

1. **Tonya Kieffer-Selby, Shannon Nelson, and Michael Gross** will set up a call to discuss details of the vice chair role.
2. **The PDO** will share a copy of Julie's presentation with the final meeting summary.
3. **Tonya** will look up when other significant conferences and meetings are scheduled to help find a time for an in-person Outreach Committee meeting.
4. **Raphaela Ware** will ask Melissa Mata for an update on hosting a summit with Tribal partners.
5. **The Events Working Group** will explore ways to improve accessibility, identify priority needs, and provide recommendations for possible action to the Committee.
6. **Paul Badame and Michael** will transfer the Outreach Event Tracker to a Google Sheet that can be accessed and edited by everyone via a direct link.
7. **Tonya** will connect Michael with UDWR's Event Outreach Specialist in Vernal, Utah.

ADJOURN: by 11:50 a.m.

Appendix A

Outreach Committee Success Stories Working Group

June 26, 2023, 1:30-3:00 pm (MST)

Meeting Summary

Attending: Rachael Gonzales (CPW), Faith Jolley (UDWR), Tonya Kieffer-Selby (UDWR), Melissa Mata (SJRP), Shannon Nelson (UCRP), Erik Skeie (CWCB), Raphaela Ware (SJRP), Adriana Zorilla (USFWS)

CPW: Colorado Parks and Wildlife

SJRP: San Juan Recovery Program

UDWR: Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

UCRP: Upper Colorado Recovery Program

USFWS: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

1. Welcome and Introductions – Nelson (10 min)

Everyone introduced themselves and named an animal or animal characteristic they admire.

2. Adjustments to Agenda – All (2 min)

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

3. Purpose and Goals – Nelson (3 min)

- a. Increase visibility and awareness of Recovery Programs
- b. Inform stakeholders and decision makers

Shannon Nelson stated the goal of sharing success stories is to increase visibility and awareness of the Recovery Programs among various audiences. She emphasized the importance of informing stakeholders and decision makers particularly as the programs are being considered for reauthorization.

4. Roles and Processes – Nelson and All (40 min)

- a. Coordinating between Programs

Melissa Mata described that in the past the Recovery Programs have primarily collaborated on producing Swimming Upstream and annual Briefing Book publications. She said it would be helpful to have a central repository of sources, contacts, and social media accounts to improve communication and sharing of information between partners. Shannon indicated there will be additional opportunities to discuss this during the meeting.

Adriana Zorilla commented that we need to be intentional and specific about increasing the visibility of the Recovery Programs by determining what is important to each organization and what we want to highlight throughout the year. She added that a calendar would be very helpful for this. Shannon acknowledged program partners have different priorities and interests which can be reflected in their approach to stories. She clarified the USFWS is an equal program partner and also houses the Recovery Programs.

Faith Jolley asked if we are going to utilize ideas from the draft Communications Plan that was shared at the full Outreach Committee meeting. Shannon said much of the draft plan is still relevant and briefly reviewed the document while sharing her screen. She described that many people put work into the plan which was paused when obstacles pointed to the need for increased coordination and collaboration between partners. The Success Stories Working Group was formed in large part to address this need.

Adriana brought up an issue with the previous effort was that too many voices were involved in writing stories. Instead, each story should be in the voice of the lead partner while other partners help distribute and amplify.

Rachael Gonzales suggested partners can develop and amplify stories about things they are already doing such as the fishing tournament that recently took place at Elkhead Reservoir.

b. Writing stories

Rachael volunteered to take the lead on three stories that CPW is actively involved with: 1) Elkhead Reservoir Classic Fishing Tournament with a target release date of late July or early August; 2) Kids and razorback sucker releases; and 3) Rifle Gap overflowing. She also brought up opportunities to feature the Recovery Programs on Twitter and Fish Friday.

Adriana mentioned she can facilitate opportunities with the USFWS Fish of the Week podcast.

Melissa said she has a near-complete story about Tribal partnerships and would like to include quotes from Tribal partners about their experiences with the SJRP.

o Rotating calendar and topics

Shannon proposed the idea of a rotating calendar with topics and story leads. She suggested starting with topics in the draft Communications Plan and asked if there was interest in this approach. Rachael expressed a calendar is a great idea and that she is always happy to highlight stories with the goal of educating people about what is happening in Northwest Colorado.

Melissa commented that she can send the Tribal partnerships draft story to the group for review and then pass it to Tribal leaders to see if they would like to provide quotes.

Tonya Kieffer-Selby expressed she cannot commit to a recurring calendar but can take more of an opportunistic approach. Faith offered to spotlight the Recovery Programs in a UDWR podcast episode this fall. Erik Skeie said that CWCB would be interested in creating a podcast series about the Recovery Programs this fall.

Shannon commented that stories can be shared through a variety of written or spoken media, and podcasts would be great. She clarified this is a flexible and voluntary process where partners can take the lead on stories as capacity allows and there is no need to commit to a regular or recurring schedule.

Adriana suggested utilizing the schedule from the draft Communications Plan and when a story is ready, partners work together to amplify on social media, newsletters, and other distribution networks. She added that it is important to set publishing deadlines, and encouraged other to bring up stories during leadership meetings so they can be pushed out by organizations.

Shannon emphasized there is no need for partners to commit to a regular schedule and we can begin with a fluid six-month trial period to figure out a path forward.

c. Distributing stories

Faith provided an update on the draft news release she is working on for the 50-year anniversary of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) featuring the Recovery Programs. She said that content created by UDWR is typically sent to Utah media contacts but that other states and partners can readily share and amplify stories on social media.

Rachael mentioned she follows UDWR on Twitter and can easily amplify stories from there. Adriana commented that we need to identify which partners can amplify stories, in addition to who can write them, and that it is important to build connections with outside reporters and journalists.

Shannon said she is happy distribute stories on behalf of partners on the Colorado River listserv and that any listserv member can post stories there if they like.

o Mechanisms and list

There was discussion about the need for a coordinated process, mechanisms, and distribution list to share success stories across the four states where the Recovery Programs are based (CO, UT, NM, WY). Shannon volunteered to develop a shared distribution list of primary media and other contacts with input from partners. Faith asked for clarification on what types of contacts to include. The group agreed that it could encompass a wide variety of sources including media outlets, partner organizations, stakeholders, and other interested parties. Shannon suggested a 'top 10' of media outlets from each partner would be a good place to start.

Raphaela Ware asked for clarification on how a mass shared distribution list would be used. The group discussed it would be a shared tool and resource that each partner could use within the guidelines of their organization. Rachael mentioned she uses Mailchimp and there are some restrictions on how CPW distributes information however there is more freedom amplify stories on social media and tag partners.

d. Evaluating impact of stories

o Methods

This item was tabled until the next meeting due to time constraints.

5. Recovery Programs Branding – Nelson and All (15 min)

a. Program or partner voice

Shannon asked how partners would like to approach branding of Recovery Program success stories while also considering the branding practices of each individual organization. Faith expressed a preference to include UDWR branding when they are the lead and acknowledged there are challenges with so many partners involved. Rachael said she typically includes CPW branding when cross promoting for other agencies however there may be other possibilities if something is more formal.

b. Letterhead, logos, purpose statement

The group agreed there is no 'one size fits all' approach to branding and that it will depend on the specifics of each story. Rachael voiced that too many partner logos on a given document could be

problematic and suggested the idea of including a brief note about what an individual logo represents. Shannon commented there are only two logos for the Recovery Programs if they are used. Adriana suggested including hyperlinks in stories for branding. Shannon said she will provide both Recovery Program logos with the meeting notes for partners to include in stories and news releases as appropriate. The subject of branding will be further explored at future meetings.

Shannon encouraged everyone to use the Success Stories Working Group as a resource to communicate between meetings and share information. She agreed to add columns to the shared outreach contacts list to show members of the Outreach Committee working groups. Currently there are three groups focusing on success stories, social media, and events.

Adriana volunteered to help maintain a shared planning document of story topics, leads, and time frames.

6. Pilot Story and/or News Release – All (5 min)

The group will learn from each experience and fine tune the process as we go. The first pilot news release is by Faith Jolley of UDWR featuring the 50-year anniversary of the ESA and the Recovery Programs with a target date of early or mid-July.

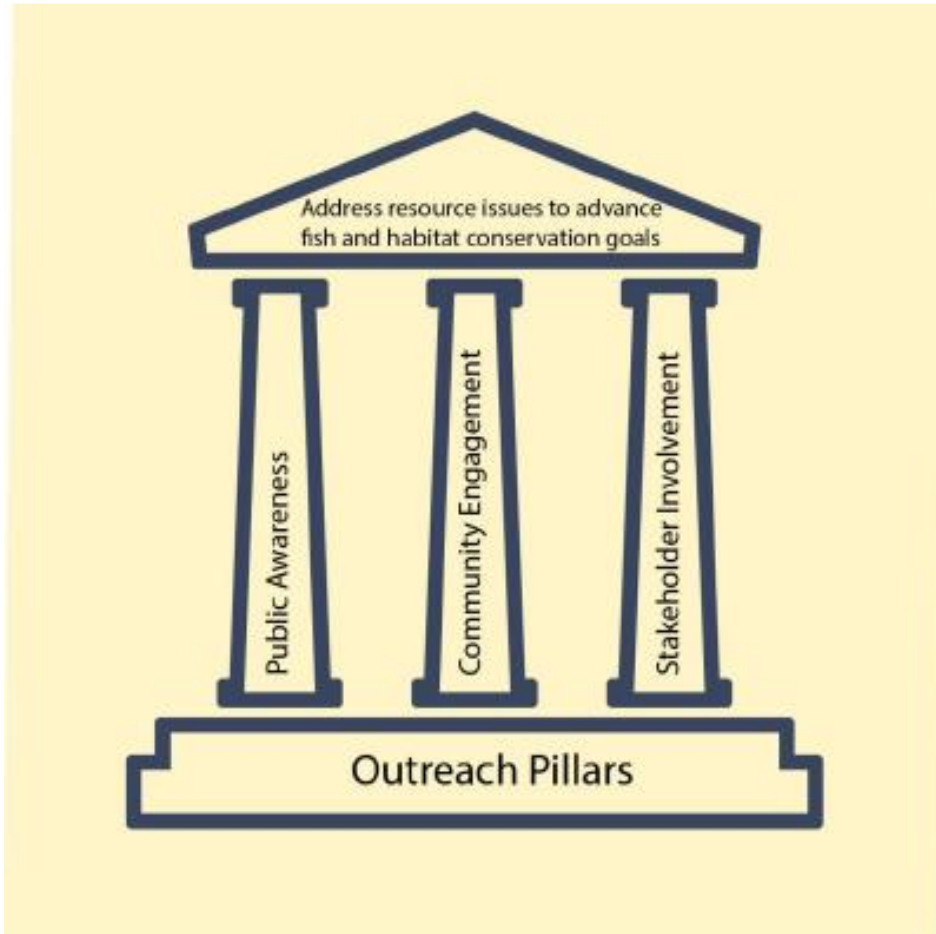
7. Identify Action Items – Nelson and All (10 min)

- **All** will send primary media and other contacts to Shannon for a shared distribution list.
- **Shannon** will develop a shared distribution list with input from partners.
- **Tonya** will send UDWR contacts to Shannon.
- **Shannon** will create a shared document of story topics, leads, and time frames.
- **Adriana** will help maintain a shared document of story topics, leads, and time frames.
- **Shannon** will add columns to the shared outreach contacts list to show members of each Outreach Committee working group.
- **Shannon** will provide the group with both Recovery Program logos to include in stories and news releases as appropriate.
- **Melissa** will provide the group with a draft story on Tribal partnerships for review.
- **Rachael** will write a story on the Elkhead Reservoir Classic Fishing Tournament in late July or early August.
- **Faith** will develop a news release featuring the 50-year anniversary of the ESA and the Recovery Programs in early or mid-July.
- **Faith** will create a podcast episode on the Recovery Programs this September.
- **Erik** will create a podcast series on the Recovery Programs this fall.

8. Schedule Next Meeting – Nelson (5 min)

- Shannon will send out a Doodle poll for the next meeting to be held in August.

Appendix B



Public Awareness

Raising awareness, providing information and education, fostering meaningful connections

Community Engagement

Engaging diverse audiences, inclusion, building relationships, co-stewardship

Stakeholder Involvement

Sharing responsibility, identifying mutual interests, collaboration, leveraging resources