JARBIDGE RIVER BULL TROUT RECOVERY TEAM
Final Meeting Summary

Date and Time: December 1, 2005 – 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Pacific
Location: Cactus Pete's Casino, Ruby Mountain room, Jackpot, Nevada
Team Members Present: John Elliott (NDOW-Elko), Jim Harvey (USFS-Sparks), Rich Haskins (NDOW-Reno), Gary Johnson (NDOW-Elko), Chris Reighn (FWS-Boise), Laurie Sada (FWS-Reno), Selena Werdon (FWS-Reno)
Team Members Absent: Tim Burton (BLM-Boise), Tim Dykstra (Duck Valley Shoshone-Paiute Tribes), Doug Megargle (IDFG-Jerome), Maija Meneks (USFS-Elko), Melissa Schnier (BLM-Burley)

A winter storm overnight left several inches of snow on the ground in Jackpot prior to the recovery team meeting, which resulted in a couple team members missing the meeting due to travel conditions. Other members were absent due to meeting conflicts and for health reasons. The team members present discussed the importance of having the full team participate in team meetings to ensure that there is ample opportunity for technical discussions and so that informed decisions can be made in a timely manner to finalize the new draft recovery plan. The team then went over the list of items to address identified at the last meeting (See 10/25/05 summary) to select agenda items for this meeting.

No comments were received from team members on the draft meeting summary prepared for the team meeting on October 25, 2005. The summary will be finalized as is, unless comments are received by Selena by January 4, 2005.

FWS mailed team members copies of all comments received from the public and the past recovery team members prior to this meeting. Copies of selected references on fish populations and habitat conditions from the old draft recovery plan still need to be electronically scanned and provided to the team.

Selena briefly mentioned the BLM's proposed changes in stream monitoring on the mainstem Jarbidge River for BLM's ongoing activities biological assessment and the FWS's corresponding biological opinion. However, detailed discussion was held until BLM could participate at the next team meeting. There was interest from the team in floating the mainstem Jarbidge River during the spring runoff to see habitat conditions firsthand.

On November 23, 2005, Maija submitted a proposal for a Pole Creek Cattle & Horse Allotment fencing project from the Three Creek Ranching Company and USFS range specialist for recovery funding. The project consists of constructing three fences, which could be completed individually if necessary. Two fences are designed to allow better pasture utilization at existing livestock use levels, which will allow rest on portions of Slide, Robinson, and Jim Bob Creeks. The third fence would expand the exclosure fence around the Jim Bob Creek spring to protect a sensitive riparian area and to facilitate aspen regeneration. The total project cost is estimated at $15,250. No decision was made on funding the fencing project at this meeting.

The team discussed that project proposals should not have to wait for funding until the draft recovery plan is published if they need to be done now. Identifying actions and working on the plan can be a dual process. The FWS needs to check with Senator Reid's office to see if the recovery funds can be spent on projects in Idaho as well as Nevada because of the wording in the appropriations bill. A final decision on preliminary allocation of funding within fiscal year 2006 must be made as soon as possible. The funds will expire in September 2006 if not contracted out or held by another party.

Much of the recovery team meeting was spent discussing the stakeholder meeting to follow in the afternoon. Selena reviewed the list of individuals and organizations contacted via phone, letter, fax, and/or e-mail prior to the meeting and the responses received to date. The team then discussed additional participants to invite to future stakeholder meetings. There was a recommendation to invite the original bull trout listing petitioners (Alliance for the Wild Rockies, Friends of the Wild Swan, and Swan View Coalition) although they are based in Montana. It was also recommended that we involve local mine owners if/when we identify issues at specific sites in the watershed. The team then reviewed the Powerpoint presentation developed for the stakeholders; there were no recommendations for changes. The team developed a list of questions to ask the stakeholders to determine how to maximize their opportunities to provide input to the recovery team during this meeting and in future contacts, how best to involve other participants, ways to communicate information to them effectively, as well as identifying their concerns about the process. One issue discussed was asking the stakeholders to consider if they would like to select someone to represent them on the technical recovery team. This individual would not have to be a technical expert, but would be expected to attend the recovery team meetings and review meeting materials. One additional idea generated from the team discussion was to add a link to recovery team/stakeholder information/documents on NDOW's existing web page.

For the next recovery team meeting, Rich recommended going back and reviewing the original threats identified in the bull trout listing documents, which were used in the old draft recovery plan. FWS will provide copies of the *Federal Register* (*FR*) notices prior to the next meeting. After looking at the overall threats identified in the listing documents and old draft recovery plan, and reviewing other relevant documents (FWS will provide .pdf files prior to next meeting), each team member should come to the next meeting prepared to discuss specific threats to bull trout or their habitat on a stream-by-stream basis. Identification of specific threats should lead to development of recovery actions and projects.

Gary provided a handout of water temperature comparison data for streams in the upper Jarbidge River watershed during various periods of record and briefly went over these data. In summary, streams with a mean summer (7/1-9/30 or 7/30-9/30) temperature of < 50°F include: Cougar Creek, upper Dave Creek, upper Deer Creek, East Fork Jarbidge River, Fall Creek, Gods Pocket Creek, Jack Creek, Pine Creek, Robinson Creek, Slide Creek and tributaries A and B, and the West Fork Jarbidge River (6,940'-7,400' elevation). Slide Creek did have a maximum daily temperature in the low 60°s, but the mean summer temperature was still in the 40°s. In general, the take home message was that the inherent thermal regime in the basin is likely a limiting factor for bull trout. However, anthropogenic influences on stream temperatures in the basin occur and should be ameliorated to extent practical and feasible.

Gary also provided an additional handout summarizing NDOW bull trout activities since May 2003. Gary, Selena, and Jim held off on presenting information on agency projects until the next meeting, since many team members were not present.

The team wants to consider having Cheri Howell, an ecologist with USFS in Wells, give a report on the Jarbidge River watershed plant community history and site potential.

The team discussed having longer meetings (1.5-2 days) in the future to maximize the time spent working together considering the travel involved for everyone. The next meeting will be held in Elko, Nevada. **Dates under consideration for the next recovery team meeting are first January 25-26 or second January 24-25, 2006. Team members should e-mail Selena ASAP regarding availability for a meeting during either of these 2-day periods.**

Assignments to prepare for the next meeting include:

All team members:

- will present information on past (~ 2003-2005) and ongoing fisheries/habitat activities in the Jarbidge River watershed, if applicable.
- will have reviewed the threat sections in the *FR* listing documents and old draft recovery plan.
- will have reviewed as many as possible of the references provided on Jarbidge River watershed fish populations and habitat conditions. (Note: Please share any other relevant documents with the team at the meeting, or if possible, provide electronic copies in advance).

In addition, FWS:

- will provide the team with selected old draft recovery plan references on stream habitat conditions and fish surveys.
- will provide the team with copies of *FR* listing documents.

Additional agenda items for the next meeting include:

- developing comprehensive population/habitat survey protocols.
- identifying and scheduling the next appropriate opportunity for additional stakeholder contact and involvement.

Brief Notes on the Jarbidge River Stakeholder Forum:

The Jarbidge River Stakeholder Forum was also held at Cactus Pete's in the Ruby Mountain room on December 1, 2005, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Pacific. After introductions, Selena did a Powerpoint presentation on bull trout biology, recovery plans, and watershed issues. During and after the presentation, we invited the stakeholders ask questions and bring up their concerns and ideas. It was a good exchange overall and the meeting ended very positive with many individuals staying afterwards for individual discussions with the recovery team members. Main issues raised included:

1) Will recovery actions affect applicant status for affected grazing allotments?;
2) What would extinction of the Jarbidge River population mean to the rest of the bull trout population across the species' range?;
3) Why not stock bull trout to improve population numbers in Jarbidge?;
4) Can the Recovery Team meet with landowners in Jarbidge when more residents are home (*e.g.*, June)?;
5) There is a need to train road crews on new maintenance techniques.;
6) Can the Recovery Team provide stakeholders in Jarbidge with mine water quality test results; and
7) How will the recovery plan affect current litigation from Western Watersheds with BLM?

In addition to the recovery team members present (see above), those attending included a couple representing the Jarbidge Town Advisory Board and Jarbidge Community Association (Butch and Jane Smith), an Elko County Commissioner (Sheri Eklund-Brown), Nevada Division of Forestry (Dennis Walker), Simplot Livestock (Chuck Jones), Three Creek Highway District (Harlan Mink and Ira Brackett), Nevada Cattleman's Association (Steve Boies), a local rancher (Bert Brackett), and four local USFS representatives including the Jarbidge District Ranger (Paul Flanagan) and staff (Tom Stefani, John Rademacher, and another individual who did not sign in).

Everyone who attended indicated on the sign up sheet that they were interested in continuing to participate, and we have received responses from several other stakeholders who want to participate but were just unable to attend this meeting. Specifically, the Owyhee County Commission Chair Hal Tolmie indicated that they would be represented at future meetings by Director Jim Desmond with the Owyhee County Natural Resources Committee. Jack and Dot Creechley will be participating as additional representatives for the Jarbidge Town Advisory Board and Jarbidge Community Association. Helen Neville from the University of Nevada-Reno will participate, but is not directly affiliated with the Sagebrush Chapter of Trout Unlimited at present. Nathan Helm with Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife-Idaho will attend. Jaime Shoneberg with Natural Resources Conservation Service will also attend. The Idaho Cattle Association, Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association, and the Idaho and Nevada Mining Associations have each passed along our invitation to their members.

Some stakeholders that attended did not receive an official invitation letter and would have preferred to be contacted directly rather than indirectly through another organization. They had valid points that: 1) not everyone is a member of organizations such as the livestock and mining associations, 2) that recovery team members know they either own land or manage activities in the watershed based on previous interactions, and 3) all landowners should have been contacted. The recovery team is going to continue to attempt to increase stakeholder team membership based on input from the individuals who attended, including identifying landowners through county records. There was some interest in having a stakeholder on the technical recovery team, and we asked that the stakeholders consider who to select to represent them.