

JARBIDGE RIVER BULL TROUT RECOVERY TEAM

Meeting Summary

Dates and Times: November 28, 2006 – 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (Pacific)
November 29, 2006 – 8:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Location: Social Room, Great Basin College, Elko, Nevada

Recovery Team (RT) Members Present: John Elliott (NDOW-Elko), Jim Harvey (USFS-Sparks), Rich Haskins (NDOW-Reno), Gary Johnson (NDOW-Elko), Maija Meneks (USFS-Elko), Rob Ryan (IDFG-Jerome), Laurie Sada (FWS-Reno), Scott Stanton (IDEQ-Twin Falls), Selena Werdon (FWS-Reno)

RT Members Absent: Sonny Buhidar (IDEQ-Twin Falls), Tim Burton (BLM-Boise), Kate Forster (BLM-Twin Falls), Todd Gilmore (FWS-Reno), Chris Reighn (FWS-Boise),

Others Present: Rob Sharpneck (IDEQ-Twin Falls), *filling in for Sonny Buhidar*

AGENDA and DISCUSSION NOTES

(not listed in exact order discussed)

1) **Review and Modify Draft Agenda**

Several additional items were added (included below).

2) **Recovery Implementation Project Updates**

Jarbridge Mines Project

Entrix (contractor) survey crew completed a survey of the stream channel morphology within the Phase I project area (Elkoro mine site to Trading Post bridge) in October 2006. An aquatic biologist/ecotoxicologist (Dr. Jeff Fisher) also visited the project area and prepared a sampling design for water, sediment, and invertebrates in October 2006. This design was reviewed by Selena and FWS Environmental Quality Program staff (Damian Higgins). Initial sample collections are scheduled in late November/early December 2006. Triplicate samples will be collected at six stations: 1) West Fork Jarbidge River (WFJR) upstream of the Elkoro Adit, 2) Elkoro Adit outflow, 3) WFJR at adit confluence, 4) WFJR-adit mixing zone, 5) WFJR upstream of Trading Post bridge, and 6) WFJR further downstream where rock staining is no longer obvious. Sample analysis costs are high due to the need for low detection limits for some analytes and use of more sophisticated analytical techniques required due to baseline water hardness conditions (“extremely soft”) in the WFJR. Total costs for the sampling and analyses are estimated at approximately \$22,000. One concern with the proposed sampling design is with using multiplate samplers to assess invertebrate colonization over the winter rather than during a warmer season when more colonization is likely. FWS will prepare a paragraph on the 2006 mine sample data results for the draft recovery plan (RP).

Jarbidge Channel Restoration/Streambank Stabilization Project

The Recovery Team (RT) has previously discussed implementing a channel restoration/streambank stabilization project on the WFJR reach in Jarbidge, Nevada. FWS was contacted in October 2006 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers about a streambank stabilization project proposed by a landowner just downstream of the Trading Post bridge. FWS contacted the landowner and offered assistance with developing a fish-friendly project design either via the RT's Entrix contractors or NRCS. FWS provided NRCS with project area photos and coordinated contact between the landowner and NRCS. Although it turned out that NRCS was unable to assist with this individual project, they are willing to work in cooperation with the RT and willing landowners on a larger-scale project of streambank stabilization and habitat improvement in the Jarbidge reach. Selena will check with Entrix to determine if they have made any landowner contacts to date.

Pole Creek Fencing Project

The USFS and FWS are completing the contracting paperwork to transfer funds between agencies. USFS's grants/contracting branch still needs some internal agency documents before accepting the funds from FWS. Maija provided an update from Tom Stefani (USFS Range Conservationist) that the alignment of the third fence is still undetermined. Cultural resource and botanical surveys of the other two fence alignments were completed by FWS in 2006. Maija is working with their Ely office to obtain volunteer assistance from the Mule Deer Foundation to plant willow poles on Slide Creek.

Genetic Sample Analyses

FWS received a cost estimate from one of five potential researchers to process the BT fin clips collected by USGS in 2006. Paul Spruell with the University of Montana would charge \$55/fish for a total of \$13,035. If the samples were delivered before the end of the year, results would be available by March or April 2007. NDOW has sent a small number of BT samples (3?) from Cougar Creek to Paul already that were collected in 2000 or 2001 that could be processed at the same time. Rich will talk to Bob Williams (FWS Field Supervisor) about potential 2007 funding for genetic analyses. Selena will ask Entrix about the possibility of subcontracting with a genetics lab through them with existing funds.

John recommended using the Mary's River (NV) LCT genetics work as a template to identify questions the RT wants answered for BT. Some example questions could include: 1) How many local populations are present?, 2) Which local populations (if any) have migratory BT?, 3) Which local populations are most closely related?, 4) Do these 2006 samples change earlier determination(s) of which other BT DPS's are most closely related to Jarbidge BT?, and 5) Is there any evidence of hybridization with brook trout?

2006-2007 BT Surveys

Field assistance from BLM is available to maintain the antenna stations through mid-December 2006. Due to the low numbers of BT (2) moving past the antennas thus far the RT is interested in maintaining the stations for as long as possible. Maintenance options to explore include: 1) using USFS staff working on bridge projects over the winter; 2) hiring a local NDOW employee for assistance after hours; and 3) USFS paying for BLM's seasonal staff. RT needs to meet with USGS to discuss 2007 surveys, including a discussion of surveying unoccupied streams. Maija will determine the availability of USFS pack animals for 2007 Jarbidge Wilderness surveys. RT intends to have USGS proceed with a mark-recapture survey on Dave Creek.

4) Additive vs. compensatory mortality regarding angling and use of bait

Rob, Gary, and Chris all provided information to the RT. Rob has volunteered to develop text for the draft RP on the issue of angling and mortality/injury from catch and release fishing. Selena will send Rob the information submitted previously.

5) Complete RT review of 2004 draft RP references to:

Recovery Team, We, Service, etc.

Completed. FWS will make the final edits before the next RT meeting.

6) RT review/edit of individually-assigned sections of draft RP

Postponed to next meeting when more new sections have been incorporated.

7) Other Topics Discussed:

RT Membership Changes

Tim and Chris will no longer be on the RT due to other workload conflicts and agency staff changes. Kate will pick up Tim's prior RT assignments. FWS is hiring a new fisheries biologist who will eventually fill in behind Selena.

Draft RP Due Date

FWS would like to have a draft RP from the RT in May 2007. This schedule has several advantages including being the first revised draft RP for BT to go through FWS regional-level review, and potential publication in summer 2007 would maximize stakeholder input. It is unlikely the draft RP will be ready by June 2007 for a stakeholder meeting.

Patch Analysis

- FWS will provide text about the patch analysis completed for the Jarbidge River watershed by the FWS's Columbia River Fishery Resource Office relative to numbers of local populations under recovered conditions. One suggestion for where to incorporate this text in the draft RP was in the section on criteria regarding 'ground truthing' information.
- Scott will check with the Duck Valley Shoshone-Paiute Tribe to determine if there are temperature data for Mary's Creek, which could be added to the patch analysis.

Winter 2006-2007 Snorkel Surveys

- Bruce Zoellick (BLM) wants to snorkel a pool on the Bruneau River at Indian Hot Springs near mouth of Jarbidge River to determine if BT overwinter there.
- Gary intends to night snorkel the WFJR next week starting near the NV-ID border and moving upstream (*Note: postponed*).
- Selena will ask USGS if the PIT tag reader wand is waterproof, and if so, what the tag read distance is underwater.

FWS's Draft Threats Analysis Guidance

Laurie will check with FWS's California-Nevada Office on providing the latest (Oct. 2006) internal agency guidance on evaluating threats to the RT for use in preparing the draft RP.

Recovery Criteria

The RT initiated preliminary discussions on developing recovery criteria in preparation for the next meeting. John noted that the Lahontan cutthroat trout RP uses one secure metapopulation per subbasin. Laurie referenced the Paiute cutthroat trout RP as a more recent example of a salmonid RP completed by the FWS's NV office. Gary pointed out that BT rearing is occurring in appropriate habitats and criteria might include having several age classes for (X) years. The distribution aspect of the criteria might also need to address seasonal occupancy of foraging, migration, and overwintering (FMO) habitats.

An example criterion trying to capture these elements included:

“Local populations would exhibit stable to increasing distribution or be represented by a minimum number (X) of age classes within suitable habitat. The estimate of stream miles within local populations is (X). The estimate of stream miles for FMO habitats is unknown at this time (RT needs more data on extent of downstream migration).”

8) RT Member Assignments Status

- **Stakeholder Interview**
 - Gary will review Chris' stakeholder (Mr. Milo Price) interview on historical watershed conditions/fishing and prepare edits to the draft RP, as appropriate.
 - FWS will send copy of the full interview to RT.
- **Stakeholder Representation**
 - The RT affirmed their position that it is working best to have separate stakeholder team and technical team meetings to maximize opportunities to obtain input from stakeholders and not subject them to tedious document editing.
 - Laurie will check into the Federal Advisory Committee Act regulations on having a stakeholder representative on the technical team and will contact the stakeholder representative volunteers to explain whether or not they can attend.

- **Outreach**
 - Todd and Selena prepared a draft copy of a flier on the 2006 BT surveys, which the RT viewed at the meeting. RT members present agreed with listing participating RT agencies on the flier (still need to check with BLM). FWS will send each RT member five copies, post it on the RT web site, and send copies to stakeholders.
 - The RT may send out another flier in spring 2007 to provide information on the 2007 work plan and to request more stakeholder input on the draft RP.
- **Update Agency Ongoing Conservation Actions**
 - BLM and USFS already provided edits. Maija will provide another update for the USFS section.
 - Rob provided IDFG info.
- **Tribal Historical Use**
 - Selena will ask Tim Dykstra or another contact with the Duck Valley Shoshone-Paiute Tribe how to obtain information from the Tribe on historical use of the Jarbidge River watershed.
- **Nevada Water Temperature Criteria for BT**
 - Gary previously added temperature data to update Appendix A.
 - 2006 data may still need to be incorporated for loggers pulled in the fall.
- **Slide Creek Trail Project**
 - USFS recreation staff provided a summary report on the Slide Creek trail restoration project. FWS shared report at RT meeting.
- **Hydrographs**
 - Tim provided additional hydrograph info, which is already in the draft RP.
- **USFS 2003 Riparian/Grazing Data**
 - Maija previously provided data.
- **Assess Potential BT Overwintering Areas (WFJR)**
 - Jim contacted Portage Environmental regarding expanding their assessment of the WFJR further downstream. They were interested in the project if the RT decides to fund it.
- **Wildfire Risk Assessment/Risk Reduction by Land Management Agencies**
 - Maija will check with USFS fire staff (Melody Ashe?) on risk assessment for USFS lands. Robinson/Jim Bob Creeks are experiencing aspen fir invasion.
 - Selena will have FWS fire staff check with BLM fire management office staff to determine if they have any assessments or plans.
 - Gary reported that the outfitter guide observed a helicopter dipping water from Emerald Lake on a past fire. This issue needs to be addressed to avoid incidental transport of brook trout.
- **TMDLs**
 - Rich (March 2006) initiated checking into TMDL process status for Nevada.
 - Selena will ask Damian to follow up through his NDEP contacts.
 - Scott indicated there might be funding related to TMDL standards projects with water quality benefits (section 319 grants). IDEQ works with NRCS on projects.
 - FWS will draft a paragraph on NV TMDLs (for p. 61).

- **Distribution and Abundance**
 - Gary has provided edits to this section.
 - RT members are each responsible for identifying and providing any other available information.
 - FWS will incorporate available USGS 2006 data.
- **Angler Information**
 - Gary will prepare the updated angler use section with information from ID and NV, incorporating Rob's IDFG law enforcement data, 2006 NV angler questionnaire responses, and other anecdotal angler contacts.
 - Rob commented that angler identification of bull trout in ID is questionable.
- **Fuelwood Collection Site Designation**
 - Jim will work on this for USFS.
 - Request Kate to work on this issue for BLM, perhaps via the Resource Management Plan process already underway.
- **Jarbidge Landfill Groundwater Monitoring**
 - Maija checked and the wells have been removed. No adverse effects were detected.
- **Three Creek Highway District Road Maintenance**
 - Scott has a field trip with Harlan Mink next week on proposed road work.
- **Bruneau River Diversion Surveys**
 - Rob reported that surveys did not happen in 2006. IDFG may want to keep the Buckaroo Ditch diversion structure in place – there is some interest in rebuilding/maintaining the structure.
 - RT wants to monitor for BT as needed to trigger actions.
 - Scott reported that diversions start as early as April. Fish sampling would need to start prior to diversions.
 - RT needs information on river conditions upstream of the diversion. IDFG will take the lead on gathering information.
- **Dave Creek Spring Diversions**
 - Jim will obtain information on diversion locations and amounts, as well as landownership (private vs. USFS) and water rights ownership.
- **Buck Creek Ranch Project**
 - Selena will have FWS's new biologist contact the ranch manager to determine interest in implementing a riparian habitat improvement project.
 - Maija noted that elk tend to spend a lot of time up in the Buck Creek headwaters on USFS lands.
- **Dave Creek Land Acquisition**
 - NDOW is still pursuing acquisition. Future public use of the stream crossing is not desirable (*i.e.*, BT, public safety issues).
- **Culvert Surveys**
 - Maija performed a visual culvert survey in 2006. There is a culvert on Buck Creek below the pasture/corral and one more on the upper end. Culvert at the road has a big drop and is a likely fish barrier. Adding culvert survey to project list for 2007. Could combine barrier removal with a habitat restoration project.

- **USFS Road Projects Update**
 - Jim completed three stream profiles upstream of Pine Creek and downstream of upper Fox Creek Bridge to fulfill Jarbidge Canyon Project implementation monitoring requirements. USFS also collected water quality monitoring data and will provide FWS with a report.
- **Standardized Stream Temperature Monitoring**
 - NDOW had loggers on upper Buck Creek (on USFS), the long-term WFJR site, upper Slide Creek (2nd year), on the EFJR downstream of Slide Creek, and in the upper EFJR during 2006.
 - Selena will check with USGS to ensure they installed temperature loggers at the 2006 antenna sites. RT would like USGS to keep loggers in place over the winter. Gary can help by putting loggers out next week. RT also needs to meet with USGS to refine habitat data collection for 2007.
- **Little Island Fencing Project**
 - Check with Kate to determine status of fencing project and litigation.
- **Jack Creek Crossing**
 - Maija will check the USFS's management plan to determine if the ATV stream crossing site in upper Jack Creek is identified as a system road. If not, then USFS can not fund fixing the crossing. With the resource issues in the area, non-road classification is possible for the crossing.
 - Jim indicated the draft travel management plan will likely not be out for 2 years.
 - RT field trip is required to evaluate the crossing site.
- **Identify Site-specific Grazing Issues**
 - Ask Kate to work with BLM range conservationist to identify any potential projects.
- **USFS Jarbidge Wilderness Sign-in Box Forms**
 - Jim checked with David Ashby (USFS) and there will be no Wilderness-related sign-in box in the South Canyon for tracking visitor use, which the RT had hoped to use to capture fishing-related comments.
- **Norman Mine Sampling**
 - Selena recommended deleting this from the action list due to observations from a field visit in 2005, which showed no obvious mine impacts.
- **Link FWS BT RT Web Page to NDOW's Web Page**
 - FWS will have their IT staff contact NDOW IT staff to make the link.
- **303(d) Listed Streams in Bruneau and Jarbidge River Watersheds**
 - Scott will double-check Idaho stream designations.
- **Significance of Jarbidge River BT Distinct Population Segment**
 - FWS will follow up on this topic with their genetics and research labs to obtain the latest information.
- **Stream Habitat Data Section**
 - Selena will contact Tim (or Kate) regarding the status of these summary paragraphs. If BLM needs data from NDOW, Gary needs to know which GAWS variables to supply. Gary also volunteered to help BLM with the text.

- **Past-Present Threats**
 - FWS will split the threats discussion out to clearly identify whether the RT identified issues as past and/or present threats to BT.
- **Range-wide BT Sampling Protocol**
 - Selena will contact Tim Whitesel (FWS) regarding the status of standardized survey protocol development by the RMEG.
- **RP Edits**
 - Send draft RP edits to Selena by Jan. 12, 2007, so FWS will have time to incorporate edits and resend a copy to RT members before the next meeting.
- **Recovery Criteria Example**
 - Selena will send RT members the FWS's latest style, threats-based recovery criteria published for the showy stickseed plant.

9) Next meeting logistics

- The RT decided that there would be no meeting in December 2006. The next meeting will likely be the week of February 5-9, 2007.
- FWS will determine if USGS is available for 1 day that week.
- Priority agenda items for the next meeting include:
 - *Recovery criteria* – Using the general concepts of population distribution, abundance, trends, connectivity, and perhaps other considerations, RT members should bring their own examples of recovery criteria to the next meeting for group discussion.
 - *Population monitoring protocol* – The RT needs to develop a realistic long-term sampling protocol that fits the new recovery criteria. This discussion could influence 2007 surveys as well. One idea mentioned at the Nov. 2006 meeting was an annual survey focusing on the headwaters and designed to just detect age classes present.

NOTE: Full RT attendance at the next meeting is essential for these high priority agenda items to be completed.