

Approved July 18, 2005



**San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program
Biology Committee Meeting Minutes
July 18-19, 2005
Farmington Civic Center, Farmington, NM**

Members Present July 18th

Chuck McAda
David Propst
Mark McKinstry
Bill Miller
Ron Bliesner
Jim Brooks
Paul Holden
Tom Wesche
Greg Gustina

Representing:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 6
New Mexico Department of Game & Fish
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Southern Ute Indian Tribe
U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, NM Fishery Resources
Jicarilla Apache Nation
Water Development Interests
U.S. Bureau of Land Management

Program Management:

David Campbell

Representing:

Program Coordinator
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, NM Ecological Service

Other Interested Parties:

Melissa Trammell
Howard Brandenburg
Nathan Franssen

Representing:

U.S. National Park Service
University of New Mexico
University of Kansas

Others who attended on July 19

Pat Page
Steve Harris

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Southwestern Water Conservation District

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES (CHUCK MCADA)

April 5, 2005 conference call minutes not available; need to correct WQ statement in June 16th Coordination committee minutes; Minutes approved as edited.

UPDATE ON COORDINATION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ON POTENTIAL FOR SINGLE-SOURCE OF CERTAIN PROJECTS (DAVID CAMPBELL, MARK MCKINSTRY, AND CHUCK MCADA)

In brief, nonnative fish management, Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of hatchery and fish grow out facilities, endangered fish population monitoring, and program management activities

and projects will likely be exempted from competition, However complete single source justifications will need to be developed and submitted.

For both population monitoring and nonnative fish management, the justifications will note that Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Tribes and the States will consider competition when and where appropriate. If a State, Tribe or Service selects a specific contractor (single source) and asks BoR to administer the contract, then the State or Service will need to provide single source justification for selecting that contractor.

The rationale for the single source justifications are:

NON-NATIVE FISH MANAGEMENT

States and Tribes have statutory authority and responsibility for the management of the fishery resource within its boundaries and the Service has statutory authority and responsibility to work with States on endangered species recovery. The single source justification for the States, Tribes and FWS will outline the statutory/regulatory authorities, any policy directives, and any other considerations such as expertise or public relations concerns. These areas of work would only go out to competition if FWS or the States requested it.

The States, Tribes or Service could consider outsourcing their work, but that decision would be up to them. If either the State or Service decided to outsource their work, then it would be their responsibility to compete it as their administrative regulations require. If the State, Tribe or Service selects a specific contractor (single source) and asks BoR to administer the contract, then the States, Tribes or Service will need to provide single source justification to the BoR for selecting that contractor.

As a Program, we may be able to write one justification for this category of work and avoid having to write a project-by-project justification.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE (O&M) OF HATCHERY AND FISH GROW OUT FACILITIES

This is O&M of existing facilities by facility owners (Federal, State and Tribes) which were constructed specifically to raise the endangered fishes. For the O&M of these facilities no competition is needed and the funds can be provided through a single source agreement. However, if in the future we consider adding onto or constructing a new facility, then we would need to see what other existing facilities (e.g., Willow Beach NFH) might be able to meet that need.

FISH POPULATION MONITORING

This is basically the same justification as non-native removal. States have statutory authority and responsibility for the management of the fishery resource within its boundaries and the Service has statutory authority and responsibility to work with states on endangered species recovery. The single source justification for the States, Tribes and FWS will outline the statutory/regulatory authorities, any policy directives, and any other considerations such as expertise or public relations concerns in developing the justifications. These areas of work would only go out to competition if FWS, States or Tribes requested it.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Service and the BoR have specific management responsibilities supporting different areas of the Program. The Service is responsible for overall management of the Program and the BoR is

responsible for the fiscal management of the base and capital funds coming to the Program under Public Law 106-392. These program areas can be single sourced to the Service and BoR.

COMPETITIVE SOURCING

The following program elements were directed to competitive sourcing and RFP will be developed for the work.

PIT tag Purchases

Long Term Monitoring - Channel Morphology

Habitat Mapping

Water Temperature Monitoring

Trophic Relationships among Colorado Pikeminnow and Its Prey in the San Juan River

Characterization of Razorback Spawning Bar

FINAL DISCUSSION/APPROVAL OF INTEGRATION REPORT (BILL MILLER)

Those with additional comments pass them on to Bill Miller. Tom Wesche has specific comments which he sent out via e-mail and will work with Bill Miller to incorporate them. Tom Wesche would like to see a recommendation and timeframe for establishing population estimates in the report. It was noted that a first step would be developing sampling protocols to use for developing the population estimates. Question regarding precision and accuracy of the methods being prescribed were raised.

Tom Wesche recommends that the Integration Report include a statement that critiques the process used to develop this Integration Report along with recommendations for how to approach its development the next time it is scheduled to be completed.

Ron Bliesner pointed out a section in the executive summary at RM V, which included an apparent contradictory conclusion to what Vince LaMarra had provided in his section (spatial and temporal distribution). Ron Bliesner will also refine the language in the flow criteria section.

Monitoring Report – Revisions will discuss Population estimates by each research component. Bill Miller will provide a section on Integration so that the next Integration report goes much more smoothly.

FY 2006 WORKPLAN (DAVID CAMPBELL, CHUCK MCADA, MARK MCKINSTRY)

a. *Expected FY 2006 budget (Mark McKinstry)*

The expected funding level for 2006 is \$2,192,475. Currently, with the revised SOW there is a balance of \$99,639 that is un-obligated. (see attached 2006 budget)

b. *Funding process for FY 2006 work plan (Mark McKinstry)*

Mark discussed the 2006 funding process. Three projects will be moved through the RFP process, Water Temperature Monitoring, Long Term Channel Monitoring, and Habitat Mapping. Mark McKinstry is currently developing the RFPs to reflect this.

c. *Discussion of suggested budget tables for current and future scopes of work (David Campbell)*

David Campbell presented a draft Excel budget template for consideration by the Biology Committee (BC) to be used by all project sponsors. The BC felt that the level of detail was not required and that the template would be cumbersome.

d. *Provide recommendation to Coordination Committee (CC) for final approval of work plan. Include specific recommendations for continuation of Annual Colorado pikeminnow larval sampling, continuation of Population Model, continuation of Isotope Study.*
(Chuck McAda)

Chuck McAda discussed the CC request that specific justification be provided by the BC for the continuation of these projects. Chuck McAda will draft a response to the CC detailing the following justifications.

1) Annual Colorado pikeminnow larval sampling

The BC strongly recommends continuation of annual surveys for larval Colorado pikeminnow. The committee believes that understanding the annual reproductive success for this species is critical to its recovery. Stocking of Colorado pikeminnow continues to be an important component of the Recovery Program. It is important that we develop a baseline of data as the stocked fish grow to maturity and begin to spawn. It is expected, as was documented with stocked razorback suckers, that reproduction by stocked Colorado pikeminnow will occur and can best be documented through annual sampling for larval fish. In order to analyze trends in future reproductive success of Colorado pikeminnow it is important that a sufficient number of samples be taken in all river reaches every year to provide statistical validity. It is important that monthly sampling trips (July through September) continue so that we can develop a temporal understanding of how environmental conditions (flow, temperature, etc) affect Colorado pikeminnow reproduction.

2) Population Model Maintenance

The BC recommends continuation of funding for the Population Model contingent on receiving the completed model and a written report before FY 2006 funding is provided. We have received periodic updates on the model (including at our July meeting) and we are satisfied with the investigator's progress. We expect model completion by the end of September and will make a final recommendation at that time.

3) Trophic Relationships among Colorado Pikeminnow and its Prey in the San Juan River

The BC does not recommend continuation of funding for the Isotope Study at this time. However, after receipt and review of the draft final report (which is expected this fall/winter) the committee will determine if funding a subsequent proposal is warranted. We have received periodic updates on the progress to date (including at our July meeting) and are satisfied with the results of the study to date, but several members of the BC would like to evaluate the new proposal and see how the research fits into the Programs recovery program needs. We expect a report in late fall-early winter and will make a final recommendation at that time.

e. *Discussion of consolidated equipment purchases and contingency fund (Mark McKinstry)*

Mark explained to the Committee that there may be instances in the future where it would benefit the Program financially for large equipment purchases to be made by the Bureau of Reclamation (BoR). If large equipment purchases are identified early in the budget process the BoR could make the purchase for the project through its simplified acquisition process. This would save on overhead charges and may save on actual cost of the item.

The BC decided that this may have merit for Tribes, States and Federal agencies and could be explored further if the situation presents itself.

Mark McKinstry and David Campbell discussed the benefits of establishing a contingency amount that would be held in reserve to cover unexpected or emergency situations were additional funds may be needed over the course of a year. The BC decided that \$50,000 was an appropriate amount. The funding would be held by the BoR until approved for use.

f. Consider request from Larval Fish Laboratory for partial support for publication for larval cyprinid key. (Chuck McAda)

The BC decided to fund the proposal at the full requested level of \$31,090 for first year. Subsequent funding in future years would be contingent upon availability of funding.

SCHEDULE AND GUIDELINES FOR FY 2007 WORK PLAN. (DAVID CAMPBELL)

This will become part of the Program's work planning process. The BoR estimates that the RFP process takes approximately 6 months (3-4 months minimum), so ideally we need to post the RFPs no later than mid-March in order to make an award by October 1, 2005.

Action Item: For FY 2007, a *Preliminary* Budget along with a draft SOW will need to be completed and submitted to the Program Office by October 14, 2005.

The Preliminary Budget and SOW's will be distributed to the BC via the listserve on October 28, 2006.

The BC will meet in Farmington on November 9, 2005 to review and approve the Preliminary Budget and SOW.

The CC will need to review and recommend any justifications for non-competition (single source awards) and approve the Preliminary Work Plan and Budget on November 16th. Those projects not approved for single source awards will be competitively awarded and require RFP's. This will allow approximately 2-3 months for the development of statements of work in preparation for RFPs that need to be posted no later than mid-March.

The RFP would need to be posted for 60 days. There is some leeway in the process. The Program could identify the projects for which it expects to issue RFP's for in the draft Program Work Plan. The BoR could utilize this information to provide an advance notice of an expected RFP (minus the details). This would allow some latitude for issuing the RFP on or about mid-March with the finalized Program Work Plan. The BoR would post the RFP for 45-days instead of the required 60. The 45-day turn-around time can be justified on the basis of having provided the advance notice under the Program Guidance.

When proposals are received for an RFP, the next step is for the BoR to screen them for completeness. This should take 5 working days. The proposals would then be copied and sent to a TPEC, which also should take 5 working days.

TPECs will have 45 working days for review of the proposal(s).

The TPEC would select the contractor and provide the selected proposal to the CC, for their approval. I have set aside a week in August for the BC to review the TPECs recommendation and make a decision.

The approved proposals will then go to BoR for an independent government cost estimate and for contract negotiations. I have allowed three weeks for this to occur. This allows the month of September for the BoR to awards the contracts.

FY 2007 WORK PLAN AND BUDGET SCHEDULE

October 14, 2005 - Preliminary Budget and draft SOW submitted to the Program Office

October 28, 2005 - Preliminary Budget and draft SOW distributed to the Biology, Hydrology and Coordination Committee

November, 9, 2005 - Review Preliminary Budget and draft SOW BC meeting (8-5 Farmington) also present RB Hatchery/Grow out Options

November 16, 2005 – Coordination Committee review, discussion and approval of Preliminary Work Plan

February 21-23, 2006 - Annual Program Review and Finalization of 2007 Work Plan

UPDATE ON PROGRAM DOCUMENT AND DISCUSSION OF LONG RANGE PLAN. (DAVID CAMPBELL)

Sub-group of the Coordination Committee will be meeting on August 1st and 2nd in Albuquerque to finalize revisions to the Program Document. Members of the group include: Tom Pitts, Brent Uilenberg, Randy Seaholm and John Whipple.

NEED MODIFICATIONS TO ‘SJ MONITORING PLAN AND PROTOCOLS.’ (CHUCK MCADA)

Originally, individual participants drafted protocols. The document needs to be revised, protocols need to be reviewed and updated.

Action Item: Bill Miller will draft overview and individual monitors will update their sections:

Larval Colorado Pikeminnow Survey – UNM

Larval Razorback Sucker Survey – UNM

YOY/Small Bodied Fish Monitoring - Propst

Sub-Adult/Adult Large Bodied Fish Comm. Monitoring - FWS GJ

Long Term Channel Monitoring - RB

Water Quality –RB

Fish Passage- FWS-FRO

Timeframe- Sections to DC to compile by end of year 12/31/05

DISCUSSION OF PROCESS TO TRACK AND FINALIZE COMPLETION OF PROJECTS AND DELIVERY OF REPORTS OR DELIVERABLES. (CHUCK MCADA, MARK MCKINSTRY)

There is a definite need to track projects products and deliverables.

A list/summary of projects, there associated deliverables and due dates will be added to the work plan in a summary section

Action Item: The BC will review all work products and deliverables. The Program will need to verify completion. The timeframes for review are in Monitoring Protocols.

Mark and Dave will work out the process and present to the BC.

****** Amy's Temperature study-**

Do we want to redo the model or have Amy provide a one thermograph? The study does not address the effect of releases on temperature. Is there a problem?

Ron Bliesner recommends that she do the thermograph and finish the report.

Action item: The BC will review the report and consider a RFP in late 2006 for a Temperature Model.

PIT TAG UPDATE. (MARK MCKINSTRY)

BoR has issued intent to compete on PIT tags and has received interest from additional/different companies. Based on responses the BoR will rewrite RFP. BoR formed a working group to develop criteria for PIT tag and readers RFP.

ADDITIONS TO LIST SERVER. (CHUCK MCADA)

Okay to Add Michael, Howard, Evett, and Mike.

Action Item: Joann to send out list of who is currently on the listserve to the committee.
Complete

DISCUSSION OF CONSTRUCTION OF PERMANENT WATERFALL. (MCADA; REQUESTED BY BRENT UILENBERG) DOES THE COMMITTEE WANT FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THIS?

NO Artificial Barrier.

OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS (ALL)

Razorback pond- Ron Bliesner

The Program had another fish kill at one of the six pack ponds. Ponds were fertilized resulting in low DO and pond one crashed.

The Razorback grow out ponds need to have aeration to prevent low DO conditions. There are three options: Wind powered, solar powered or to run power out to the ponds.

- Wind is not feasible and not reliable when needed - Cost is ~\$ 50,000.
- Solar would work however the panels make good targets Cost would be \$115,000.
- Running power to the ponds would be the most expensive but would be the most reliable and produce the most oxygen per unit cost. \$165,000, O&M ~9,000 Steve Harris interjected that the Program needs to meet its stocking goals, which we have not for razorback suckers since we started. Steve stated that the Water Developers expect us to move forward and address this issue seriously. If the Program needs more funding to achieve this goal then they would help secure it. The BC needs to pursue every option to increase production of Razorback suckers to meet stocking goals.

Action Item: (Razorback grow out ponds need for Aeration to prevent low DO conditions)

The BC agreed and discussed whether the Program should consider outsourcing the work or building a hatchery. Mark McKinstry. Dave Campbell, Dale Ryden and Jim Brooks will investigate the various options and report back to the BC in November.

Other steps that the Program needs to take to address this problem are:

- 1) The Program need to get a pond manager at NAPI
- 2) The Ponds at NAPI need to have aeration to prevent addition pond kills.

- 3) The Ponds at NAPI need to have Bird Control cost is estimated at \$20,000
- 4) The Program needs to create additional stocking capacity, either through additional grow out facilities or a hatchery. Mark McKinstry, Jim Brooks, Dale Ryden to look at options and costs. Willow Beach etc.

Next Meeting: November 9, 2005, 8:00 am – 3 pm, Farmington Civic Center, Farmington, New Mexico