



**Approved Summary
San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program
Biology Committee Meeting Summary – Durango, CO
13-14 December 2010**

Attendees

Biology Committee Members:

Bill Miller, Chair – Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Paul Holden – Jicarilla Apache Nation
Keith Lawrence – Bureau of Indian Affairs
Jason Davis – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2
Mark McKinstry – U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Dale Ryden – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6
Vincent Lamarra – Navajo Nation
John Alves – State of Colorado
Andrew Monié – State of New Mexico
Tom Wesche – Water Development Interests
U.S. Bureau of Land Management – absent

Program Office – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2:

Sharon Whitmore
Scott Durst

Interested Parties:

Carrie Lile – Southwest Water Conservation District
Steven Platania – American Southwest Ichthyological Researchers
Travis Francis – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
James Morel – Navajo Nation Department of Fish and Wildlife
Darek Elverud – Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (day 2)
Michael Preston – Dolores Water Conservancy District (day 2)
Manuel Ulibarri – Dexter National Fish Hatchery (day 2 via phone)
Tom Fresques – Bureau of Land Management (day 2 via phone)

Monday 13 December 2010

Introductions; changes to agenda:

- Patrick McCarthy's update on the TNC Conservation Action Plan will be rescheduled for the February meeting.

- Provide update on the Upper Program's non-native fish workshop in Grand Junction last week.
- Dave Gates from Reclamation will give a tour of Lake Nighthorse after the meeting closes tomorrow.
- The nomination of Monié as BC representative for the State of New Mexico needs to go through official channels.

Approve draft summary of 9-10 November BC meeting:

- Holden motioned to accept, Davis seconded, and group unanimously approved the summary without additional revisions.

Long Range Plan discussion and priorities:

- Whitmore made edits to the LRP document in track changes as the group reviewed the document. Some of the comments included: (1) revise Table 2 to reflect a logical order; (2) move some data integration from Element 5 to Element 4; annual integration should be in Element 4 while long-term integration should be in Element 5; (3) include some aspects of Element 3 in Element 4; (4) the downlist criteria for Colorado pikeminnow are not accurate; (5) Figure 1 should be revised to reflect the actual relation of items in the Recovery Program; (6) the funding section should be revised to reflect current realities; (7) the LRP should be updated to reflect current realities (e.g., are updates to recovery goals realistic in 2010, what is the threat of the waterfall below Clay Hills).
- The LRP needs to be updated to reflect the revised monitoring protocol document, especially Elements 3, 4, and 5. The non-native fish removal data supports monitoring. The broader periodic integration analyses need to be distinguished from the annual integration efforts.
- The group discussed means to track the activities of the Program. Would a summary report that incorporates the findings of all PIs be useful? All of the integration from individual PIs could be put together in a summary presentation during the Annual Meeting.
- The group discussed where integration fits into the LRP. Integration is already being done in annual reports. Does the integration effort need to be directed at specific questions? The sub-group formed during the November BC meeting will tackle these issues.
- The Sufficient Progress report produced by FWS is separate from the LRP.
- The group reviewed the tables in Appendix A and provided comments and changes to be included in the next draft of the LRP. All activities that the Program is currently conducting need to be reflected in the LRP in addition to those activities that the BC would like to see happen in the future.

Tuesday 14 December 2010

Continued Long Range Plan discussion:

- The group discussed the need to have future work that is currently planned or may happen reflected in the LRP, especially the Lake Powell project or work that could occur in tributaries like Yellow Jacket Canyon.
- The group suggested that the document be forward-looking and that the document is used to ensure information is not lost as current BC members and PIs leave the Program.
- Priorities for 2012 work plan are: (1) O&M of existing facilities for ESA compliance; (2) augmentation – including production, stocking, and evaluation; (3) non-native fish monitoring and control – including the development of measureable criteria for non-native species using population estimates and the population model; (4) data integration that would include both the results from the Lake Powell study and a review of the flow recommendations; (5) fish monitoring (in order – larval, YOY, and adult); (5) habitat monitoring – temperature, habitat mapping, and the development of a long-term habitat monitoring plan; and, (6) peer review.

- Whitmore will incorporate the suggested changes into the LRP. The BC will provide additional comments on the current draft by 17 January so a revised draft can be distributed by the end of January for review at the February meeting.

Dexter update and hold-over fish stocking recommendation:

- Manuel Ulibarri called in and Davis provided update. Fish health testing from November came back negative for largemouth bass virus (LMBv). The next round of testing is scheduled for late April 2011. If the results of that test are negative, fish would be available to stock from Dexter in early June.
- There are currently 290,000 age-0 and 3,000 age-1 Colorado pikeminnow at Dexter. By early June 2011, there should be at least 150,000 of these formerly age-0 pikeminnow. These fish should be 100-125mm TL by then. Those fish that are currently age-0 fish will not be implanted with PIT tags but current age-1 fish will be implanted with PIT tags.
- If the second fish health test comes back negative, should these fish that were held-over be stocked? These fish should be stocked upstream of PNM in early June to free up space for the production of 400,000 new age-0 pikeminnow that will be stocked in the fall of 2011. The stocking in fall will occur in the normal location. The BC is in favor of proceeding with stocking these hold-over fish in addition to the 400,000 age-0 pikeminnow in the fall.
- Discuss additional stocking locations for these hold-over fish during February meeting.
- Ryden informed the group that in Texas, LMBv-positive fish are stocked in the state because it is endemic in Texas but it is not known if LMBv is endemic to the San Juan River. Is there a need to investigate LMBv in the San Juan? The fish health group has not detected LMBv in the San Juan but they do not look every year. There is no evidence of this virus in Colorado or Utah.
- The fish health group could give a presentation on these issues during the May meeting.

Update and overview of online database:

- McKinstry reported that an online database was developed by Reclamation's Science and Technology group for the Trinity River Recovery Program. This web-based system allows data to be entered and downloaded remotely in addition to real-time analysis. It is unclear how much a system like this would cost the San Juan Program. Andreas Krause is the contact for this project and could be available to give a presentation to the BC during the May meeting.

National Park Service participation in work in the San Juan Arm of Lake Powell:

- Ryden reported that NPS committed to an in-kind contribution of one resupply trip during the longer periods of work in the San Juan Arm.

Update on remote PIT tag reader:

- McKinstry will take the BC's recommendation to move forward with this proposal to the CC. There is support to use capital funds to pay for this kind of effort. A scope-of-work will need to be developed.
- McKinstry will report back to the BC during the February meeting following the next CC meeting.

Colorado pikeminnow in Yellow Jacket Canyon:

- Tom Fresques presented via conference line. The sampling of a 500 foot section of Yellow Jacket Canyon was initiated in 2007 to monitor roundtail chub stocking.
- Yellow Jacket Canyon is approximately 20 miles upstream of the San Juan along the McElmo Creek drainage. Perennial water is present largely due to irrigation return flow.

- Yellow Jacket Canyon is dominated by native fish and Colorado pikeminnow have been detected every year since 2007. In 2010, they detected 6 pikeminnow and one was previously PIT-tagged although there was no previous record of this tag.
- All Colorado pikeminnow detected in Yellow Jacket Canyon are likely the result of stocking in the San Juan. Given the number of pikeminnow detected in this small stretch of Yellow Jacket Canyon, there could be large numbers of pikeminnow in these tributaries. It is unclear if this work will continue in the future.
- The BC recognized the importance of continuing work in Yellow Jacket Canyon and possibly other tributaries to the San Juan River to detect more Colorado pikeminnow. CDOW is planning to sample Yellow Jacket Canyon in 2011.

Planning for 2011 habitat workshop:

- The workshop should be set up like the non-native fish workshop to review protocols, determine if there are other protocols or methodologies that are more cost effective, and to be sure that the Program is collecting data necessary for revision to the flow recommendations by tying flow to habitat. Tentative dates for the workshop are 25-26 August 2011 in Albuquerque. Need to work out moderator and summary responsibilities for the workshop. Holding the workshop is contingent on funding.
- A scope-of-work needs to be developed to lay out the expected outcomes and products from the workshop. The BC and Program Office will need to come up with a list of possible outside experts with knowledge of flow-habitat relations, hydrology, physical river processes, and climate change.
- The workshop could start with an overview of what has occurred to date in terms of habitat monitoring work on the San Juan. Outside experts will need to be educated about what has been done on the San Juan to get them up-to-speed. What kinds of questions can be answered with the data collected thus far? What kinds of questions could be answered using different approaches? Are the right metrics being used to reach Program goals?
- What are the habitat goals in the San Juan River? What should the San Juan look like in terms of habitat?
- Wesche observed that how the workshop discussion included both form versus function. The workshop should focus on function, the processes that create physical habitat that will allow the flow recommendations to be evaluated and revised rather than on form which is simply the tools being used for monitoring. What workshop outcomes are needed? Between now and the February meeting, BC members should think about desired outcomes of this workshop.
- The PO will have a draft SOW ready by the February meeting

Updates on finalizing monitoring protocols and non-native fish workshop summary:

- BC should get any comments on non-native protocols to Davis by 1 January and the Program Office will distribute another revision of the monitoring protocols by the end of January. The work of the integration sub-group will be incorporated into this document.
- Work continues on the non-native fish workshop summary and a draft will be available in January.

Update of 2011 budget and Congressional funding issues:

- McKinstry presented a PowerPoint. The Program is likely facing a full year under a Continuing Resolution (CR). There is a chance of budget cut-backs to 85% of 2010 level and cuts to 2010 funding levels at a minimum. If these cuts become reality, projects will have to be prioritized.
- The current CR runs through 17 December. By the end of the week there will likely be a new CR that runs through 28 February or the entire fiscal year. McKinstry will provide an update as soon as he has new information.

Discussion of February meeting format:

- The February meeting will be at the Civic Center in Farmington 24-25 February 2011 from 8am to 5pm both days.
- Last year's meeting should be used as a template with additional time for discussion.
- Possible agenda items include: RERI update, CAP update, flow presentation from Reclamation, funding issues, Yellow Jacket Canyon tributary work.
- At the end of the meeting, the BC should come up with major conclusions from 2010 and think about what activities the Program should do next. The second day of the meeting could focus on bigger picture issues.

Non-native fish workshop in Grand Junction:

- There should be more coordination between the San Juan and Upper Programs that can be worked on through the Program Offices. The BC recommended the Program Office attempt to coordinate better to allow for more participation of the San Juan group at the Upper Program meetings.

Upcoming meetings:

- The Upper Program's Researcher's meeting is 12-13 January 2011 in Moab, UT,.
- The San Juan Annual Meeting is tentatively scheduled for the weeks of May 16th or May 23rd. The preferred dates are 17-20 May 2011. The meeting will likely be held in Durango but could be held in Ignacio.
- What is the role of the peer reviewers at the Annual Meeting?

BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM LOG

(Updated 21 December 2010)

Item No.*	Action Item	Meeting/Origination Date	Responsible Party(s)	Due Date	Revised Date	Date Completed
1	Provide RBS/CPM stocking/capture/recapture data		P.I.'s to the Program Office	Annually before Jan. 1		
2	Provide Preliminary Draft Report Presentations		Project Leads (authors)	Annually at Feb. meeting		
3	Review LRP		BC	Annually at fall meeting		
4	Review Peer Review Comments from the February and May meetings		BC	Annually at fall meeting		
5	Provide Draft Final Reports		Project Leads (authors) to Program Office	Annually by end of March		
6	Scopes of Work		Project Leads to Program Office	Annually by end of March		
7	Provide Final Reports		Project Leads (authors) to Program Office	Annually by end of June		
8	Annual Data Delivery		PIs to Program Office	Annually by June 30		

BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM LOG

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Item No.*	Action Item	Meeting/Origination Date	Responsible Party(s)	Due Date	Revised Date	Date Completed
9	T&E Species Data		BC to Program Office	Annually by Dec. 31		
10	Annually compile T&E data and Program progress into summary to address overall Program recovery goals/objectives for presentation at annual meeting		Program Office/BC	By Annual Meeting in May		
11	Distribute Consolidated Data and list of annual data collected and available in the Program's database		Program Office to BC	Annually by Jan. 31		
12	Recapture analysis on PIT tagged fish		Durst	Annually by March		
13	Coordinate CPM stocking closely with Reclamation to avoid negative impact due to high flows/releases		Project Leads	Annually		
14	Waterfall Inundation Whitepaper – review past meeting summaries, determine what is needed, and provide report at the next meeting.	05/18/07	Program Office	12/07/07	Not a current priority	
15	Revise RBS Augmentation Goals (based on the outcome of experimental stocking)	5/10/10	FWS Fisheries/Program Office	2/2011 – provide update and extend as needed	ongoing	

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16	Provide specifics of selenium sampling procedures and analysis – Sampling completed as of 11/17/10, but still need to analyze samples	1/26/09	BIA/FWS	2/18/2009	on going	
17	Develop a detailed outline for San Juan River Recovery Program case history manuscript	11-5-08	Propst/Miller			On hold
18	Non-native fish stocking procedure to States and Tribes	11/5/09	BC provide recommendations to States	12/1/09	ongoing	
19	Pursue effects study on Hg/pikeminnow with other groups/programs	1/14/10	Program Office lead	ongoing		
20	Blank database structure for data integration	1/13/10	Durst	3/23/10	2/24/11	
21	Compile list of references and literature available at Program Office - post list on website and send an email reminder to BC, consider periodically updating	1/13/10	Program Office	3/23/10	12/13/10	
22	Discussion of what is the appropriate number of fish to stock	3/23/10	BC	ongoing		
23	Finalize monitoring protocols and integration analysis document PO will incorporate Wesche's	3/24/10	PO, Davis, Elverud, and Ryden	5/10/10	12/13/10	

BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM LOG

(Updated 21 December 2010)

Item No.*	Action Item	Meeting/Origination Date	Responsible Party(s)	Due Date	Revised Date	Date Completed
	comments and PIs will complete NNF section, incorporate TOC					
24	Evaluate stocking locations upstream of Animas confluence	3/24/10	Davis, Furr	6/30/10	12/31/10	
25	Sufficient Progress Report	5/10/10	PO	6/2010	ongoing	
26	Develop final product from non-native workshop that incorporates notes and Peer Review report – revision based on Nov meeting	5/10/10	Whitmore	11/2010	2/24/10	
27	Southern Ute funding of Population Model	5/10/10	Miller	11/2010	ongoing	
28	Work with I&E Coordinator to determine feasibility of brochures and signs	11/10/10	PO	2/24/11		
29	Develop species specific catch curves using adult monitoring dataset	11/10/10	Durst and Ryden	2/24/11		
30	Draft SOW for population model	11/10/10	Miller and Lamarra	2/24/11		
31	What does Dexter need from the BC in terms of a recommendation for the 2010 pikeminnow stocking class	11/10/10	Davis	12/13/10		12/13/10

BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM LOG

(Updated 21 December 2010)

Item No.*	Action Item	Meeting/Origination Date	Responsible Party(s)	Due Date	Revised Date	Date Completed
32	Prioritized integration analysis	11/10/10	Integration sub-group	1/31/11		
33	Tom Fresques presentation of Yellow Jacket Canton to BC	11/10/10	Gustina	12/13/10		12/13/10
34	Additional details of USGS online database	11/10/10	McKinstry	12/13/10		12/13/10
35	Pros and cons of stocking 3,000 age-2 and 300,000 age-1 pikeminnow in addition to other stocking in 2011	11/10/10	BC	12/13/10		12/13/10
36	Comments on current LRP draft	12/13/10	BC to PO	1/17/11		
37	Distribute revised LRP draft	12/13/10	PO	1/31/11		
38	Draft SOW for 2011 Habitat Workshop	12/13/10	PO	2/24/11		

* Items were re-numbered after changes were made

Yellow highlight indicates annual action items

Green highlight indicates new action items

Red highlight indicates completed action items that will be removed from the next iteration of the Action Item Log