



**Approved Summary**  
**San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program**  
**Biology Committee Conference Call**  
**15 September 2014**

**Attendees:**

**Biology Committee Members:**

Bill Miller, Chair – Southern Ute Indian Tribe  
Jacob Mazzone - Jicarilla Apache Nation  
Brian Westfall – Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Jason Davis – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2  
Mark McKinstry – U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
Benjamin Schleicher – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6  
Vincent Lamarra – Navajo Nation  
Harry Crockett – State of Colorado  
Eliza Gilbert – State of New Mexico  
U.S. Bureau of Land Management – absent  
Tom Wesche – Water Development Interests  
Dave Gori – Conservation Interests

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

David Campbell  
Scott Durst

**Interested Parties:**

Mike Farrington – American Southwest Ichthyological Researchers  
Brent Uilenberg – Bureau of Reclamation  
Ryan Christianson – Bureau of Reclamation  
Susan Behery – Bureau of Reclamation

**Approve 5 August 2014 draft conference call summary and review Action Item list:**

- Durst incorporated previous comments.
- Wesche motioned to approve conference call summary, Mazzone seconded, and the summary was approved unanimously.

**Discussion and update of Service/Reclamation draft flow modification proposal:**

- Uilenberg provided an overview of the proposal. Reclamation is proposing two separate things: (1) revising the available water calculation in the current decision tree based on a target end of season reservoir elevation and (2) an adaptive management process to replace the decision tree to determine the timing and magnitude of spring peak releases. The first will ensure base flows are met while minimizing the risk of shortage. The specifics of the target reservoir elevation should be worked out in a workshop over this winter in time for a possible spring release. The adaptive management process is longer term and will require additional integration and analysis.

- Behery provided an update from her May analysis. The proposal seeks to keep more water in the reservoir to ensure base flows are met and reduce the risk of shortage. The existing Flow Recommendations only have a one year buffer against shortage.
- Analysis 1 simulated five consecutive drought years of different severity over a range of end of year reservoir elevation targets and determined the number of years until shortage would occur. There are no spring peak releases under this analysis, base flows are maintained, and water user demands are satisfied. Reservoir elevations of 6050 to 6065 feet offer multi-year protection against shortage in the face of long-term drought. A reservoir elevation of 6018.8 feet only offers a single year of protection against shortage in a long-term drought. Reclamation favors an elevation of 6065 feet because it provides a buffer to account for model error. If the reservoir elevation is too high there is an increased risk of a spill. Behery will include additional explanation in the analysis write-up.
- Analysis 2 investigated the historical operation of Navajo Dam over the last 42 years with the Flow Recommendations in place for that entire period. This analysis determined the spring hydrograph that could have been released with different target reservoir elevations being proposed given the actual hydrology from 1971-2013. The model assumes base flows are maintained as close to 500 cfs as possible. While higher reservoir elevations provide a longer buffer against shortage, there is little to no effect on the hydrograph released. The spring peak release is made up of any water in excess of the end of season target reservoir elevation.
- The BC should review the revised proposal and get comments to Reclamation and their CC representative by 15 October.

#### **Discussion of Peer Reviewers' comments on the Phase 2 restoration monitoring:**

- Gori asked about the process for integrating these comments. The CC approved the 2015 AWP but some comments could increase the cost of this SOW. Miller suggested debating the pros and cons of the various comments on the call and Gori et al. could provide a revised SOW with point-by-point response to the reviewer's comments and highlight of any budget changes.
- Gori indicated that editorial comments and those asking for additional detail would be incorporated into the next revision of the SOW. Also the SOW will ensure pressure sensor include temperature monitoring capability.
- Westfall hopes that on-the-ground construction starts the first week of October but there are some permitting hold-ups from the Navajo Nation EPA.
- Wesche asked for baseline data to accurately compare pre and post-restoration treatments. There is habitat and fish data available at the restoration site that will form the basis of a pre-restoration comparison. The to-be-restored channel has flowed under various conditions in the past.
- Wesche asked that continued monitoring at RERI sites be specifically mentioned in this SOW. ASIR has updated their SOW to include continued monitoring at RERI sites.
- Additional monitoring at channel inflow and outflow may include photo-monitoring, additional cross-sections, and more detailed habitat measures (i.e., distinguishing between sand and cobble shoal, and measuring water and sediment depth).
- The group discussed monitoring additional control sites and the functionality of control sites (i.e., are they intended to function as pre or post-restored channels?). Given the additional cost and difficulty finding appropriate controls in close proximity to the restored channels, the group felt a single control was adequate.
- Gori et al. will revise the SOW noting any budget changes and provide a response to Peer Reviewer comments by 15 October 2014.

**Scheduling Population Model workshop:**

- During the 10 September 2014 CC conference call, the CC tasked the BC and Peer Reviewers to hold a workshop devoted to the Population Model. Miller would present the model and new features in order for the BC and Peer Reviewers to understand the model configuration and functionality. The workshop would also include model runs. Miler is preparing a user's manual that will also address some of the Peer Reviewers' previous comments.
- The preferred date for this workshop would be 5 December in conjunction with the BC meeting scheduled in Durango. Durst will send a Doodle Poll to identify a day that work for BC members and Peer Reviewers.

Next scheduled meeting is in Durango at the Public Lands Center 3-4 December 2014.

## BIOLOGY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM LOG

(Updated 8 December 2014)

Item No. *	Action Item	Meeting/O rigination 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 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		
9	T&E Species Data		BC to Program Office	Annually by Dec. 31		

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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 and analysis by Franssen and Durst)	5/10/10	FWS Fisheries/Program Office	5/2011 – provide update and extend as needed	2/20/15	
16	Develop a detailed outline for San Juan River Recovery Program case history manuscript	11-5-08	Propst/Miller			On hold
17	Pursue Non-native fish stocking procedures	11/5/09	Crockett and Gilbert	12/1/09	2/20/15	

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18	Pursue effects study on Hg/pikeminnow with other groups/programs	1/14/10	Program Office lead	ongoing		
19	Discussion of what is the appropriate number of fish to stock	3/23/10	BC	ongoing		
20	Southern Ute funding of Population Model	5/10/10	Miller	11/2010		12/5/14
21	Work with I&E Coordinator to determine feasibility of brochures and signs	11/10/10	PO	2/24/11		12/5/14
22	Prepare memo to CC conveying BC recommendation to conduct a feasibility study on removing fish barriers in the lower Animas River	7/9/12	PO	8/20/12	3/31/14	12/5/14
23	NNF workshop recommendations to Davis	2/21/13	BC	3/18/13		12/5/2014
24	Complete Threats Assessment draft	5/7/13	TNC	6/28/13		12/5/14
25	Schedule maintenance work at PNM	8/5/14	BR, NN, PO	12/31/14	2/20/15	
26	Explore videography alternatives	8/5/14	McKinstry, Lamarra	10/31/14		8/26/14
27	Develop questions related to thermal modification of Navajo Dam and explore methods of addressing these questions	8/5/14	Miller, McKinstry	10/31/14		12/5/14

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Item No. *	Action Item	Meeting/O rigination Date	Responsible Party(s)	Due Date	Revised Date	Date Completed
28	Plan workshops to determine an end of season reservoir elevation for revised available water calculation and develop a protocol to implement replacement for "decision tree" to make releases from Navajo Dam	9/15/14	Program Office	ongoing		
29	Schedule one-day Population Model workshop	9/15/14	Program Office	10/1/14		12/5/14
30	Review revised Reclamation flow proposal and provide comments to Reclamation of CC representative	9/15/14	BC	10/15/14		10/15/14
31	Revise Phase 2 monitoring SOW based on Peer Reviewer comments	9/15/14	Gori	10/15/14		10/15/14

\* 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

Date	Annual Tasks	PO	CC	BC	P.I.
Oct.	Reclamation administers contracts	X			
Nov.	BC Meeting (peer reviews typically do not attend this meeting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review data integration results from previous year</li> <li>Identify questions for annual data integration</li> <li>Discuss Program priorities</li> <li>LRP review and provide recommendations (with pros and cons) to PO</li> <li>Appoint new BC Chair (every two years)</li> </ul>	X		X	
Dec. 31	RBS/CPM stocking/capture/recapture data to Program Office				X
January	Notification/update of Program rosters/mailling lists	X			
January	Executive meeting (Program Office; Reclamation Fund Manager; CC and BC Chairs) to do preliminary planning for upcoming year	X	X	X	
January	Updated LRP to BC and CC for review	X	X		
January	Reclamation provides a determination of perturbation for BC Review.	X			
Jan. 31	Distribute consolidated PIT tag data and post other data	X			
February	BC Meeting (peer reviewers are expected to attend this meeting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare for Annual Meeting</li> <li>Provide preliminary results; draft report presentations</li> <li>Final review of updated LRP</li> <li>Review annual data integration priorities</li> </ul>	X		X	X
Feb/Mar	Final updated LRP to CC (with explanation of input included/not included)	X			
March	CC approval of LRP				
March	Annual guidance/solicitation for SOWs based on LRP/list of prioritized projects	X			
March 31	Draft final reports and SOWs due to Program Office			X	X
April	Preliminary draft Annual Workplan and Budget	X			
May	Annual Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program overview</li> <li>P.I. presentations</li> <li>Review preliminary draft AWP</li> <li>Committee reports</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X
May	Annual hydrology meeting to review and solicit information regarding the San Juan River Basin Hydrology Model	X			
June/July	Draft Annual Workplan and Budget	X			
June 30	Provide final reports and data sets to Program Office				X
July	Final reports posted on website	X			
August	Tech review of draft AWP; recommendations with pros and cons to Program Office			X	
August	Revise AWP based on input and transmit final draft to CC with documentation of all input	X			
Sept.	Review and approve final AWP		X		
Sept.	Post final AWP to website	X			