

Biology Committee Draft Agenda
Web Conference, January 24, 2011

Phone Conference Details: Please dial in using the toll-free number: 866-762-0576, Participant Passcode: 2759325 (NOTE: THIS IS A DIFFERENT PHONE NUMBER THAN THE ONE WE TYPICALLY USE FOR PHONE-ONLY CONFERENCES)

To join the web portion of the meeting, please follow the directions below. If you have not previously used Verizon Web Ex conferencing software, you may want to test it out prior to the meeting. Contact Angela Kantola if you want to do a quick trial run (~5 min.). This will help assure that we can start our meeting promptly at 8:30 a.m. with no delays.

Angela will start the web portion of the meeting by 8:15 a.m. so that everyone can get connected and work through any technical difficulties before the 8:30 a.m. start time.

Meeting Date: 1/24/2011, Meeting Start Time: 8:30 AM MOUNTAIN STANDARD TIME

Web Conference Details:

Meeting Number: 742936817
Meeting Passcode: (None)
Meeting Host: ANGELA T KANTOLA

To join the Web Conference:

1. To join the meeting, go to:
<http://www.mymeetings.com/nc/join.php?i=742936817&p=&t=c>
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CONVENE: 8:30 a.m.

1. Review nonnative fish briefing paper (Chart, Martinez, 1 hour) *Sent to Biology Committee on January 6.*
2. Review revised nonnative scopes of work (All, 2 hours) *Revised SOW's will be sent to BC this week.*

LUNCH 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

3. Update on Flaming Gorge flows (Speas, Chart, Wilson, 15 min)
4. Review and approve [December meeting summary](#); previous meeting assignments (see Attachment 1) (All, 15 min)
5. Review reports due list. (All, 30 min) *Revised reports due list included in e-mail with this agenda.*
1. Discuss agenda items for next meeting, March 1-2 in Grand Junction (1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on March 1 and 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. [possibly later, so Committee members are asked to

make travel arrangements, accordingly] on March 2.) (All, 10 min) *Agenda items will include: a) review of draft RIPRAP assessment, draft revised RIPRAP and draft FY 12-13 Program Guidance (will be sent out by the Program Director's office for technical committee review on February 1); b) nonnative fish management activities (including CDOW "bucket list"); c) final review/approval of UDWR's #138 report; d) review/approval of revised research framework report; e) review of proposal to evaluate fish survival in GVP screen fish return (unless discussed during January 24 web conference; f) discussion of Flaming Gorge spring and base flows; g) implications of recent humpback chub genetic results for Yampa River humpback chub captivity plan.*

ADJOURN by 2:30 p.m.

Attachment 1: Assignments

1. The Program Director's office will work with CDOW and Aaron Webber on the potential for designing a permeable, hydrologically-stable (gravel?) berm to prevent northern pike access to the oxbow slough at RM 151 on the Yampa, and then clean it out once and for all. *10/30 CDOW has contacted the property owners of the RM 151 backwater, but hasn't been able to meet with them yet. Mark Wernke from Reclamation is willing to take a look at the property with CDOW. A fairly long berm would be required (>3,000') and we'll need to determine the best type (more permanent configurations could be very expensive). The funding source would need to be determined, with Partners for Fish and Wildlife, lottery funds, grant funds, etc. as possible sources to be explored. 1/15: Tom Nesler said they plan to get engineers develop specs/estimates this spring for something like a 10-year berm structure; the next step will be to find funding (perhaps as a habitat project through GOCO). This would be the first of three or four such projects. Tom Pitts suggested that if the Program provides some matching funds (annual or capital), it might improve the probability of getting GOCO money. Tom also suggested that if we have a project in the hopper, we might be able to compete for end-of-year Reclamation funds. 2/10: The PD's office considers this a high priority and will contribute funds, if available (see revised FY09 budget). 2/20: Recovery Program funds likely available; CDOW working to get engineers on the ground; Nesler considering different approaches (berm, fill the oxbow, etc.). 4/20: Tom Nesler said they've met with the landowner and Reclamation engineers will do an onsite survey as soon as the snow melts. 1/5/10: Project deferred indefinitely; Reclamation cautions that the lesson from the Butch Craig floodplain site is to be very cautious before considering modifying habitats. Based on the channel dynamics in this area of the Yampa River, it would be unwise to construct an impervious dike at the mouth of this backwater. 1/14/10: The Committee discussed other options to eliminate spawning in this area; the >PD's office will provide Mark's trip report to the BC and work with CDOW to outline options for Committee discussion at the next meeting (options could include: make the entrance too shallow for adults; a dike set back instead of right at the river; direct removal/net sets; piscicides, etc.) 2/22: PD's office provided Mark's report. 3/10: **CDOW** will work with Reclamation to flesh out their gravel proposal and also will review additional options (e.g., plant eradication, barriers, etc.). This will be on the May 6-7 Committee agenda. 5/6/10: Sherm Hebein said Reclamation will conduct a site visit with CDOW in July. 8/18: Sherm hopes to schedule a visit after the landowner cuts the grass in the next 2 weeks.*
2. Within the next month, >the **Service and Program Director's office** will provide the Committee a draft addendum to the White River report that will present the measured flow requirements in a historical hydrologic perspective. The Program Director's office also will research where we left Schmidt and Orchard's draft report on peak (channel maintenance) flows and recommend whether to have it reviewed by the geomorphology panel. The Program Director's office will use the information currently available to >develop a position paper on Price River flow recommendations for Committee review. *10/16 Pending; out by the end of November-1/5: February 2009. 2/20: Bob Muth said he's making good progress on this and he'll have a draft to the Committee by ~~early March~~ end of April. 7/8: Mohrman and Chart expect to provide drafts of this and Price River report by the end of August 2009. 7/13: Dave Speas said the goal for the Narrows EIS is to get it out for public review in the fall, so the above schedule should work. The PD's office will keep the Service's SLC-ES shop in the loop on Price River. 9/21: Chart and Mohrman have made good progress on*

*this, but other priorities have so far prevented completion. 1/14/10: still pending and the PD's office will continue to communicate with Reclamation re: Narrows. 3/3/10: PD's office is communicating with SLC-ES to determine the best way to move this position paper forward. 5/6/10: The Program Director's office will complete a position paper (or similar construct) on Price River endangered fish flow needs and submit it for Biology Committee review by September 1, 2010. The Program Director's office will complete the addendum to the White River report and provide a status update and recommendation on the draft Schmidt and Orchard report on peak (channel maintenance) flows for Biology Committee review by December 31, 2010. 12/13 Price River discussion: The **Program Director's office** will revise the draft Price River position paper and get it to the **Biology Committee** within the next week, with comments due a month later. Draft Price River position paper sent 12/30/10 with comments due Jan. 31; White River report still pending.*

3. *Melissa believes an Environmental Assessment of the impacts of the Humpback chub captivity management plan (also addresses how to deal with captured roundtail chub) will need to be written; Krissy will work with Melissa on the EA. 7/13: Melissa needs to coordinate with the NPS if this is the case and she intends to do that in the next few weeks. 10/6: John Reber reported that **Melissa Trammell** will do the EA for this. 5/6/10 Melissa said she would have a draft for the park by ~~the end of May~~ **September 6**.*
4. The **PD's office** will communicate with Gary White to determine how many and which of the questions from the HBC workshop to focus on. *Pending. **Derek Elverud** will provide the database for Westwater for Gary White to combine with Black Rocks, which will require a separate SOW. 10/6: **Travis Francis** said they plan to complete the reports, then revisit a SOW for assistance from Gary White. 3/10: pending. 4/28: **Derek Elverud** has finished compiling the Westwater data to send to Gary White. Travis Francis is going to combine his Black Rocks data set with the Westwater data and his report (when he has time after he gets out of the field). 8/18/10: Michelle said we can get this to Gary White this winter.*
5. The **Program Director's office** will prepare a list of issues to be resolved regarding Tusher Wash screening (e.g., what levels of mortality are acceptable for what size classes, potential O&M costs, etc.) to help move this decision forward (and provide that to the Biology Committee and the Service). *Done. 5/6/10: A small group (**Melissa, Kevin McAbee, Dave Speas, Tom Pitts, and Tom Czapla**) will work with **Kevin Bestgen** to review/build on the risk assessment, focusing on understanding existing impacts and what could be gained by various screening options. Tentatively, it would seem the best choice would be fish friendly runners with a screen on the irrigation ditch (contingent on further analysis). BC to submit proposal to MC by 12/31/10. 11/23: Conference calls held 11/10 and 11/24 and scheduled for 12/2. 12/13 BC discussion: The Biology Committee recommended >starting with a literature review (there may be good information from low-head structures in the eastern U.S.); working on outlining what would be needed in a mortality study (including engineering considerations); and further investigating whether the owners would consider full or partial decommissioning.*
6. **Michelle Shaughnessy** will provide cost comparisons for O&M of the proposed new Grand Valley fish rearing ponds versus existing ponds as soon as the value engineering study is completed. *Pending; Michelle anticipates ~\$30K increase in total costs (primarily fish food). 8/18: Current est. is an increase of \$30K to the FY 11 SOW. If a new vehicle is*

needed, another \$11K would be needed. All of this will depend on actual construction/completion dates.

7. The **Program Director's office** and **Kevin Bestgen** will work with **PI's** to identify sampling shortcomings and remedies for Green River Colorado pikeminnow population estimate and report back to the Biology Committee prior to the 2011 sampling season. *Pending.*
8. The **Program Director's office** will post the revised 2008 and 2009 nonnative fish workshop summaries to the web. *Done.* **Dave Speas** is working to tabulate the recommendations from the 2008 and 2009 workshops and outline how to implement them and the NNFSC will meet to discuss this on June 30. *Done.* In the future, the **PD's office** will quickly complete these workshop summaries and the recommendations included as part of the annual and final report summaries. *11/23: Recommendations being incorporated into basinwide nonnative fish strategy; workshop summary sent to NNFSC for review Jan. 4, comments due Jan. 19.*
9. The **Service (GJ-CRFP and the Program Director's office)** will make recommendations for how/where to manage the fish spawned this year at the Grand Valley facility and bring those back to the Biology Committee. *8/18: Will be discussed during the health condition profile meeting. The PD's office needs to schedule discussion//revision of the integrated stocking plan. 9/30: >The PD's office will set up a work group for revising the propagation plan (Krissy and Michelle will assist).*
10. The **Biology Committee** will work on prioritizing their list of potential additional capital projects at a future meeting. *Ongoing.* By September 22, **Committee members and others** who suggested capital project ideas will provide short explanatory/descriptive text (preferably just a paragraph), and then the **Committee** will decide when to take the next steps (individual ranking, group discussion of combined ranking, etc.). *UDWR comments submitted; next BC discussion pending.*
11. By June 1, the **Program Director's office** will provide a review package for Aspinall Study Plan Ad Hoc Group participants, to include: Gunnison River PBO, flow recommendations, floodplain mgmt plan, LaGory's geomorphology report, recent reports (e.g. #121 Gunnison River larval sampling), and a list of uncertainties identified in the flow recommendations, PBO, and draft EIS. *Done; ad hoc met in early June, study plan drafting is underway; next ad hoc meeting September 1-2.* The **Program Director's office** will post the summary of the June Aspinall Study Plan meeting to the fws-coloriver listserv. *Done. 11/23: Web conference held Oct. 5 & Nov. 15; draft plan pending. 12/13 review of draft: Shane Capron will provide suggested text changes. >Committee members should submit any additional detailed comments no later than January 14 (earlier, if possible) to Tom Chart and Angela Kantola and the rest of the Biology Committee. >The Program Director's office will incorporate those comments and do a thorough editorial review, then submit the revised plan to the Management Committee for their review/approval by the end of January (with Management Committee members preferably providing specific written comments IN ADVANCE of the February 16 Management Committee). >Tom Pitts will send the draft document to the water users and incorporate any of their comments with those he submits by January 14.*
12. **Sherm Hebein** will provide the Committee a copy of the output/report on CDOW's

Gunnison River work (e.g., wherein they captured seven razorback last year in sampling half of the river) as soon as he receives it. 8/18: *Sherm will send to Angela this week to distribute to the Committee.*

13. **Angela Kantola** will modify the final report format document and put a note in future scope of work formats specifying that authors are to provide electronic versions of draft final reports which can be commented on directly (via track changes or through Adobe, but preferably through track changes in Word [if a Word file like this is too large, the embedded Excel files can be compressed]). *Pending.*
14. Requirements/process for the next round of synthesis reports should be discussed by the **Nonnative Fish Subcommittee** and at the upcoming **nonnative fish workshop**. 9/30: Pat will work on the agenda for the workshop and guidance for the PI's. *Done.*
15. **Pat Martinez** will schedule a conference call among the signatories to the 2009 Nonnative Fish Stocking Procedures to discuss clarifications. *Pending.* 9/30: *Pat is first working to address the private sector concerns and issues regarding Rifle Gap management.*
16. **Pat Martinez and the PD's office** will work with the PI's to determine ETS electrofishing units to be ordered and where they'll be deployed. *In progress.*
17. **Angela Kantola** will modify the work plan budget table to reflect the changes to UDWR's scopes of work (#128 and #138). *#138 done; awaiting PI's approval to replace #128 SOW.*
18. The **Committee** will consider the proposal for fixed weirs at Ashley Creek and Stewart Lake drain a contingency at this time, get any comments on the scope of work to the PD's office, and have more discussion at/after the nonnative fish workshop.
19. **Tom Czapl**a will send out the briefing paper he received with the humpback chub genetic data to the Biology Committee (*done*). >At a future meeting, the **Committee** will discuss how this affects the Yampa River humpback chub captivity plan.
20. **Krissy Wilson** will send Utah's comments on the research framework to >Tom Czapl a who will send these and the Service's to the Biology Committee (*done*). >The **PD's office** will meet with the environmental groups (and perhaps other commenters) prior to the Biology Committee discussion/review of the framework so that the Committee can have a fairly focused discussion. *Done.* 12/13 *discussion:* The Committee decided to pursue the first option (complete the document), and then consider the next steps at the time they review the final draft. It will be helpful for folks to see the 5-Year Reviews and see what those offer (though they may not have the level of detail folks are looking for, in the future, they certainly could reference the more detailed documents). **Committee members** should provide any additional comments on the framework to the Program Director's office (and the Committee) by January 15 (four weeks was allotted in recognition that the Biology Committee *is* the peer review for this work and Biology Committee members very much need to provide a substantive review). **Tom Czapl**a will immediately provide a copy of the July version, a working link to the database referenced in the draft report, copies of the comments submitted to date, and a bold, uppercase reminder of when Committee members comments are due (January 15) (*done*).

21. **Paul Badame** will revise report #138 according to comments and any additional comments >offered by **Biology Committee members** within 2 weeks and get the revisions back to the Committee by February 1. The Committee will need to look at the recommendations again before approving the report (preferably at the next meeting). **Pat Martinez** will provide suggested language regarding the shift to other species and related food-web shift to Paul (*done*). Suggestions for any changes should be *in addition* to the current protocol, so that nothing is lost.
22. To inform discussion at the February 16 Management Committee meeting, **Pat Martinez** will draft Attachment 5 into a briefing paper addressing recommendations from the recent nonnative fish workshop that differ from the 2010 status quo (see CDOW position, below) The outline/draft will be worked on by the **Nonnative Fish Subcommittee**, then come to the **Biology Committee** for review during their January 24 web conference. Tom Pitts suggested including background about current permit conditions and any agreements made regarding maintenance of the Elkhead fishery. Tom Chart agreed, and recommended including language from the Yampa River PBO, as well. Melissa suggested including language from other relevant documents, such as the Nonnative Fish Stocking Procedures, Policy, sufficient progress letter, etc., also. CDOW's Director and Steve Guertin have discussed a seeking a complete, independent review of the Recovery Program (and perhaps beyond). Tom Pitts asked what this review is about and suggested that >**CDOW** and the **Service** offer considerably greater transparency to the rest of the Program partners about the objectives and desired outcomes regarding such a review (at least by the time of the February Management Committee); others agreed. The majority of the Biology Committee recommends ceasing translocation into Elkhead Reservoir at this time, with Colorado unable to support that recommendation (thus, >**Colorado** should provide a minority report outlining the technical basis for their position). The Committee recommended that the **Nonnative Fish Subcommittee** discuss and distill workshop recommendations before they come to the Biology Committee in future years (and the subcommittee should spend more time with the recommendations beyond what the Biology Committee did today). In future years, the **Nonnative Fish Subcommittee** should discuss and distill workshop recommendations before they come to the Biology Committee.

Assignments from review of workshop recommendations:

- a. 147: **Pat Martinez** will work with FWS to determine if they should order an ETS unit. Pat will distribute design details for raft fan-style cathodes consisting of four strands of 0.25-inch diameter stainless steel cable of a length that allows 46-inches of each cable strand to be submerged in the water while trailing the raft.
- b. Procedures: **Pat Martinez** will ask Anita Martinez to locate in the Procedures the requirement for state agencies to annually inspect screens and berms. *Done*. Sherm Hebein will provide Pat a copy of one or more of their HACCP's that can be provided as an example for the private sector.
- c. C18/19: **Pat Martinez** will get a draft SOW amendment from CSU for the Committee's consideration (contingent on available funding), with sorting out the difference between Green River and Flaming Gorge Reservoir the highest priority. *Done*.

- d. 125: The “**Team Surge**” **PI’s** will meet soon to consider recommendations to move intensive removal into other reaches (e.g., South Beach and Craig) and revise SOWs as needed and provide those in advance of the January 24 Biology Committee web conference.) *PI’s met January 13.*
 - e. 123a **UDWR** and **USFWS** will discuss moving a part of the Echo to Split 16-pass effort downstream, also considering whether people and/or reaches would be available in the Upper Yampa. *Done.*
 - f. 161: **Pat Martinez** will work with CSU to facilitate the Nonnative Fish Subcommittee beginning to interacting with Andre (in light of what Andre showed about our level of effort from his preliminary analysis at the workshop). The Subcommittee would like to ask Andre questions about things like whether we can forego population estimates. **Pat Martinez** also will send a reminder to **PI’s** this week regarding the deadline and format (with emphasis to those who are delinquent with 2009 data) (*done*).
 - g. 98a: **CDO** will address Loudy Simpson Pond berming through the Division and come back to the Biology Committee with their recommendation for berming to keep pike **currently** in the pond from escaping.
 - h. 110 & 123a: **Pat Martinez** will see if we have an isotope signature from Lake Powell (Derek Elverud in Utah may already have otoliths archived.) *Done (no); Pat requesting SOW from CSU.*
23. **Dave Speas** will talk with Heather Patno about the best way for Utah to make their proposal for a spring flushing flow from Flaming Gorge to benefit trout. **Melissa Trammell** will find out if the Park Service can support UDWR’s proposal. **Krissy Wilson** will send Matt McKell’s presentation to the Biology Committee (*done*).
24. **Michelle Shaughnessy’s staff** will spend more time with scope of work for evaluating fish condition below the Grand Valley Project fish return and get it (and a recommendation for which alternative they think would be best) back to the **Biology Committee** for discussion during the January 24 web conference.
25. Review previous meeting assignments and reports due list. The Committee did not have time to review assignments, but **Biology Committee** members will review the list and take necessary reactions. A number of reports are behind schedule and this needs to be addressed. **Committee members/PI’s** will review the reports due list and provide updates or revised due dates, as required.