

January 12, 2009

Biology Committee Draft Agenda
Doubletree Hotel, Grand Junction, Colorado
January 15, 2009

CONVENE 8:30 a. m.

1. Review/modify agenda (Irving, All; 5 min.).
2. Approve Biology Committee web conference summary for October 30-31, 2008. (All, 5 min.) *Posted to fws-coloriver listserver by Krissy Wilson on November 7.*
3. Review assignments from October meeting (Irving, All; 45 min.). *The status of assignments is annotated at the end of this agenda (please review in advance of the meeting to reduce discussion time). Note that items the Committee will discuss later during this web conference are indicated with an asterisk.*
4. Review reports due list (Kantola, All; 10 min.). *Angela Kantola provided a revised version to the listserver with the draft meeting agenda.*
5. Nonnative fish & subcommittee updates (1.5 hours)
 - a. Second level synthesis
 - b. Upper Yampa River nonnative fish management strategy (CDOW)
 - c. Outcome of nonnative fish workshop and nonnative fish session of researchers meeting
 - d. Modifications to FY 09 nonnative fish management activities and scopes of work
6. Report review (15 min.)
 - a. 123, UDWR, Green River nonnative fish management (revised draft sent to BC 12/2/08)
 - b. Not received in time; on next BC agenda.

Lunch: Noon – 1 p.m. (unless the Committee elects to work through lunch)

7. Floodplain update
 - a. Floodplain synthesis (Bestgen, 20 min)
 - b. Stirrup (Hedrick, 5 min)
 - c. Baeser (Irving, 5 min)
 8. 2009 Green River/Flaming Gorge flows (All, 10 min)
9. FY 09 work plan update (15 min.)
 - a. Update on proposal to remove small nonnative fishes from Green River backwaters

b. *Other items?*

10. FY 2010-2011 work planning schedule (Kantola, 10 min.)

- 2/1 Due from Program Director to technical committees (and their consultants and interested parties) and Management Committee:
Draft RIPRAP assessment
Draft revised RIPRAP; and
Draft FY 10-11 Program guidance (including recommendations for new, ongoing, and ongoing-revised projects).
- 2/15 Technical committees' review/recommendations on draft RIPRAP assessment, draft revised RIPRAP and draft Program Guidance due to Management Committee.
- 2/28 Management Committee review/recommendations draft RIPRAP assessment, draft revised RIPRAP and draft Program Guidance due to Implementation Committee (or IC may delegate approval to MC).
- 3/10 Implementation Committee approval by this date (if not delegated to MC).
- 3/15 Program Director issues final RIPRAP assessment, revised RIPRAP and FY 10-11 Program Guidance.
- 4/30 All (new, revised, and ongoing) FY 10-11 technical scopes of work due from principal investigators to Program Director. Coordinators begin working (with technical advisory panels and principal investigators) to review and refine technical scopes of work and develop recommended FY 10-11 technical work plans.

11. Schedule next meeting (All, 10 min.).

ADJOURN by 1:45 p.m.

Attachment 1

Assignments carried over or modified from previous meetings:

1. Tom Czapla will work to get the questions regarding what hatchery repairs are needed at Grand Valley resolved as soon as possible. *10/31: Grand Junction working to get cost estimates; \$44.4K funds placeheld. 1/17: Chuck said that a larger de-humidifier would be too costly; their current plan is to repair the walls so they can withstand the humidity. The Biology Committee expressed interest in a full solution. >Chuck will provide the full estimate to Tom Czapla. >Bob Muth will discuss the possibility of using capital funds with Brent Uilenberg. 2/15: Reclamation & FWS working on getting this contracted; dehumidifier will be installed first, then walls will be repaired. 3/31: Reclamation waiting for report from an HVAC mechanical engineer on what's needed for dehumidification. Due to oil and gas activity in the Valley, they've had difficulty getting anyone to work on this relatively small project. 6/13: Contractor visited site June 5; appraisal study pending. 7/22: Report and initial cost estimate provided mid-July; BOR & USFWS discussing construction and contracting options. Tom Czapla said Reclamation likely will contract the planned building refurbishment (insulation, dehumidifiers, etc.) with assistance from FWS Engineering; with the goal of getting bids by the end of the calendar year.*
2. Tom Nesler will see if CDOW can provide a report on Billy Atkinson's work on pike in Catamount and the river below. Update provided at nonnative fish workshop; workshop participants recommended CDOW provide some kind of management plan. *1/17: Billy will provide a Catamount pike removal document/strategy by the end of February. 4/15: Nesler will provide update at BC. 4/28: Tom has reminded Billy that this is overdue and will try to get it to the BC as soon as possible. 6/13: Nesler just received the draft today and will provide it to the BC by the end of July. 8/18: Tom Nesler will provide Billy Atkinson's upper Yampa "strategy" report to the Biology Committee by September 18 (Nesler's and Chart's birthday). 10/30: Tom Nesler and Sherm Hebein will revise Billy's report and provide that to the Recovery Program (Biology Committee, NNFSC, PI's, etc.) along with an outline of CDOW's strategy for nonnative fish management in the Yampa River above the diversions for discussion as part of the nonnative fish workshop. Tom Chart said it would be very helpful to have that outline before the December. 9-10 workshop. Sherm noted that Billy removed >2,000 np from Catamount this year (>4,000 np total).*
3. 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, and then clean it out once and for all. *2/15, 4/15: Pending. 4/28: Chart has discussed with Nesler and with the Partners for Wildlife Program, also. Will focus on this summer/fall. 6/13: CDOW will be contacting the landowner regarding access, if they are amenable, then CDOW and Program will determine a feasible solution (before the end of spring runoff). 8/18: Tom Chart said Sherm will try to get someone from CDOW on this as soon as possible. The Biology Committee would like a date certain on this; >Sherm Hebein will accelerate this. 10/30 said 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 of berm (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.

4. Tom Chart will review the latest draft of the nonnative fish stocking procedures and get comments back to the States no later than February 15, then Krissy, Kevin, Tom, and the Service will submit it for agency review (one month review time). 2/15: *Dates need to be modified.* 4/14: *Group discussing a few more revisions before seeking agency approval.* 4/28: *Krissy said a bill passed in Utah's latest legislative session (the Aquaculture Revitalization Act) took away Utah's ability to issue a COR to anyone with a private pond; Krissy will provide language incorporating that within two weeks. Kevin Gelwicks should have comments back from Wyoming by early June, but doesn't expect anything substantive, and will try to expedite their comments. Tom Chart said Tom Nesler realized we may have missed stipulations that would apply to private pond owners within critical habitat outside the 100-year floodplain. Krissy will review that; she thought that a private pond outside the 100-year floodplain would still be covered if it had the potential to connect. Melissa suggested including language regarding extending and revising the document; Tom Nesler said we're on a 5-year revision schedule.* 6/13: *A subgroup met yesterday, Wyoming has reviewed and provided comments, and Utah also has reviewed it. Further streamlining is underway.* 7/11: *Utah and Wyoming have reviewed; Colorado and FWS reviewing (FWS comments due 9/5/08). Colorado has shared the draft Procedures with their legal counsel and expects to provide any comments within two weeks. Krissy said Utah's legal counsel still needs to review this.* 10/16: *The PD's office is responding to Wyoming's recent comments, then will send these revisions to the States and Service for review, with the goal of beginning the surnaming process in November.* 10/30: *Tom said Bob Muth sent the revised stocking procedures to the States and the Service on October 22. Krissy said Utah has some new concerns about moving fish from one body to another and potentially spreading quagga mussels. >UDWR will provide draft language for review. Dave Irving said we also need to be sure we're not transferring mussels on equipment. Colorado and Utah have equipment-cleaning protocol in place. Sherm said they're using Sparquat for disinfection and Krissy said UDWR is using Quat128. Tom Nesler added that where the draft Procedures suggest certain stocking may become routine, we need to consider potential mussel transfer.*
5. Researchers are to submit all their nonnative fish data to Chuck McAda by April 1 (the Program Director's office will send out an e-mail notification on this). 4/28: *Tom Chart said Chuck had only received data from Tim Modde ten days ago. Trina said they're making sure their data is in the right format. Tom Chart said that at a minimum, he would like the data sent to Chuck even if it's in the old format. >Tom Nesler will check on Lori's data; >Krissy will check on Moab's data. All the data on captured nonnative fish should be submitted, not just data on tagged fish; >Chuck will make sure the correct data are submitted and work with principal investigators if anything is missing.* 6/13: *Krissy said Utah has submitted their data. Tom Chart said Tim Modde submitted Vernal's data; Tom will get with Chuck to determine what data are still needed and e-mail the PI's. Tom Nesler will check on Lori's data. Sherm suggested cross-checking with CDOW's data system to be sure all data is in both places (Chuck's database and CDOW's).* 7/11: *Data have been submitted by Vernal CRFP, Badame, Hedrick, Hawkins, Bestgen, Bestgen/Zelasko and Burdick.* 4 August 2008: *Harry Vermillion submitted an extract from ADAMAS in the appropriate format to Chuck McAda on August 4th. The extract included Colorado River data from 2003 and 2007; Gunnison River data from 2007; and Yampa River data from years 2004 - 2007.* 8/18: *>Chuck will send the most recent version of the database to the NNFSC; and the NNFSC*

will review status of the data with Chuck and Travis after the Biology Committee meeting. 10/30: Tom Chart said the NNFSC will follow-up on this at the workshop, most of the data are in; we need to determine how quickly we can get the 2008 data added.

6. The Program Director's office will modify Rich Valdez' technical assistance scope of work as needed to accommodate the initial work on the second-level nonnative fish management synthesis. 4/14, 6/13, 7/25, 8/18: *Pending.*
7. Tom Nesler will check on the status of revision of the Yampa River Aquatic Management Plan. 4/14: *Colorado's new completion date is May 1, 2009. (In the interim, CDOW will need to produce an Upper Yampa River strategy to assist the Program in our prioritization of 2009 field activities. This strategy should ultimately be incorporated into the Aquatic Wildlife Management Plan for the Yampa River Basin. 4/28: Tom Nesler said they don't plan to provide a formal strategy, but will describe what they [primarily Billy Atkinson] are doing down through Steamboat and with regard to isolating sloughs in Sam Finney's reach. See #3, above.)*
8. The PD's office needs to schedule a humpback chub population monitoring workshop. *Pending (the Program Director's office will discuss this with Rich Valdez); a workshop might also include discussion of humpback chub broodstock. 10/30: Tom Czapla said this is still pending. He would like to see the workshop address the issue of first acceptable population estimates.*
9. The Program Director's office and CDOW will send letters of thanks to Sherriff Tim Jantz for the use of the Craig Justice Center Ponds for nonnative fish translocation. *Pending.*
10. 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 1/5: ~~November~~ February.*
11. Dave Irving will call the Mantle Ranch landowner to give him an update on work to raise *Gila* in captivity (since the Ranch's cooperation made it possible for the Service to get the fish out to the hatchery quickly). 10/30: *Dave Irving sent him a letter.* CDOW and the Park need to discuss the future of the captive *Gila* in light of plans for those fish as broodstock under Three Species conservation and Colorado's Management Use agreement with the Park (Tom Nesler and Melissa will work on this). 10/30: *Pending.* The Program Director's office will move forward to establish a Yampa River humpback chub broodstock using young fish. Tom Czapla will work with Melissa on a letter to the Park. 10/30: *Pending. Tom Czapla said he's been drafting a refuge/broodstock plan for discussion within the Service, then for sharing with the Park Service and the Recovery Program. Tom Nesler and Krissy Wilson also are working on related roundtail plans.*
12. Tom Czapla will work with Krissy Wilson and Paul Badame to finalize the Cataract

humpback chub scope of work and include some seining during this work to look for bonytail reproduction. Krissy will ask Paul to review the “probable violations of modeling assumptions” language, which may be incorrect. 10/30: Krissy re-sent Paul’s 8/28 e-mail which has the revised version of the scope of work; the Program Director’s office will post that version to the website. 12/30: Done.

13. Angela Kantola will send out a revised reports due list. Done.
14. Biology Committee members will provide comments on the nonnative fish priorities document by December 1 (and the NNFSC can discuss this as part of their December 12 meeting).
15. Tom Chart will provide last year’s presentations to the BC and PI’s (either on an FTP site or on a website). Tom also will work with the PI’s to draft a workshop agenda, and then send that to the Biology Committee for review. Done.
16. Biology Committee members are invited to provide questions/expectations for the 2nd level synthesis to Tom Chart by November 28. The NNFSC will have a conference call at 8:30 a.m. on December 1 to further discuss the RFP.
17. Leisa Monroe will work with Tildon Jones and Paul Badame to revise the #123 report fairly quickly (and will give Tom Chart a due date – hopefully that date will be no later than December 1).
18. John Hawkins will talk to Grant Wilcox in CDOW’s Fort Collins office to see if smallmouth bass movement data can be mapped.
19. John Hawkins will revise the #125 report (in discussion with the commenters), and provide a copy to the Committee by January 5 so they can review and approve it at their January 15 meeting.
20. Krissy Wilson will work with Zane Olsen to make sure that Wahweap’s budget for FY 09 is accurate.
21. Trina Hedrick, Dave Irving, et al. will prepare a rough draft SOW for removal of small nonnative fishes in the Green River in advance of the nonnative fish workshop.