

**Biology Committee Meeting Agenda, Thursday-Friday, February 20-21, 2014
445 West Gunnison Avenue, Grand Junction, Colorado**

Thursday, February 20

CONVENE: 8:00 a.m.

1. Review/modify agenda (Speas, 5 min)
2. Tusher Wash update and discussion of need for interim prevention of entrainment (McAbee, 45 min)
3. Nonnative fish
 - a. Rapid response to Ridgway Reservoir smallmouth bass (Crockett, McAbee, 20 min) – *Review of discussion of rapid response (e.g., preventing spill) to illegally introduced smallmouth bass documented last year in Ridgway Reservoir*
 - b. Otoliths (McAbee, 5 min)
 - c. Smallmouth bass projection tool update (McAbee, 5 min)

BREAK (10 min)

4. 2014 Work Plan adjustments (PD, All, 45 min)
 - a. Evaluation of Green River flow and temperature recommendations?
 - b. Nonnative fish:
 - i. Pike removal by CSU in the “98c” reach (\$?)
 - ii. 123a walleye removal (~\$25K?)
 - iii. 123a bass surge optimization (Jones & Howard, \$0)
 - iv. 123b walleye removal in lieu of bass pass (Breen, \$0)
 - v. 167 White River smallmouth bass additional pass (Breen, \$~8800)
 - c. Jackson Gross pilot study with CSU (Crockett)
 - d. Humpback chub genetics (\$37K)
 - e. Ouray NFH electrical repairs? (Capital? FWS?)
 - f. Database management (\$150K [\$100K UC, \$50K SJ?])
 - g. Green River razorback population estimate?

BREAK (10 min)

5. Review draft revised RIPRAP, RIPRAP assessment (Kantola, all, remainder of day) – *The Committee will review and comment on: the draft revised RIPRAP (tables and text) and draft RIPRAP assessment (see RIPRAP tables) posted to the fws-coloriver listserv on 2/6/14.*

LUNCH (11:30 – 12:15)

6. RIPRAP review, continued

ADJOURN: 4:00 p.m.

Friday, February 21

CONVENE: 8:00 a.m.

7. FY 15 Work Plan review/adjustments (Kantola, all 45 min)
8. Flaming Gorge Flow request letter, initial FWTWG meeting update (Chart, 20 min.)
9. Review previous meeting assignments (All, 15 min) – *See Attachment 1.*
10. Review reports due list. (All, 10 min) – *Angela Kantola sent an updated list to the Biology Committee with this agenda.*
11. Schedule next meeting and outline agenda (All, 5 min)
12. Review and approve January 16, 2014, Biology Committee meeting summary (All, 10 min) – *Comments were received from Pete Cavalli and Dave Speas A track changes revised draft was sent to the Biology Committee with this agenda.*

ADJOURN: By 12:00 p.m.

Attachment 1: Assignments

(Asterisked items were on the meeting agenda; items preceded by a “-“ can be deleted after this summary)

Note: the order of some assignments has been changed to group similar items together. For earlier history of items preceded by an ampersand “&”, please see [previous meeting summaries](#).

1. *& Tusher Wash Screening: 1/26/12: **Tom Czapla, Dave Speas and Kevin McAbee** will draft a Tusher Wash mortality study and literature review RFP (or similar) for review by folks who would not be submitting a proposal. 7/12/12: *no proposals were submitted in response to the RFP, >the ad hoc committee will work on completing the literature search portion of the mortality study (which will aid the discussion in the biological opinion). Need to assign lead.*
 - The **Biology Committee** will review Jackson Gross’s proposed scope of work (to evaluate potential e-barrier impacts) (done). **Tom Czapla** will work with **Kevin McAbee** and **Dave Speas** (and keep Tom Pitts in the loop) on developing a recommendation for how to accomplish Objective 1 of the proposal (determine the minimum electric gradients needed to prevent downstream passage while minimizing the risk of injury). 11/1: *Kevin sent list of BC/PDO questions, comments, and ideas to make the proposal for Obj. 1 more complete to Jackson Gross (who responded he’d begin laying out a strategy to answer the questions). Smith-Root/Program will discuss if this study needs to be accomplished before e-barrier installation (to determine potential effectiveness levels, barrier configuration, or velocity requirements) or only after installation (to determine effective electrical gradients for an existing e-barrier design and structure).*
 2. & Revise the Integrated Stocking Plan (ISP) and related issues. **Tom Czapla** is convening a group to revise the ISP.
 - 9/27/12: *Revised draft ISP sent to ad hoc group by 9/27/12; comments due by the end of October. 5/2/13: Comments received from Zelasko, Wilson and Cavalli; 7/10/13: Czapla will incorporate comments and try to have to Biology Committee by end of July 2013. 9/27/13: Czapla sent revised draft to Committee for review July 31; Cavalli comments submitted September 26, McAbee September 27; 10/10/13 Tom Czapla incorporated comments and sent to Biology Committee). 1/16/14: **Krissy Wilson** will complete her portion by the end of February and the small group will get it in shape to send it to the Committee.*
- Humpback Chub (population estimates)
- 3/7/13: **Program Director’s office** will check with Kevin Bestgen on a revised due date for the humpback chub combined population estimate from Gary White. 3/14/13: *LFL will turn this around as quickly as possible after they receive the most recent data from the Service (scheduled for 3/19/13). 3/19/13: The **Program Director’s office** will discuss with Kevin Bestgen what it would take to use the 131 analysis of Westwater/Black Rocks to identify clues as to early life history dynamics and recruitment failure. >**Dale Ryden** will provide revised due date. 6/28/13: Three reports are pending: a 2011-2012 Black Rocks report, a 2011-2012 Westwater report, and a 1998-2012 combined analysis report. Previous discussion indicated the combined analysis would be provided by LFL and tacked onto the Black Rocks report, but it doesn't fit neatly into either the 2011-2012 Black Rocks or 2011-2012*

Westwater reports because it has data from both. Further, Grand Junction CRFP's SOW only covered writing a Black Rocks report, not a combined report. 10/10/13: Biology Committee will discuss later after Kevin, Travis et. al recommends how to proceed with reporting (after Travis completes this year's fieldwork). 1/16/14: What Kevin Bestgen presented was the joint report and parts of it will appear in the individual reports. A young-of-year sampling effort may need to be added back to the fieldwork.

&Humpback Chub (broodstock development / genetics)

- *3/6/12: **Tom Czapl**a will remind the humpback chub genetics ad hoc group to submit comments (7/13/12 comments still pending). 1/17/13: Some comments received and incorporated; comments still pending from **Trammell**.*
 - **As identified in the 2012 sufficient progress assessment and requested by the Management Committee, the **Program** will develop an action plan for establishing refugia for humpback chub (avoiding getting bogged down in genetic analysis). Mike Roberts has recommended building in limiting factor/life history studies to better understand what's going on in the system that's affecting humpback chub populations. 5/2/13: **Program Director's Office** will provide outline to Biology Committee in advance of the July 10, 2013, meeting. 7/10/13: **PDO** will forward the document that a smaller group has worked on and the Biology Committee will discuss in October 2013 (discussed 1/16/14). Tom Czapl received comments on the draft from Dave and Tildon and is trying to reach Wade Wilson regarding his genetics work on the fin clips we've provided. **Dave Speas and Tom Chart** will see if a deliverable on Upper Basin fin clips was mentioned in Wade Wilson's Lower Basin scope of work). After Wayne's report is received, a workshop should be held to include discussion of when and where fish would be stocked. Tom Chart recommended outlining questions for a workshop, conducting the workshop, and then finalizing the action plan.*
 - *10/16/12: Age-0 Gila from Westwater were going to be brought to the Horsethief Canyon ponds this fall, but river conditions won't allow safe transport until spring (timing will depend on hydrology). Tissue samples from those humpback and fin clips collected from humpback in the field in 2012 will be analyzed by Wade Wilson to provide information needed to determine if we can use local humpback chub for broodstock development, if needed, or if we will need to incorporate fish from the backup broodstock at Dexter NFH (from the Grand Canyon). Fish will be brought in fall 2013. 10/10/13: Dale said they brought ~40 fish they caught into ponds, but have less than a dozen at this point. They will try to build these numbers in future years if the Biology Committee supports that (1/16/14: the Committee supports this).*
3. & Flaming Gorge/Green R burbot: **Melissa Trammell and Pat Martinez and Krissy Wilson and Jerry Wilhite** will work on a Flaming Gorge burbot risk assessment. 10/16/12: They held a conference call August 30 and October 15; will have another call November 20, and Melissa will present something to the nonnative fish workshop (done). UDWR is funding two studies (food web and early life history). Late this season, Tildon tried baited hoop nets and other methods in the Green River and did not capture burbot. 12/7/12: **Melissa** will provide a draft to the ad hoc committee members in early February. 1/29/13: **Melissa** asked if **UDWR** could include larval burbot sampling near the spillway in their current work in Flaming Gorge; **Krissy** thought they could. Tildon asked and **Krissy** said they're not doing any sampling in the tailrace for burbot. **Melissa** will provide a draft assessment to the Committee by the end of July 2013. 1/16/14 – **Melissa** assured she'll have this done by the

end of February 2014.

4. & Nonnative fish management follow-up:

- **Melissa Trammell** offered to work with **Travis** in summer 2013 and report other nonnative fish data (e.g. gizzard shad, nonnative fish captured during Colorado pikeminnow estimates to the Committee each year). The **Program Director's Office (Pat)** will provide specific protocol for handling nonnative fish during other work like Colorado pikeminnow estimates (i.e., which species to target, measure, take otoliths from, etc.) and reporting the data (5/2/13: *done; main question was when to take otoliths and Pat has informed PIs to take otoliths from new species or new occurrences of established species in new areas*). Walleye, pike, gizzard shad, and other anomalous fish all should be removed. The **Committee** will review the report Melissa provides in working with Travis and then discuss what further analysis may be needed.
- In 2013, population estimates for smallmouth bass will only occur in Project 125. The **Committee** will reconsider resuming the smallmouth bass population estimates throughout the current Yampa River population estimate reaches in 2014, based on an analysis from André. 1/16/14: *To be revisited after workshop on projection tool*
- The **Committee** agreed to suspend all mark / release of northern pike Program-wide in 2013. They made a **firm agreement** to revisit this issue (northern pike population estimates) when results of the northern pike synthesis are available.
- **Harry Crockett** will check to see if Colorado's Parks folks might be interested in administering a harvest incentive program. 7/10/13: *response pending*. 10/10/13: *Harry said CPW is open to considering this in some situations and will discuss further with the Program Director's office (Kevin McAbee, Harry, and Vernal CRFP to discuss and consider bringing proposal on this and a potential White River incentive program to the nonnative fish workshop)*. 1/16/14: *Harry said CPW is discussing this and thinks it may be implemented in one or more places in 2014 (though not on the White River)*.
- ***98c & Upper Yampa: Potential PIs** and the Biology Committee will discuss possibilities for 2014 and make a recommendation for consideration during the 2013 nonnative fish workshop. **Colorado Parks and Wildlife** will review landowner permission for access. Meanwhile, **Harry** also will see if by any chance Billy could add an electrofishing pass from Steamboat to Hayden to the 98c work they've been funding (in 2013). 5/2/13: *The 2-3 passes in the upper third of 98c that were done last year will be repeated this year, but Harry doesn't know yet if they'll have landowner permission to work in the remainder of the reach. Three to four times as many pike were collected in 2004-2005 in the upper third of the reach where CPW knows they can sample, however.* 7/10/13 – *Harry said they worked the upper reach, but won't be able to access the lower reach this year.* 1/16/14 – *Harry thinks this electrofishing pass needs to be done, but they can't do it without funding due to their budget cuts; CPW is amenable to FWS doing this work.* >**Kevin McAbee** will coordinate with **CPW** and **FWS PIs** to provide a draft proposal (from CPW or FWS or both) for Committee review.
- ***Walleye: UDWR** will modify their proposed addendum to 123a and submit it to the Committee for discussion and approval (via e-mail, if possible). >**Kevin McAbee and Paul Badame** will work on organizing a "walleye summit" with appropriate outside expertise. **PI's** should fully document walleye captures (date/time, length/weight, and river mile). >Protocol for otolith collection is needed before field season begins.

- ***Kevin McAbee** will send out a Doodle poll to schedule a webinar for André Breton to walk folks through the smallmouth bass projection tool. A follow-up face-to-face meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 18 in Grand Junction. *Done.*
 - Walton Creek: Action items after the site visit were to determine if fill material is available and what topography information is available; **Harry Crockett** will provide follow-up on this.
 - *Private (LaFarge) Pond near Rifle: **Harry Crockett** will find out if the landowner will allow and if CPW can reclaim the pond before spring runoff; >**Tom Chart** will coordinate with **Harry** and **Brent Uilenberg/Bob Norman** on repairing the notches.
 - Starvation Reservoir escapement: The **Committee** will hear more about escapement control options once the **strategy work group** can discuss **Reclamation**'s evaluation. **Dave Speas** will see if he can find out when USBR-Provo will provide their evaluation; **Krissy Wilson and Paul Badame** will call for a follow-up meeting (will include CUWCD). **Paul Badame** will send Tom Pitts his presentation, his report, and the 2005 escapement report and then schedule a call with Tom to review.
5. *Database Management: The **Program Director's office** will work to define the overall problem/need to improve data management in light of the increased PIT antenna data, draft an overall schedule, and bring that back to the Committee in advance of the December meeting for discussion. 3/8/13: *PD's office provided draft prior to the March Biology Committee meeting. Tom Czapla will work with Scott Durst, Travis Francis, and Kevin Bestgen, to develop a problem statement. 5/2/13: Conference call scheduled for May 24. Dave Speas will talk to Mark McKinstry about collaborating with this group to develop a scope of work. 10/10/13: Travis Francis, Koreen Zelasko, Scott Durst, Tom Czapla and Dave Speas have held -3 conference calls developed list of requirements. They're reviewing a draft RFP that will go to the Biology Committee, perhaps by the end of next week (sent to Committee 11/8/13). 1/16/14: Committee members should quickly send Dave Speas any additional comments regarding what they want incorporated in the FOA.*
 6. **The Program Director's office** will work with States to compile all the Lake Management Plans. *Pending — McAbee. (Krissy said she believes she submitted information to Pat in the past, but can do so again).*
 7. ***The PD's office** will work with **Harry Crockett, Krissy Wilson, Dale Ryden, and Pete Cavalli** to review the otolith analysis situation and make recommendations for FY14-15. *Deferred pending available funding. >Dave Speas will discuss with Bill Pine, who has a source(s) for this work.*
 8. After the nonnative fish workshop, the **Program Director's office** will recommend boilerplate language (including identifying reduction targets) to be used across applicable nonnative fish management scopes of work. *Pending.*
 9. ***Kevin Bestgen** and **Dale Ryden** will work up estimated costs for addressing additional razorback data being collected (need for additional data analysis on both Green and Colorado rivers). *Dale said Kevin wants to wait until after the end of the field season to ascertain the number of records to be analyzed (probably ~150,000 fish records). This may be a fairly involved effort. 2/6/14: FWS project #163 has task for razorback pop. est. in Gunnison and Colorado, though not enough razorback captures/recaptures to do much with the Gunnison*

River data. Osmundson developed razorback matrix for 2008-2010 and Gary White ran this data through Program MARK in 2013 (data to be reported in 2015). PIs recommend also including 2013 razorback data (from the Colorado River pikeminnow population estimate study) in this analysis (\$2K in SOW for White to help with data analysis in 2015, adding 2013 razorback data shouldn't add to cost). Developing razorback population estimates in the Green and Yampa will be more difficult, probably not in existing SOWs, and probably should be separate effort. PD's office will discuss costs/mechanism (e.g., add-on to #128) with LFL.

10. **Dale Ryden and Harry Crockett** will work on next steps for the electrofishing course to be held at Highline Lake the third week of August (updated roster of boats and attendees, etc.).
11. **Brett Johnson** will draft revisions to the Project C-18/19 final report for **Dave Speas'** review, then he and Dave will propose revised language to the Committee via e-mail. >Dave also will send a few comments to **Kevin McAbee** who will work with Brett to see if they can be reasonably addressed. Kevin will summarize any changes made and seek Committee approval via e-mail.
12. The **Program Director's office** will find out if there are ways Program partners can support the CRI proposal for the proposed work by FWS at Johnson Bottom on the Ouray National Wildlife Refuge.