

Biology Committee Revised Draft Agenda
[Clarion Inn](#), Grand Junction, CO, 2011

Tuesday, March 1

CONVENE: 1:00 p.m.

1. Review/modify agenda (Trammell; 5 min)
2. Nonnative fish management activities (1 hour)
 - a. Overview of final white paper (Chart, Martinez)
 - b. Discussion of northern pike synthesis (Martinez, Crockett)
 - c. General discussion of modeling and structured decision making (Martinez, Crockett)
 - d. CDOW's "bucket list" (Crockett)
3. Discussion of Flaming Gorge spring and base flows (Speas/Wilson/Chart/Capron, 30 min)
4. Price River (Chart, 30 min) – *Discuss comments & future direction (Amy Defreese, USFWS Ecological Service, ES will join by phone.)*
5. PD update on Aspinall Study Plan (Chart, 10 min)

10 minute break

6. Review of proposal to evaluate fish survival in GVP screen fish return (Ryden or Francis, 20 min)
7. Brief review of Price-Stubb PIT tag results and data interpretation as it relates to direction of fish movement (Ryden, 20 min)
8. Clarification of information needs for Tusher Wash (Speas, 15 min)
9. Discussion regarding stocking fewer, larger razorback for the next few years given the decrease in grow-out ponds in the Grand Valley (Schnoor, 20 min) – *Dave Schnoor wants to make sure everyone understands what this decision means on the ground. (In particular, for FY11 what to do with the excess fish that the hatchery is already rearing.)*
10. Discussion of water source for Ouray NFH Randlett Unit (possibility of using some capital funds to purchase filters or perhaps finding a different water source). (Schnoor, 10 min)

ADJOURN 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 2

CONVENE: 8:00 a.m.

11. Implications of recent humpback chub genetic results for humpback chub captivity plan and potential propagation needs (Czapla, 30 min)
12. Review draft revised RIPRAP and RIPRAP assessment and draft FY 12-13 Program Guidance (posted to fws-coloriver listserver by Angela Kantola on February 3) (Kantola, all, 5 hours) – After a presentation of the RIPRAP Treasure Hunt prize, the Committee will review and comment on:
 - a. the draft revised RIPRAP (tables and text)
 - b. draft RIPRAP assessment (see RIPRAP tables) ; and
 - c. draft FY 12-13 Program Guidance

Includes 10 minute break

LUNCH 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Continued until 2:30 p.m.: Review of RIPRAP and Program Guidance

13. ~~Brief discussion of capital projects prioritization~~ (Trammell, 15 min) *Defer to future meeting based on limited funds availability.*
 14. Final review/approval of UDWR's #138 report (Wilson, 15 min)
- 10 Minute Break*
15. Review/approval of revised research framework report (Czapla, 30 min)
 16. Review and approve [January 24, 2011, web conference summary](#); review previous meeting assignments (see Attachment 1) (All, 30 min)
 17. Review [reports due list](#). (All, 15 min)
 18. Schedule next meeting and outline agenda (All, 10 min)

ADJOURN 4:30 p.m.

Attachment 1: Assignments
(Asterisked items also on meeting agenda)

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~~ March 15, 2011. 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. UDWR may submit a Price River PIT tag proposal for "activities to avoid jeopardy" funding.*

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~~. May 6, 2011.*
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). 1/24/11: Michelle said this will go to Gary White by the end of April 2011.*
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. 1/24/11: >**Dave Speas** will talk to Reclamation's Tech Center about working on these items.**

6. 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. *1/31/11: Kevin Bestgen contacted (Jones, Osmundson, Hawkins) and will contact Hedrick and Badame. Cameron Walford will coordinate some of this activity. A key point is to seek ways to increase capture rates of pikeminnow at least to those levels achieved from 2000-2003.*
7. 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. 1/24/11: The Biology Committee extended this date to January 31.*
8. 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). 1/24/11: Pending, Krissy thought a meeting could occur in conjunction with a meeting at Dexter (likely in March).*
9. 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.*
10. **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.*
11. **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.*
12. **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.*
13. **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. *Done.*

14. **Angela Kantola** will modify the work plan budget table to reflect the changes to UDWR's scopes of work (#128 and #138). *Done.*
15. 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. *Will be considered in context of RIPRAP revisions and FY 12-13 Program Guidance. Dave Speas said an RFP for "activities to avoid jeopardy" funds will be out in the next month or so and may be a source of funding for weirs; Dave Speas will post that RFP to the listserv when it comes out. UDWR will keep the Program Director's office in the loop on this.*
16. ***Tom Czapl**a will send out the briefing paper he received with the humpback chub genetic data to the Biology Committee (*done*). >At the March 2011 meeting, the **Committee** will discuss how this affects the Yampa River humpback chub captivity plan. **Melissa Trammell** will review Dexter's new plan to see if it may impact this (*also will talk to Tom Czapl*)
17. ***Krissy Wilson** will send Utah's comments on the research framework to >Tom Czapl 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*). *1/24/11: The Program Director's office will revise the document based on comments received to date and provide it to the Biology Committee in advance of the March meeting for final review/approval. Committee discussion will include recommendations and future direction.*
18. ***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. *1/24/11: Revised draft should be out this week.*
19. 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).

Done. 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. *Done.* 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) (*Colorado subsequently agreed to support three of the four recommendations in the draft white paper*). 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. *1/24/11: Pat Martinez will make the requested changes to the white paper and provide it to the Management Committee by February 2.* *Done.* As part of this, Pat will:

- Consider Harry's comment on the lower recapture rate.
- See if he can get the numbers for a "mini risk assessment" to bracket the probable escapement range through 2009 (prior to the Management Committee meeting).
- Make the analysis of propagule pressure more explicit by clearly outlining what it took to establish invasive species in various places in the basin (perhaps in the second bullet on page 3)
- Work with the PI's to try to get a better handle on translocation costs (see below)
- Add that if CDOW is willing to assume costs and time (with non-Program) funds, continued translocation into Kyle's Pond will be acceptable (although we will need to continue to monitor escapement).
- Clean up the small and differing fonts

Tom Chart asked **Harry Crockett** to request that CDOW have a representative at the Management Committee for this discussion; >Harry will make that request. *Done.*

Harry Crockett will discuss with Colorado whether they would suspend their translocation requirement for smallmouth bass during the extended surge period. *Done.*

Assignments from review of workshop recommendations:

- a. 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. *Pending. Pete provided Pat an example from Wyoming.*

- b. 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. *Pending. 1/24/11: Harry Crockett* will ask if Colorado can provide an estimate of the cost of translocation efforts to Pat (it doesn't have to be in the SOW).
 - c. *1/24/11: John Hawkins* will separate out the costs of all translocation (split out for pike and smallmouth bass) efforts to Pat (it doesn't have to be in the SOW).
 - d. *1/24/11:* With regard to the discussion about crayfish versus otolith signatures, **Pat Martinez** will send the Committee a note on the question Pete raised about Figure 1 in Brett's scope of work.
20. ***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. *1/24/11: Travis said the draft SOW was based on a similar situation on the Yakima River, but the assumptions need to be tested, so Travis recommends conducting a test this year with surrogate white suckers (alternative #3, ~\$18K). Travis Francis* will review with **Bob Norman** and provide a revised SOW showing alternative #3 at least 2 weeks in advance of the March Biology Committee meeting.
21. ***Dave Speas** will find out what Scott Miller at USU is planning with regard to assessing success of Flaming Gorge flushing flows. With regard to Dave Speas question as to whether the Service will view the Flaming Gorge flow request differently in light of the requested flushing flows for trout; **>Tom Chart** will ask Larry Crist , but noted that the Program might be requesting something similar if the floodplain synthesis report were complete.
22. ***Angela Kantola** will send out an updated reports due list. *Done.*
23. ***Harry Crockett** will send the Committee CDOW's "bucket list" of nonnative fish management activities in advance of the March 1 meeting. *Done.*
24. **In advance of the March 1 meeting, Grand Junction CRFP* will send the Biology Committee information on Price-Stubbs PIT tag results and data interpretation as it relates to direction of fish movement.