

Biology Committee Draft Webinar Agenda  
May 13, 2011

**CONVENE: 8:00 a.m.**

1. Review/modify agenda (Trammell; 5 min)
2. Review of remaining 2011 scopes of work (All, 45 min)
  - a. Northern pike synthesis (Bestgen) – *This draft SOW will be e-mailed to Committee members in advance of the webinar.*
  - b. Gunnison fish community sampling (Osmundson) – *E-mailed to Committee on 4/29/11 by Tom Chart.*
3. Review of draft final reports (All, 1hr 15 min)
  - a. Zelasko final report #159 (additional analysis of stocked razorback sucker survival) *E-mailed to Committee on 2/28/11 by Tom Czapla. Files may be downloaded from [http://www.fws.gov/filedownloads/ftp\\_region6\\_upload/Czapla/Project%20159%20Stocked%20RBS%20Analysis/](http://www.fws.gov/filedownloads/ftp_region6_upload/Czapla/Project%20159%20Stocked%20RBS%20Analysis/)*
  - b. 2007-2008 Black Rocks humpback chub population estimate report – *E-mailed to Committee on 3/14/11 and 4/29/11 by Tom Czapla.*

**10 minute break**

4. Discussion of Research Framework report (finalized) recommendations and future direction (All, 20 min)– *The final research framework report was e-mailed to the Committee on April 28, 2011, by Tom Czapla; however the Committee still needs to have a discussion of the recommendations and any future direction.*
5. Demonstration of the CWCB laserfiche website which houses Program technical reports (Kantola, 10 min) – *Angela Kantola will demonstrate use of the [CWCB laserfiche site](#). The Program Director's office still needs to implement a process for submitting and posting new technical reports to the laserfiche site (new reports are also available at <http://www.coloradoriverrecovery.org/documents-publications/technical-reports/technical-reports.html>), but the laserfiche site is helpful for searching the body of reports and other literature compiled on the endangered fishes and the Recovery Program over the years.*
6. Review previous meeting assignments (see Attachment 1) (All, 20 min)
7. Review reports due list (All, 10 min) – *Angela Kantola will e-mail the Committee an updated list in advance of the webinar.*
8. Updates – TBD (all, 30 min)
  - a. *Maybell antenna*
  - b. *Hydrology*

c. *Peak flow science plan*

***Break/Lunch if needed***

9. Next meeting (All, 5 min) – *The next Committee meeting will be in Denver, at the [Country Inn and Suites](#) near DIA, July 11 – 12, beginning at 10:30 a.m. on the 11<sup>th</sup> and concluding by 3:00 p.m. on the 12<sup>th</sup> (NOTE: the Committee had suggested the meeting adjourn earlier on the 12<sup>th</sup>, but the PD's office foresees that more time will be needed with the FY 12-13 work plan on the agenda). Agenda items will include:*
- *review of revised Price River report*
  - *review of FP-Synth/22f report*
  - *Review of draft FY 12-13 work plan*
10. Consent items: Review and approve [January 24, 2011 webinar summary](#) and [March 1-2, 2011 meeting summary](#): *As these are consent items, Committee members are to communicate any items of concern to Angela Kantola in advance of the meeting.*

***ADJOURN 2:00 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). 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 careful 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 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. 3/11/11: Harry Crockett provided a list of habitats CDOW would like to work on (attachment 3 to [March 1-2, 2011 BC meeting summary](#)). A rapidly eroding bank at the Yampa SWA is the highest priority, but CDOW can't access funds to stabilize it until July 1. **Harry and Dave Speas** will talk with Brent Uilenberg about the possibility of getting capital funds; **Harry** will follow up with CDOW to make sure they could move forward with the temporary fix this year. **CDOW** also will look to see if other funds might be available. Other items on the list may be considered after a synthesis of the northern pike data. 5/2/13: Sherm Hebein at CDOW found funding and the bank stabilization project at Yampa SWA was completed on April 13, 2011, just prior to rapidly-increasing flows. Billy Atkinson reported that he believes the project was successful and that we will not see further bank erosion in this particular stretch, and potentially alleviate connectivity to the adjacent pond system. See photos on next page.

Before:



After:



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, July 1, 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. 3/11/11: The Committee discussed the draft Price River report 3/1/11; **Tom Chart** will respond to comments and revise the report (in consultation with the Service) and bring it back to the Committee by July 1, 2011. Any additional comments should be provided to Tom by March 15.**
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 (done). 3/1/11L As Kevin McAbee gets engineering info from the irrigators, he will share it with the ad hoc group. Kevin also will inquire more about the purpose of the 9" (at riverbank) – 20" (at center) concrete cap, to determine whether it is to benefit the existing diversion, or both the existing diversion and the proposed diversion on river left. 5/2/11: Dave provided a list of questions from Juddson Sechrist; the Tusher ad hoc group reviewed and discussed these on April 4 (summary sent to BC 4/20/11), agreed to have another meeting in early summer, and re-iterated the need for an initial literature search/review focusing on fish mortality at other sites with small hydro-electric facilities and smaller hydraulic head differentials.*

6. 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).*
7. 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.*
8. **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.*
9. **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]). *In SOW format; pending in final report format document.*

10. **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.*
11. 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 posted that RFP to the listserv. UDWR will keep the Program Director's office in the loop on this.*
12. **Tom Czapla** will send out the briefing paper he received with the humpback chub genetic data to the Biology Committee (*done*). **Melissa Trammell** will review Dexter's new plan to see if it may impact this (*also will talk to Tom Czapla*). *3/11/11: Melissa will talk to the Park about what they want to do with the chubs in captivity at Ouray and Mumma (likely return them to the river after acclimation) if the Program does not want to keep them. Melissa suggested assessing morphology now that the fish have matured somewhat (Travis said he's seen the fish and they don't look like humpback to him). The Committee agreed to keep the fish in captivity for now.*
13. **\*Krissy Wilson** will send Utah's comments on the research framework to **Tom Czapla** 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 Czapla** 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. 3/11/11: Biology Committee members will e-mail Czapla by March 24, 2011, to let him know if they believe comments have been adequately addressed to finalize the document. If comments have not been adequately addressed, we will put this on the next meeting agenda. 5/2/11: Document finalized. Discussion of recommendations and future direction on 5/13/11 agenda.*
14. **\*Kevin Bestgen** will work with **Pat Martinez** and **Tom Chart** to flesh out the northern pike

synthesis proposal for the Committee's consideration.

15. **Tom Chart** will do a final editorial review of the Program's Flaming Gorge spring flow request and seek the approval of the Management Committee via e-mail (*Letter finalized*). **Dale Ryden** will contact Ouray NWR about coordination of this experiment and management at Ouray.
16. **Dale Ryden** and **Dave Schnoor** will write up the Ouray hatchery needs (water source for Randlett and generator for Grand Valley) and submit this to the Program via Tom Czapla. **Dale** also will seek Service funding for these needs. The report will include a discussion the relative risks of power outages at Grand Valley. Melissa suggested that for the long-term, we need a feasibility study for alternative water sources for Randlett.
11. **Tom Czapla** and **Krissy Wilson** will develop recommendations for where and when to stock the Wahweap bonytail (e.g., floodplains before spawning) and send those to the Committee.
12. The **Service** will add to the contaminants annual report a review of and any recommended modifications to State and Federal hazardous materials spills emergency response programs.
13. The **PD's office** will follow up on establishing a process to track percentages of hybrid suckers using standardized protocol for identification of hybridization at fish ladders and in monitoring reaches.
14. \***Harry Crockett** will review draft Aspinall Study Plan and ongoing CDOW Gunnison River monitoring and let PD's office know if CDOW work (or that and just a little extra) could address all or part of Aspinall Study Plan needs to monitor fish community to evaluate effect of flows. *Done*.
15. The **PD's office** will post UDWR's [final #138 report](#) to the web. *Done*.