



Biology Committee Webinar Agenda, May 2, 2013

To join the webinar, please follow the directions below. If you have not previously used Verizon Web Ex conferencing software, please test it prior to the meeting. Contact Angela Kantola (angela_kantola@fws.gov) if you want to do a trial run (~5 min.). This will help us start our meeting promptly at 9:00 a.m. with no delays.

Meeting Time: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM MOUNTAIN DAYLIGHT TIME. The agenda includes a half hour break for lunch. Angela will start the web portion of the meeting by 8:45 a.m. so that everyone can get connected and work through any technical difficulties before the 9:00 a.m. start time.

Web Conference Details:

Meeting Number: 742936817

Meeting Passcode: (None)

Meeting Host: ANGELA T KANTOLA

1. To join the meeting, **using the Internet Explorer browser**, go to:
<http://www.mymeetings.com/nc/join.php?i=742936817&p=&t=c>
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Phone Conference Details:

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

CONVENE Webinar: 9:00 a.m.

1. Review/modify agenda (Wilhite, 5 min)
2. Tusher Wash (McAbee, 1.5 h)
 - a. PIA update
 - b. Proposed e-barrier location (Smith-Root)
 - c. Updated NEPA process (McMillen)
 - d. Biological studies (Czapla's discussion that got postponed)
 - e. Updates on antennas (BioMark) to share with the group.

BREAK (10 min)

3. Update on inflow forecasts and hydrology (Mohrman, 15 min)
4. Nonnative fish management activities
 - a. Nonnative Fish Strategy (Chart, 5 min) – *The Management Committee will meet with States' Fish chiefs on May 21-22.*
5. Update on 2013 activities (All, 10 min.; *Nonnative Fish Coordinator, Pat Martinez, will not be available to participate in the webinar, but others may have updates they'd like to provide on 2013 activities*)
6. Review reports due list. (All, 10 min) – *Angela Kantola provided an updated list in the e-*

mail with this meeting agenda.

7. Review previous meeting assignments (All, 15 min) – *See Attachment 1.*
8. Schedule next meeting and outline agenda (All, 10 min) – *The Committee’s next webinar is scheduled for July 10 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Review of the draft FY14-15 work plan form the major part of that agenda.*
9. Consent Item: Review and approve revised Biology Committee meeting summary (*Angela Kantola provided a revised summary in the e-mail with this agenda.*)

ADJOURN: Noon.

Attachment 1: Assignments

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

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.*
 - *When the final engineering designs are provided (Kevin McAbee will send the Biology Committee any plans he receives), key Committee members should make another site visit.*
 - *In response to concerns expressed about the loss of fishing opportunities in the canal if an e-barrier is installed, Krissy Wilson will check into other nearby community fishing opportunities.*
 - *On January 16, 2013, interested Biology Committee members met with engineering design firm (McMillen) to discuss design and engineering of the e-barrier and passage.*
 - *The PIT antenna from Maybell was installed in the Green River canal on March 20, 2013.*
2. & Revise the Integrated Stocking Plan (ISP) and related issues. **Tom Czapla** is convening a group to revise the ISP.
 - *5/13/11: Cost-benefit analyses should be included in the revised ISP; Tom Chart said he thinks the Program Director's office can initiate this analysis. Results of the health condition profile meeting held at Dexter in March should be incorporated into the revised stocking plan.*
 - *9/27/12: Revised draft ISP sent to ad hoc group by 9/27/12; comments will be due by the end of October. 3/7/13: the Program Director's Office (Czapla) will provide a revised draft by March 31, 2013.*
 - *3/8/13: Tom Czapla will calculate whether we can achieve bonytail recovery by 2023 based on planned stocking rates in the draft revised ISP and using razorback sucker survival estimates as surrogate estimates for bonytail.*

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.*

Humpback Chub (broodstock development / genetics)

- *11/22/11: Conference call to discuss humpback genetics and potential refugia/propagation held 11/2/11; draft action plan materials sent to group from Tom Czapla.*

- *3/6/12: **Tom Czapla** 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 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. 1/17/13: **Program Director's Office** will provide outline to Biology Committee by February 28, 2013.*
 - *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).*
 - *After the ad hoc group meets, Melissa Trammell will draft an Environmental Assessment of the impacts of the humpback chub captivity management plan (also addresses how to deal with captured roundtail chub); **Krissy Wilson** will work with **Melissa** on the EA. **Melissa Trammell** will review Dexter's new plan to see if it may impact this (also will talk to Tom Czapla). 3/6/12: On hold (if even necessary) until the humpback chub ad hoc committee finishes their plan. If fish are not removed from the Yampa River, an EA won't be needed.*
3. **Hybrid suckers:** The **Program Director'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. *Pending. 1/11/12: Discussed on 1/5/12 NNFSC call; process pending from **Pat Martinez** (lower priority). 10/16/12: Pat will check with LFL about offering a course on sucker identification. 11/14/12: LFL has developed a preliminary, hypothetical matrix to aid in identifying hybrid catostomids. 12/7/12: discussed at the December 5-6, 2013, Nonnative Fish Workshop; key folks will review materials at the researchers meeting in hopes of providing a guide to "standardize" identification of hybrid suckers by agreeing to use a common set of identification aids (pictures, meristics, etc.), so we can be more efficient and confident in identifying sucker hybrids basinwide as a means of tracking the incidence or increase in this genetic threat by nonnative suckers to native and endangered catostomids. 3/13/13: **Pat Martinez** compiling identification guide and will distribute soon.*
 4. **& 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.*

5. & Nonnative fish management follow-up:

From January 14 and 29 meeting/webinar:

- **Melissa Trammell** offered to work with **Travis** 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. 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.
- 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.
- **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).
- **Pat Martinez** will confirm whether Brett's work will address analyzing previously-collected otoliths to determine if Duchesne River & Starvation Reservoir sources of smallmouth bass or walleye.
- **Matt Breen** will provide proposal for FY14-15 that they believe would monitor native fish response (e.g., sampling fish through time throughout the summer).
- The **Program Director's office and Vernal-CRFP** will work to develop a proposal for a smallmouth bass harvest incentive program on the White River.

Red Fleet: **Krissy Wilson** thinks water drawn down from Red Fleet can go into Stewart Lake and will get more information to the Committee. **UDWR, the Service, and Reclamation** also will discuss Stewart selenium issues.

6. Fire impacts: **Dave Speas** will invite the SRLCC Science Coordinator, John Rice, to come and discuss this with the Biology Committee (or at the Researchers Meeting) ways agencies might coordinate to prevent or mitigate impacts of wildfire on endangered fishes. 12/7/12: *Dave said John is interested (but can't make the researchers meeting) and will continue to work with him to get him to a meeting 1/29/13: or webinar (perhaps more likely given travel restrictions). Tildon said this is on the radar of BLM's Vernal office with regard to the Wolf Den fire. Tom Chart plans pitched monitoring impacts of some of these fires to the SRLCC at their Denver workshop Feb 20-22 (along with Lake Powell monitoring and database management). Tom and Dave Campbell are discussing this with Kevin Johnson and John*

Rice, so he will bring this up with them and include Dave Speas.

7. 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. Dave Speas will talk to Mark McKinstry about collaborating with this group to develop a scope of work..*
8. Reports: For the Elkhead escapement report, **Kevin Bestgen** will send the Committee revised verbiage related to the lake management plan, get that approved, and revise the report, also addressing other comments discussed; *pending*. **Kevin Bestgen** will provide a revised due date on the smallmouth bass synthesis.
9. Protocol for documenting fish captures: **Tom Czapla** will provide protocol for the scope of work format (or other appropriate venue) for how Program PIs will consistently document significant fish captures with photos, etc. (E.g., new nonnative species, information from fish kills after fires, etc.) Krissy suggested the protocol also should include checking for ripeness and noting if fish are tuberculated. *12/7/12: The PDs office will provide a due date. The Committee discussed how to document in the database things like fish kills, oil spills, etc. Access software allows linking to all kinds of information (including photographs). Information on mortalities may include things like PIT tags. Our existing database can clearly handle information on mortalities; we need to emphasize that these data need to be collected and submitted.*
10. The **Program Director's Office** will post the SOW for the stationary PIT detection system in the Green River Canal to the web. *Done; see*
<http://www.coloradoriverrecovery.org/documents-publications/work-plan-documents/sow/12-13/hab/C28a.pdf>.
11. RIPRAP
 - **Harry Crockett** will send the Biology Committee a copy of the CPW's Gunnison fish community report.
 - **Harry Crockett** will provide the Committee an update on how the screen at Juniata Reservoir is functioning.
 - **Pat Martinez** will work with States to compile a list of Lake Management Plans.
12. FY 14-15 Program Guidance
 - **Dave Speas** will discuss with Mark McKinstry and the **Program Director's office** will contact Dave Campbell about studies to determine impacts of mercury on Colorado pikeminnow reproduction and larval development.
 - **Pat Martinez, Harry Crockett, Krissy Wilson, Dale Ryden, and Pete Cavalli** will review the otolith analysis situation and make recommendations for FY14-15.