



Biology Committee Revised Draft Webinar Agenda, Wednesday, June 11, 2014

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

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CONVENE: 9:00 a.m.

1. 9:00a Review/modify agenda (Speas, 5 min)
2. 9:05a Report reviews
 - a. Colorado River Colorado pikeminnow population estimate (Czapla, all, 30 min) – The final report with response to comments was sent to the Committee for review and approval February 21.
3. Tusher Wash update (McAbee, 45 min)
 - a. 9:35a Electrical barrier study (30 minutes)- *Per the February Biology Committee discussion, Jackson Gross has finalized a draft study plan for the electrical barrier study to support the Tusher Diversion. Kevin McAbee will send the draft to the Committee in advance of the webinar.*
 - b. 10:05a Canal Salvage (15 min) – *Per the February Committee discussion, do we need to make any more logistical plans for a canal salvage?*

10:20a BREAK (10 min)

4. Nonnative fish
 - a. 10:30a Strategy (McAbee, 10 min) – *Pete Cavalli has noted that although the [2009](#)*

*[Nonnative Fish Stocking Procedures](#) permit routine salmonid stocking above critical habitat, the compatible species list (Appendix C) of the [Nonnative Strategy](#) includes some cold-water species, but omits several salmonids that should be included (e.g., cutthroat trout, grayling, tiger trout, splake, rainbow/cutthroat hybrids). In the Strategy, we probably should have just said "salmonids" as was done in the Procedures. However, the Strategy does not supplant the Stocking Procedures; therefore, the PD's office recommends the Committee simply document the inconsistency in this meeting summary since a management conflict on this point is unlikely to arise in actual practice (with the possible exception of Siberian Salmon, *Hucho taimen*).*

Pete Cavalli also noted in a recent email that "[his] interpretation of the [2009] Stocking Procedures is that reviews are only needed in cases involving nonnative non-salmonids." As such, the recent LMP for Strawberry Reservoir would not have needed a full review. The Service agrees that if a state wishes to stock salmonid species upstream of designated critical habitat, it does not require a Service review. However, if a LMP is updated to change the non-salmonid, nonnative species stocking (even change in number, but not species), it does require review. It is important to continue these discussions as the 2009 Stocking Procedures are implemented. Thanks to Pete for bringing up this discussion.

- b. 10:40a Ridgway Reservoir smallmouth bass update (Crockett, McAbee, 20 min)
- c. 11:00a 2014 Nonnative Fish Workshop (McAbee, 5 min) – *The Committee will discuss dates (potentially December 2-4) for a 2014 workshop.*
- 5. 11:05a Database (Speas, 30 min) – *Dave will provide a briefing on issues arising from the technical evaluation panel review process. The panel meets by phone June 10.*
- 6. 11:35a Field updates (All, 15 min) – *The Committee will receive and discuss recent updates from the field. May include updates on ETS units from Hawkins/group.*

11:50a LUNCH (30 min)

- 7. 12:20p Presentation from Carl Saunders on burbot research in Flaming Gorge (25 min)
- 8. 12:45p Presentation from Heather Patno, USBR Hydraulic on recent updates to the Green River Hydrology (20 min) – *The Green River Model incorporates the Flow and Temperature Recommendations for the Green River and 2006 Record of Decision using daily subroutines into Reclamation's monthly Colorado River Simulation System model.*
- 9. 1:05p Review previous meeting assignments (All, 15 min) – *See Attachment 1.*
- 10. 1:20p Review reports due list (All, 10 min) – *Angela Kantola sent an updated list to the Biology Committee with this agenda.*
- 11. 1:30p Schedule next meeting and outline agenda (All, 10 min)
- 12. 1:40p Consent item: Review and approve [February 20-21, 2014, Biology Committee meeting](#) and April 29, 2014 (sent to the Committee on May 2) webinar summaries (All, 5

min) – *No comments received to date on either summary. The April 29 summary will remain in draft for now (corrections still welcome).*

ADJOURN: By 2:00 p.m.

Attachment 1: Assignments

(Asterisked items are 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). Jan 16 – Jackson presented preliminary concepts at BC meeting. 2/21/14: The Committee considered Jackson’s recent study outline and framework (Attachment 3 to 2/21/14 meeting summary). Melissa suggested also testing smaller pikeminnow than Jackson is contemplating (adding a third size class) and eliminating the juvenile bonytail size class. Several Committee members questioned whether field conditions can be mimicked adequately in a hatchery and would like to see a schematic of what the testing setup would look like. Dave Speas suggested adding another test variable of no electricity. The Committee suggested considerable cost-share from Smith-Root would be appropriate. >Kevin will discuss Committee ideas and concerns with Jackson and ask for cost estimates. Dave Speas suggested we consider a value engineering study for Tusher; others agreed.*
 - >Dave Speas will work with Peter MacKinnon to develop antenna plan and implement installation; once funding for second set of antennas and salvage operation are confirmed, Kevin will talk to GRCC about logistics & permissions.
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 sent those to the 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. recommend 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. >Czapla will follow up on due dates.

&Humpback Chub (broodstock development / genetics)

- 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 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 Czapla 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 Wade'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. 2/21/14: No deliverable on Upper Basin fin clips; cost would be ~\$37K (Committee considering, but not our highest priority; see 2/21/14 meeting summary).
- 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 ~25 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 (done 2/28/14); **Krissy** and **Jerry** will review at that time, then it will go to the Biology Committee. **Melissa** proposed a review schedule which comports with Program report review process. The report also will be reviewed by staff from Dinosaur NM, go through some NPS review process, and be 'published' under an NPS 'natural resource' report where it will be available online:
 - 2/28/14 - Co-authors and the Program's nonnative fish coordinator (Kevin McAbee) review
 - 3/28/14 (after I receive and respond to comments) it goes out for peer review and Biology Committee review; they have 45 days to review
 - 5/13/14 BC/peer comments due, plus 4 weeks for my revision and response to comments
 - 6/15/14 Final to BC for Program approval.
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 **Committee** will review the information **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).*

- **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.
 - **Walton Creek:** Action items after the site visit were to determine if fill material is available and what topography information is available; **Harry Crockett** provided follow-up on this to the PD’s office.
 - ***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 (considering a seismic gun option); >**Tom Chart** will coordinate with **Harry** and **Brent Uilenberg/Bob Norman** on repairing the notches after runoff.
 - **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* (2/21/14: pending; Paul Badame said Reclamation has asked for more information); **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. 2/21/14: *If an in-reservoir net solution is selected, Krissy believes a portion can be paid for with UDWR boating safety funds.*
5. **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). 2/21/14: Kevin received a number of plans from Utah (though three still under review are outstanding), Pete and Harry are working on compiling Wyoming and Colorado’s.
 6. **The PD’s office (McAbee)** 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 (see 2/20/14 meeting notes). **Kevin McAbee** will work with Melissa to refine otolith guidance and then send PI’s instructions for when, where, and from what fish otoliths should continue to be collected. Done.
 7. **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 (PD to include in FY16-17 Program Guidance).
 8. **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. 2/21/14, cost estimate pending from LFL).

9. **Brent Uilenberg** and **Harry Crockett** will be working with CPW and Reclamation engineers to evaluate the potential for a permanent barrier downstream of the Ridgway Reservoir.
10. **Tom Chart** and **Jerry Wilhite** will draft a process and discuss Western's monetary contribution with regard to an evaluation of Green River flow and temperature recommendations. *Done; see assignment #21.*
11. **Harry Crockett** will look into what it would take to add a marking pass in Billy Atkinson's reach on the upper Yampa.
12. ***Harry Crockett** will contact **Jackson Gross** and let him know the Committee appreciate Smith-Root's interest (and willingness to bring considerable cost-share), but would like to see a proposal that includes evaluation of success and a report.
13. The **Program Director's office** (Czapla) will discuss Ouray electric repairs with Reclamation and Dave Schnoor.
14. **Harry Crockett** will discuss with CPW Krissy Wilson's proposal to provide \$10K to Colorado toward upgrading a hatchery to produce more and larger tiger muskies in exchange for half the fish production.
15. Regarding white sucker hybrids, **Harry Crockett** will talk to **Kevin Bestgen** about any further work needed subsequent to the identification guide that Pat Martinez distributed last year.
16. The **Nonnative Fish Subcommittee** should discuss need for completing long-term syntheses for Yampa River native fish response and Lodore/Whirlpool Canyon (funding has not been available so these syntheses had been placed on hold).
17. The PD's office (**Czapla**) will ask LFL when the cyprinid key will be completed.
18. The PD's office (**Kantola**) will get a link to the CWCB Laserfiche library (which houses the Program's technical report library) on the Program website. *5/27/14: Done; please see <http://www.coloradoriverrecovery.org/documents-publications/bibliography/bibliography.html>.*
19. The **PD's office** will review and summarize fish screen operations over a longer period of time (and as it relates to hydrology and conditions under which the irrigators are not required to operate the screens). **Jana Mohrman** and **Tom Pitts** will discuss concerns about fish screen operation with Brent Uilenberg and Bob Norman.

20. **Dale Ryden** will provide a revised scope of work for Gunnison fish community monitoring (#163) to cover continued monitoring. *Done.*
21. **Kevin Bestgen** will confirm dates for completing a draft of the backwater synthesis with John Hayse and get back to the Committee). The **Program Director's Office** will work with **Western, Reclamation, and Kirk LaGory** and others to incorporate the two Flaming Gorge "discussion papers" (evaluation of flow recommendations and experiment to disadvantage smallmouth bass) into a draft scope or scopes of work in advance of the June 11 webinar.
22. **Harry Crocket** will let the Committee know when CPW will make their draft Elkhead plan available.