

September 22, 2009

Biology Committee Draft Agenda
[Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites](#), 2571 Crossroads Blvd
Grand Junction, Colorado
October 6, 2009

8:00 a. m. convene in the lobby of the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites. Travel to Butch Craig floodplain site, then return to Holiday Inn.

~10:30 a.m. reconvene in meeting room at Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites.

1. Review/modify agenda (Irving, All; 5 min.).
2. Butch Craig floodplain discussion (Uilenberg, All 45 min). *High flows have caused significant undercutting of the levee at the Butch Craig site and the entire site may be recaptured by the river during the next high-flow year. Repairs would cost ~\$250K (capital funds). The site recently has been used to stock excess fish, but was originally intended to provide nursery habitat for wild-produced larvae. The Management Committee would like a technical recommendation from the Biology Committee as to the relative priority of rehabilitating the Butch Craig floodplain levee. Tom Chart sent the Committee background information and questions to consider on August 28.*
3. Approve Biology Committee July 13-14 meeting summary. (All, 10 min.) *The July 13-14 summary was posted to the fws-coloriver listserv by Dave Irving on July 17. Tom Nesler provided several comments on this draft on July 19.*
4. Review assignments (Irving, All; 30 min.). *The status of assignments is annotated at the end of this agenda (please review in advance of the meeting to reduce discussion time).*

LUNCH: Noon to 1 p.m.

5. Nonnative fish management
 - a. Weir site visit report (UDWR, 20 min)
 - b. Synthesis report schedule (All, 15 min) *Tom Chart sent the NNFSC's recommendations on synthesis reports to the Biology Committee on August 28. The NNFSC recommended that PI's continue to produce multi-year synthesis reports, but that the next round be postponed until after the 2010 field season (with draft synthesis reports due in March 2011) to get all researchers on the same schedule and to take advantage of preliminary recommendations from the programmatic synthesis. The NNFSC also recommended that PI's team up on the next round of reporting to produce more comprehensive products.*
 - c. December workshop agenda (All, 15 min)

6. Final Review/approval of revised Yampa Pike Sources report (R. M. Fitzpatrick and D. L. Winkelman. 2009) (All, 5 min.) *The Committee reviewed this report and made recommended changes at their last meeting. Tom Chart sent the revised version to the Committee on September 9.*
7. Bringing humpback chub from Desolation/Gray Canyons into captivity (UDWR, Irving, 30 min) – *Discussion/approval of SOW sent to Biology Committee by Tom Czapla on 9/21/09.*
8. Entraining small-bodied cyprinids in Baeser pump (Irving, Speas, 15 min) - *The pump at Baeser Bend has entrained small-bodied cyprinids. Dave Irving asks if modifications can be made to the filter, or the existing filter placed inside some kind of secondary filter, or other solutions might be found. A possibility exists that endangered fish could be entrained at certain times of the year.*
9. Review reports due list (Kantola, All; 15 min.). *Angela Kantola included an updated list with this meeting agenda.*
10. Schedule next meeting (All, 10 min.).

ADJOURN by 3:30 p.m.

Attachment 1

Assignments carried over or modified from previous meetings:

1. Tom Nesler will see if CDOW can provide a report on Billy Atkinson's work on pike in Catamount and the river below. Update provided at nonnative fish workshop; workshop participants recommended CDOW provide some kind of management plan. 1/17: Billy will provide a Catamount pike removal document/strategy by the end of February. 4/15: Nesler will provide update at BC. 4/28: Tom has reminded Billy that this is overdue and will try to get it to the BC as soon as possible. 6/13: Nesler received the draft today and provide it to the BC by the end of July. 8/18: Nesler will provide Billy Atkinson's upper Yampa "strategy" report to the Biology Committee by September 18 (Nesler's and Chart's birthday). 10/30: Tom Nesler and Sherm Hebein will revise Billy's report and provide that to the Recovery Program (Biology Committee, NNFSC, PI's, etc.) along with an outline of CDOW's strategy for nonnative fish management in the Yampa River above the diversions for discussion as part of the nonnative fish workshop. Tom Chart said it would be very helpful to have that outline before the December. 9-10 workshop. Sherm noted that Billy removed >2,000 np from Catamount this year (>4,000 np total). 1/15: The upper Yampa strategy has been separated out and provided to the Committee; Billy's report is still being revised. 2/20: outline strategy provided prior to last meeting; full strategy due May 1. Tom Nesler will check on the status of revision of the Yampa River Aquatic Management Plan. 4/14: Colorado's new completion date is May 1, 2009. (In the interim, CDOW will need to produce an Upper Yampa River strategy to assist the Program in our prioritization of 2009 field activities. This strategy should ultimately be incorporated into the Aquatic Wildlife Management Plan for the Yampa River Basin. 4/28: Tom Nesler said they don't plan to provide a formal strategy, but will describe what they [primarily Billy Atkinson] are doing down through Steamboat and with regard to isolating sloughs in Sam Finney's reach. See #3, above.) 1/15: The Upper Yampa strategy will be directly incorporated into the Yampa River Aquatic Management Plan (which will be completed by May 1, 2009). Tom Nesler will remind Sherm Hebein about this due date. 4/20: Tom Nesler said CDOW expects to meet this due date. 7/8: In CDOW review/revision with commitment to MC to provide by early July. 7/13: Draft will be available for internal review by mid-July. CDOW will send the draft out the States and Service (NNFSP) prior to Greg Gerlich's final approval. 9/21: The draft final will be distributed to the Recovery Program office and the NNFSP Agreement signatories as a courtesy copy for review and comment as desired. This should be distributed fairly soon. Pending comments received and further revision, Greg Gerlich and Tom Nesler will approve the plan.
2. 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. 2/15, 4/15: Pending. 4/28: Chart has discussed with Nesler and with the Partners for Wildlife Program, also. Will focus on this summer/fall. 6/13: CDOW will be contacting the landowner regarding access, if they are amenable, then CDOW and Program will determine a feasible solution (before the end of spring runoff). 8/18: Tom Chart said Sherm will try to get someone from CDOW on this as soon as possible. The Biology Committee would like a date certain on this; >Sherm Hebein will accelerate this. 10/30 said 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 of berm (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). This project also was submitted in the Service's list of potential projects for the Economic Stimulus Package. 2/20: Recovery Program funds likely available; CDOW working to get engineers on the ground; Nesler considering different approaches (berm, fill the oxbow, etc.). Muth and Chart discussed with Uilenberg; Wernke available when landowner grants access. Bob Muth suggested Jeff Blakeslee of TNC may know the landowner. 2/20: The Program Director's office will contact Jeff Blakeslee, and then get back with CDOW and Reclamation on the Yampa habitat work. 4/14: CDOW is handling. 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. 7/13: Reclamation engineers have not been on site. Tom Nesler will coordinate with Sherman after other State priorities (e.g. 98a report) have been accomplished.

3. Melissa suggested following up on signage at the translocation ponds acknowledging that the Recovery Program has provided the fish (but keeping in mind the concern re: potential elevated Hg levels; which CDOW will investigate). 2/10: Chart will discuss this with the I&E Committee at their meeting Feb 12, 2009. 2/20: The PD's office met with the I&E Committee last week; it was suggested that a sub-group of that Committee work with the Nonnative Fish Subcommittee to discuss/implement appropriate signage (keeping in mind on concerns regarding mercury levels). 4/14: Pending. 4/20: Tom Nesler said they first need to get the mercury results to determine if consumption advisories are needed. The nonnative fish subcommittee will discuss further, but not move forward until the mercury question is resolved. 7/13: Tom Nesler – CDOW will discontinue translocation of smallmouth bass to CJCP. CJCP will be reclaimed and turned over to trout fishery. Elkhead Reservoir will remain the primary translocation site (subsequent to spills or until the upper reservoir can be accessed). CDOW will continue to translocate NP to Headquarters Pond (Kyle's pond), Loudy Simpson, and State Wildlife Area ponds (subsequent to connection in the latter two locations). Also, no more translocation of NP from Catamount Lake – all lethal removal. Future actions will be contingent on further contaminant results. Elkhead Reservoir still under a public consumption advisory.
4. 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 Larry's 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.

5. *Melissa believes an Environmental Assessment of the impacts of the Humpback chub captivity management plan (covers both humpback chub and 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.*
6. *Krissy will provide Utah's Health Condition Profile to Tom Czapla. 4/20: Krissy has asked for a formal write-up from their hatchery folks. 7/13: Krissy will condense relevant information gleaned from hatchery managers and consider organizing workshop(s) in the future.*
7. *Aaron will provide more detail on the Baerer pump to Dave Speas as he receives it over the next few days. 4/14: FWS seeking bids. 7/8: Done and pump has been delivered. 7/13: Dave Irving will follow up on final 2009 funding.*
8. *Lower Green larval, juvenile RBS monitoring pilot study should say work will begin when water temperatures and flows are favorable." >Tom Czapla will work with Paul Badame to make that change. 7/8: Pending. 7/13 Tom Czapla will update the 2009 SOW to reflect language Paul included in the 2010-2011 SOW. 9/21: Revised SOW on web.*
9. *Tom Chart will work with Brett Johnson to revise (primarily budgets and inclusion of Red Fleet sampling) the 2009 C18/19 SOW to post to the web. Pending.*
10. *Tom Chart will ask Brett to include more detailed progress in the annual report as it applies to proposed revision / expansion of the C-18/19 project (as discussed during the 6/30 conf call).*
11. *UDWR will consider modifying their existing Deso/Gray HBC population estimate SOW to bring chubs into captivity. Done. The PD's office will investigate the need for permits and NEPA compliance.*
12. *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.*
13. *The PD's office will work with PI's on SOWs to:*
 - *Check for cut-and-paste errors*
 - *Make sure information in the SOWs is consistent with annual reports, synthesis reports, etc. and delete/replace information that is no longer relevant. (SOW #98a had a section showing changes from the previous FY which was helpful.)*
 - *Make sure all applicable SOWs show submittal of data to GJ-CRFP by March 1 of each year.*

- Check annual report dates.
- Review budget detail to make sure it meets requirements outlined in Program Guidance. (Based on subsequent communication with Dave Speas, the PD's office also will work with PI's to: 1) check that travel and per diem do not exceed federal standards (www.gsa.gov) without up-front justification up front; 2) make sure that if a subcontract element constitutes the majority of the work (e.g., FISHBIO in the weir study), it has the same level of detail as would be requested of everybody else; and 3) make sure not to identify something like "O/M" as a single line item (as for the Ouray well work) when in reality it includes labor, parts and rental fees.
9/21: Some SOW's revised, others pending.

The PD's office also will compile a list and justification of additional capital project needs (e.g., weirs, hatchery residences, rearing ponds, humpback chub capacity, floodplain work, remote pit-tag arrays, etc.) *Done.*

14. The PD's office will work with Dave Speas to review and tabulate the terms and conditions of the Flaming Gorge Biological Opinion (BO) and the Program's involvement. *9/21: In progress.*
15. The PD's office will discuss options for managing floodplain easements with Refuges and other Service offices. *9/21: Pending. The new manager at Ouray NWR is Ryan Mollnow.*
16. UDWR and the CRFP offices will review all their SOWs (and revise as necessary) so that vehicle mileage is calculated consistently within each agency. *9/21: In progress (some of UDWR's already done).*
17. Tom Nesler will ask Sherman Hebein why indirect rates are characterized differently in some SOWs why they apply only to seasonal technicians. *7/31: CDOW will make the indirect rates charged for temps consistent among SOWs. (CDOW charges indirect for temps because DNR requires them to cover their costs to help hire temps.)*
18. All NNF PI's should specifically identify in their SOWs if fish community information is being collected. *9/21: NNF SOW's will be revised after December workshop.*
19. Tom Chart will investigate potential cost savings should the Program purchase GPPs/generators in bulk. *Pending.*
20. The PD's office, Vernal CRFP and UDWR will coordinate with the Ute Tribe (Jay Groves) to see if there is interest in a greater level of sampling on the White River. *Pending.*
21. Tom Czapla and Dave Speas will contact Tom Burke to get a better sense of the MSCP hatchery production needs. *9/21: Tom Burke had contacted UDWR regarding potential space at Wahweap to rear bonytails for the MSCP, but now believes the Uvalde hatchery can meet those needs (in addition, due to poor survival of stocked bonytail, the MSCP is postponing increasing bonytail stocking numbers and hopes to increase/accelerate research on bonytail post-stocking survival in the lower Colorado River).*
22. Melissa will send Krissy the Iceberg Canyon bonytail proposal. Krissy will check with Zane on sizes and potential numbers for each excess bonytail year class at Wahweap.

23. Derek Elverud will provide the database for Westwater for Gary White to combine with Black Rocks, which will require a separate SOW.

24. Angela Kantola will post a revised reports due list to the listserver.