

Biology Committee Meeting Agenda  
December 7, 8 a.m. – ~ Noon  
Clarion Inn, 755 Horizon Drive, Grand Junction, CO

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

1. Review/modify agenda (Crockett, 5 min)
2. Tusher Wash (McAbee, Czaplá, 15 min) – *Update on recent Nov 15 scoping meeting and related.*
3. Colorado pikeminnow recovery team update (Czaplá, Martínez, Chart, 20 min)
4. Lake Powell update (Czaplá, Chart, 20 min)

**BREAK (10 min)**

5. Nonnative Fish update (Martínez, 1.5 hours) – *The Committee will review recent nonnative fish management activities*
  - Nonnative Fish Management Workshop follow-up – *Presentations for Upper Basin Researchers Meeting; SOW adjustments for work in 2013; March 2013 Electrofishing Course coordination and emphasis on ETS MBS; incorporation of SMB Synthesis results; northern pike in upper Yampa and Colorado Rivers; sucker hybrids; other nonnative species.*
  - Basinwide Strategy – *In revision. In August 2012, the MC directed the PDO to incorporate a more ‘RIPRAP-friendly’ component into the Nonnative Strategy with the intent of revising the RIPRAP accordingly in 2013. The second draft of the Nonnative Strategy due by late December 2012, and will include the ‘RIPRAP-friendly’ tasking element the MC requested. Revision will convey the Program’s sense of urgency on nonnative fish prevention / control and the role of this Nonnative Strategy. The MC asked that they get a chance to respond to the revised draft of the Nonnative Strategy before meeting with the State’s Fish Chiefs. A meeting with the Fish Chiefs will be scheduled as soon as the MC is ready – likely mid-February 2013 at the earliest. PDO will work with the committees to revise the RIPRAP and finalize the Nonnative Strategy as soon as possible in 2013.*
  - Reservoir projects (Paonia [northern pike rotenoned in late Oct.], Miramonte [illegally stocked smallmouth bass], Red Fleet [illegally stocked walleye and smallmouth bass]).
  - Elkhead [smallmouth bass and northern pike] ideas.

**BREAK (10 min)**

6. 5-year budget requirements in FY14-15 scopes of work (Speas, Kantola, 5 min) –

7. Approve revised report review and flow recommendation approval process (Chart, all 15 min) – *The Management Committee recommended revisions to clarify: 1) how flow recommendations are approved; and 2) that the technical report review process applies to both the Biology and Water Acquisition committees. Tom Chart sent the recommended revisions to the technical committees for their review and approval on November 14, 2012.*
8. Review reports due list (Kantola, 10 min) – *Angela Kantola will e-mail the Committee an updated reports list in advance of the meeting.*
9. Review previous meeting assignments (see Attachment 1) (All, 20 min) –
10. Designation of 2013 BC chair (Jerry Wilhite) and vice-chair (All, 5 min) –
11. Schedule next meeting (mid-February?) and suggest agenda items (All, 5 min)
12. Consent Item: Review and approve October 16, 2012 Biology Committee webinar summary (*Angela Kantola will send a revised summary in advance of the meeting.*)

***ADJOURN around 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. & White River report: 3/6/12 **Jana Mohrman** will provide a revised report to BC and WAC by December 31, 2012.
2. & 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.*
  - 6/26/12: **Reclamation** is developing a cost estimate for a coffer dam that would allow installation of an electrical barrier.
  - Tom Pitts suggested **Reclamation** work with **Smith-Root** to put all the Tusher Wash electrical barrier installation costs (barrier, coffer dam, construction, etc.) in a report for the Committee’s review. **Tom Czapla** will work with Smith-Root and Reclamation to produce that. 8/21/12: *Recommended strategy sent to Biology Committee and approved via e-mail.*
  - 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.
3. & 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.*

### Humpback Chub (population estimates)

- 5/13/11: *Black Rocks and Westwater data have been transferred to Gary White; **Program Director’s office** will check to make sure we’ve got this analysis covered. 3/6/12: Done and 131 SOW revised accordingly (\$20K provided to LFL in FY12); report due in 2013.*
- 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: *This is 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.*

### 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 Czapl**a will remind the humpback chub genetics ad hoc group to submit comments (7/13/12 comments still pending).
- 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.
- 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. 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).

#### Razorback Sucker

& **Dale Ryden** and **Dave Schnoor** will summarize Ouray hatchery needs (water source for Randlett and generator for Grand Valley) and submit it to the Program via Tom Czapl. **Dale** also will seek Service funding. 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.

- 5/13/11: Dale said Reclamation says alternative water sources would have a \$10M price tag. The Service has been discussing the manganese problem and will convene a group to discuss (Program Director's office, hatchery folks, Reclamation, etc.).
- 9/30/11: Proposal for **contractor** review of alternatives for remediating manganese approved by Management Comm. 5/4/12: Contractor has recommended two options in a preliminary report; likely the selected option will be to install one more bank of filters/BIRM. 6/27/12: contractor made recommendations and Ouray ordered the filter bank and has been replumbing the facility. Contractor may provide report after the install and recheck. 7/13/12: Some additional well electrical problems at Ouray are being worked on.
- **Tom Czapl**a said Dave Schnoor is working on creating back-up broodstock for Wahweap from some of the excess razorback at Ouray.

#### Bonytail

- **Dave Schnoor** will write up his thoughts on bonytail stocking and temperature (3/6/12: draft provided to Tom Czapl, Dave Schnoor revising and will send to BC). The **Mumma and Wahweap hatcheries** will compile their records of stocking temperatures and provide that to **Tom Czapl**a for consideration as part of the integrated stocking plan. Done; Tom Czapl included Dave's recommendations in the draft ISP. Krissy attempted to get river temperature at stocking prior to 2008; but this information was not on the data sheets. 10/16/12: Zane stocked ~6,000 bonytail last week. Krissy said Julie captured 8 bonytail only 2 of which had PIT-tagged; Tildon reported catching an untagged bonytail, also.
4. 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; this

*issue will be discussed at the December 5-6, 2013, Nonnative Fish Workshop in hopes of "standardizing" 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.*

5. **& 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 and provide a draft by January 2013. 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 any burbot.*
6. **Sediment monitoring: Tom Chart and Jana Mohrman and Kirk LaGory** will convene fish biologists involved in developing flow recommendations and geomorphologists (e.g., John Pitlick and Cory Williams) to identify logical next-steps (e.g., is MD-SWMS modeling the best way to proceed) to evaluate flow recommendations, particularly on (but not limited to) the Gunnison where sediment transport is so important. *Pending.*
7. **Nonnative fish management follow-up: 10/16/12: Dave Speas** convened a conference call in August to discuss reconnaissance for future nonnative fish work on the Dolores River and decided against it due to access and other difficulties. Jim White is collecting otoliths and will provide them to Kevin Bestgen. Dave said Peter MacKinnon and Jim White have been working on a PIT-tag antenna at Disappointment Creek and also have identified a site on the lower river (Rio Mesa Center). 10/16/12: Colorado conducted additional northern pike removal passes on the Colorado River this year. **Harry** asked CPW Regional and Aquatic staff if Colorado's view regarding a smallmouth bass bounty on the White River might be different if Colorado weren't responsible for the bounty dollars/management. If someone has a proposal to administer a smallmouth bass bounty on the White River, Colorado would consider it.
8. **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.
9. **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. *In progress, but not yet fully defined; PD's office will provide update.*
10. **Reports: Kevin Bestgen** will make the modifications discussed and finalize the razorback monitoring report by November 1. *Done.* 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 above. *Pending*

11. 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 document significant fish captures with photos, etc. Krissy suggested the protocol also should include checking for ripeness and noting if fish are tuberculated.