

Biology Committee Draft Agenda
Grand Junction, CO, December 13-14, 2010

Monday, December 13

CONVENE: 1:00 p.m.

1. Review/modify agenda (Trammell; 5 min.)
2. Aspinall study plan (Chart, 1 hour) *The Committee will review the draft study plan.*
3. Tusher Wash (Czapla, 1 hour) *Review recommendations of Tusher Wash ad hoc work group.*

BREAK

4. Report review: #138 (Final draft sent to BC from Badame 11/23/10 [disregard version sent 10/22]) (All, 45 min)
5. Research framework procedural review (Czapla, 15 min) *The Committee will discuss how to address comments from UDWR, environmental groups, and the Service.*
6. Floodplain updates (All, 30 min)
 - a. Fall sampling results
 - b. Baeser (Shaughnessy) *The Committee will discuss a revised SOW for using the existing 30K from FY 10 to remove fish from Baeser, reset it for next year, and sample Thunder (assuming permission) and Johnson (pending from Michelle Shaughnessy).*
 - c. Stocking locations for Wahweap bonytail (Wilson)
7. Other updates
 - a. Maybell Ditch sampling for 2011 and 2012 (Speas, 10 min)
 - b. Price River flow recommendations/position paper (Chart, 10 min)
8. Schedule next meeting (All, 5 min) *The Committee may wish to schedule their next meeting in mid- to late February to review draft RIPRAP assessment, draft revised RIPRAP and draft FY 12-13 Program Guidance (due from PD's office on Feb. 1.) The Management Committee meets in Denver on Feb. 16 and the I&E Committee meets in Denver Feb. 23.*

ADJOURN 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 14

CONVENE: 8:00 a.m.

9. Nonnative fish workshop (Martinez, 90 min) *The Committee will discuss outcomes and implications of the previous week's nonnative fish workshop.*

10. Green River spring flows (30 min) *UDWR would like to discuss a proposal for a spring flushing flow request.*

11. FY 11 work plan update and discussion of any other new/revised SOWs (Kantola, 15 min)
(E.g., evaluation of fish condition below GVP fish return)

BREAK

12. Propagation activities (Czapla, 15 min)

a. Humpback chub genetics and captivity plan (*see [September 28-30 meeting summary](#)*)

b. Dexter NFH request for broodstock review (*meeting scheduled for February 16*)

13. Approve Biology Committee [September 28-30 meeting summary](#) (All, 5 min.) *The summary was posted to the fws-coloriver listserv by Melissa Trammell on 10/6/10.*

14. Review previous meeting assignments and reports due list. (All, 30 min) *Angela Kantola will send the Committee a revised reports due list in advance of the meeting.*

ADJOURN by 12:30

Attachment 1: Assignments

1. **Sherm Hebein** said he **and Tom Nesler** hope to finalize the Yampa River Aquatic Management Plan by March 19. 4/7: *Sherm and Tom Nesler reviewed 4/6; Sherm is incorporating changes, reviewing suggested changes that are policy-related within CDOW, and responding to suggested revisions they to which they can't respond. Tom says they expect it will be ready for signature by the end of April 2010 (the 98a synthesis report also will be completed by the end of April).* 5/6/10: *Sherm still needs to incorporate comments; the Plan will be finalized no later than July 1, 2010. On the 98a final report, CDOW comments are being incorporated and will come to the BC for final review no later than July 1, 2010.* 7/28/10: *CDOW has committed to provide the revised plan, with response to reviewer comments by 7/31/10.* 8/17/10: *Plan complete; CDOW completing transmittal letters. CDOW will incorporate comments and finalize the 98a report (in about a month in light of field season). Complete: report and comments submitted November 2010.*
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. 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). 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).* 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 cautious 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 also will 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. 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.*
4. *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.*
5. **Krissy Wilson** 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. 10/6: Krissy provided this information to Tom Czapla and will work with Tom to determine if we'll host a workshop for hatchery personnel (pending, will schedule after new hatchery manager is in place at Ouray NFH). 3/10: Workshop on condition measurement for hatchery folks will be scheduled in late summer or early fall, probably in Grand Junction (to allow someone from the Mumma Hatchery to attend); >Tom Czapla will also invite San Juan Program hatchery managers. 9/30/10: Scheduled for Oct. 5 in Grand Junction.*
6. 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). 8/18/10: Michelle said we can get this to Gary White this winter.*

7. The **Program Director's office** will review the 121a report recommendations (as well as the Gunnison PBO) and determine what items need to be included in the RIPRAP. 2/22: *PD's office recommended this be incorporated into the Gunnison River Study Plan.*
8. 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.*
9. **Angela Kantola** will add a reminder to future annual report requests about the importance of PI's supervisors' reviewing recommendations to be sure that they are grounded in the data and that the Program takes these recommendations seriously. *11/23: Included in 2010 annual report request.*
10. **Michelle Shaughnessy** will provide cost comparisons for O&M of the proposed new Grand Valley fish rearing ponds versus existing ponds as soon as the value engineering study is completed. *Pending; Michelle anticipates ~\$30K increase in total costs (primarily fish food). 8/18: Current est. is an increase of \$30K to the FY 11 SOW. If a new vehicle is needed, another \$11K would be needed. All of this will depend on actual construction/completion dates.*
11. The **Program Director's office** and **Kevin Bestgen** will work with **PI's** to identify sampling shortcomings and remedies for Green River Colorado pikeminnow population estimate and report back to the Biology Committee prior to the 2011 sampling season. *Pending.*
12. The **Program Director's office** will post the revised 2008 and 2009 nonnative fish workshop summaries to the web. *Done. Dave Speas* is working to tabulate the recommendations from the 2008 and 2009 workshops and outline how to implement them and the NNFSC will meet to discuss this on June 30. *Done.* In the future, the **PD's office** will quickly complete these workshop summaries and the recommendations included as part of the annual and final report summaries. *11/23: Recommendations being incorporated into basinwide nonnative fish strategy; workshop summary will be made available soon after Nov. 7-8, 2010 workshop.*
13. 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).*

14. 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 likely not before December*.
15. By June 1, the **Program Director's office** will provide a review package for Aspinall Study Plan Ad Hoc Group participants, to include: Gunnison River PBO, flow recommendations, floodplain mgmt plan, LaGory's geomorphology report, recent reports (e.g. #121 Gunnison River larval sampling), and a list of uncertainties identified in the flow recommendations, PBO, and draft EIS. *Done; ad hoc met in early June, study plan drafting is underway; next ad hoc meeting September 1-2*. The **Program Director's office** will post the summary of the June Aspinall Study Plan meeting to the fws-coloriver listserv. *Done*. 11/23: *Web conference held Oct. 5 & Nov. 15; draft plan pending*.
16. **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*.
17. **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]).
18. Requirements/process for the next round of synthesis reports should be discussed by the **Nonnative Fish Subcommittee** and at the upcoming **nonnative fish workshop**. 9/30: Pat will work on the agenda for the workshop and guidance for the PI's. *Done*.
19. **Jana Mohrman** will make sure the BC received Tom Pitts' and Dan Luecke's comments on the sediment report. *Done*. **Jana** also will contact Bob Muth and George Smith about how they see the report results and how those can guide us in future evaluation of flow recommendations. *In progress*.
20. **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*.
21. Annual reports will be due November 15; the **Program Director's office** will get the updated report templates posted to the fws-coloriver listserv and on the Program's website. *Done*.
22. **Pat Martinez and the PD's office** will work with the PI's to determine ETS electrofishing units to be ordered and where they'll be deployed. *In progress*. **Pat** will capture the essence of his electrofishing powerpoint presentation with Larry's paper to document the rationale for our decision and share that with the San Juan Program (recognizing, of course, that only

rafts, not aluminum boats, are used on the San Juan). *Done?*

23. **Angela Kantola** will modify the work plan budget table to reflect the changes to UDWR's scopes of work (#128 and #138). *#138 done; awaiting PI's approval to replace #128 SOW.*
24. **Dave Speas** will ask **Peter McKinnon** to estimate the cost for a PIT tag system with two antennae and satellite uplink and multiplexer (prior to the meeting Tom Chart and Tom Pitts have with the Maybell Ditch owners). *Done.* Patty Gelatt has suggested that the Service would like to see two years of data, with the hope that different hydrologic conditions might be observed. **Tom Chart** will check on this with **Patty Gelatt** and also will ask her about using two antennae versus one. *Done.* >**Dave** will ask **Peter** to make a presentation on his techniques at either DFC, the Researchers Meeting, or both.
25. 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.
26. **Michelle Shaughnessy** will provide a revised SOW for using the existing 30K from FY 10 to remove fish from Baeser, reset it for next year, and sample Thunder (assuming permission) and Johnson. >The **Biology Committee** will review overall floodplain management using Tim Modde's draft plan in early 2011, wrapping in the floodplain synthesis report (>**the PD's office** will send Modde's plan to the Committee -- *done*).
27. **The PD's office** will make recommendations for overall FY 11 contingency projects given available funds. *Ongoing.*
28. **Tom Czapla** will send out the briefing paper he received with the humpback chub genetic data to the Biology Committee (*done*). >At a future meeting, the **Committee** will discuss how this affects the Yampa River humpback chub captivity plan.
29. **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.
30. **Krissy Wilson** will check with Trina on the status of the #138 report for the Committee's review in December. *Done; on agenda.*