

- I. Project Title: Fish and Wildlife Service Program Management
- II. Principal Investigator(s): Tom Chart, Program Director, P.O. Box 25486, DFC, Denver, CO 80225. Phone: 303/969-7322, ext. 226. FAX: 303/969-7327. E-Mail: tom\_chart@fws.gov.
- III. Project Summary: The ongoing work of the Recovery Program Director's office is to ensure timely and effective planning, implementation, coordination, and administrative support of the Recovery Program by: 1) coordinating and implementing recovery activities; 2) conducting Program planning and evaluation; 3) managing the Recovery Program annual budget; 4) providing staff assistance to [Program committees](#); and 5) directing and coordinating Service Recovery Program activities. These tasks were carried out by Recovery Program staff including the director, deputy director, coordinators for the major recovery elements, and administrative staff.
- IV. Study Schedule: 1989-ongoing.
- V. Relationship to [RIPRAP](#):  
General Recovery Program Support Action Plan:  
VII.A.1 Assure consistency of RIPRAP with currently approved recovery plans.  
VII.A.  
VII.A.3 Update, refine, and prioritize recovery actions (RIPRAP) annually.  
VII.A.5e Conduct species status review and update recovery goals at least every 5 years.  
VII.A.7 Monitor and assess Recovery Program accomplishments annually.  
VII.A.8 Develop biennial work plan to address priority needs.  
VII.B Actively participate in Recovery Program committees and secure funding for annual work plan and larger projects.  
VII.C Manage, direct, and coordinate Recovery Program activities.
- VI. Accomplishment of FY 2011 Tasks and Deliverables, Discussion of Initial Findings and Shortcomings:
  - A. Program Director & Staff
    1. Directed and coordinated implementation of recovery efforts as described in the RIPRAP and the Annual Work Plan in the areas of: a) instream flow protection b) habitat restoration and nonnative fish management; c) propagation/genetics and research, monitoring, and data management; and d) information, education, and public involvement. Program coordinators are: Vacant (vice-Tom Chart) for instream flow protection and floodplain restoration/management (with Jana Mohrman of the Service's Water Resources office coordinating hydrology-related issues and, beginning in FY12, fish passages and screens); Pat Martinez for nonnative fish management; Tom Czaplá for propagation/genetics, research,

monitoring, and data management (and prior to FY12, also fish passages and screens); and Debbie Felker for information, education, and public involvement.

Maintained tracking system of Program reports and due dates to ensure timely accomplishment of Program objectives.

Significant Program accomplishments/activities in 2011 included:

- 2011 was a record high-flow year in the northern portions of the Upper Basin. The Recovery Program was able to gather high-resolution aerial photography over ~350 miles throughout the Upper Basin at very near peak flows to capture important areas of inundation.
- Augmentation of late summer flows in the Yampa River for the fifth year using releases from [Elkhead Reservoir](#). The Recovery Program coordinated with the Colorado River District to experiment with a new release pattern to disrupt smallmouth bass and assist field sampling efforts. This resulted in a release of nearly 300cfs for several days from Elkhead Reservoir to target 1,000cfs at the Maybell, CO gage. The Program left roughly half of its 5,000 af ‘permanent fish pool’ in the reservoir in 2011 as baseflows remained high (>300 cfs) in the lower Yampa River through September 30, 2011.
- Operation of Flaming Gorge Dam under the [Biological Opinion](#) and [ROD](#) is going well. Reclamation’s efforts to meet spring flow targets and recommended base flow temperatures in Reach 1 and at the confluence with the Yampa River is commended. In 2011, a request was made to time the spring flow release to be coincident with the presence of larval razorback sucker in the Green River Reach 2 habitats (as opposed to matching the peak of the Yampa River). The April – July 2011 inflow to Flaming Gorge Reservoir was categorized among the ‘wettest’ of years. Spring operations at Flaming Gorge shifted into Safety-of-Dam mode during the runoff period, which resulted in more than two weeks of significant floodplain connection (>18,600 cfs) in Reach 2 after larval native suckers were detected in light traps. With the exception of a few days, baseflows remained above 3,000 cfs through September 30, 2011.
- Continued augmentation of Colorado River flows. It was a high snowpack year, with a 50th percentile forecasted peak of 23,000 (25,400 cfs is flood stage); therefore, no additional releases were coordinated for the spring peak. During runoff, reservoir operators made weekly calls with the Service to prevent flooding. Because the spring was cool and the runoff gradual, the peak at Cameo was 29,000 cfs. As flows decreased throughout the season, a “wet year” baseflow target of 1,630 cfs was maintained 85% of the time in the 15-Mile Reach. The lowest was in late October when flows dropped to 1430 for two days. Shoshone made repairs to their dam most of the summer and did not place a call, but water users again operated as if Shoshone were making its call, which helped to meet target flows.
- Drafted flow recommendations for the Price and White Rivers, with finalization expected in FY2012. The Price River position paper is scheduled for Biology Committee approval at the end of this month and then it will go to the Management Committee.

- Finalized and began implementation of an Aspinall Study Plan to evaluate Reclamation's re-operations at the Aspinall Unit.
- Review of nonnative fish control activities at the December 2010 workshop; continued removal of northern pike and smallmouth bass in the Colorado, Green and Yampa rivers.
- The Program has drafted a Basin-wide Nonnative and Invasive Aquatic Species Prevention and Control Strategy, which when approved, should provide important guidance on what many partners consider the largest remaining threat to recovery.
- Continued good hatchery production and numbers of stocked bonytail and razorback sucker. Larval razorback sucker were discovered this year for the first time in the White River. Also, in October 2011, seven juvenile-sized razorback sucker were found in a floodplain habitat in the Ouray National Wildlife Refuge, meaning that hatchery-produced razorback sucker had survived, matured in the river and successfully spawned in the wild and then their larvae rode high spring flows up onto the floodplain where they found suitable habitat to grow from a larval size of about ½-inch to a juvenile size of about 6 inches over the course of their first summer.
- [Five year reviews for the Colorado pikeminnow and humpback](#) chub were completed in FY2011 – no change in listing status for either species was recommended. The razorback sucker and boytail reviews are expected to be complete by the end of the calendar year.

2. Conducted Program planning and evaluation:

- a. Reviewed and updated the RIPRAP and documented changes; submitted recommended RIPRAP revisions to the technical, Management, and Implementation committees for review; published final, revised [RIPRAP](#) (with progress information included) to web. Revised process for developing sufficient progress memo (and modified format) per discussion at [November 9, 2010, Management Committee meeting](#).
- b. Modified 2010-2011 biennial work plan as needed and posted revised [scopes of work](#) to web; drafted [FY12-13 Program Guidance](#) and subsequent FY12-13 Work Plan and worked with Program committees to finalize (see [scopes of work](#)). Condensed FY 12-13 Program Guidance o primarily a spreadsheet-only format with anticipated budgets.
- c. Requested, revised as needed, and posted FY 2010 [project accomplishment reports](#) to the web. Summarized and distributed FY 2009 report recommendations.
- d. Continued to implement peer review to ensure the technical and scientific integrity of Recovery Program activities.
- e. Provided updates of [depletion consultations](#).

- f. Worked with non-Federal Program partners to provide supplemental information in response to questions from Representative Tom McClintock.
3. Monitored the FY 2011 Recovery Program annual budget and modified as necessary.
    - a. Developed annual funding tables (Program, Reclamation, and Service).
    - b. Developed and administered various cooperative agreements and contracts.
    - c. Monitored payment and expenditure of Section 7 funds in the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation account.
    - d. Calculated [FY 2012 annual agency contributions and depletion charge increases](#) based on the 2010 CPI.
    - e. Assisted with [Recovery Program trip to Washington, D.C.](#) to brief key people in the Department of the Interior, the Office of Management and Budget, national environmental groups, Congressional delegations, and authorizing and appropriation committees. Prepared [Program Highlights briefing book](#).
  4. Provided staff assistance to the [Implementation](#) and [Management](#) committees:
    - a. Prepared and distributed agendas and related documents in coordination with committee chairs. Arranged meetings and conference calls. Continued using web conferencing where applicable. Provided background materials, met with participants of [San Joaquin River Restoration Program](#) and facilitated their participation in [August 10-11, 2011 Management Committee meeting](#).
    - b. Prepared and promptly distributed concise, accurate meeting summaries. Took notes at [Biology Committee meetings](#) and promptly provided drafts meeting summaries to the Committee chair. Coordinated presentations at [Annual Researchers' Meeting](#).
    - c. Maintained Recovery Program administrative record (primarily on [web](#)).
    - d. Provided staff assistance to committees as necessary.
    - e. Recovery Program committee and related activities publicized on the Program listserver and posted on [Program web pages](#).
    - f. Attended Implementation, Management, and technical committee meetings.
    - g. Maintained Recovery Program [technical report library](#) and database. Provided library documents for serving on [CWCB LaserFische website](#).
    - h. Continued to maintain the electronic mailing list for Program participants.

- i. Continued to revise and maintain [Program website](#). This new site is heavily used by Program participants now.
  - 5. Directed and coordinated Service activities related to the Recovery Program.
    - a. [Recovery goal](#) revision and species' status reviews underway.
    - b. Administered funding for Service Recovery Program activities.
    - c. Conducted monthly Service conference call.
    - d. Coordinated with and provided staff support to Service management on Recovery Program activities and issues.
    - e. Provided annual Recovery Data Call information.
- B. Fish and Wildlife Service
- 1. Provided technical expertise and recommendations to the Biology Committee as requested.
  - 2. Participated in Biology Committee meetings.
- VII. Recommendations: 1) Continue use of webinars where applicable, especially in light of requests to further reduce Federal travel expenses; 2) update 1994 Program *Organization, Mission and Staffing Plan* and add Program Procedures; 3) maintain strong communication with [Southern Rockies LCC](#).
- VIII. Project Status: Ongoing and on track.
- IX. FY 2011 Budget Status
- A. FY 11 Funds Provided:
    - \$1,103,101 project funds
  - B. Funds Expended: ~\$970K . We cannot report an exact figure at this time because the Service is in mid-transition to FBMS (Dept. of Interior's new financial management system) and we will not be able to access financial reports until ~February 2012.
  - C. Difference:
    - \$815,900 carried over from FY 10 and previous was returned to the Recovery Program to cover FY 11 budget shortfalls.
    - \$284,952 of FY 11 Program funds have been preserved under this project for FY 12.

- Any additional carry-over in this project (#3) and projects #12, #12H, #12L and #19 will be identified early in CY12 and can then be applied to Recovery Program's FY 12 list of contingency projects.

D. Percent of the FY 2011 work completed, and projected costs to complete: All work completed.

E. Recovery Program funds spent for publication charges: None.

X. Status of Data Submission: Not applicable

XI. Signed: Tom Chart 11/21/11  
Principal Investigator Date