

Trip Report
March 15 through March 20, 2001
2001 Washington, D. C. Briefing
Meetings
Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery
Implementation Program
And
San Juan River Basin Endangered Fish Recovery
Implementation Program



Prepared by John Shields, Chairman, Upper Colorado Program Management Committee

SYNOPSIS AND PURPOSE: During the period March 15th through March 20th, representatives of the non-federal participants in the Upper Colorado River and San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Programs¹ met with Members of Congress and their staff to brief them on the status of the two endangered fish recovery programs. The group met with the Congressional Delegations of the States of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming, and Congressional committee staff for the authorizing and appropriations committees having jurisdiction over the Bureau of Reclamation and Fish and Wildlife Service, Administration officials and several other entities. The meetings addressed three matters:

1. Status of the Recovery Program and its accomplishments, including the anticipated upcoming publication in the *Federal Register* of the notice of availability of the recovery goals for the four species of endangered fish (including the need, basis, development and proposed content of those goals).
2. Fiscal Year 2002 funding needs and inclusion of Recovery Program funding line-items in the budgets for the USFWS and the Bureau of Reclamation which we anticipate will be included in the in the President's Fiscal Year 2002 recommended budget (when the details of same are released in early April) to meet those needs.
3. Our progress in implementing the provisions of Public Law 106-392, authorizing cost sharing for the remaining capital construction projects for the Upper Colorado River Recovery Implementation Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program and providing a stabilized source of annual "base" funding, and to report on the status of the States' cost-sharing to be contributed pursuant to this newly enacted law.

At each meeting, our group recognized the importance of past funding support from the Congress as being a key element of the progress that these two programs are making and explained the continuing need for funding and the uses and benefits being obtained with Program funding. Joint-delegation letters addressed to the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development and the Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies (expressing funding support for specific funding amounts which we anticipate will be included within line-items in the President's FY 2002 recommended Bureau of Reclamation and USFWS budgets for these two recovery programs when that budget's detailed are released in a few weeks) were circulated on Capitol Hill last week. Copies of the funding support letters submitted to the appropriations subcommittees by Governors Leavitt and Geringer, the Colorado

¹ Program participants represented at these briefing meetings were the four involved states of Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and New Mexico, water users, environmental groups and Colorado River Energy Distributors Association [(CREDA) - an association of consumer-owned electric systems which purchase power generated at Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) facilities, for delivery to nearly 3 million consumers in six western states]. Representatives of the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Reclamation participated in the briefings for the purpose of answering technical questions concerning the fishes' life history and habitat needs and program accomplishments and anticipated activities (including the proposed recovery goals).

Dept. of Natural Resources Director, the New Mexico State Engineer and The Nature Conservancy were provided to legislative staff at each meeting. In addition, letters of support have been submitted by a number of water user interests and municipalities and the water users' Program representative provided a recounting of those.

As measured by having nearly all of the signatures of the Members of Congress from the four involved states on the joint delegation letters, we have again amply demonstrated the support of our Congressional delegations for fiscal year 2002 funding for these two recovery programs. We received a number of compliments for our efforts – including the Program's successes, the quality of the briefing materials and the presentations made, the approaches we are using and our repeated visits to these offices each year. In particular, the author wants to note that the briefing of Interior Department, Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Reclamation directorate and high-ranking officials garnered particularly pleasing praise.

A copy of our briefing booklet used for these visits may be downloaded from the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Implementation Program's Internet home page. The URL to view or download the booklet is: [http:// www.r6.fws.gov/crrip/doc/PrgrmHilites01.pdf](http://www.r6.fws.gov/crrip/doc/PrgrmHilites01.pdf).

The objectives of the trip were met and the participants feel that we did about all that we could while we were in Washington, D.C. A list of those who participated in the meetings/briefings is attached to this report. Not all participants were in Washington, D.C. during the entire period of the trip nor did all participate in each meeting, nonetheless the roster provides a listing of all who participated in one or more meetings.

TRIP PARTICIPANTS:

The group representing the two recovery program consisted of:

- John Shields – Wyoming
- Robert King – Utah
- Darin Bird – Utah – (briefings with Utah House and Senate Delegation and House Resources Comm. staff)
- Kent Holsinger – Colorado
- Tom Blickensderfer – Colorado
- Tom Pitts - Water Users
- Robert Wigington – TNC (3/15-16)
- Tom Iseman – TNC
- Christine Karas – USBR
- Robert Muth – USFWS – Upper Colorado Recovery Program Director
- Shirley Mondy – USFWS – San Juan River Basin Program Coordinator
- Leslie James (Colorado River Energy Distributors Association) [3/20 11:00 a.m. meeting]
- Marcus Faust (representing several Utah and New Mexico clients at meetings with the Utah and New Mexico House delegation members)
- Kiel Weaver (Vice President, Morgan McGuire, LLC – who represents CREDA in re: legislative matters – attended 3/19 recovery goals briefing in 121 Cannon House Office Building and provided immensely valuable assistance in arranging our “Dear Colleague” letter and briefing logistics working with Matt Meagher, Executive Director for the Western Caucus).

SYNOPSIS OF MEETINGS AND CONTACTS:

The following provides a very brief description of each meeting held and notes specific requests, points of discussion or other information worthy of note for future reference, including necessary follow-up that should occur.

Thursday, March 15:

- 8:00 - 9:10 a.m. Trip participants held a pre-briefing information sharing, strategy and orientation meeting in Board Room 108 at the Capitol Hill Suites Hotel.
- 9:30 a.m. Met with Legislative Assistant Renee Howell and briefly with Rep. Scott McInnis in 320 Cannon House Office Building (hereafter CHOB). We requested that Renee assist by printing and circulating the joint delegation funding support letters to the E/WD and Interior Approps. Subcommittees (which she graciously agreed to do – as she did last year).
- 10:00 a.m. Met with Rep. Mark Udall and Legislative Director Stan Sloss in 115 CHOB. Rep. Udall expressed his support for this effort and requested we advise if he could assist in obtaining the support/signature of his cousin, Rep. Tom Udall of New Mexico on the joint delegation funding support letters.
- 10:30 a.m. Met with Rep. Tom Tancredo and Legislative Assistant Matt Knoedler in 418 CHOB. Rep. Tancredo expressed his support, was pleased to hear our reports and provided sizeable compliments to Tom Blickensderfer. Rep. Bob Schaffer’s Legislative Director Rob Nanfeldt and Legislative Assistant Kelly Brady joined us in Rep. Tancredo’s office for this briefing (there had been a scheduling error made on the part of their office’s staff as to the time of our appointment but they were able to join us at this meeting and we thanked them for Rep. Schaffer having consented to circulate the “Dear Colleague” letters for the Monday briefings regarding the proposed recovery goals.
- 11:30 a.m. Met with Representative Diana DeGette and Legislative Assistant Paul Lhevine in 1530 Longworth House Office Building (hereafter LHOB). Rep. DeGette verbally indicated her willingness to sign the joint delegation funding support letters and thoughtfully considered the message that we delivered.
- 11:45 a.m. Tom Blickensderfer and Tom Pitts traveled to 2230 Rayburn House Office Building to meet with Larry Hojo, Legislative Director for Representative Joel Hefley, but were stood-up. Upon reaching Mr. Hojo by phone in the early afternoon, Hojo asked if this was the same matter which our group had visited with him in prior years, and upon being told that yes, we were wishing to meet with him concerning the ongoing Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program Mr. Hojo stated that he was not interested in holding a briefing. He later told Tom Blickensderfer that he would be willing to put the letter in front of his boss, but did not commit that doing so would yield an affirmative response. Briefing materials were left at the office for Rep. Hefley and his staff.
- 1:00 – 1:50 p.m. Met in 1328 LHOB with Tim Stewart, House Resources Committee Staff Member (1324 LHOB, 225-2761) for Rep. Hansen, Joshua Johnson, Staff Director for the Water and Power Subcommittee of the House Resources Committee, Luke Johnson, Legislative Assistant for Representative Jim Hansen, Sarah Anderson, Legislative Assistant for Rep. Chris Cannon. Steve Lanich, Minority Prof. Staff Member of the Water and Power Subcommittee joined the meeting about halfway through the meeting. Our group presented Certificates of Appreciation to Rep. Hansen and Rep. George Miller (via Luke Johnson and Steve Lanich, respectively). Ron Yoder, on the full Committee staff also participated in this meeting.

Stewart and Johnson advised that the Water and Power Subcommittee will be holding hearings in April concerning the capability to increase the generation of power at Federal hydropower facilities and why those facilities have not been able to generate more energy as a way to decrease the probable rolling blackouts that will be suffered in California and perhaps elsewhere this coming summer. These hearings will include some level of focus on the operations at Glen Canyon Dam and Powerplant and other Colorado River Basin facilities. We indicated to Johnson our desire to “keep the Upper Division States” in mind as these hearings are scheduled. The point was made that the deliveries to Lake Mead from Lake Powell, quantity-wise, are dictated by provisions of the “Law of the River” and that the Glen Canyon Adaptive Program, instituted by the Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Operation of Glen Canyon Dam has been a primary determinant in the parameters of the Powerplant’s operation. No information has yet been posted to the Subcommittee’s website but we should continue to watch

for indications about the hearing and when information is shared there is an expectation on the part of our Program's participants that it will be posted on the Upper Colorado Recovery Program's list-server.

- 2:00 p.m. Met with Rep. Jim Matheson and Chief of Staff Stacey Sylvia in 410 CHOB. Rep. Matheson was supportive of the programs and indicated he would sign the letters.
- 3:00 p.m. Met with Congressional Fellow Lindon Wiebe, for Rep. Tom Udall in 502 CHOB. Wiebe was amazed at our program's efforts and entirely supportive and complimentary of the briefing materials.
- 3:30 p.m. Met with Legislative Assistant Kristen Astor for Rep. Heather Wilson in 318 CHOB.
- 4:00 p.m. Met with Legislative Assistant Jim Hughes, for Rep. Joe Skeen in the hallway outside of 2302 RHOB. Mr. Hughes indicated that while Rep. Skeen, as an Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman, will not sign either the letter addressed to his Subcommittee or the one addressed to the E/WD Subcommittee, he is aware of the Program and supportive of our approaches and efforts.
- 4:30 p.m. Met with Legislative Assistant Dennis Ellis for Representative Barbara Cubin in 1114 LHOB. I also spoke briefly with Legislative Director Bryan Jacobs and Chief of Staff Tom Wiblemo (spoke to Wiblemo on 3/22/2001 and Tom indicated that Rep. Cubin most certainly will and wants to sign the joint delegation letters).

March 16 (Friday)

Wigington and Muth had breakfast with Brock Evans, Executive Director of the Endangered Species Coalition and provided him with a progress report on the two programs. Brock feels that the ESA may suffer a "death of a thousand cuts" under the new Bush Administration.

- 9:30 a.m. Met with Legislative Assistant Seth Voyles, for Senator Ben Nighthorse-Campbell in 380 Russell Senate Office Building (hereafter RSOB). Shields had previously sent on copies of the draft joint delegation letters expressing funding support and a meeting backgrounder to Legislative Assistant for Appropriations Laurel Reed Preler (but she did not attend the meeting).
- 10:00 a.m. Met with Legislative Assistant Fitz Elder and Legislative Correspondent Catherine Ackerson, for Senator Robert Bennett and Legislative Assistant J.J. Brown for Senator Orrin Hatch in 431 Dirksen Senate Office Building (hereafter DSOB). Elder and Brown indicated that their bosses continue to support the programs and will sign the joint delegation letters.
- 10:45 a.m. Met with Legislative Assistant Andy Colosimo, for Senator Wayne Allard in 525 DSOB. Our group presented Certificates of Appreciation to Andy Colosimo and a second one for him to present to Sen. Allard for their considerable assistance in achieving the enactment of PL 106-392. We provided a computer disk with the draft joint delegation funding letters and requested of Andy that he initiate the circulation of the letters on the Senate side (Andy agreed to take on this task).
- 11:30 a.m. Met with Majority Professional Staff Member Tammy Perrin and Minority Clerk Drew Willison of the Senate Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee in 127 DSOB.
- 1:30 p.m. Met with Legislative Assistant Shelly Vaughn Randel for Senator Pete Domenici and Legislative Assistant Mark Edwards for Senator Jeff Bingaman in 328 Hart Senate Office Building (hereafter HSOB). Mark clearly indicated that Senator Bingaman would be willing to sign the letter and I believe that Shelly clearly understood the importance of the San Juan River Basin Recovery Program to numerous current and planned New Mexico water uses and planned uses.
- 3:00 p.m. Met with Legislative Assistant Celia Wallace for Senator Craig Thomas and Legislative Assistant Dallas Scholes for Senator Mike Enzi in 109 HSOB. After a short two-minute version of the presentation that we had been making in each office, Shields noted that it is clear that the two Wyoming Senators are hearing the message that we are attempting to deliver in a much different

way than any other office on Capitol Hill. He suggested that the allotted time might be well spent in our group trying to better understand the bases for the positions that Senators Thomas and Enzi are taking to not support (and he noted that we certainly very much appreciate the fact that neither Senator has chosen to oppose our efforts to secure funds and the absence of opposition is both noted and appreciated) the funding requests we are making; e.g. to try to better understand their views as opposed to stating ours again as we have for several years in a row, but seemingly without any positive response or result. The remainder of the meeting was spent in a rather free-wheeling exchange of ideas and positions. Scholes noted that Senator Enzi needs a higher demonstration of consensus on the ground within our programs – without “the gun at our head.” He believes that a different atmosphere will come about now that Secretary of the Interior Norton is at the helm, and that clearly the “game will not be played the same way it was in the middle and late 1970s” with regard to environmental regulation. Senator Enzi would like to see how things evolve under the new Administration before committing that our collaborative partnership process is one that he should embrace. Pitts responded to these statements by noting the voluntary, home-grown nature of the Recovery Program and that the USFWS cannot recover the fish species by themselves and the Program is built around several fundamental and basic tenets, including compliance and respect for state water laws and interstate water compacts and decrees, equitable sharing of costs and responsibilities, accountability of all partners to one another and the creation of strong vested interests and support for the Program’s continued accomplishments of its dual objectives. Karas noted that the new funding authorization act has capped the Program’s authorizations in terms of both time period for the construction projects remaining to be completed and the amount of funding that can be expended for those projects. Holsinger noted that Colorado’s number 1 goal is seeing the fish recovered. He noted that the Program is very important to Colorado and that State is committed to the Program. He noted that it is much more productive than the Platte River Cooperative Agreement’s proposed Recovery Program has been to date.

Scholes noted that he is anticipating that a whole new dynamic is now on the horizon, and that a variety of things will be available under the new Administration. He noted an expectation that there will be more developments in the future like Bennett v. Spears, which established standing for landowners in ESA administration cases. Shields noted that our intent continues to be to advise that we don’t expect that either Wyoming Senator will like everything about the Program (as we don’t either) but we are advising that the Program is the right thing to do. Given the current federal Endangered Species Act, we feel we have no choice but to cooperate, as neither litigation nor legislative approaches to amend the ESA are effective options at the current time. He stated that the difficulty with the “just say no” approach is that it is not appropriate governance policy for our communities, industries or agricultural sectors when it comes to being able to develop additional water for consumptive use.

Scholes responded that they do not advocate “management by moratorium” either. He stated that he believes the ESA is in its infancy with regard to being applied for multiple use management. He noted that the Supreme Court of the United States overturns decisions concerning the ESA that are issued by the 9th Circuit about 75 percent of the time. He believes that we are entering a new atmosphere of ESA administration where options will be available that simply have not been there heretofore. He noted that Senator Enzi is not going to stand in the way of appropriations for or oppose this Program. Wallace noted that in Senator Thomas’ view the Programs are not “all about the fish” but rather are about being strangled by others with more leverage and being forced to do things that you don’t want to do.

Pitts noted that he continues to serve as the Co-chairman of the National Water Resources Association’s Endangered Species Reform Subcommittee and that the involved States and water users would still need these Programs even if the ESA reform bills (including Kempthorne-Chaffee) had been enacted. Scholes made reference to HR478, introduced again by Rep. Pombo, which will provide exemptions to the ESA in flooding circumstances. Wallace offered her perspective that reform of the ESA is not going to happen in a 50/50 divided Senate. Scholes stated that he believes that national energy policy is going to be a big driver in the coming months and he concluded by noting, “policy is a very interesting dog.”

3:45 p.m. Met with Sharla Moffett-Beall, Staff Director, Fisheries, Wildlife and Drinking Water Subcommittee of the Senate EPW Committee and Legislative Fellow Tede Fleming for Senator Crapo in the hearing room across the hall from 410 DSOB and Legislative Assistant Lisa Moore of Senator Harry Reid's staff.

4:30 p.m. Met with Colleen Deegan, Majority Counsel for the Senate Water & Power Subcommittee of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee in temporary housing space in the Russell Senate Office Building Courtyard. Colleen was very complimentary to our group about our programs and stated that we are doing things right. She noted she is mentioning our programs to others who come in to see her regarding conservation/development conflicts and encouraging those folks to contact us to "figure out how to go about it right." We volunteered to share information, make presentations, etc., and encouraged her to continue with "referrals." This was a great meeting to end the first two days of briefings with on a very positive, reaffirming note.

Briefing materials were given to Colleen and she indicated she would provide them to David Brooks, Minority Senior Counsel, for the Water and Power Subcommittee for the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. We also provided some additional razorback sucker magnet-cards to Colleen for her to give to Jim Beirne when she gets the opportunity, since he was not in attendance at this meeting.

We dropped a briefing booklet and other materials by the office of Legislative Assistant Valerie West for Senator Gordon Smith, who serves as the Chairman of the Water and Power Subcommittee of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee at 404 Russell Office Building, along with a note on the cover of the booklet thanking her for her assistance and advising to call if she has any questions.

Monday, March 19:

9:00 a.m. Met with Professional Majority Staff Member Loretta Beaumont and Professional Minority Staff Member Mike Stephens of the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee and Professional Staff Member Christine Drager of the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee in B308 RSOB. Additional briefing materials were provided to Drager to share with Minority Staff Member Peter Kiefhaber of the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee.

12 to 1:30 p.m. Our group conducted/participated in a Recovery Goals briefing in 122 CHOB. Susan Baker provided a brief introduction to the topic and Upper Colorado Recovery Program Director Robert Muth made a Powerpoint presentation on the development and proposed elements of the draft recovery goals. Handouts and lunch were provided. This has been set up in conjunction with Kiel Weaver of Morgan Meguire, LLC, (202-661-6192; 661-6182 (fax) [kweaver@morganmeguire.com]) who will be attending. Those in attendance at the briefing were the following:

Legislative Assistant J.J. Brown for Senator Orrin Hatch,
Legislative Correspondent Catherine Ackerson for Senator Robert Bennett,
Legislative Assistant Susan Kachouroff for Rep. Jeff Flake,
Legislative Fellow Tede Fleming for Senator Mike Crapo, who serves as the Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, and Water of the Environment and Public Works Committee,
Executive Director Matt Meagher of the Western Caucus (established in 1994 by and for Western States' Members of Congress),
Kiel Weaver, Vice President with Morgan Meguire, LLC, which lobbies for the Colorado River Energy Distributors Association (who had greatly assisted with the arrangements and organization of the recovery goals briefing).

J.J. Brown of Senator Hatch's office asked a number of interesting questions regarding Program performance measures, e.g., the results obtained to date and how do we assess the progress that is being made. One might infer that what he was looking for is when will the Programs be done and what percentage or amount of the way to completion are we to at this point in time.

4:00 to 5:00 p.m. Repeated the Recovery Goals briefing in Room HC-7 of the U.S. Capitol Building. There were no staff members from either Delegation or Committee offices in attendance, so the briefing was truncated to a discussion among the briefing trip participants.

Tuesday, March 20:

9:00 a.m. Met with Senior Legislative Analyst Carolyn Duffin of the Western Governors Association and Agriculture Conservation Policy Analyst David Walker of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in Suite 388 of the Hall of States at 444 N. Capitol St., N.W.

11:00 a.m. Met with Department of Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service directorate and officials in Room 7000B of the Main Interior Building, 1849 C Street, N.W.). Meeting attendees included:

Acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Amy Holley,
Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks Joe Doddridge,
Assistant USFWS Director for Ecological Services Gary Frazer,
Assistant Director for Fisheries and Habitat Conservation Cathy Short,
Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior for USFWS Rob Rhoades
Ren Lohofener, Chief, Office of Consultation, HCPs and Recovery, USFWS,
Kevin Adams, USFWS, Washington Office,
Bob Pos, ONFHS, USFWS, Washington Office,
Morgan McCosh, USFWS, Washington Office,
David Cottingham, USFWS, Washington Office,
Ken Burton, Public Affairs, USFWS, Washington Office,
Tino Tafoya, Liaison to Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, USBR, Washington Office,
Larry Todd, Director of Operations, USBR, Washington Office,
Maryanne Bach, Great Plains Region Regional Director, USBR,
Shannon Cuniff, USBR, Washington Office,
Ella Mae Herrera, Upper Colorado Region Liaison Officer, USBR, Washington Office,
Bill Burleigh, Upper Colorado Region Liaison Officer, USBR, Washington Office,
Terry Zontek, Great Plains Regional Liaison Officer, USBR, Washington Office,
Andrea Nelson, Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, USBR, Washington Office,
Judy Troast, Office of Policy, USBR, Washington Office
Bob Wolf, USBR, Washington Office,

This meeting went very well and consisted of presentations on the initiation, purpose and status of the recovery programs, a description of the efforts to implement the non-federal cost-sharing provisions of Public Law 106-392, and a short status report on the development and schedule for publishing the notice of availability for the draft recovery goals for the four endangered fish species. Only a few questions were asked.

2:00 p.m. Shields and Karas met with Assistant Fisheries Program Director Pamela McClelland with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in Suite 900 at 1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW. We obtained a copy of the NFWF's 1999 Annual Report and requested that the Foundation include information about our endangered fish recovery programs in future publications. We left copies of our briefing materials for circulation among Foundation staff and for their publications rack. Whitney Tilt was not able to join us at this meeting on account of a NFWF Board meeting.

4:00 p.m. Met with Majority Professional Staff Member Bob Schmidt of the House Energy & Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee in 2362B RHOB. Schmidt continues to be supportive of our efforts and approach to recovering, what he calls, "those ugly fish." It is noted that he had the humpback chub magnet given to him last year on his credenza. In several other offices we noted that last year's "fish program calling card magnets" were sticking on file cabinets, etc.

4:35 p.m. Stopped by and quickly spoke with Legislative Renee Howell in Rep. Scott McInnis' office to advise that we had followed up with each of the four delegation member's legislative staff who had failed to sign the House-side joint delegation funding support letters when they were circulated on Monday.

APPENDIX MATERIALS:

Dear Colleague Letter signed by Rep. Bob Schaffer for Recovery Goals Briefing

03/15/01 10:21

BOB SCHAFFER
MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM COLORADO
FOURTH DISTRICT

712 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
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(202) 225-1876
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CONGRESSIONAL WESTERN WATER CAUCUS
LUNCH BRIEFING on
Draft Recovery Goals for Four Species of Endangered Fish
Native to the Colorado River Basin
Monday, March 19, 2001
12-1:30 p.m.; 4-5 p.m.
121 CHOB; HC-7

Dear Colleague:

The bipartisan Congressional Western Water Caucus invites you to attend a short luncheon briefing and discussion on draft recovery goals for four species of endangered Colorado River fish - Colorado pikeminnow (formerly Colorado squawfish), humpback chub, bonytail, and razorback sucker.

The recovery of these species is being undertaken in a cooperative manner involving the federal government, various state wildlife agencies in Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, New Mexico, Arizona and Nevada, and private entities. The briefing's purpose is to update you and your staff on the current and future efforts on implementing the recovery goals.

A notice of availability of draft recovery goals will be published in the *Federal Register* in late March or early April. A subsequent 45-day public comment period is planned.

The Mountain-Prairie Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, headquartered in Lakewood, Colorado, has the lead for conservation and recovery of these four fish species. These recovery goals are supplements and amendments to existing recovery plans for each species. They detail the criteria that must be met before the species may be considered for removal (delisting) from Endangered Species Act (ESA) protection. As "recovery" of species is essentially the reverse of listing, the draft recovery goals address the five listing factors detailed in Section 4(a)(1) of the ESA. The five listing factors are: 1) the present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range; 2) overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; 3) disease or predation; 4) inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; and 5) other natural manmade factors affecting its continued existence.

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Criteria contained in the goals include demographic and genetic needs for self-sustaining, viable populations, and management actions/tasks that address the five listing factors to minimize or remove threats. The goals address the entire Colorado River Basin, thereby affecting seven states: Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, and California.

Susan Baker, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Assistant Regional Director for Ecological Services, and Robert Muth, Program Director, Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish

Recovery Program will brief attendees about the draft recovery goals. Time will be allotted for questions and answers.

I hope you and your staff can attend this important luncheon briefing. An R.S.V.P. is not necessary, but will be appreciated. Please contact Rob Nanfelt of my staff at 202-225-4676 should you have any questions.

Very truly yours,



Bob Schaffer
Member of Congress
from Colorado