

Biology Committee Conference Call
May 12, 2004

Biology Committee: Melissa Trammell, Frank Pfeifer, Tom Pitts, Gary Burton, Kevin Christopherson, Kevin Gelwicks, and Bill Davis (BC members not attending: John Hawkins, Tom Nesler, Bureau of Reclamation)

Other participants: Kevin Bestgen, Bob Muth, Pat Nelson, George Smith, Tim Modde, Tom Chart, and Dave Speas.

The primary purpose of the meeting was to discuss contingency plans for studies that would be affected by the projected low spring peak flows in the Green River sub-basin.

1. **Starvation Reservoir Escapement**. The study so far has been conducted as planned in anticipation that Starvation would spill this year. Currently, however, it appears that the reservoir will not spill. The Biology Committee decided to allow the study to proceed, to determine levels of escapement from the reservoir outlet. At a later date the committee will decide whether or not to proceed with spillway escapement evaluation.
2. **Duchesne River Nonnative Fish Management**. Flows are too low to float a boat, so the work will be deferred until flows are high enough (~150 cfs).
3. **Larval Growth/Survival Study**. Leota L-10, Johnson, and Old Charlie Wash are currently connected to the river and filling with water. Thunder Ranch will not connect this year, but has standing water and nonnative fish. Larval razorback sucker were stocked into the four wetlands (3,000/acre) on April 26. Larval bonytail were stocked on May 3. The study is being conducted as planned.
4. **Baeser Bend Study**. Water was pumped into the site to prepare for stocking. Larval razorback sucker were stocked on April 26. Larval bonytail were stocked on May 3. The study is being conducted as planned.
5. **Stirrup Recruitment Study**. Flows will not get high enough this year to conduct the recruitment study. The study will be conducted next year if flows cooperate. If necessary, UDWR proposes pumping water into the Stirrup to sustain the razorback sucker that currently reside within the site as well as newly stocked larvae.
6. **Larval Entrainment Study**. Because of low spring flows and other circumstances, the entrainment study will not be conducted as described in the scope of work. However, the committee decided that there would be some value in monitoring drift and entrainment of beads and ~100K marked larvae at the lower flows, to see if beads can be used as surrogates to larvae. The pilot experiment is tentatively scheduled for the week of May 17. Larvae will be released downstream of all light traps sampling wild razorback larvae.

Regarding the existing scope of work, efforts are underway by Kevin Christopherson and Kevin Bestgen to redesign the study and conduct it next year if flows cooperate.

7. **Excess Razorback Sucker Larvae.** The committee decided to stock the excess larvae from the first batch (~400–500K) into the Stirrup for growout if nonnative densities were acceptable. *Subsequently, however, UDWR found a high abundance of green sunfish and black bullheads in the site. Therefore, the current plan is to stock the larvae into mesh cages to be placed into the Stirrup. As the fish grow larger, they will be released into the Stirrup.*

The ~100K excess larvae from the second batch will be marked with tetracycline and used in the larval drift experiment.

8. **Sediment Monitoring.** George Smith said that non-federal matching funds were not secured, so the study had to be cut back. Since funding issues delayed the onset of the study and peak flow sediment measurements could not be captured this year, the remainder of the study could be conducted as planned with the remaining funds. The committee approved.
9. **Date of Population Estimate Workshop.** Mike Hudson had requested a change in the date of the population estimate workshop. However, the committee could not find another date without schedule conflicts. >>>Program Director's office will discuss alternatives with Mike.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. UDWR will sample the Stirrup and, if nonnative fish densities are low, stock the 400–500K larvae into the site, or in an alternative site if densities are high.
2. Kevin Christopherson and Kevin Bestgen will work together to redesign the larval entrainment study and submit a revised FY 05 proposal to the Biology Committee.
3. CSU, ONFH, and UDWR will coordinate to conduct a drift/entrainment pilot experiment with beads and ~100K razorback sucker larvae.
 - a. CSU will send tetracycline to ONFH.
 - b. ONFH will mark larvae.
 - c. UDWR/CSU will conduct experiment.
4. Bob Muth will discuss Population Estimate Workshop dates with Mike Hudson.