

March 4, 2010

**Meeting Summary**  
**Information & Education Committee Meeting**  
**March 4, 2010**  
**Country Inn and Suites, Denver, CO**

Participants: Kara Lamb, Debbie Felker, Justyn Hock, Randy Hampton, Martha Moore, Joann Perea-Richmann, Leslie James, John Shields, Tom Chart, and Angela Kantola. Melissa Trammell joined the meeting by phone.

CONVENE: 10:30 a.m.

1. **Introductions** –
2. **Current and future Program status** –Tom reviewed each Program element, discussing current challenges as well as long-term, post-recovery considerations (see also 2009-2010 *Program Highlights*.) Tom also asked the Committee for suggestions regarding giving a similar presentation at the Congressional staff luncheon hosted by the water users during the Washington, D.C., briefing trip. Leslie said Tom should assume that most of the staffers won't know anything about the Program. The presentation text has a number of abbreviations that will need to be spelled out for an unfamiliar audience. Kara suggested significantly reducing the amount of text on the slides to just short bullets and to add in photos. Randy suggested *not* providing a handout on the PowerPoint presentation, because it will distract the audience.

The Committee discussed how Tom (and Dave Campbell from the San Juan Program) should discuss the cost of activities in this venue and with such a short presentation time. They should make clear that this is a forward-looking review of future challenges. It may be best to have a brief introduction that covers these kinds of concerns, mentions accomplishments, and addresses why it takes so long to achieve recovery. Fortunately, the group will already have visited many of these staffers and given them an overview of the recovery programs' accomplishments. John suggested that Krissy Wilson be asked to do the introduction. She could address state conservation plans, since the states will assume conservation responsibilities and Krissy has experience with the three species plans.

3. **Nonnative fish management update and raising Program visibility in the Yampa River Basin** – Tom reviewed possible ways to improve visibility and understanding of our Program and our recovery efforts in the Yampa River communities. We've considered setting up a truck with an electrofishing boat in the WalMart parking lot in Craig on a Saturday, for example. Debbie asked Betsy Blakeslee (former I&E committee member) with The Nature Conservancy's Carpenter Ranch in Hayden for ideas because she is actively involved in the Yampa River Basin community. Betsy suggested that it might be better to set up a booth with an aquarium at the Routt County fair in Craig and the Moffat County Fair in Hayden in August. She said many local people attend both

fairs and would be less rushed than if they were stopping in at a WalMart or other shopping center on a weekend. A poster discussing how the Recovery Program's support of the Elkhead Reservoir enlargement provides water for people would be a good addition to a booth or similar event. Betsy also mentioned that both counties' chambers of commerce highly publicize the fairs and the organizations that provide booths. She said to keep in mind that cultures are very different in Routt and Moffatt counties.

Betsy said the Community Ag Alliance will host a regional tour on July 21 to Steamboat Springs and Craig that will address what is happening in the Yampa River Basin and will include a stop at Elkhead Reservoir and that maybe the program can participate or provide materials for the tour. She also suggested that another idea would be to provide area libraries (South Routt, Hayden, Steamboat Springs, Craig and Oak Creek) with a copy(ies) of the *Phoebe and Chub* children's book and ask their summer story readers to read the book to the young children and perhaps hand out our bookmarks.

Debbie still plans to contact Audrey Danner who used to staff the Yampa River Basin Partners and is now a Moffatt County commissioner, and a few others in the basin to ask their views. John recommended that Debbie continue making these contacts and suggested T. Wright Dickinson would be another good contact. John suggested reaching out to [yampavalley.info](http://yampavalley.info) and asking to be added to its natural resources and environment tab. John said the Program needs to get its logo out in front of folks (and should use it much more than we do). Kara added the importance of including our three talking points.

Justyn suggested the possibility of adding magnetic signs with our logo to field trucks. The question is when is it appropriate to identify our Program and concerns were raised that the vandalism risk may be too great. Randy said he believes CDOW would support the use of Program logo magnet signs if the other Program participants would do the same. We need to continue to emphasize the public benefit of the Program in terms of water use (and finding ways water users can help us carry that message). Randy noted that we tend to be on the defense with Moffatt County folks, but with this audience it may be better to emphasize that the Recovery Program prevents the worst things they perceive about the federal government. Kara countered that a Pitkin County reporter just told her this was extremely irrelevant to locals and she sees journalism shifting focus to local concerns and local issues. We have to make clear to locals what this "ESA compliance" means to them directly. County fairs would be a good place to point out how their continued water use relates to success of the Recovery Program.

The Committee looked at [consultations in the Yampa River](#) and talked about ways the Program could help raise awareness of how this Program makes continued water use possible (and what the alternative would be without the Recovery Program). The Committee would like to ask water districts to help the Program tell the public why the Program is important.

Justyn suggested hosting a poster and/or essay contest using the Program's messages and then display the winning entries at our booth and give winners some type of a prize. Leslie said one of her CREDA members sponsored a poster contest for electrical safety

and used the winning entries in their calendar. Randy suggested having the list of water projects available at the booth – folks will recognize the names of projects in their areas. We might even want to ask some of the more public water users to somehow acknowledge that ESA compliance for their water use is provided by this Recovery Program. Leslie said it's important to develop the message in a way that is easily understood by the average person and explains what water development actually means to them.

John again emphasized the importance of getting our information on area websites (e.g., Craig Chamber of Commerce, etc.), as this will really give us a high return on our investment. The Committee thought the county fair and tour were excellent ideas, as well as the Phoebe and Chub book + bookmarks for libraries. Tom said we may have some northern pike data that can be used in a news release with other outreach materials this spring.

4. **D.C. briefing trip (March 17-22)** – John discussed the current itinerary of meetings (~30) which remain vital to maintaining Congressional support for the Upper Colorado River and San Juan River Basin recovery programs and keeping the programs visible to before the various agency headquarters, Office of Management and Budget, and so forth. A four-page flyer from the non-Federal program partners on budget requests also will be provided, as in past years. John Shields will send this to the Committee for their information.
5. **Lunch and roundtable discussion of each committee member's projects related to the Recovery Program** –
  - a. Martha said the River District is working on interpretive signs for Elkhead Reservoir and preparing for 10,825.
  - b. Justyn said Reclamation's Grand Junction office is working on Orchard Mesa Irrigation District canal improvements. They held a public meeting in December and are working to finalize environmental documents. Recently Justyn was involved with the Gunnison Basin selenium issues. She will represent the Program at the annual Ute Water Festival in Grand Junction be held May 17-18 for about 2,000 local students.
  - c. Debbie said she's working with the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Vernal to return an aquarium exhibit to the Dinosaur National Monument visitor center when it reopens. The aquarium previously at the monument's visitor center was moved to the high school in Vernal where it will display razorback sucker from the Ouray National Fish Hatchery. A special school event will be held May 21 at Baeser Bend Wetland to teach high school students about the ecosystem and endangered fish with a potential student story for our newsletter. Endangered Species Day is May 21<sup>st</sup> and the Program will again have an exhibit at the Downtown Denver Aquarium (with information on our species and others).

The Grand Valley Endangered Fish Facility and Ouray National Fish Hatchery will also provide information on our Program and other endangered species to students who tour these facilities in May. Tom added that our office hopes to get the Service's Regional directorate out on a tour of our facilities in the Grand Valley next spring. We've had enough turnover that some folks within the Service aren't really aware of what the Recovery Program is doing. Tom asked the Committee if their agencies have similar needs for their leaders. Leslie said the newly developed Landscape Conservation Cooperatives are a big issue with members of CREDA and they would like more information on how all of the recovery efforts tie in with the LCC (i.e., Upper Colorado River and San Juan River recovery programs, Glen Canyon Adaptive Management Program, Multi-species Conservation Program).

- d. Melissa said the National Park Service is working on its representation on the Information and Education Committee. Melissa is attending the Washington, D.C., briefing trip this year. Debbie thanked Melissa for providing photos of Program activities for publications and other purposes.
- e. Joann will help staff the shared exhibit at the Utah Water User's meeting in St. George, Utah, March 15-17. She distributed samples of San Juan Program educational items, including a plastic cup with the Program's logo, sticky notepads and drink coozies. Joann said she'll also have an exhibit at a water users fair May 17-18 in Farmington, NM, for more than 2,000 middle school students, where she will hand out 5" diameter Frisbees with the Program's logo.
- f. Kara – Reclamation's Eastern Colorado Area Office oversees Ruedi water management and is the Federal lead agency for NEPA compliance for 10,825 releases, which will present educational opportunities. Reclamation is working to address public perception issues related to Ruedi releases and flow levels in the Fryingpan River. They met with the town of Basalt in January and agreed to hold two operations meetings each year (adding one at the end of July to help keep the town and the fly-fishing anglers better informed about probable August operations). They also have invited the anglers and some folks from the Aspen Yacht Club to sit in on the weekly operations (Historic Users Pool) call. Kara is developing a Ruedi-specific web page to keep people informed. The Pitkin County journalist who recently stressed the importance of local issues has been reporting on the Ruedi releases. The mountain papers are owned by one publisher, who's been downsizing, and Kara said they've noticed that the reporters are scrambling to cover so much that they're no longer able to do thorough research. John asked >Kara to see if Reclamation's Loveland office might proactively help educate its Billings office about the importance of the Recovery Program to garner Billings' support for the legislation that will be introduced in Congress to make the cost of the Ruedi water to be provided to 10,825 non-reimbursable. Kara explained that the I&E Committee is not the right forum for this question and that as everyone knows, Reclamation wholeheartedly supports the program.

- g. Randy discussed a recent issue over the City of Grand Junction's main water supply reservoir (one of the few that CDOW can manage for warmwater fishes) due to mercury concentrations (fish consumption advisory issued a year ago). The Colorado Water Quality Advisory Council recently placed this city reservoir on the 303d list, making it an impaired water. The City considered closing the reservoir to fishing to get it off the impaired list, but decided they would not after CDOW and others worked with them. CDOW garnered some favor with anglers in this. However, mercury issues are likely to increase. Angler roundtables are coming up in late April. CDOW is preparing lake management plans for Rifle Gap and potentially Harvey Gap reservoirs to include plans for CDOW to screen the reservoirs to allow management more consistent with what anglers would like (likely walleye in Rifle Gap and potentially northern pike in Harvey Gap). These will go through the review process outlined in the Nonnative Fish Stocking Procedures.
- h. John provided an update in January on the Program and our draft legislation to the Green River Basin Advisory Group. The group meets three times a year and provides advice and input for development of basin water plans. John will provide the new briefing book to them at their May meeting. John added that the Washington, D.C., briefing group will have an opportunity to meet with Senators Barasso and Enzi and their key staffers on the trip in March. John is gathering letters from local water users to help educate the senators about the importance of the recovery programs.
- i. Tom said Utah is working on Green River flow protection and a task force has been formed to review alternatives (potentially looking at the kind of things we've done in Colorado for the 15-Mile Reach).
- j. Mark Hadley of Utah couldn't attend the meeting, but provided a written update:
- Nonnative fish removal – The program's nonnative fish removal efforts received good media coverage in Utah last year. Utah is ready to assist the program in getting information to the media again this year and would be happy to post the Program's news release on its Web site.
  - Uintah County Fair – Residents of the Uintah Basin in northeastern Utah are closer to endangered fish recovery work than anyone else in the state. Trina Hedrick, Utah's Northeastern Region native aquatic projects leader, plans to have a booth at the Uintah County Fair this year. She wants to create some large posters to display at the booth (lots of pictures, few words). She'd also be happy to make the Program's materials (e.g. magnets, stickers) available at the booth. Trina won't focus the booth specifically on nonnative removal, but that will be a large component of it.
  - Future plans – open-house-style meeting – In the future, Trina would like to hold an open-house-style meeting. Posters that explain various projects would be posted at the meeting. People could mill about, ask questions and provide comment. Trina wants to branch out more and build more relationships with folks in the community.

6. **Review/comment on Elkhead Reservoir interpretive signs** – Martha presented a mock-up of a draft interpretive sign about the Recovery Program sign (18” x 56”). The sign will be installed near the beach where the dedication ceremony was held (near the boat launch ramp). The Committee reviewed the sign and provided comments; Committee members will review the text and provide comments to Martha by next Wednesday. The sign is on schedule to be installed this spring.
  
7. **Review of work planning materials** –
  - a. Draft RIPRAP assessment – Angela gave an update on the scientific library on CWCB’s laser fiche website and asked the Committee if they had any suggestions about copyrighted materials. Randy suggested a potential disclaimer statement; John suggested the GCMRC library might serve as an example. The Committee had no changes to the draft assessment.
  - b. Draft revised RIPRAP – “Public Laws” is capitalized. Add the word “current” in the last paragraph.
  - c. 2011 work plan revisions – No revisions.
  
8. News article e-mails – Tom and Debbie asked the Committee for their opinion about news article e-mails (re: suggestion from Aaron Tilton that we add a disclaimer to these e-mails). The Committee did not believe a disclaimer is appropriate.
  
9. Promotional needs:
  - a. National Geographic map – The Committee looked at the draft maps; we will get several thousand copies we can distribute in our outreach efforts.
  - b. Update on current educational materials (ruler, sticky notepads, trading card, magnets, stickers, and bookmarks) – Not so many of these are picked up at our outreach events since many people already have these items. Although vendors seem to be distributing less of these items, potential new items could include pens (e.g. regular or floaty pens), calculator, hat, or sticker with one of our fish (Debbie showed some concept art). Angela suggested a 4-notecard set; Justyn suggested humorous cards with our fish (one with a birthday hat, etc.). Or we could consider Tomelleri art for notecards. Another possibility would be something that we e-mail and people print out themselves. The Committee still likes the idea of using contest art and will keep it in mind for other items. For example, artwork to be featured in the annual newsletter, for sticky notepads, notecards, etc. Debbie will continue to reorder rulers and stickers (not bookmarks at this time). Kara suggested not ordering more magnets until we get our humorous fish illustrations which we might want to make into magnets. This also would serve to make the existing magnets collector items. The Committee will brainstorm ideas for notecards over e-mail the next few weeks. We also could have an e-mail version of notecards.

- c. Calendar idea – John Shields noted the calendars used by the Virgin River Recovery Program and suggested we might consider a small calendar (<\$3) we could hand to Congressional staffers, folks at public events, etc. Debbie showed the Committee a CD-case calendar (\$3 each if print 1,000). We could use these in Las Vegas and at the Colorado Water Congress in Denver in January. The Committee decided not to order calendars at this time.
  - d. Tagline (brainstorm) – Kara encouraged the group to use our three bullet points. We might want to develop a tagline. For example, “Reclamation, Managing Water in the West.” The Committee will give this some thought and brainstorm together over e-mail over the next few weeks.
  - e. Other technology – Kara asked each Committee member to identify their available social technologies (blogs, e-mail newsletters, twitter, Facebook, etc.) to discuss on the next call, with the idea that we want to better target specific audiences in our river basins, especially to reach people in their homes.
10. **Schedule next meeting** – The Committee scheduled a conference call for May 3 from 1 to 3 p.m. Items for discussion will be the brochure, promotional items, and tagline.

ADJOURN: 4:00 p.m.