

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary
January 18, 2002
Grand Junction, Colorado

Participants: Chris Treese, Peter Roessmann, Jone Wright, Debbie Felker, Bob Muth, Angela Kantola, Kara Lamb, Betsy Blakeslee, John Marshall, and Mark Hadley (via phone).

> Action items.

1. Program Director's Update - Bob Muth gave an update on recent Program activities.

The annual researcher's meeting was just held in Moab and included several reports on the Program's nonnative fish control efforts. The Program will convene a workshop for biologists to further discuss nonnative fish control on February 13-14. Chris Treese suggested communicating appropriate information from that workshop to the sportfishing community (especially on the Yampa) prior to our control efforts this year. Also at the Researcher's meeting, Rich Valdez was honored as researcher of the year.

Bob noted that Kathy Holley, who had been on temporary reassignment with the Fish and Wildlife Service, is now back at Reclamation. The Program Director's office is working to continue and complete the work Kathy began.

Bob said roughly 80 sets of comments were received on the draft recovery goals. His office is organizing the comments and preparing to brief Ralph Morgenweck and determine how to proceed to finalize the goals (hopefully by this spring).

The Program's Cooperative Agreement was extended on December 6th.

The Program Director's staff will have a retreat to rewrite the RIPRAP on January 29-30.

The Program is in a two-year work planning process and will begin early program guidance for FY 2004-2005 this September.

The annual Program trip to D.C. is planned for March 13-19.

Instream Flow

Three scoping meetings were recently held on the Yampa River Management Plan. The written comment period ended two weeks ago and Gerry Roehm is working to finalize the plan. Once that is done, the Service will begin the work on the programmatic biological opinion. An environmental assessment will be prepared concurrently.

The Gunnison River programmatic biological opinion has been on hold pending:

- 1) finalizing the flow recommendations (resolving issues regarding sediment transport);
- 2) determining how transbasin diversions will be addressed (they weren't included in Reclamation's water demand study, however, the Colorado Water Conservation Board will make a recommendation regarding how future transmountain diversions would be

addressed under the PBO); and 3) determining what role the National Park Service's reserved water right claim will have on operation of the Aspinall Unit.

The 3-year study of coordinated facilities operations has been looking at existing or potentially new facilities to provide an additional 20,000 acre-feet of water on top of the peak in the 15-Mile Reach. There is a lot of controversy here, but once the preferred alternative is determined, this will be a good story to tell the public. Meanwhile, the voluntary coordinated reservoir operations project continues to provide water to augment water in the 15-Mile Reach. Related to that, the Program is working to extend releases from Ruedi through 2012.

Habitat Restoration

A workshop was recently held in Denver to discuss our floodplain restoration efforts (primarily for razorback sucker). >Debbie will send the summary of that workshop to the I&E Committee members. The Biology Committee has asked for an assessment on how much floodplain acreage is needed for razorback recovery and the Program has contracted with Rich Valdez to prepare that.

Levees will be removed at three sites in the Grand Valley before spring runoff: Butch Craig, Walter Walker, and Grand Junction Pipe. These may be an opportunity for good stories.

Passage at the Price-Stubb Diversion is still on hold pending outcome on the proposed Jacobsen hydropower facility.

Installation of the fish screen at GVIC is underway and will be operational by irrigation season. The owners don't want any publicity at this point, however.

Propagation and Stocking

The Program's work to raise, tag and release stocked fish (razorback and bonytail) continues. Stocked razorbacks have shown up on the spawning bar behaving like wild fish.

The Program recently held a workshop on Colorado pikeminnow and humpback chub population estimation. The draft recovery goals have helped focus what estimates are needed (for both adults and young fish) and the Program is working to improve methodology.

Humpback chub population estimate work will be done in Cataract Canyon this fall and this is a possible story for the Program newsletter and Utah Division of Wildlife Magazine.

Nonnative Fish

This will be the second year of removal of northern pike in the Yampa River above Craig

(recommend CDOW prepare and distribute news release prior to the start of the project.)

2. I&E Update - Debbie Felker provided photos of the Program exhibit.

Key Activities Completed (October 1, 2001 through Jan. 17, 2002)

The exhibit was displayed at the annual Researcher's Meeting, in Moab, Jan. 16-17
Hatchery interpretive signs are completed and are being distributed.
Reordered Historic Accounts publication (5,000 quantity)
Ordered Colorado pikeminnow magnets (delivery in February).
Exhibit – Wyoming Water Users Association Annual Meeting, Casper, Oct. 24-25
Recovery Program newsletter produced and distributed
Yampa River Management Plan Public Meetings Held: Steamboat Springs and Craig, Colorado, and Baggs, Wyoming, Nov. 27-29
Announced extension of public comment period for draft recovery goals
Organized signing ceremony for extension of Cooperative Agreement (Dec. 7)
Completed slide show script for traveling trunk
Interpretive sign copy drafted for Jarvis site

Current Priorities

Management Committee, Denver, Jan. 23
Exhibit – Colorado Water Congress, Northglenn, Jan. 24-25
Implementation Committee, Denver, March 5
Exhibit – Utah Water Users Association Meeting, St. George, March 12-13
Produce D.C. Briefing Book for Washington D.C. Congressional Visits, March 13-19
(Irving's project - Vernal)
Montrose Aquarium
Aquarium at TNC's Carpenter Ranch
Finalize interpretive signs Jarvis site and have them installed
Have interpretive kiosk built at Ouray Hatchery
Produce Recovery Program video
Redesign Recovery Program public web site

- a. Hatchery interpretive signs are completed. Jennifer is having them installed at the Ouray Hatchery and the Refuge.
Others go to: 24-Road Hatchery
Wahweap Hatchery (2 sets)
Bureau of Reclamation - Grand Junction
Dexter Fish Hatchery
Native Aquatic Species Facility (Mumma Hatchery)
Montrose Pavilion
State of Wyoming
TNC's Carpenter Ranch
The Recovery Program Office
- b. Historic Accounts is at the printer (5,000 quantity). Should be ready by the end of

February. (>Debbie will send 50 to each Committee member when they're delivered).

- c. Colorado pikeminnow magnet will also be ready in February – ordering 5,000.
 - d. Will reorder bookmarks in the near future.
 - e. Advanced Project WILD workshop – now scheduled for June 18-21. Debbie distributed a tentative agenda. I&E Committee members are welcome to attend.
 - f. Traveling Trunk – The slide show script is finalized. David and Debbie still need to select the photos to go with the text. David is putting together a list of other items for the trunk that he may need some help getting. He'll keep us posted.
 - g. Exhibits: Colorado Water Congress Annual Convention in Denver next week (Angela, Kara and Dan Sobieck will help Debbie staff). Utah Water Users Association meeting is in St. George, Utah – March 12-13. George Smith and Matthew Andersen will help Debbie staff. Quent Bradwisch from the Wahweap Hatchery may bring some bonytail to exhibit in a small, portable aquarium. Kathi Irving of the Vernal library recently informed Debbie about a traveling exhibit and radio project called “Moving Waters, the Colorado River and the West.” As part of that, our exhibit will be at the Vernal library for the month of June, and we may have other opportunities to be part of this at other locations, as well. CDOW put Program materials at its exhibit at two sports shows in Denver (January and March). John said Colorado would like to do a permanent aquarium with an exhibit at the education building at the Colorado State fair site in Pueblo. Chris asked if Colorado would want to focus this on the Colorado River fish and the Recovery Program or also include other native fishes from the Arkansas and Platte basins. >John will work with Debbie to scope this out and we'll see if this can be worked into the interpretive exhibits budget for this fiscal year.
2. Interactive Map - Chris described this cooperative project with the Colorado River Water Users Association. An interactive web-based GIS map is being developed to provide target audiences with a broader context of the Recovery Program. A consultant has been contracted and the partners working on this will meet in February. The Committee is working to keep this focused. The Southwest Data Center has joined the effort and offered to host (serve) the information (this will bring considerably more technical capability to the project). The project has sufficient interest and resources to have a base map available by next fall. The Recovery Program needs to identify what GIS-based information it has (e.g., the 15-Mile Reach, historic and currently occupied habitat, critical habitat, etc.). >Debbie and Angela will work together to determine who should be contacted and provide the list of what data are available by the next I&E meeting. Betsy said that TNC has a community mapping project which could be made part of this (Chris noted this is also a project of the Southwest Data Center, so it should be easy to coordinate and link).
3. TNC's Carpenter Ranch - Betsy noted that in northwestern Colorado, mostly anglers

come to public meetings. The Carpenter Ranch staff hope to broaden the constituency base that's informed about biodiversity health and plans a series of talks, one of which would be about the Recovery Program and the endangered fish (it would be good to have the Program exhibit at that presentation). Betsy said they're very excited about the aquarium that will be installed at their education center. High school students will work on a special mural project for the aquarium May 17-19. Betsy will work on media coverage of this and will provide a story and photos for the Program newsletter. Betsy said they have a new "stream trailer" and they'll train people on it in Meeker and at the ranch in early spring. Contact bblakeslee@tnc.org if you're interested in that training.

4. Briefing Book - Debbie explained that under the new administration, the Service can't print the support letters into the document, so it will have two pockets and the letters can go in the front pocket. The book will include content about: signing the extension of Recovery Program; recovery goals with demographic criteria for downlisting/delisting; a sidebar table of the numbers of fish stocked and the numbers to be stocked under the Colorado and Utah stocking plans (and the importance of stocking for bonytail and razorback recovery). John Marshall suggested the inclusion of a note about the new Mumma hatchery. We'll also add the recycled paper symbol to the back. John Marshall provided draft text on the recovery goals for the briefing book. >Committee members will provide comments on this to Debbie by January 29.
5. Public Web Site - Debbie said she's ready to contract a designer to incorporate look of I&E materials into the public web site. She's not sure how lack of internet access will affect the timeframe for this to be done.
6. Newsletter - Would like to produce an issue late spring/early summer, but will need help from others to write stories/take photos. The Committee agreed to help with these stories. Topics could include: Recovery goals, researcher of the year, the Mumma facility (John), coordinated reservoir operations (Kara), Yampa Management Plan, and more. >Debbie will develop a story list and deadlines and notify committee members.
7. River Guide Publication - David Whitman proposed that in the future we develop a spiral-bound guide printed on waterproof paper to distribute to commercial river guides for their use in providing more information to their customers. David estimates there are 2,000 commercial river guides in the Colorado Plateau (would have to research how many of those are upper basin.) Dinosaur Nature Association could provide the typesetting/design. Printing estimates: 2,000 quantity: \$4,763 or \$2.28 each; 5,000 quantity: \$9,238 or \$1.84 each; 10,000 quantity: \$16,413 or \$1.64 each. There would be additional costs for distribution and someone would have to develop a distribution list. David says river guides change from year-to-year so he recommends distributing to all the first year and then contacting companies and having them request guides from us in future years. This would require some coordination (perhaps our college student could assume this task, if this is an important audience the Committee wants to reach). Chris noted that the Watershed Education Foundation runs a seminar for river guides at the beginning of each season, and that would be a place where we might get information to the guides. >Chris will get WEF contact information to Debbie.

8. Interpretive Exhibits

The Committee was joined by John Gray, Watchable Wildlife Coordinator for the Colorado Division of Wildlife and Bob Cron who coordinates the Colorado River Greenway in Mesa County. Bob Cron described the location and history of the Jarvis Site at the confluence of the Gunnison and Colorado rivers. Funds received for the signs to date exceed what is needed, and Parks recommends the excess funds go to the city of Grand Junction to maintain the signs. It was agreed that before signs are ordered and installed, a Memorandum of Understanding be prepared for all participating agencies to clarify responsibility for maintenance. Debbie distributed draft sign text. Mark Hadley said he was very impressed with the draft text and that it does a good job of telling the overall story. Mark said he'd provide minor comments to Debbie, and noted that he wondered if there might be too much text on a few of the signs. >Committee members will get comments to Debbie by January 29. Debbie will then talk with Bob and John about any changes. David Whitman is ranking proposals for sign fabricators and he's also putting together a list of graphics and other items he needs from us before he can get the contract underway. Debbie will check on the funds in hand to make sure we have enough to pay for sign fabrication and installation. She will follow-up with all of the partners involved so they know the status and who their contact is. Bob Cron said the Parks Department won't plant vegetation until it can get water to the site (which they're working on), but this will take awhile.

Master Interpretive Plan for Riverfront Trail – Bob Cron described this plan, which will be submitted for legacy funding from Great Outdoors Colorado. This would be about a year and a half out. Bob said they've already outlined the plan.

State Park Signs – John Marshall said he followed up on the status of signs at Island Acres and he thinks they're already done. >John will find out where they are and what they say.

Ouray Fish Hatchery – The Committee previously approved funds to purchase materials for an information kiosk. The Committee authorized an additional \$3,000 to contract out for construction so Ouray doesn't have to wait until hatchery staff have time to do it.

Aquarium at Montrose Pavilion – Debbie is following up regarding providing endangered fish (including permit) and producing interpretive signs if any are needed in addition to the hatchery signs. >John will find a local CDOW person to work with them, also.

9. Jone noted that Barry Wirth has hired Doug Hendrix who may be getting involved in the Recovery Program.

10. Schedule Next Meeting - The Committee will schedule the next meeting later when the agenda is clearly identified.