

MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting: Colorado River Management Committee, Salt Lake City, Utah

Date: February 23-24, 2000

Attendees: See Attachment 1

>Assignments are highlighted in the text.

CONVENE: 10:00 a.m.

1. Introductions. Review/modify agenda and time allocations - The agenda was revised as it appears below.
2. Approve February meeting summary - The summary was approved as written.
3. Program Updates
 - a. Development of basinwide recovery goals - Tom Czapl reported that Rich Valdez and the Recovery Team met last week and worked through a number of issues; a revised draft of the humpback chub recovery goals will be out within a couple of weeks. The Service plans to publish the humpback chub recovery criteria in the Federal Register in April. The draft razorback sucker and Colorado pikeminnow goals should be out in the next month. Rich will make a presentation to the Implementation Committee on March 8. One of the outstanding issues is whether we can develop goals that would allow separate downlisting or delisting in the upper and lower basins. Tom Pitts asked that time be allowed to work out Upper Basin issues before Federal Register publication. Robert Wigington suggested it may not be wise to publish the humpback chub recovery goals in the Federal Register before the Recovery Team and the Biology Committee have had the opportunity to review the goals for the Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker. Henry said he's willing to take that approach, but the Implementation Committee will have to agree to a revised schedule. The Management Committee may want to outline a strategy for how the recovery goals will be finalized in terms of resolving the policy and administrative issues. The Management Committee recommends to the Implementation Committee that all three sets of goals be reviewed by the Biology Committee, then the Management Committee, and then go to the Implementation Committee with recommendations from the Management Committee. They also recommend approving additional funding for the contractor in light of the additional time and work required. The Committee outlined a process for recovery goal review within the Program, resulting in a recommendation from the Implementation Committee to Ralph Morgenweck by July of this year. >The Program Director's Office will draft a flow chart of this proposed process and send it to John Shields by Friday, February 25. Tom Czapl cautioned that this is a very aggressive schedule since we haven't even seen the draft of the Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker goals yet.
 - b. Colorado's recovery goal development - Bruce McCloskey said Tom Nesler has finished the humpback and pikeminnow goals and hopes to have razorback and bonytail goals done this week. His process is similar to the one Rich Valdez is using. >Tom Pitts and Bruce will brief Greg Walcher on the Program's recovery goal process and find out what he wants to do with the goals that Colorado is developing.
 - c. Ouray hatchery construction - Brent Rhees said the components of the water treatment facility were operational as of February 17 and the system is being tested through March 1. If everything is working, then Tom Pruitt can put trout in on March 1 to test the system with fish. There have been problems with adequate flow due to iron bacteria deposits in the lines and production wells. The wells have been cleaned and all but one are now operational, but not at full capacity. The lines and production wells will need

some ongoing maintenance. Tom Czaplá noted that Reclamation has really been working hard the last few months to get the hatchery up and running.

- d. Fish passage - Brent Uilenberg distributed a fish passage construction schedule. The big issue on the Grand Valley Project (aka Government Highline or Roller Dam) will be that it is on the National Register of Historic Places. On Price Stubb, Reclamation is still working on the issues regarding Jacobsen hydropower licensing. The hydropower facility is not economically feasible, but it still may take some time to settle. The draft report of conceptual design alternatives for Hartland will come out at the end of April (and hopefully be finalized by the end of May).
 - e. Fish screening - Brent Uilenberg said the Tusher screen is on hold until the water rights issues are settled. A screen could be developed that would accommodate any of the possible outcomes, but it would be very expensive. The GVIC diversion canal has fish passage and NEPA has already been conducted on the screen; however, the GVIC is currently reluctant to have a screen placed in their canal (and it's much more expensive to place it outside of the canal). Reclamation is addressing the issues that GVIC has raised and Tom Pitts said he believes we need to meet with them a few more times to work those out. The Committee discussed who should pay for operation and maintenance of screens (at both at Tusher and GVIC, and whether we need to be consistent between the two).
 - f. Grand Valley water management - Brent Uilenberg outlined the problem of permission to construct a pumping plant at Highline Lake, which may prevent getting construction contracts in place and funds obligated this FY (see his summary previously posted to the listserver). Susan Baker said that the property will be turned over to CDPOR, but it has to go through a Federal property disposal and NEPA process. Once the draft EA is back from CDOW, it will take about 3 months before the property can be turned over to Parks. Grand Valley Water Users want assurance that the pumping plant will be built before they'll allow construction to begin. >Tom Pitts will talk with GVVUA. >Bruce will see what he can do to get the EA back from CDOW.
4. Report on Razorback Habitat - Pat Nelson distributed a handout and made a presentation describing razorback sucker life history and recent razorback successes as a result of floodplain habitat restoration. Bruce McCloskey suggested this would be a good presentation for the Implementation Committee; Henry agreed.
 5. River Trip - Henry Maddux suggested a VIP river trip on the lower Yampa River (through Dinosaur) from June 7-10. (Our last trip was a bus tour two years ago.) Participants would probably fly in and out of Vernal or Craig, and we could add an option to tour Ouray NFH and floodplain habitat at the end. CREDA has scheduled a congressional staff river trip the middle week in August that will include Westwater Canyon and a tour of facilities in the Grand Valley. Tom Pitts said he thinks we'll have difficulty getting Congressional staff on the river in June. We may want to focus on local Congressional staff and state people (both state representatives and staff, water users, and key state employees). The Committee approved Henry's recommendation. >The Program Director's office will proceed to set this up.
 6. Long-term funding legislation - Tom Pitts was unsure if the bill has been reintroduced in the Senate with the new language incorporating the CREDA amendments. The next step is to schedule a hearing (>Dan McAuliffe hwill draft a letter for participants to send to request a hearing, although The Nature Conservancy's letter distributed by Robert Wigington also may be used as an example). The Ad Hoc Committee discussed changing the bill language that says "capital construction will be completed by 2005" to say 2007, instead. They decided to leave the date at 2005 and deal with a change in 2004, if necessary.

7. Develop plan and strategy for Washington, D.C. briefing trip - The trip is scheduled for Wednesday April 12 through Tuesday, April 18. Debbie Felker distributed a rough draft of this year's briefing book. This year, we've worked with the San Juan River Basin Program and incorporated their information and ours into one briefing book. Robert Wigington will need to make sure that the environmental groups are okay with this combination. Henry said he recommends taking out the Section 6 earmark request this year because we've asked for it for several years and have gotten no response. John Shields asked >the Program Director's office to send it out (or put it up on the web site) in Adobe PDF format when it's finalized. >Comments on the draft are due to Debbie Felker by March 8. Those comments need to include who's going on the trip (including their e-mail address). Chris Karas said Reclamation may be able to participate this year. A block of rooms has been reserved at Capitol Hill Suites (\$132/room) and Kathy Wall needs to make reservations in the next couple of weeks (>Call or e-mail Kathy Wall, 303/236-2985 ext. 221, [Kathy J Wall@fws.gov](mailto:Kathy_J_Wall@fws.gov) with your name and credit card number.) >Angela Kantola will send John Shields a copy of the pertinent pages from the Service's FY 2001 budget book as soon as that is received in the Regional Office. >By March 8, John Shields will send out a draft itinerary from which participants can begin making appointments (including recommendations of who should call to set up which appointments). The itinerary will follow the same basic format as last year. >Tom Pitts will draft the delegation letter. >The Program Director's Office will look into having 150 magnets made with the endangered fish photos on them. >The PDO also will consider a color cover and making the pie chart pages in color.

8. Funding issues

- a. FY 2000 capital funds - Brent Uilenberg provided an updated budget sheet. Chris Karas said there will be lots of pressure to reprogram unobligated funds this year, but Reclamation will do everything they can to give the Management Committee an opportunity to respond if FY 2000 funds are threatened.
- The Wahweap State Hatchery Building line item has gone up to \$280,000 (Committee approved).
 - The Coordinated Facilities project needs \$77,000 for Phase II in FY 2000 (Committee approved).
 - \$22,000 left over in the River District account from the Yampa studies could be used to take the Elkhead screening feasibility one step further, including a better determination of what Elkhead screening would cost (Committee approved). Reclamation will give the funds to Craig or the River District who will contract with Ayers.
 - Depth reduction for gravel pit at 29-5/8 Road - Pat Nelson described the proposed project to reconfigure this pond a 2" winter depth to prevent nonnative fish from overwintering (at a cost of \$230K - \$400K). Brent said he thinks this is too expensive and recommends breaching it instead and letting it silt in. Pat is concerned about the flood risk this might pose to adjacent landowners. The Committee discussed the expense and the potential benefits, but did not approve it at this time. >Brent and others will review less expensive options and post a recommendation to the listserv.
- b. FY 2001 projected funds availability
- FY 2001 depletion charge & annual budget adjustments - >Angela Kantola will draft a table of what's actually expected from each participant in FY 2001 assuming that the long-term funding legislation passes.
 - Capital funds & State cost-share funds - Cost-sharing: Governor Johnson of New Mexico put \$350K in their 2001 budget, but won't reach agreement with the legislature on the budget for several more months. HB 275 in Utah should pass in this legislative session with no difficulty (it will provide \$700,000 in their endangered species fund as this July 1 and \$2.3 million next July 1). In Colorado, there's a request in for \$375K from the species conservation trust fund for capital construction to control nonnative fish

(Colorado will have the Program Director's office review the language in future years to make sure the projects mentioned fit within the Program's work plan.) John Shields noted that we need to at least begin spending Wyoming's \$1.7 million by July 1, 2001. >Before the August meeting, the Management Committee needs to review the status of the Federal and State funding for 2001 and decide how that affects spending Wyoming's \$1.7 million.

9. Section 7 Consultation

- a. Programmatic biological opinions
 - 15-Mile Reach PBO implementation - Henry noted the opinion was signed before Christmas and water users are working on signing recovery agreements. Tom Pitts posted to the listserver a table of elements from the opinion that need to be incorporated into the RIPRAP. The 5412.5 af water agreements from the East and West slope water users are nearing completion. The municipal water contract for the Green Mountain historic user pool should be done this spring.
 - Yampa PBO - The management plan has been drafted. It includes nonnative fish control and some augmentation for the base flow period. The next step is to develop the MOU to implement the plan and the Service will work concurrently on the PBO.
 - Others - The Service is talking with Reclamation about how to approach the Gunnison and Aspinall reoperation. The NEPA and biological opinion process are planned to run concurrently. Henry said they'll be working on a tributaries management plan for the other tributaries.
- b. Section 7 consultation list - Angela Kantola outlined the changes in the list in light of the 15-Mile Reach PBO. >Tom Pitts will have Matt Cook revise his table to subtract the depletions with footnotes 9 and 10 from the overall total. >Angela and Matt will change language in both lists to say "on an average depletion of 1million af/year."
 - Flaming Gorge (approval of the synthesis report is on the next Biology Committee's agenda). Aspinall report - The draft is out for peer review with comments due back March 1. It will then be revised and sent to the Biology Committee.
- c. Service sufficient progress determination - Susan Baker said the Service has not yet held its internal meeting on this, but plans to do so near the end of March. Overall the accomplishments look good for the year, with the main concerns at this point being Duchesne coordinated reservoir operations and land acquisition. The Committee discussed the potential of increasing the sufficient progress threshold beyond what's being done in the programmatic biological opinions.

Thursday, February 24

10. Land acquisition

- a. Status of floodplain easements - Bruce Snyder outlined Reclamation's process for purchasing property. They generally expect it to take 9-10 months to acquire a property after they've been presented with a legal description and plat map. Steps include getting a title report (up to 3 months), appraisal, appraisal review, and negotiation (which can be very lengthy). Seven staff members in Bruce's office are involved in this process. In some cases, Reclamation can pay more than fair market value, but only with good justification. Dave Soker outlined the process that occurs *before* they can provide Reclamation with a legal description and plat map. The Committee discussed ways of accelerating the process and prioritizing large properties over small, etc. Bruce McCloskey described the RFP and sealed bid process that Colorado is using to accelerate land acquisition (down to about 3 months) and suggested the possibility of the states doing acquisition (with cost-share funds once the legislation is passed). >Bruce Snyder will determine if Reclamation can use a similar process. Additional funding for land acquisition may come through the Service from the Land & Water Conservation Fund

(LWCF), but it will require political assistance from Program participants to get the local congressional delegations to support getting LWCF funds for the Program. The Committee agreed that the Service should begin work on acquiring easements along the Colorado River between Rifle and Debeque. >Pat Nelson will develop a proposal prior to the next Management Committee meeting, since this will require a transfer some capital funds from Reclamation to the Service's Realty office. The Committee discussed whether we can ever pay more than fair market value for easements. >The Program Director's Office will prepare the summary land acquisition report quarterly, beginning July 1. Bruce McCloskey noted that Colorado is doing "management agreements" with landowners to protect Preble's meadow jumping mouse habitat. This approach could have applicability for growout ponds.

11. Review and approve recommended RIPRAP revisions and FY2001 Program Guidance

- a. RIPRAP revisions - Henry Maddux outlined the proposed revisions to the RIPRAP. The Committee discussed items expected to go beyond 2003 and agreed to extend those in the RIPRAP now.

Narrative - >Brent Uilenberg and Angela Kantola will develop an updated budget table and revise the budget language on Page 2 prior to the Implementation Committee meeting. They will be sure to incorporate what's currently in the budget ceiling. Robert Wigington noted that the Water Acquisition Committee recommended deleting the paragraph on page 6 that describes contract deliveries (which begins "Flows also may be protected through..."); however, this needs to be left in (the Committee agreed). Robert noted that we need to include PBO press release language on the Grand Valley Water Management Project on page 17 (the Committee agreed).

Page Item # and change

- 20 IA3 - The lead for the item that the BC added for evaluation of CDOW's instream flow methodology should be FWS.
- 20 ID - The lead for the item that the BC added for a tributary management plan and Section 7/NEPA should be FWS. Add an item before "develop a tributary management plan" for the PD's office to convene a workshop on the scope of tributary management by 12/00.
- 21 IIIA2c - Delete x's beyond 2003 because we're still evaluating effectiveness of nonnative fish removal efforts and haven't yet determined how we'll monitor nonnative fishes longterm.
- 23 IVF, 1-4 - Need to clarify that this is long-term monitoring of the contribution of endangered fish stocking to recovery. It's not the same as evaluating the success of a specific stocking technique (e.g., size at stocking, release method, etc.).
- 23 VA1- The Committee discussed whether to add an item for completing initial population estimates and tracking population indices to the RIPRAP, but decided not to add it at this point. >The Program Director's Office will send a letter to the chair of the Biology Committee requesting that they get the ISMP objectives developed ASAP (so the changes can be incorporated into the FY 2000 monitoring).
- 23 VA3 - By 12/00, the >PD's office will develop a draft habitat monitoring plan and hold a workshop with the BC and probably the WAC to finalize it.
- 27 IIA3a - The lead should be PD/BR.

- 28 IIB5c - Completion of Tusher Wash screen 9/03.
- 28 IIC1 - Since this is to *identify options*, the date should coincide with the completion of NEPA on Flaming Gorge (6/01). >Brent and Chris will check on the date (also affects IA3c on page 26).
- 33 Tom Pitts distributed a revised schedule for Duchesne coordinated reservoir operations from Gene Shawcroft to meet the dates in the RIPRAP.
- 34 IIA3a - Change to "Evaluate feasibility of screen on Bottle Hollow Reservoir and explore alternative funding sources." Add BOR to the lead list and complete in FY 01.
- 37 The WAC's reference to IA3b3 is incorrect. We still need an item on a depletion accounting report for the 15-Mile reach every 5 years (this is correct in Appendix B of the PBO but not in the body of the PBO).
- 38 IA4i1 - Add "and protecting" after "Evaluate options for providing."
- 38 IA5 - Add item to review implementation of the RIPRAP actions to determine timely compliance with applicable schedules.
- 38 Program Director's office will add items with specific timelines from Robert's handout (Robert suggests they belong under ISMP).
- 39 ID3b & c - Move out one year.
- 39 IB4c4-6 Duplicate ID3d1-3 from page 44 to enter contract for delivery of Aspinall flows, if needed.
- 41 IIB2a1- We don't yet have landowner consent for Price Stubb fish passage, so put an x in FY 00.
- 42 IIB3a2-3 - Roller Dam completion date should be 4/02.
- 42 IIB3b2-3 - Screen completion by 4/03.
- 44 IA2 - put 12/00 in the correct column.
- 44 IB - Delete
- 46 IIB1g2 - Redlands design in FY 02 and construction completion in 4/03.
- 46 IIB2b1-2, IIB2c-d - Move out one year.
- 46 IIB2e2-3 - Design in 02, complete construction in 4/03.
- 46 IVA2a
- 48 IVA1a - Pikeminnow stocking in Gunnison and Dolores won't begin until FY 02.

Program Director's response to recommended RIPRAP changes and FY 2001 Guidance - Tusher Wash Fish Passage evaluation should say *The Management Committee chose to truncate the study after deciding to proceed with screening*. >Angela Kantola will revise and reissue that document.

b. Program Guidance

I-2 Sediment monitoring - with regards to the WAC's recommended change, insert "voluntary" before "releases" and also incorporate Randy Seaholm's language change regarding "bypasses."

The PD's office will make sure that the guidance conforms to all the RIPRAP changes.

I-4 Gunnison River temperature model - we know temperature is a limiting factor, so the word "possible" should be removed from line 3 of the Rationale/Problem Statement. Dr. Brett Johnson has conducted studies on kokanee and may have applicable data. >Bob Muth will contact him.

>Angela Kantola will add RIPRAP numbers to *all* projects in the Program Guidance.

Tom Pitts noted that the proposed cost for all monitoring is about \$700,000 per year (or ~\$1,000 per occupied river mile per year).

>Angela Kantola will make changes to the 2001 budget estimates table and check the totals.

12. Draft Implementation Committee agenda for March 8, 2000 meeting - Action vs. information items will be identified and action items will be placed early on the agenda, to the extent possible. >The PD's office will develop a draft agenda and reserve tables at the Marriott for lunch.

- a. Approval of August 30, 1999 meeting summary
- b. Recovery Program and fish status update - we may also use this document as a handout in Washington, D.C. As part of the fish status update, Pat Nelson will give his 10-minute razorback habitat powerpoint presentation. As part of the Section 7 update, Henry will give an update on biological opinions, an outline of 15-Mile Reach PBO, and a status report on Yampa PBO. Henry also will include a discussion of Narrows and the tributary management plan.
- c. Amendment to Section 7 Agreement (action item). >Henry's office will draft the one-line revision to the Section 7 agreement for the Committee's approval.
- d. Recovery Goals presentation - Presentation and questions (45 minutes); Management Committee's recommendations for completion (15 minutes)
- e. Review/approval of recommended RIPRAP revisions
- f. Review/approval of recommended FY 2001 Program Guidance (followed by lunch break)
- g. Update on long term funding legislation - Tom Pitts will make this presentation.
- h. "Heads-up" discussion of the status of state funding and how/when it will be incorporated into the Recovery Program. The Management Committee will suggest that a subgroup of the Management Committee outline a process, issues and constraints.
- i. Update on Congressional briefing trip scheduled for April 12-18
- j. Update on June 7-10 Yampa River trip.
- k. Scheduling of July recovery goals meeting and September 2000 regular meeting.
(*Perhaps August 29, 30, September 6, or 7?*)

13. Review of action items from recent meetings - The Committee reviewed and modified the list. >Angela Kantola will post a revised version to the web site.

14. Next Management Committee meeting - April 7 in Denver near DIA from 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. June 7 in Craig from 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (the day before the river trip).

ADJOURN - 1:30 p.m.

Attachment 1
Colorado River Management Committee, Denver, Colorado
February 23-24, 2000

Management Committee Voting Members:

Brent Uilenberg and Chris Karas	Bureau of Reclamation
Bruce McCloskey	State of Colorado
Tom Pitts	Upper Basin Water Users
Marty Ott	Utah Department of Natural Resources
Robert Wigington	The Nature Conservancy
John Shields	State of Wyoming
Shane Collins	Western Area Power Administration
Susan Baker	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Nonvoting Members:

Henry Maddux	Recovery Program Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Dave Mazour	Colorado River Energy Distributors Association

Recovery Program Staff:

Angela Kantola	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Debbie Felker	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Tom Czapl	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Pat Nelson	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Bob Muth	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Dave Soker	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Others:

Brent Rhees	Bureau of Reclamation
Gerry Roehm	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ray Tenney	Colorado River Water Conservation District
Tim Modde	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
George Smith	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Tom Chart	Bureau of Reclamation
Robert King	Utah Division of Water Resources
Ralph Swanson	DOI - CUP Completion
Bruce Snyder	Bureau of Reclamation
Gene Shawcroft	Central Utah Water Conservancy District
Leslie James	Colorado River Energy Distributors Association
Barry Saunders	Utah Department of Natural Resources