



# Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

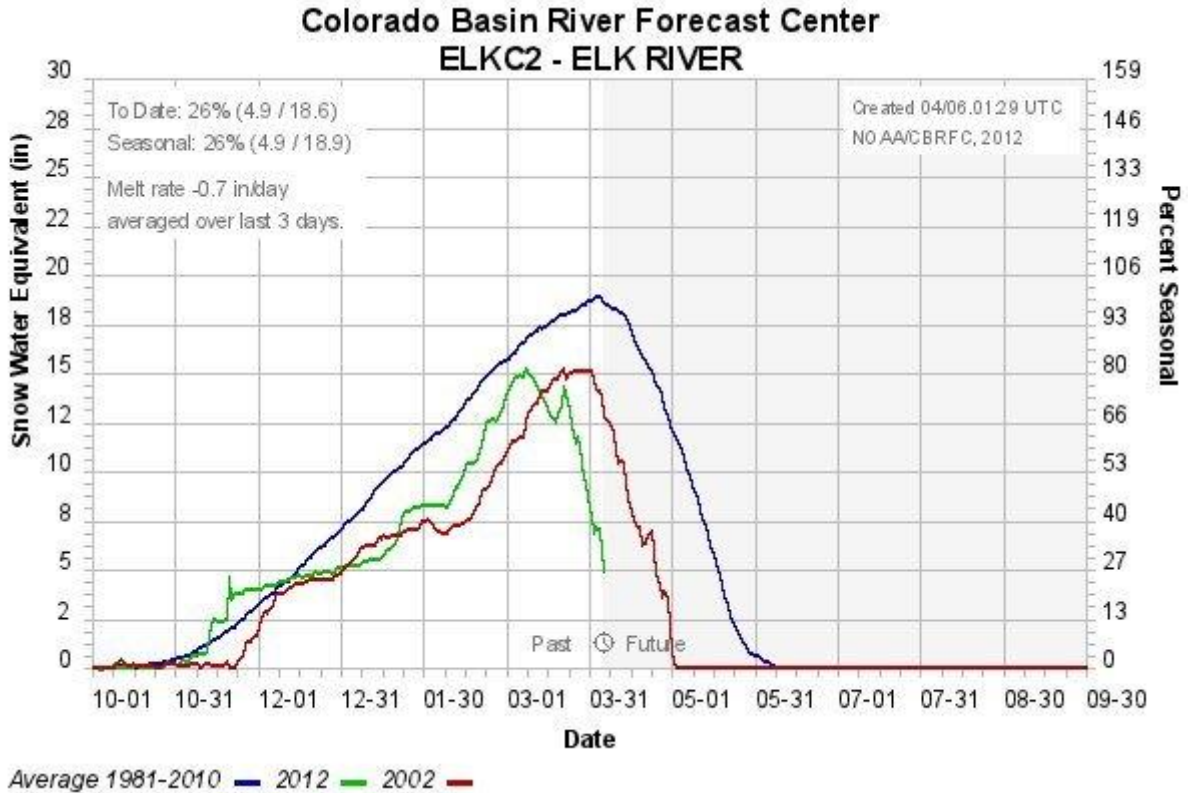
Dated: April 12, 2012

## April 10, 2012 Management Committee Webinar Draft Summary

**CONVENE: 9:00 a.m.**

### 1. Elkhead Reservoir Issues

- a. Lease for 2012 – Based on current hydrologic forecasts (see figure below), the Service and the Program Director’s office recommend leasing at least a portion of the available 2,000 af 'Short term Water Supply' from Elkhead Reservoir in 2012 (in addition to the Program’s annual 5,000 af). Snowpack is 44% of normal, which compares closely to



2002.  
Elk River Snotel April 4, 2012.

The lease contract requires us to commit to first 500af by May 1, which we’re currently planning to do. Tom Chart said that in addition to mechanical removal efforts, increasing base flows seems to help native fishes, so hopefully the leased water will help us maintain the progress we’ve made in reducing smallmouth bass numbers. It’s not clear if we’ll be able to maintain a 93 cfs minimum flow throughout the base flow period. Tom Pitts asked if the release schedule for a minimum flow would be different than one to disadvantage smallmouth bass. Jana Mohrman said she would work to maintain the 93

cfs minimum flow, and Pat Martinez said that also would help disadvantage smallmouth bass somewhat. Tom asked about duration of flows (e.g., would we seek a lower target for a longer period), and Tom Chart said he plans to keep all options on table and work with District on how to best use the water throughout the season. Tom Chart proposed to use Section 7 funds from the \$130K from the Ruby Pipeline project for the lease this year (if we use all 2,000 af, the cost will be \$100K). John Shields suggested that the Program Director's office structure a process for communication and a written record on the release pattern. Jana noted that she gives the State Engineer and Don Meyers (District) 2-week notice on proposed releases and could include the Management Committee in that notice. Brent Uilenberg added that decisions will be made on a real-time basis. The Committee recognized this and just wants to be kept informed, rather than being involved in decision-making. Ray Tenney suggested that Jana could include a release plan (and options) in the Program's lease request(s). Ray said he expects the release plan may change somewhat with each increment (May 1, June 1, and July 1). The Committee approved the expenditure of up to \$100,000 (if the full 2,000 ac-ft Short Term Lease pool is needed) out of the Section 7 fund to further augment Yampa River base flows in 2012. > Jana will cc: the Management Committee with her lease request letters to the District, which will include the Program's proposed release patterns (e.g. Maybell flow triggers and targets) based on the current hydrologic forecasts. Ray Tenney said there was ~17Kaf storable inflow in 2002, but snowmelt has come off sooner and melted faster this year. They've held Elkhead levels down to avoid spilling, but will begin filling the current 2,400 af hole now and release excess via the screened outlets. Low-flow conditions are expected to start sooner this year than in 2002.

- b. Repairs and associated costs to the movable fish screen (See Attachment 3) – Ray Tenney described the problem with the screens and the total anticipated \$80K needed to repair them. The 2-year warranty expired in 2008; therefore it would be difficult to recover the cost from the contractor at this point. Therefore, the River District is looking for other options, but there's a good chance that the Program may have to cover the full cost. Tom Chart said that if there are additional O&M funds available in 2012, those would be the best source of funds (Ray said that the District could bill for this in 2012, if needed). If that can't cover the full cost, then the Program Director's office will look at 2013 budget and/or capital funds. The Committee approved. Tom Pitts noted that he would like to avoid using Section 7 funds for this if at all possible; others agreed. John Shields asked if Reclamation might consider using "activities to avoid jeopardy" funds. >Brent said that he and Dave Speas will discuss this. Pat Martinez commented that this repair underscores the fact that mechanical structures to contain fish in reservoirs are never risk-free (i.e., they offer some control of escapement, but not prevention), which is why we want to adhere closely to the Nonnative Fish Stocking Procedures and focus on *prevention*.
2. Mesa County request for funding assistance for GJ Pipe Pond floodplain site "weir" construction – On March 21, 2012, the Committee approved an expenditure of \$15,000 from the 'Section 7' account to assist Mesa County in their construction of a levee breach at the Recovery Program's Grand Junction Pipe property. The Committee also had asked about the designed connection flow and raised concerns as to potential long-term Program liability associated with this levee breach project. Tom Chart provided additional information via email date April 6, 2012. In 1999, Tetra Tech designed an inlet and outlet breach for this

property (see 'GJct Pipe plan' in Attachment 4). In 2002, the Program decided to abandon the upstream breach due to concerns regarding potential effect on adjacent landowners. Consistent with this 2002 Program decision, the current plan is to breach at the downstream end of the property only. The breach invert, as designed, will connect floodplain and river at ~ 8,080 cfs (1.01-year peak flow). The Committee ratified their previous approval of the \$15K on this basis.

3. Review of draft of the primary elements of the 2012 sufficient progress letter – John Shields exhorted the Service to insert a paragraph after the first full paragraph on page 3 addressing the work the Service is doing regarding the humpback chub genetics and MVP (primarily related to the lower basin). The Service will review the genetics contract and consider this. The Committee reviewed Tom Pitts’ comments on the draft document, and agreed to incorporate a number of them. Melissa asked about including development of a Yampa peak flow recommendation in the RIPRAP, but Tom Chart recommended waiting until the depletion accounting report is completed. Melissa recommended re-inserting the 2011 Yampa River instream flow concern in the 2012 sufficient progress memo (with the action that the “Committee will continue to discuss the need for a peak flow recommendation”). Language from 2011 sufficient progress memo was:

Yampa River		
The Yampa Programmatic Biological Opinion (PBO) calls for a review of progress under the PBO every 5 years to determine if instream flow filings are necessary.	Hampers ability to 3 – Determine adequacy of flows.	The Water Acquisition Committee will review mechanisms of current flow protection under the PBO’s for both the Yampa and Colorado rivers to determine if additional mechanisms or instream flow filings are needed at this time (this will be reviewed every 5 years). As part of this review, the Committee will discuss the need for peak flow protection (which would require a peak flow recommendation).

Last year, the deficiency was the determination of whether instream flow filings are necessary. The Water Acquisition Committee made the determination that additional filings are not needed for one 5-year period, but now the concern is we haven’t completed the depletion accounting, looked at the baseline, and determined the need to protect peak flows. The Committee agreed to add: “the depletion accounting report will include a discussion of the need for flow protection (which would require a peak flow recommendation)” to the action item.

With regard to Tom Pitts’ suggestions about concerns vs. criteria language and moving/changing that, Tom Chart said he thinks that the Service may be able to bundle concerns together better, but likely will still need some of the lead-in language on the criteria. The Program Director’s office/Service will make Tom Pitts’ suggested changes where appropriate.

Dave Speas asked about including the concerns about smallmouth bass on the White River and northern pike on the Colorado River; the Program Director’s office said they would add those with their appropriate action items identified in the RIPRAP. The concern will be expressed as the flare-up of these nonnative fish species in the two locations.

Any follow-up comments from the Committee on the draft elements of the sufficient progress memo are due to the Program Director’s office by COB Tuesday, April 24.

4. Schedule next meeting, webinar, or conference call – >Tom Chart and John Shields will

propose a date and venue, probably in early June.

**ADJOURN: 12:00 p.m.**

Attachment 1: Attendees  
Colorado River Management Committee Webinar, April 10, 2012

Management Committee Voting Members:

Brent Uilenberg	Bureau of Reclamation
Michelle Garrison for Rebecca Mitchell	State of Colorado
Tom Pitts	Upper Basin Water Users
John Shields	State of Wyoming
Julie Lyke	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Melissa Trammell	National Park Service
Robert Wigington	The Nature Conservancy
Clayton Palmer	Western Area Power Administration
Leslie James	Colorado River Energy Distributors Association
Robert King	State of Utah

Nonvoting Member:

Tom Chart	Recovery Program Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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Recovery Program Staff:

Pat Martinez	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Debbie Felker	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Tom Czapl	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Angela Kantola	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Others

Ray Tenney	
Dennis Strong	Utah Division of Water Rights
Harry Crockett	Colorado Parks & Wildlife
Dan Luecke	Environmental Groups
Jana Mohrman	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Jerry Wilhite	Western Area Power Administration
Dave Speas	Bureau of Reclamation
Dave Schnoor	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## Attachment 2 Meeting Assignments

1. The **Management Committee** will consider naming a floodplain site for Pat Nelson. *The Service's Grand Junction field office is considering what might be an appropriate location. We do have a memorial to Pat on the pikeminnow bench at Walter Walker SWA.*
2. **Tom Pitts** will work with **Clayton Palmer and Brent Uilenberg** and provide a list of additional Program contributions to be added to the Program's budget pie chart that appears in each year's briefing book. *In process; see discussion in agenda item #3.b.* For the 2012 *Program Highlights*, we will use the \$37.4M annualized estimate. By July 2012, **WAPA** will complete modeling and report actual power replacement costs going back to 2001. Subsequently, **WAPA** will provide annual power replacement cost for the previous year each January for inclusion in the *Program Highlights* pie charts. Those pie charts will include a footnote explaining the calculation and assumptions (the 2012 footnote will explain that these are annualized estimates, which will be verified beginning in 2013). **Program participants** will identify other significant costs that have not previously reported (e.g., the Granby component of 10,825 which is estimated at \$16M, \$1.25M contributed by Colorado for GVWM and \$1.5M for OMID, CRWCD contributed property for OMID, etc.). **Tom Chart** will ask **Dave Campbell** to work with the SJCC to determine their additional costs not currently reported. *1/30/12: Tom Pitts provided additional costs to be included in briefing book pie chart; need to follow up with documentation for the record. 3/21/12: Clayton will be asking modelers/analysts to look at economic impact of re-operation of Flaming Gorge Dam beginning in FY2001. Tom Pitts said P.L. 106-392 recognizes power replacement costs as non-reimbursable; is that the same thing as economic costs? John Shields asked why not include the ~7 years of "study flows" preceding 2001. Clayton will do both, since Flaming Gorge was originally reoperated in water year 1991 (a separate table for 2001 and forward will be included responding specifically to the P.L. 106-392). Clayton also will include analysis to show the year in which FG was reoperated under the new EIS (2006 to present). John said he and Robert were asked about retail level yesterday; Leslie doesn't believe that can be reported since each individual utility has a different amount of hydropower in their mix. Tom Pitts suggested setting up a work group of himself, Leslie, Clayton, Robert Wigington, Angela Kantola and/or Tom Chart; Tom Pitts will send out preliminary materials. 4/10/12: Conference call scheduled for 4/27/12.*
3. **Brent Uilenberg** will modify the OMID scope of work to reflect the ITRC contract to design the SCADA system. The **PD's office** will post the revised SOW to the web. *Pending; Brent Uilenberg will provide a copy of the contract to append to the SOW.*
4. D.C. trips & legislation assignments:
  - a. John Shields **will try to arrange a meeting with just a few people (if McClintock is in town).** *3/21/12: done. John Shields will draft a short summary of the meeting with Chairman McClintock.*
  - b. Tom Pitts **will get back to Leslie regarding including power representatives in the meeting with Rep. McClintock and the water users.** *3/21/12: done; meeting*

*scheduled for April 18; important that Rep. Tipton be present.*

5. The **Program Director's office** will work with Jerry Wilhite and Clayton Palmer on FY12 work plan items which Western may help fund. *In progress.*
6. Recovery Goals/Plans and 5-Year Status Review items
  - a. The **Program Director's office** will discuss with the Service how to best get stakeholder input and feedback (via the Recovery Team and subsequently involvement of the recovery programs' participants prior to broad public review via the Federal Register). *Pending. 3/21/12: Julie said the Service hasn't had the opportunity to brief the Regional Director on the request to reconvene the recovery team, but >will do so and get back to the Committee.*
  - b. The **Service** (Region 6) will work out the perceived issues with Region 2. *3/21/12: This is in reference to the perceived "raising of the bar" on the humpback chub population in Grand Canyon. Tom Chart said Region 2 is working with Dexter NFH on genetics (funded through Reclamation); Dave Speas will forward a copy of the work plan to the Management Committee (done).*
7. **Dan Luecke, Robert Wigington, Tom Pitts, and John Shields** will discuss simpler language for the assessment under the Yampa River depletions/instream flow item in the RIPRAP with WAC members via e-mail, then provide the result to the MC (**Jana Mohrman** will help coordinate). *3/10/12: Revisions discussed and will be incorporated in final RIPRAP.*
8. The **Program Director's office** will finalize the RIPRAP when the recovery team and Yampa depletions/flow protection issues are resolved. *3/11/12: In progress.*
9. **Jana Mohrman** will cc: the Management Committee with her Elkhead lease request letters to the District, which will include the Program's proposed release patterns (egg. Maybell flow triggers and targets) based on the current hydrologic forecasts.
10. **Brent Uilenberg and Dave Speas** will discuss the possibility of using "activities to avoid jeopardy" funds on the Elkhead screen repair.
11. **Tom Chart and John Shields** will propose a date and venue, probably in early June.

### Attachment 3

#### **ELKHEAD RESERVOIR – FISH SCREEN REPAIRS**

There are fish screens with one-quarter inch openings on the outlets of Elkhead Reservoir to assist with containment of non-native game fish in the reservoir. The fish screen on the bottom outlet has been fitted with a liftable screen so the screen could be bypassed if needed to drain the reservoir. (see photo)

In 2010 the one large nut which holds the 6000 pound, 7 foot diameter liftable fish screen on the 100 foot long stem fell off and approximately \$20,000 was spent on 20 dives to install 2 new jam nuts. These jam nuts remain in place.

The guides which the fish screen travels on are bolted to the wall of the outlet tower with epoxy cemented stainless steel anchors. The original contractor apparently used shortened bolts to attach the fish screen, many of which are missing. Those bolts recovered do not show adequate embedment (only about 2"). The remainder of the 29 bolts (11 each side, 7 bottom) are suspect and all must be replaced with adequate anchors. Drilling through concrete and large rebar in 80 feet of water with 6 inch visibility is required.

\$20,000 was originally budgeted to have ASI inspect the screen because in the 2011 dam inspection, it would not open fully. The initial dive inspection and three days of underwater work on the bolt issue have consumed the original \$20,000 authorization.

Generally the work is billed on a daily rate basis for the hard hat dive crew of 5 divers at \$4,250 per day (includes all equipment and diving supplies such as their decompression chamber and special gases for extended bottom time, plus parts and supplies [\$1,500] and mobilization [\$3650]). The work is expected to take 10 days. The raw total would be \$47,600 if all goes as predicted. The \$60,000 estimate allows for a few extra days if needed. Hopefully the techniques being employed on this effort now will yield better than planned results and the entire budget will not be needed.



Elkhead liftable fish screen and guides on tower face – now 80 feet deep in the reservoir



Bolts from the original construction recovered by divers from the fish screen guides – March 2012.



Stud in place w/rusted hardware  
Backing material present

Stud in place w/rusted hardware  
1/4" Gap between tab and concrete  
No backing material present

No stud or hardware  
Visible shallow hole  
No backing material

deepen hole, install stud  
shim

No stud or hardware  
No backing material  
1/4" gap between tab & concrete

drill hole, install stud  
shim

deepen hole, replace stud  
No hardware or visible hole  
backing material present

deepen hole, replace stud  
Stud & hardware present.  
Pulled out by hand

test/remove stud  
Stud & hardware present  
Backing material present

test/remove stud  
Stud & Hardware present  
Backing material present

test/remove stud  
Stud Present  
No visible Hardware

deepen hole  
Stud pulled out & brought topside  
for inspection

Shallow Hole

test stud  
replace hardware  
preserve shim

test  
replace hardware  
replace shim

deepen hole  
replace stud w/ hardware  
shim as necessary

test stud  
shim as needed

test/remove stud  
remove & replace  
hardware

test/remove  
replace hardware  
shim

Tab across bottom were not checked

check/test 7 on bottom

Stud & hardware present  
No backing material present  
1/2" gap between tab &  
concrete heavily corroded  
hardware

Stud & hardware present  
No backing material  
1/2" gap between tab & concrete  
Heavily corroded hardware

No stud present. Hole appears shallow  
No backing material present  
1/2" gap between tab & concrete

No stud present. Hole appears shallow  
No backing material present  
1/2" gap between tab & concrete

Stud & hardware pulled out of wall  
Heavily Corroded. 6" length

No hole visible. No backing material  
1/4" gap between concrete & tab

Hardware & backing material present  
Heavy corrosion on hardware

Hardware & backing material present  
Heavy corrosion on hardware

deepen hole, replace stud  
No stud, Hole appears shallow  
1/4" gap between concrete & tab  
shim

Stud & backing material present  
Missing Hardware

Stud & backing material present  
Missing hardware  
test/remove  
replace

Attachment 4

