

I. Project Title: Ruedi Reservoir Releases Public Involvement Plan

II. Principal Investigator:

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III. Project Summary: Since 1990, Reclamation has released water from Ruedi Reservoir to benefit endangered fish species in the 15-Mile Reach of the Colorado River. In the past, local businesses and residents of Basalt, CO, have expressed concern that when releases to the local Fryingpan River exceed 250 cfs, the Fryingpan's gold-medal fishery is adversely impacted. Basalt's economy is heavily based on the fishery reputation and resulting tourism. However, in managing Ruedi to meet multi-purpose needs of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project of which Ruedi is a part, Reclamation's Eastern Colorado Area Office (who owns and operates Ruedi) must periodically release flows greater than 250 cfs. To promote understanding of the Upper Colorado River Recovery Program, the Fry-Ark Project, and to help address stakeholder concerns, the ECAO maintains an open and continuous dialogue with local businesses and residents.

IV. Study Schedule: 1995-present

V. Relationship to RIPRAP: Colorado River Action Plan 1.A.5.a. Pursuant to Ruedi Biological Opinion, deliver 5,000 af annually and an additional 5,000 af, 4 out of 5 years (ongoing and protect by short-term agreement) 1.A.5.b.(1) Provide water annually pursuant to long-term lease

VI. Accomplishment of FY 2006 Tasks and Deliverables, Discussion of Initial Findings and Shortcomings:

Tasks: The ECAO disseminated timely information on related activities, including meetings, through news releases, frequent e-mail notifications, customer request responses, and public notifications. We held our annual public meeting on May 11 to explain Ruedi operations, including releases for the Recovery Program and the Coordinated Reservoirs Operations Program, which ran for a week this year.

In FY 2006 we:

- 1) Conducted our annual water year-in-review presentation at the public meeting: what happened at Ruedi last year (2005) compared to what was anticipated to happen this year (2006). This was particularly important this year because of the continuing, but highly variant, drought conditions. This year, for example, high snowpack enabled us to run a specialized release program out of Ruedi Reservoir the last week of May. The releases were run in conjunction with Coordinated Reservoir Operations and also to benefit silt removal for the fishery and to coordinate with an emergency preparedness exercise by local entities. Originally scheduled to run for two weeks, Reclamation performed a high release of about 800 cfs the last week of May. Running 800 for one week enabled us to run around 250 cfs or less the rest of May, all of June, and all of July. This benefited recreation interests and economic concerns in, and around, the Town of Basalt.
- 2) Continued e-mail notifications to better communicate frequent operational changes due to drought. Continued to expand e-mail notification list.
- 3) Once again had staff representatives present at public meetings for all applicable areas of public concern including fish biology, operations planning, and contracting.
- 4) Once again held the public meetings as locally as possible, this year in Basalt. We had approximately 30 people attend this year.
- 5) Included a public outreach and education program on the specialized release program. Worked dedicatedly with local news media

Additionally, tours of the top of Ruedi Dam for 4th and 5th graders through the Roaring Fork Conservancy were conducted in August. We continue to work with the Conservancy as a cooperating partner in the areas of public outreach, education, and natural resource studies based on the concerns of Basalt and surrounding areas.

Also, Reclamation once again participated in the Colorado River Water Conservation District's "State of the River" meetings on both the Colorado and the Roaring Fork Rivers. In that capacity, we also updated interested members of the public and the water community on our spring projections and project operations, including the two week release program.

VII. Recommendations: Continue to build our outreach and public communications programs.

VIII. Project Status: On track and on-going.

IX. FY 2006 Budget Status

- A. Funds Provided: 0
- B. Funds Expended: n/a
- C. Difference: n/a
- D. Percent of the FY 2006 work completed, and projected costs to complete: n/a
- E. Recovery Program funds spent for publication charges: 0

X. Status of Data Submission (Where applicable): n/a

XI. Signed: Kara Lamb 11/09/06

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Kara Lamb	Date
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