

Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Act Collaborative Program
Species Water Management Standing Workgroup (SWM)
06 January 2009 Meeting
BIA

Decisions

- The SWM work group approved the Draft 2010 SWM Workplan with the clarification that the USGS Groundwater/Surface Water project will be specified as the only project recommended for 2010 Peer Review.
- The SWM work group approved the November 4th and December 2nd meeting notes with two corrections to the November action items.
- The SWM work group agreed to elevate the USGS Groundwater/Surface Water project to the CC for 2010 Peer Review consideration.

Recommendations

- The SWM work group would like to request the CC consider Matt Martinez's comments on the Climate Change SOW and the fact that the added uncertainty would be difficult to validate.
- The SWM work group recommended a revised scope of work be drafted for the Soil Salinity project; a sub-group consisting of John Sorrell (Isleta), Cody Walker (Isleta), Janet Jarratt (APA), Chris Banet (BIA), and Matt Martinez (MRGCD) was formed to revise the existing scope before the February 3rd SWM meeting.

Actions

- Chris Banet will email Tetra Tech an electronic copy of the January 6th attendance sheet.
- Tetra Tech will make sure that Hilary Brinegar is included on the SWM email lists to receive SWM meeting notices and conference call-in information to BIA.
- Tetra Tech will make sure that Dennis Garcia and Curtis McFadden are on the SWM email distribution list.
- Marta Wood will send email to Cassie Brown, Page Pegram, and Amy Louise regarding Steve Harris calling into the SAR meeting on Friday, January 8th at ISC.
- Amy Louise will forward the SWM work group request that the CC consider Matt Martinez's comments on the Climate Change SOW and the fact that the added uncertainty would be difficult to validate.
- John Sorrell (Isleta), Cody Walker (Isleta), Janet Jarratt (APA), Chris Banet (BIA), and Matt Martinez (MRGCD) will revise the Soil Salinity scope of work before the next SWM meeting, scheduled for Wednesday, February 3rd.
- Comments from work groups on the Riparian Model draft scope are due by January 27th.
- Tetra Tech will correct the November action items and then finalize the November 4th and December 2nd SWM notes.
- Janet Jarratt will send SWM members the bullet list on miles denuded and needing reconstruction.
- Amy Louise was requested to electronically circulate the draft LTP to the SWM work group members.
- Amy Louise will electronically distribute the most current SWM charter to work group members before the February 3rd SWM meeting.
- Chris Banet will schedule a meeting room at BIA for the February 3rd SWM meeting and will inform Tetra Tech of the details, including possible conference call information.

Announcements

- The NM Water Dialog meeting is January 14th at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center. Please register in advance to save on the cost. The fee is \$40 for at-the-door registration.
- Environmental Flows Workshop will be held at the UNM Law School (hosted by the Utton Center) all day on March 15th 2009. Representatives from all agencies will be invited as attendance is limited due to the size of the facilities. Save the date reminders will go out this week. Please contact Susan Kelly if you are interested in attending.

Meeting Summary

- Chris Banet brought the meeting to order and introductions were made. Dennis Garcia (COE) and Curtis McFadden (both from COE) expressed the Corps' commitment to having regular representation on the SWM work group.
- The agenda was approved with the addition of making sure Amy Louise, Valda Terauds, and Matt Martinez's requested topics were all addressed.
- The work group discussed the purpose of the annual workplan and the peer review activity. The SWM work group approved the Draft 2010 SWM Workplan with the clarification that the USGS Groundwater/Surface Water project will be specified as the only project recommended for 2010 Peer Review.
- The work group discussed confusion on the Climate Change project and where in process it was and which groups (CC, EC, SWM, etc.) have already provided approval. Since the CC will be discussing this project at their January 13th meeting, there is apparently still an opportunity to supply comments. Any additional comments, concerns, suggestions on the climate change project should be provided to Amy Louise to elevate to the CC for their consideration during their deliberations.
- Attendees discussed how they would really like the soil salinity project to be implemented. It would require fixing the current draft scope, but the NRCS soil data is not refined. If the soil data can be refined many areas (such as how water moves through the aquifer and how the land could be better managed through known soils) could be well informed. While concern was expressed about extrapolating some soil information from a small sample to the larger whole, members expressed how it would be good to have a more generalized view of what is going on and how the information could be useful. A sub-group was formed to revise the draft scope before the next SWM meeting.
- The November 4th and December 2nd SWM meeting notes were approved for finalization with minor changes to 2 November action items.
- All November and December action items have been completed with the exceptions of 1) Isleta coordinating with BIA to discuss using a 638 as a mechanism for continued SWFL water needs work at Isleta which has not occurred yet and 2) provision of the 2005 water exchange feasibility study which will not be supplied because the report has not and will not be made final unless other funding is made available and the client will not release the draft at this time.

Next SWM meeting

- February 3rd, 10:00am to 12:00am to BIA;
 - Tentative agenda items: 1) soil moisture scope; 2) SWM updated charter (which is due on March 3rd); 3) any changes to the Riparian Model scope of work from comments received;

**Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Act Collaborative Program
Species Water Management Standing Workgroup (SWM)**

06 January 2009 Meeting
BIA

MEETING NOTES

1. Introduction and Announcements

- Chris Banet brought the meeting to order. Introductions were made around the table. Dennis Garcia and Curtis McFadden (COE) expressed commitment to having regular representation on the SWM work group. Curtis will be Mark Mendenhall's replacement.
- Chris Banet briefly shared how the group work functions with himself as the federal co-chair and Matt Martinez, with MRGCD, as the non-federal co-chair. Amy Louise, with ISC, is the Program Management Liaison (PMT) who assists the group with administrative tasks, Program coordination and communication. Tetra Tech provides other administrative and organizational support.

Action: Tetra Tech will make sure that Hilary Brinegar is included on the SWM email lists to receive SWM meeting notices and conference call-in information to BIA.

Action: Tetra Tech will make sure that Dennis Garcia and Curtis McFadden are on the SWM email distribution list.

Action: Marta Wood will send email to Cassie Brown, Page Pegram, and Amy Louise regarding Steve Harris calling into the SAR meeting on Friday, January 8th at ISC.

2. Agenda Approval

- The agenda was approved with the addition of making sure that Amy Louise, Valda Terauds, and Matt Martinez's emailed requested topics are addressed; suggested to add to Agenda Item 4.

3. FY10 SWM Workplan

- The annual workplan outlines what each group of the Collaborative Program (Program) expects to be doing over the course of the up coming calendar year in terms of recommended activities and tasks. Each work group is expected to provide yearly updates to the workplan to reflect any changes and updates.
- Amy Louise would like to present the SWM 2010 work plan to the Coordination Committee (CC) on January 13th, so please provide any changes to Amy by noon on January 7th in order to be a CC read ahead.
- The work group briefly reviewed the work plan and discussed the peer review task. It was clarified that the Program is funding external peer review for up to 2 deliverables/reports in order to help make sure that the deliverables are scientifically sound and as high quality as possible. Other similar programs have external review completed on their projects as well. This is a relatively new process for the Program and the details of the process are still being worked out.

Decision: The SWM work group approved the Draft 2010 SWM Workplan with the clarification that the USGS Groundwater/Surface Water project will be specified as the only project recommended for 2010 Peer Review.

4. Update on SWM FY10 SOWs

- *USGS*
 - The USGS Scope of Work (SOW) is ready to go.
- *Climate Change*

- The issues brought up by MRGCD about the Climate Change SOW will be discussed at the CC meeting at their January 13th.
 - The SWM work group discussed confusion about the review/approval of the Climate Change scope and the apparent opportunity to still supply comments or feedback. Anything comments or feedback should be provided to Amy Louise to elevate to the CC to consider during their deliberations.
 - **Question:** Is this project proposing a re-write in the model? A node for the data in the water operations model might be valuable.
 - **Response:** Apparently, the project proposes taking one of the general circulation models and making it applicable to the Program (Middle Rio Grande) by scaling it down for incorporation into the URGWOM model.
 - Concern was raised that the water supply in URGWOM can already be “tweaked” thus the climate change uncertainty should be already included to a degree in the model.
 - It was clarified that the watershed and runoff model is still to be incorporated.
 - The concern is that this could be a tremendous way to introduce potential error or variability by adding a lot of uncertainty. What assumptions will be made in trying to scale it down?
 - FWS has been very clear that climate change will have to be taken into account in the consultations.
 - Other agencies still supports updating URGWOM with climate change capabilities mainly because everything out there now is directed at incorporating climate change considerations and it would be better to address now instead of having to do it later.
 - **Question:** Would it be appropriate to attach a comment from SWM expressing concern about the potential to introduce uncertainty; cautionary note
 - **Response:** It was cautioned that the term “climate change” has come to have implications all its own; there are a lot of assumptions that people hold when they hear the term.
 - The concern remains that it would introduce variability and increase uncertainty in ways that can’t be ground truthed so there would be no way to actually test the model.
 - However, it was expressed that that is exactly the point – we can’t assume climate will continue as it has and we have to acknowledge the potential range.
 - There are certain elements that can probably be agreed on such as snow packs not lasting as long into the spring and accumulating over a shorter period, etc.
 - It was suggested that some of the climate change ranges might be addressed purely statistically.
 - Chris Banet quickly read the draft scope of work. The work group discussed how it sounded very complicated. The work group also discussed that the project had already been voted on but there was no recollection of a re-vote or the distribution on the voting tally. Attendees discussed confusion where the project was at in terms of being approved by SWM and the CC and if it will have to go before the EC as well.

- Concern was raised about conflict of interest with the URGWOM tech team reviewing the scope and then possibly bidding on the work.
- The work group wants to make sure the CC considers Matt Martinez's comments on the climate change SOW and that the uncertainty would be difficult to validate.

Recommendation: The SWM work group would like to request the CC consider Matt Martinez's comments on the Climate Change SOW and the fact that the added uncertainty would be difficult to validate.

- Valda Terauds provided some clarification on the Climate Change scope:
 - Back in November 2009, the EC approved funding the project but the scope was revised based on December SWM discussions. The issue is that the EC needed to see the activity summaries before SWM was able to review the changes made.
 - In an email that was sent, Matt Martinez has raised some valid issues regarding the climate change scope that should be addressed. They are issues that will be raised sooner or later.
 - Regarding the conflicts of interest concerns, the strawman was drafted by Valda Terauds and the EC requested that the PVA and tech team provide some review. However, only Program participants have supplied any comments and the signatories will not be bidding. Therefore conflict of interest should not be a concern with this situation.
 - The work group discussed how conflict of interest has been an ongoing concern through all aspects of the Program.
 - Conflict of interest occurs when a contractor is involved in the writing of a scope that they then bid on. The work group discussed several recent examples including DSS and IAS.
- The work group briefly questioned the existence of the SWM work group if the only real activities/projects are to be the USGS gages and transects. These are monitoring tasks that could be covered by another group.
 - Any additional work that comes from the PVA results could realistically take until the new BiOp in 2 years.

- *Soil Salinity*

- Several members expressed wanting to see the soil salinity project scope of work fixed and that project moving forward. The NRCS data is not refined, but if the soil data can be refined then many areas (such as how water moves through the aquifer and how the land could be better managed through known soils) could be well informed. It might also provide explanation for the "odd" occurrences in fields. Once key information was identified it could probably extrapolated to cover much more.
 - Concern was raised about extrapolation some soil information from a small sample to the larger whole.
 - Ultimately, the hope would be to help determine how or where water could be saved. Information is useful and could be used to refine the parcel schedule and to help

people understand why a parcel needs less or more or what the particular issues are.

- It was cautioned that how the information will be applied needs to be known in order to dictate what a representative field could/would be (i.e., site selection).
- A conservation benefit cannot be expected until all the lands involved have been looked at. A small sample size means small conservation benefit.
- Attendees were reminded that there is some money available this year but subsequent years funding cannot be counted on. It was expressed that it would be a shame to let this project go in the one year that the work group might be able to do something with it.
- This project is the data gathering piece needed before any management or practices can be informed and changed.
- Potential project benefits include informing DSS, inform permanent soil stations, it could give an idea of present day management and what percent of fields could potentially be managed in a way that uses less water, it is a step toward more scientific management practices using real-time science.
- Work group discussed how the implementation of this project could help inform management to save water that could then be used to support the species or Program goals.
- Until the data is gathered and analyzed there is no way to know what will be discovered. There could be some fields that actually need more water than historically provided.
- It was suggested, as an alternative, that people could use grain size instead of actual soil classifications.
- The work group briefly discussed using proper phrasing in order to not come across as insulting to farmers who have historical knowledge and experience.
- It was suggested that an official small sub-group be formed to revise the soil salinity scope. The sub-group will consist of: John Sorrell, Cody Walker, Janet Jarratt, Chris Banet, and Matt Martinez. Valda Terauds, Curtis McFadden and Dennis Garcia volunteered to provide additional review to the revised scope once available.

Recommendation: The SWM work group recommended a revised scope of work be drafted for the Soil Salinity project; a sub-group consisting of John Sorrell (Isleta), Cody Walker (Isleta), Janet Jarratt (APA), Chris Banet (BIA), and Matt Martinez (MRGCD) was formed to revise the existing scope.

- *Riparian Model*

- If money becomes available, possibility that Riparian Model SOW will be approved since it is almost complete. Comments from work groups for Riparian Model will be due by January 27th. SWM will discuss any changes to SOW at the February 3rd meeting.

- *Amy Louise's Emailed Discussion Requests*
 - The work group has adopted the work plan as is; however, there is concern that the work plan is scanty and doesn't speak well to the longevity of the group.
 - The work group briefly discussed how there are many problems that SWM encounters that are political in nature and very challenging to overcome.
 - The work group needs to identify future activities if it is to justify its existence. It is hoped that the revised LTP and recovery plans (once available) might provide hydrologic direction.
- *Valda Terauds's Emailed Discussion Requests*
 - There is a correction on an action item from the December meeting: input on riparian model is being sought from the PHVA group not the PVA group.
 - There is a correction on an action item from the November meeting: Valda Terauds should replace Jeff Ohara as the action item lead.
 - Update: the 2005 water exchange feasibility study report isn't going to be available as there is no funding to finalize the draft report. The work was never finalized into a report and the client not going to authorizing releasing the draft report as is.
 - Steve Harris believes he might be able to get a copy; although it is uncertain if he would then be able to release that copy to the work group.

5. Proposed Deliverables/Reports for Peer Review FY10

- The CC has requested that each work group recommend up to 2 deliverables or reports for external peer review in FY10.
- The external peer review consists of a panel of experts outside the Program who will be paid by the Program to provide sound, objective feedback on the quality and content of the submitted deliverable/report. It could be considered a quality review. Attendees discussed that a peer review would be most useful in the first year of the project in order to have sufficient time to respond to the review and thus enhance the subsequent years work.
- DSS was suggested as a possibility but the attendees decided to not recommend DSS because (1) it has been finalized already and (2) several of the issues delve into the realm of policy as well.
 - The District is attempting to address and resolve issues even now; and there are several issues that need to be resolved before any next steps with the DSS can be taken. Remember that the DSS is a model and is experiencing "growing pains." It was suggested to not consider the DSS for peer review for this yearly cycle.
- It was discussed that the USGS surface water/groundwater study, which is on-going, would be the most appropriate project for SWM to recommend for peer review.
 - Update: The USGS surface water/groundwater transects report originally expected in December has been setback by one month due to comment delay with their internal review process and the holidays.

Decision: The SWM work group agreed to elevate the USGS Groundwater/Surface Water project to the CC for 2010 Peer Review consideration.

6. Approval of 11/4 and 12/2 meeting notes

- Both the November and December SWM meeting notes were approved with the corrections to the action items.
 - (1) November: remove Jeff Ohara and replace with Valda Terauds;
 - (2) December: PHVA input on the riparian model instead of PVA

- Attendees briefly discussed flood control and future projects including agency levees projects, alignments and new construction in SWFL habitat. The group discussed the Corps' mindfulness of environmental aspects and ESA policies.

Action: Janet Jarratt will send SWM members the bullet list on miles denuded and needing reconstruction.

7. December Action Item Review

- Dr. Jeff Ohara will get back to the SWM work group regarding the availability of the 2005 water exchange feasibility study. – *incomplete*;
 - This action item will be reassigned to Valda Terauds for follow up; but to date the report will not be made available.
 - Provision of the 2005 water exchange feasibility study will not be supplied because the report has not and will not be made final unless other funding is made available and the client will not release the draft at this time.
- Janet Jarratt will provide tracked changes to the October notes and will re-circulate her suggested revisions to SWM members. – *complete*;
- Cody Walker will schedule with Chris Banet and Jericho Lewis to discuss using a 638 as a mechanism for continued SWFL water needs work at Isleta. – *incomplete*;
 - Isleta has not initiated this discussion at this time.
- John Sorrel will send the original scope of work used in the Pueblo of Isleta Soil Salinity to the workgroup as a template to use for the SWM scope Farm Soil Survey. Along with the scope, John will send an updated cost estimate and the original PowerPoint that the SWM workgroup viewed during the November 2008 meeting. – *complete*;
- Valda Terauds will email the Final URGWOM Watershed Model Report and the Pueblo of Isleta Soil Salinity report to the workgroup. – *complete*;
- Valda Terauds will seek input from Jim Wilber regarding PHVA input on the scope for Activity 36: Riparian Groundwater Model. – *complete*;
 - No comments were received by the original deadline. The scope was resent to *all* the work groups with comments due in January.
 - Attendees discussed the concern that the scope went out to the entire Program mailing list.
- Amy Louise will send an email to the HR, MPT, PVA and PHVA workgroups to gain input on the scope for Activity 36, Riparian Groundwater Model. Comments will be due back to Amy by December 17, 2009. – *complete*;
- John Sorrel will contact the USGS regarding data from the Bosque Farms river gage. – *unknown status; ongoing*;
- Amy Louise will update the SWM workgroup annual work plan according to discussions at the meeting. She will then email the work plan to the workgroup for final review. – *complete*;
- John Sorrel will check with Cody Walker to determine if his action from the 11/04/09 SWM meeting had been completed. John will inform the workgroup of the outcome of the action via email. – *ongoing*;

- Amy Louise will check with the Interim Program Manager if the draft LTP will be made available on the website for all work group members to view. – *complete*;

Action: Amy Louise was requested to electronically circulate the draft LTP to the SWM work group members.

8. Program Coordination (10 min)

- *PHVA/Hydro (Population and Habitat Viability Analysis)*
 - The PHVA/Hydro work group has begun going through comments received from the URGWOM refresher meeting. They are waiting on direction from the Program and will be running Executive Committee (EC) requested model runs next.
- *Joint Work Group Updates:*
 - RESPEC did a hands-on training in December on the mapping and spatial analysis tool. The tool is now available for use by Program members. There are several nice features built in that allow overlays with habitat, depth to groundwater, snapshots, and other useful visuals. CD copies were distributed at the training so please contact your agency representative who attended if you wish to receive a copy.
- *Issues to be elevated?*
 - None at this time other than making sure the CC considers Matt Martinez's concerns with the Climate Change SOW.
- *Upcoming Meetings:*
 - Jan 13th CC meeting 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm, topics: Work Plans, SWM Climate Change SOW, etc.
 - Jan 14th Database Management Systems (DBMS) meeting 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm at Corps
 - Jan 19th Non-federal EC meeting with Tom Pitts 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm at NMISC
 - Jan 19th Habitat Restoration (HR) Pueblo of Sandia field trip; Science (ScW) and Monitoring Plan Team (MPT) meetings
 - Jan 21st EC meeting Long-term Plan (LTP) with Tom Pitts, topics: LTP
 - Jan 26th & Jan 27th (morning) PVA & joint meeting with PHVA morning of 26th at Reclamation.

9. Agency Updates

- Several tribes have raised concerns or issues to BIA regarding the recent P&P updates to the URGWOM model. The concerns center on the fear that something negative will happen as a result of those changes.
- The NM Water Dialog meeting is January 14th at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center. Please register in advance to save on the cost. The fee is \$40 for at-the-door registration.
- Environmental Flows Workshop will be held at the UNM Law School (hosted by the Utton Center) all day on March 15th 2009. Representatives from all agencies will be invited as attendance is limited due to the size of the facilities. Save the date reminders will go out this week. Please contact Susan Kelly if you are interested in attending.

10. Next SWM meeting

- February 3rd, 10:00am to 12:00am to BIA;
 - Tentative agenda items: 1) soil moisture scope; 2) SWM updated charter (which is due on March 3rd); 3) any changes to the Riparian Model scope of work from comments received;

Action: Amy Louise will electronically distribute the most current SWM charter to work group members before the February 3rd SWM meeting.

Species Water Management Work Group 06 January 2009 Meeting Attendees					
NAME	POSITION	AFFILIATION	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	Primary, Alternate, Other
Page Pegram	SWM Member	ISC	383-4051	page.pegram@state.nm.us	P
Chris Banet	SWM Member	BIA	563-3403	chris.banet@bia.gov	P
Andrew Lieuwen	SWM member	ABCWUA	768-2570	alieuwen@abcwua.org	P
Valda Terauds	SWM Member	Reclamation	462-3584	vteradus@usbr.gov	P
Dennis Garcia	SWM Member	COE	342-3380	dennis.e.garcia@usace.army.mil	A
Curtis McFadden	SWM Member	COE	342-3351	curtis.m.mcfadden@usace.army.mil	P
Steve Harris	SWM Member	RGR	575-751-1269	steve.harris39@gmail.com	P
Janet Jarratt	SWM Member	APA	865-1430	jj@jjwater.info	P
Marta Wood	Admin Support	Tetra Tech	259-6098	marta.wood@tetrattech.com	O