

**Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program
Public Information and Outreach (PIO) Workgroup Meeting
Thursday February 11, 2010
9:00am to 11:00am
ISC**

MEETING SUMMARY

Decisions

- o The PIO work group agreed to switch their regular meeting day and time (at least on a trial basis) to the 2nd Wednesday of each month in order to meet with the PMT from 10:30am to 11:30am in a joint session before finishing regular PIO meeting business during a working lunch.

Actions

- o Julie Maas will attend the February 17th joint CC/Work group/PMT meeting to represent PIO.
- o Yvette McKenna will send the PIO work group members the draft copy of the Program Quarterly Update for their review and input.
- o PIO members will investigate and share their individual agency Communication Plans as a starting point for a Communication Plan for the Program.
- o PIO members will look at the other recovery plan documents (posted on the website: Library>>>Revised LTP Development) for references and starting points for a Program Communication Plan.
- o Yvette McKenna will provide the PIO with a list of EC members that includes web addresses and point of contacts.
- o Yvette McKenna will announce to the CC and EC the need to have assigned representatives to the PIO work group; it was suggested that the issue be approached from the standpoint that PIO is seeking to clarify what each agency's involvement is in the Program and it would be in the agencies best interest to send a PIO representative to these meetings.
- o Julie Maas will contact Mary Carlson regarding the status of the PIO 2009 Work Plan Accomplishment document.
 - If no 2009 PIO work plan exists, Tetra Tech will create the template using the 2010 work plan and the PIO progress presentations to build a 2009 accomplishment table with status of task column that can be filled with updates (ex. completed, ongoing, lower priority, under staffed, etc.).
- o Tetra Tech will request Jenae Maestas send the PIO members their work group login and password information.
- o Yvette McKenna will add a standing agenda item to the PMT meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month to include discussing current projects, current activities, and provide direction to the PIO work group.
- o Julie Maas will seek permission from Sandia Pueblo to scan and distribute the restoration site visit descriptions to other members of the Program and for use in publications.
 - If permission is granted, Julie Maas will scan the site description document and provide copies to Ronnie Anderson, Monica Mann, and Tetra Tech.
- o Tetra Tech will update the 2010 work plan and distribute for review
- o Tetra Tech will send a list of upcoming Program work group meetings for PIO members to assign and arrange Program video viewing.
- o Lance Cherry will RIP and post the Program video to YouTube as soon as he has a copy.
 - *During a conference call with Reclamation videographers on Feb 11, Yvette McKenna was told that Reclamation would like to organize the release of the video to the public, both on YouTube and to the local news media. They can provide the video in flash file format with captions. It is envisioned that Mary Carlson and PIO would draft the press release and*

coordinate the availability of Estevan Lopez, Lisa Croft and a local freelance videographer for 30-45 minutes of extra footage to create a video news release and an audio news release. We would also like to add an easily accessible link for posting the video to the Collaborative Program website. If the date to release the video could coincide with something else (i.e. the dedication of the Sanctuary, the beginning of irrigation season...) that would be nice.

- o Yvette McKenna will collect and hold several copies of the Program video to provide to the PIO work group members.

Suggestions

- It was suggested that PIO members visit the Program's website (www.middleriogrande.com) for materials related to the LTP that could help inform future PIO activities. Under the main menu: Library >> Revised LTP Development >> Other Recovery Implementation Programs module toward the bottom of the page.
- It was suggested that PIO members look at the past Quarterly Updates on the Program's website: Library >> Quarterly Updates.
- It was suggested that the PIO have combined meetings with the PMT in order to be provided with direction, updates on current information, upcoming events, notice of anything controversial, etc. The PMT meets weekly every Wednesday morning from 8:30am to 11:30am.
- It was suggested that other Program work groups have a goal to accomplish one good Public Relations story about the work they are doing each month (or have at least one work group once a month). That particular work group could send at least one member that month to PIO to assist with the story production.
- It was suggested that PIO members attend the other work group meetings to show the new Program video, explaining how the video came to be and that there are multiple copies available for Program and agency use; this should be done within one month of video release.
- It was also suggested that individual agencies show the video to their entire agency.

Meeting Summary

- The work group briefly reviewed the 2 minor changes made to the FY10 work plan since the last meeting: (1) the Rio Grande Days at the Round House was omitted as it will not be held this session and (2) the deadline for the Media Binder was set as December 20th, 2010. This date was selected to allow ample time for the work group to coordinate with signatories and agencies which is expected to take most of the year but to be completed before the Christmas holidays.
 - o Yvette McKenna, Interim Program Manager, shared that the Program's current priority is to complete the development of the revised Long-Term Plan (LTP) as part of the transition to becoming a recovery implementation program (RIP) as the compliance vehicle with Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) requirements. The Coordination Committee (CC) will be reviewing each work groups FY10 work plan at the February 17th CC/Work group joint meeting.
 - o There are 3 suggested work plan activities that each work group is being asked to include on their 2010 work plan.
- Yvette explained that the LTP will include future projects for the next 5 to 7 years in order to highlight how the Program can work toward recovery during that time.
 - o The CC has scheduled 3 all-day working meetings with the work groups and PMT to develop the list of future activities: (1) February 17th; (2) March 4th; and (3) April 14th from 10:00am to 4:00pm each day.
 - o Reference materials for PIO to use in considering future activities include: (1) the public outreach tables copied from the minnow and flycatcher recovery plans (taken directly from

- the FWS website); and (2) the Program's website has a new page under Library >> Revised LTP Development to be the "warehouse" containing all pertinent LTP related documents and materials including the full draft LTP.
- The work group discussed that without additional direction from the Program, the 2010 work plan is as far as they can extend into the future. PIO's role, in terms of future activities, is seen as advertising the successful projects that the other groups are completing.
 - Future activities discussed include: (1) develop a Program communication plan (ties into the formation of the media binder as the first step; highest priority); (2) raise public awareness that the Program as a recovery program is the best mechanism for maintaining the new BO; (3) how to increase public/congressional/legislature traffic to the website; and (4) Rio Grande Days at the Round House *every other year*.
 - The PIO work group shared several concerns with the Program Manager including:
 - PIO, as far as public outreach goes, might have to wait until they are more familiar with what the rest of the Program work groups are expecting to do in the future in order to be able to suggest outreach activities (ex. brochures for restoration projects, media events, etc.).
 - The tasks that tend to be delegated to PIO are not PIO duties in the sense of what PIO does. There is a long-standing issue of lack of understanding the PIO role.
 - There is no clear direction, no clear purpose, and no PMT support provided from the Program and there hasn't been for years. The group goes through periods of being "stagnant" until the obvious, large outreach events (ex. millionth minnow, open house) even though the Program does a lot of good work each year.
 - There is no communication plan for the Program in place; nor is there a crisis management plan in place.
 - The group is concerned that the Program comes across as an "elitist club" that is overwhelmed with paper-pushing, jargon, and acronyms that ultimately don't really inform the public about the work that is actually being done.
 - Attendees shared their frustrations about trying to follow up on outreach complaints that they hear about, but they cannot get the party to respond with direction or suggestions.
 - The group finds it disconcerting that only 4 signatories out of 20 even participate in the PIO work group; it appears that public outreach and information is not important enough to the rest of the Program.
 - There is concern that the public perceives the Program has "hiding" information instead of being transparent (ex. of HR projects that are under taken but the outreach piece is either not wanted or of least importance to be consciously thought about).
 - Concern was expressed that while groups are told they are authorized to do certain things or carry out certain actions, there is a "control" issue that then makes everything go through channels to be reviewed anyway.
 - There is concern with the lack of internal communication in the Program.

Next Meeting

- Wednesday, March 10th from 10:30 am to 11:30am for joint session with PMT; lunch meeting with just PIO to directly follow
- Tentative agenda items: (1) review PIO charter for appropriateness; (2) start media binder tasks: (a) assign members to follow up with specific agencies on questionnaires; (3) assign PIO members to a work group to show the Program video; (4) provide agencies communication plans (if available) and discuss starting points for the communication plan; (5) discuss outline of tasks needed to complete the legislative tours in May/June.

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MEETING NOTES

Introductions and Announcements

- Julie Maas opened the meeting. The Long-term Plan (LTP) and 2010 work plan discussions were covered first out of consideration for the Program Manager.

Finalize PIO Annual Work Plan

- The Coordination Committee (CC) will be reviewing each work groups FY10 work plan at the February 17th CC/Work group joint meeting.
- The only changes to the PIO work plan from the last meeting are (1) the Rio Grande Days at the Round House was omitted as it will not be held this session and (2) the deadline for the Media Binder was set as December 20th, 2010. This date was selected to allow ample time for the work group to coordinate with signatories and agencies which is expected to take most of the year but to be completed before the Christmas holidays.
- Yvette McKenna shared that the PMT has provided each work group with a 2010 annual work plan template that contains 3 suggested tasks for the work groups to consider including in their draft plan. The 3 tasks pertain to the development and schedule of the draft LTP.
- Work groups have also been asked to provide a 2009 Work Plan Accomplishments update (a template has been provided in the read aheads). Basically, a new column for “task status” needs to be added to the 2009 plan. The work group then reviews the tasks and fills in the status column appropriately: completed, ongoing, lower priority, under staffed, etc.

Action: Julie Maas will contact Mary Carlson regarding the status of the PIO 2009 Work Plan Accomplishment document.

- If no 2009 PIO work plan exists, Tetra Tech will create the template using the 2010 work plan and the PIO progress presentations to build a 2009 accomplishment table with status of task column that can be filled with updates (ex. completed, ongoing, lower priority, under staffed, etc.).

Action: Tetra Tech will update the 2010 work plan with the 3 suggested LTP tasks and distribute to PIO members for review.

Long-Term Plan (LTP) Update and direction for developing future activities – (Yvette)

- Yvette explained that the new LTP will address future projects in the timeframe of 5 to 7 years out in the future. Each work group is being asked to supply an initial draft list of potential future activities and projects to the CC by February 17th. The February 17th meeting is the first of a series of joint meetings scheduled for the CC/Work Groups/PMT; the other joint meeting dates are: March 4th and April 14th from 10:00am to 4:00pm at Reclamation.
 - Work group members are encouraged to invite their agency experts and/or points of contacts that would be appropriate to attend the joint CC meetings focusing on the LTP. The target audience is CC members, work group co-chairs, the PMT, Tom Pitts (the consultant on contract to assist in the development of the LTP) and Reese Fullerton (to facilitate).
 - The PMT provided PIO with several reference materials for guidance in developing future activities. The tables were copied from the species recovery plans and taken from the FWS website.

- o There is a new webpage set up on the Program's website that is being used to house all LTP related documents and materials including the FWS recovery plans and regulatory guidance.
 - www.middlerigrande.com Library>>Revised LTP Development
 - The actual draft LTP narrative document (97 pages) is posted there as are all the tables that were sent as read aheads.
- o For clarification, it was explained that Table 7.0 of the draft LTP is the "meat" of the LTP document. Yvette briefly introduced PIO members to the layout of the table and explained that PIO isn't expected to have many Priority 1s. Regardless of what is currently in the Table 7.0, PIO is still able to prioritize what they think needs to happen first (i.e. determine their own priorities). The Program will get compliance "credit" from FWS based on what has been included in Table 7.
 - This LTP is our compliance with FWS which is the regulatory agency.
- o Over the next two working CC meetings, the CC/work groups/PMT will compile the list of future activities (which is expected to be enormous, contain overlap between groups, and in need of reviewing, revision, and rewording).
 - PIO members expressed concern that the group doesn't have guidance from the Program for other specific projects; there is no direction and there hasn't been for years. Members expressed that they might have to wait until after the first CC meeting (once they learn about what the other groups expect in terms of future activities) in order to be able to suggest future outreach activities.
 - Without additional, specific direction for outreach, the FY10 work plan is as far as the group can extend in the future.

Action: Julie Maas will attend the February 17th joint CC/Work group/PMT meeting to represent PIO.

- PIO members expressed concern that the tasks delegated to PIO are not really PIO duties in the nature of what PIO is supposed to be doing. The PIO group should be utilized to get the success message out to the public when other work groups complete their activities. There is a long standing issue of a lack of understanding of the PIO role.
- The work group tends to be stagnant, waiting until there are obvious, large events that are clearly outreach events (such as the millionth minnow release, the open house, etc.).
- o Attendees discussed the lack of a crisis management plan for bad press or publicity and cited the example of the shocking information presented at the last EC meeting without having been vetted through the appropriate Program groups as should be procedure. Along the same lines, attendees discussed the lack of a communication plan or procedures for the Program as well.
 - PIO shared that they have been attempting to develop a media binder to assist with communications, but only 6 signatories responded to the questionnaires.
 - Even the individual agencies have issues with getting information out to the public.
 - Yvette shared that PIO is really needed to promote this Program as the best mechanism for maintaining the BO and any future BOs and to accomplish all the ESA requirements.
 - Attendees discussed that if negative information were to be provided to the media right now (with no communication plan in place) then the responsibility would be placed back on the lead agency. Members were concerned that this approach would only encourage division among the Program – for while it is a collaborative program things fall off to individual agencies at the drop of a hat.
- o PIO members expressed concern that it is not clear how new information, success, or progress is shared with the public. There isn't the traffic on the website that people imagine.
 - Google analytics need to be set up for the website. And it is recommended that a "what's new" section be added to the website to list all the newest posts.

- Yvette shared that there is an informational Program Quarterly Update that is prepared for the congressional staffers. They also have a face-to-face meeting with the PMT to discuss the newest update.
 - PIO members were asked to review the next Quarterly Update (October-December 2009) for input on how to make it more informative and to improve presentation.
 - The previous Quarterly Updates can be found on the website: Library>>Quarterly Updates.
 - PIO members strongly suggested that the quarterly updates should be going out on a regular basis to the media/public. The Program has to continuously justify its existence because we are not regularly in the public's awareness.

Action: Yvette McKenna will send the PIO work group members the draft copy of the Program Quarterly Update for their review and input.

- Yvette shared that the database management system (DBMS) work group is developing a Program database. It is foreseen that the public site will be revised within the next year or so (once the DBMS is in place); the document library and document repository tasks will be switched to the DBMS. A task order was just issued to the contractor to purchase the hardware.
- The group shared the concern that the Program comes across as an “elitist club” that is overwhelmed with paper-pushing, jargon, and acronyms that ultimately don't really inform the public about the work that is actually being done. We don't brag about all the good or successes. And PIO needs more direction or help in identifying what things need to be broadcasted to the public and media.
- Attendees shared their frustrations about trying to follow up on outreach complaints that they hear about, but they cannot get the party to respond with direction or suggestions.
- The group finds it disconcerting that only 4 signatories out of 20 even participate in the PIO work group; it appears that public outreach and information is not important enough to the rest of the Program.
 - There is no direction, no purpose, no PMT support, and no buy-in from other signatories.
 - The Program is missing the essential part - the public face.
 - Attendees discussed the perception that the public may have regarding the Program has been “hiding” information instead of being transparent (ex. of HR projects that are under taken but the outreach piece is either not wanted or of least importance to be consciously thought about).

Action: PIO members will investigate and share their individual agency Communication Plans as a starting point for a Communication Plan for the Program.

Action: PIO members will look at the other recovery plan documents (posted on the website: Library>>Revised LTP Development) for references and starting points for a Program Communication Plan.

Action: Yvette McKenna will provide the PIO with a list of EC members that includes web addresses and point of contacts.

Action: Yvette McKenna will announce to the CC and EC the need to have assigned representatives to the PIO work group; it was suggested that the issue be approached from the standpoint that PIO is seeking to clarify what each agency's involvement is in the Program and it would be in the agencies best interest to send a PIO representative to these meetings.

- Concern was expressed that while groups are told they are authorized to do certain things or carry out certain actions, there is a “control” issue that then makes everything go through channels to be reviewed anyway.
- There is concern with the lack of internal communication in the Program.

- Attendees discussed how the negative is always the first thing you hear about and it is the last memory people retain. However, even with all the past negatives and fiscally irresponsible things that have happened in the past, there is good science and good projects, with dedicated people who are trying to help the Middle Rio Grande (MRG) through natural resources management and conservation. Sometimes Program members have to get to the point of continuing their work just for themselves – knowing they are making a difference and feeling good about the work they are doing.
 - o It was suggested that the PIO have combined meetings with the PMT in order to be provided with direction, updates on current information, upcoming events, notice of anything controversial, etc. The PMT meets weekly every Wednesday morning from 8:30am to 11:30am.
 - The PIO work group agreed to switch their regular meeting day and time (at least on a trial basis) to the 2nd Wednesday of each month in order to meet with the PMT from 10:30am to 11:30am in a joint session before finishing regular PIO meeting business during a working lunch.
 - Ultimate goal where each work group to accomplish PR one good story about what doing; have work groups send one member each month to assist with the story production.
 - o It was suggested that other Program work groups have a goal to accomplish one good Public Relations story about the work they are doing each month (or have at least one work group once a month). That particular work group could send at least one member that month to PIO to assist with the story production.
 - o It was suggested that PIO members attend the other work group meetings to show the new Program video, explaining how the video came to be and that there are multiple copies available for Program and agency use; this should be done within one month of video release.
 - o It was also suggested that individual agencies show the video to their entire agency.
 - o Julie Maas shared that she attended the HR Field Trip to visit Sandia Pueblo Restoration sites and requested (and received) a brief write up from Sandia describing each of the sites visited.
- Action:** Julie Maas will seek permission from Sandia Pueblo to scan and distribute the restoration site visit descriptions to other members of the Program and for use in publications.
- o If permission is granted, Julie Maas will scan the site description document and provide copies to Ronnie Anderson, Monica Mann, and Tetra Tech.
- Potential PIO Future Activities: (1) develop a Program communication plan (ties into the formation of the media binder as the first step; highest priority); (2) raise public awareness that the Program as a recovery program is the best mechanism for maintaining the new BO; (3) how to increase public/congressional/legislature traffic to the website; and (4) Rio Grande Days at the Round House every other year.

Action: Tetra Tech will request Jenae Maestas send the PIO members their work group login and password information.

Action: Yvette McKenna will add a standing agenda item to the PMT meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month to include discussing current projects, current activities, and provide direction to the PIO work group.

Action: Lance Cherry will RIP and post the Program video to YouTube as soon as he has a copy.

- *During a conference call with Reclamation videographers on Feb 11, Yvette McKenna was told that Reclamation would like to organize the release of the video to the public, both on YouTube and to the local news media. They can provide the video in flash file format with captions. It is envisioned that Mary Carlson and PIO would draft the press release and coordinate the availability of Estevan Lopez, Lisa Croft and a local freelance videographer*

for 30-45 minutes of extra footage to create a video news release and an audio news release. We would also like to add an easily accessible link for posting the video to the Collaborative Program website. If the date to release the video could coincide with something else (i.e. the dedication of the Sanctuary, the beginning of irrigation season...) that would be nice.

Action: Yvette McKenna will collect and hold several copies of the Program video to provide to the PIO work group members.

Action: Tetra Tech will send a list of upcoming Program work group meetings for PIO members to assign and arrange Program video viewing.

Upcoming Events

- Update on Rio Grande Day at the State Legislature –
 - There is no Rio Grande Days at the Round House scheduled for this session.
 - This activity was omitted from the FY10 PIO work plan accordingly.
 - Apparently, the Rio Grande Days event only occurs every other year.
- Update on EC response to Draft Program Video –
 - The Program video has been finalized and is in production right now. There are 900 copies being made; although 100 of those will be sent to Reclamation's Salt Lake City office. The remainder will be sent to Reclamation's Albuquerque office for further distribution.
- Legislative Tours in May/June 2010 (according to PIO work plan) –
 - Members explained that it takes legislative action to get state money for match opportunities. The purpose of the tours is to keep the state legislature aware of the Program's work and successes by taking legislative folks to visit sites and show the on-the-ground work being done.
 - The tours have to be done in May or June before the finance committee meets in July or August.
 - The group has tried for the last 2 years to meet this task. In fact, they created a legislative fact sheets that "died" before it went anywhere. But the group has to keep trying because it creates awareness and it is the only way to help garner state legislative support.

January 14th Action Item Review

- ✓ Lance Cherry will create a state parks and visitor center's list for potential video distribution and will send the list to PIO members. – *ongoing, almost complete;*
- ✓ Lance Cherry to work on the details to post the Program Video on YouTube. – *ongoing pending receipt of the actual video;*
- ✓ Rebecca Onchaga to check with Lisa regarding correcting the verbiage or footage on the Program's Video. – *complete; video is finalized and 900 copies being produced.*
- ✓ Tetra Tech will finish the PIO 2010 Work Plan and distribute to work group members for additional review/input. – *complete;*
- Tom Buckley to write a summary on the recovery plans for the flycatcher and minnow to have available for. – *unknown;*
- Tom Buckley to find out who could summarize the flycatcher recovery plan. – *unknown;*
- ✓ Julie Maas will send an electronic copy of the coloring/factsheets/handouts to Tom Buckley. – *complete;*
- ✓ Julie Maas will email her contact at the roundhouse regarding the date of the Rio Grande day for 2010. – *complete; no Rio Grande Days this session;*
- ✓ Julie Maas will attend the January 21st EC meeting (scheduled from 9:00am to 1:00pm at Reclamation) in Mary Carlson's absence. – *complete.*

Next Meeting

- Wednesday, March 10th from 10:30 am to 11:30am for joint session with PMT; lunch meeting with just PIO to directly follow

**Public Information and Outreach Workgroup
11 February 2010 Meeting Attendees**

NAME	POSITION	AFFILIATION	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	PRIMARY, ALTERANATE, OTHER
Lance Cherry	PIO Member	NMDGF	476-8003	lance.cherry@state.nm.us	P
Ross Morgan	PIO Member	NMDGF	222-4707	ross.morgan@state.nm.us	A
Julie Maas	Co-chair	OSE/ISC	O: 765-2011 C: 294-2767	julie.maas@state.nm.us	P
Ronnie Anderson	PIO Member	COE	342-3353	ronna.t.anderson@usace.army.mil	P
Rebecca Onchaga	PIO Member	Reclamation	462-3598	ronchaga@usbr.gov	A
Yvette McKenna	Interim PM	Reclamation	462-3640	yrmckenna@usbr.gov	O
Marta Wood	Admin support	Tetra Tech, EMI	259-6098	marta.wood@tetrattech.com	O