

Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program
Habitat Restoration Workgroup Meeting
16 March 2010 – 1:00pm-4:00pm
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Decision

- The February 16th 2009 Habitat Restoration (HR) meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

Actions

- Anders Lundahl will send the RM 80-89 workshop summary/synopsis to HR members.
- Monika Mann will send the compiled comments on the RM 83 to all the reviewers
- Gina Dello Russo will contact Cheryl Rollands about scheduling the free Tetra Tech presentation for the April HR meeting and about a potential draft scope on \$15,000 workshop costs.
- Ondrea Hummel will contact Jericho Lewis with questions on Velarde and the peer review scope questions; his responses will be forwarded to the work group.
- Monika Mann will start the draft scope of work for RM83 peer review.
- Anders Lundahl will send the Los Lunas Snags report synopsis to HR members.
- Rick Billings will make a “first pass” going through the rest of the Table 7.0 (7.2 to 7.10) to assigning priorities to HRW projects and distribute to Monika Mann for compilation.
- Monika Mann will compile all HR project rankings to develop a list of HRW Priority 1 projects. She will then assign each member 5 HR project to draft the summary. The assignment list will be distributed along with a copy of the activity summary template and the updated/revised Table 7.0 to members. The email will include an assignment list of which member will be writing the summaries for which 5 projects. Members to include are: Yasmeen Najmi, Anders Lundahl, Gina Dello Russo, Brian Wimberly, Colin Lee, Peter Wilkinson, Ondrea Hummel, Rick Billings, Jill Wick, and Sarah.
- HRW Priority rankings and activity summaries are due to Monika Mann no later than March 26th.

Meeting Summary

- Rick Billings called the meeting to order and introductions were made around the table. The agenda was approved with no changes. The February 16th 2009 Habitat Restoration (HR) meeting minutes were approved with no changes.
- Attendees briefly discussed the revised schedule for the RM 83 Realignment Report & RM 80-89 geomorphic analysis. Tetra Tech discovered problems with the hydraulic modeling due to a sediment plug and has requested a 1 month extension to develop the new model that is required. The original due date was 03/12/10 but the new estimated submittal date is 04/02/10. The rest of the tentative schedule is:
 - 05/03 or 05/04 – tentative HR review panel meeting to review all compiled to avoid contradictions or conflicts; the HR review panel consists of Jill Wick, Gina Dello Russo, Anders Lundahl, and Yasmeen Najmi.
 - 05/07 - HR review comments dues to Monika Mann;
 - 05/28 – Tetra Tech’s written response to comments due;
 - 06/08 or 06/09 – tentative HR review panel meeting;
 - 06/11 - Final HR review comments due;

- 07/12 - Final report due;
- There is the possibility of a RM 83 alignment workshop to present the final proposed option(s); estimated cost of the workshop is a total of \$15,000 (the Program portion would be \$10,000) that needs to be approved.
- Attendees discussed the HR Deliverable/Report Review Process. Monika provided hard copy handouts of a peer review schedule. A minimum of 4 weeks is expected for a single peer review, although it is project specific. For each review, the lead work group has to develop a list of questions to be provided to the peer review panel through Jericho Lewis or Yvette McKenna. The peer review process would be during the periods between draft reviews so that questions and comments are addressed in the final report development.
 - The RM 83 project and Velarde are the 2 HR peer review suggestions. RM 83 would need a scope out as soon as possible. A scope would have to be provided to Jericho as soon as possible in order to be concurrent with the contract modifications in process. The work group would like to have the peer review panel look at the draft at the same time as the work group and also would like the peer reviewers to look at the work group comments to be able to review the contractor's response to the HR comments.
- In the Program Update, it was shared that the River Maintenance Work Shop has been scheduled for September 21st (replacing the regular HR monthly meeting) in order to encourage maximum participation. Stacey Kopitsch, the new FWS PMT member, created a draft Program scientific code of conduct that has been distributed for review – work group comments are due to her by March 24th. The Program video will be distributed to the EC at their meeting this Thursday. The assigned priorities for LTP future activities need to be sent to Monika Mann by the end of this week (no later than early next week). The activity summaries for the Priority 1 (highest priority) activities are due to Monika no later than April 14th and the Priority 2 & 3 are due no later than April 28th. There has been no response on volunteers for co-chair.
- The work group discussed the Los Lunas Fisheries report review as an effort to “jump start” the work group process to attempt review and educate ourselves on the results/outcomes/information of Program reports and documents. Anders Lundahl reviewed the Los Lunas Fisheries report and drafted a 2 page synopsis with the highlights that could be easily shared with other members. Since everyone is very busy, it was suggested that only a few people need to review or read an entire report provided they could report out at the meetings and/or draft a synopsis that others could quickly read. The PMT liaison was asked to help keep a list of upcoming reports: expected available date, who is reviewing, and scheduling a review report out with brief written summary.
- The remainder of the meeting was a working session to assign a priority to each of the HR future activities listed in the LTP Table 7.
 - Rick Billings shared the Program direction explaining that the newest revisions to the table (that was distributed to all work group members as an attachment in an email sent yesterday afternoon) includes the following changes: (1) lead work groups were assigned to each project; (2) bolded italicized categories in the original table were based on the *draft* recovery plan but are still being compared to the final recovery plan for accuracy and consistency - some additional changes or corrections are still being found; (3) some of those category changes made by the PMT have been shaded in gray in the revised table; (4) for bolded italicized projects (from recovery plan) that did not have specific activities identified underneath, the PMT reviewed to determine if the category was itself specific enough to be considered an activity; if appropriate, the category was assigned a lead work group but the project will remain bolded and italicized font to signify it is a category heading from the recovery plan but a project too; and (5) flycatcher information provided by Reclamation's Denver flycatcher expert has been incorporated into the table.

- Representatives from the Service have volunteered to tackle the flycatcher sections including assigning priorities. Suggested participants include Deborah Hill (FWS), Daryl (BOR), Peter Walker (NMDGF), Jen Bachus (FWS), Stacey Kopitsch (FWS), and Ondrea Hummel (COE). However everyone interested is invited to assist in the effort.
- In order to brief the CC at their March 31st meeting, the list of work group priorities is due by March 24th. At that time, an extension can be requested if the work groups are unable to meet the deadline of having activity summaries available by April 7th as a read ahead for the April 14th CC/Work Group/PMT working meeting. Even with extension, the intent is to have the draft activity summaries on the Priority 1 activities available for review by the April 14th CC/Work Group/PMT LTP meeting.
- The work group began assigning priorities in a line-by-line basis starting in Table 7.1 Physical Habitat Restoration and Management. Only projects that contained HRW as the lead or joint work group were discussed. Due to the necessarily sequencing and needed priorities identified by the work group, all HR projects in Table 7.1 were assigned a Priority 1. The actual changes were captured in an electronic version of the table; changes were highlighted in yellow.
- The next step, once all HRW projects have been prioritized, is to develop the 1 page activity summary for each Priority 1 project (due to Monika Mann no later than March 26th). Monika will develop the list of all Priority 1 projects for HRW and assign members 5 projects each to write the summary following the template.

Next HRW Meeting April 20th, 2010 1:00pm to 3:00pm at COE

- Tentative agenda items include: (1) Cheryl Rollands to present on the RM 83 workshop cost of \$15,000; (2) draft RM83 peer review scope of work; (3) Jericho Lewis to explain procedure with Velarde; (4) SA peer review summary report out, late in the agenda to accommodate Gina; (4) volunteers for co-chair; (5) Anders Lundahl to report out on the Los Lunas Snags report; and (6) Environmental flow (E flow) workshop report out.

**Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program
Habitat Restoration Workgroup Meeting
16 March 2010 – 1:00pm-4:00pm
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**

Meeting Minutes

Introductions and Changes to Proposed Agenda

- Rick Billings called the meeting to order and introductions were made around the table.
- The agenda was approved with no changes.

Approve February 16th, 2009 meeting minutes

- The February 16th 2009 Habitat Restoration (HR) meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

RM 83 Realignment Report & RM 80-89 geomorphic analysis (Tetra Tech)

- Attendees briefly discussed the revised schedule for the River Mile (RM) 83 Realignment Report & RM 80-89 geomorphic analysis. Tetra Tech discovered problems with the hydraulic modeling due to a sediment plug and has requested a 1 month extension to develop the new model that is required. The original due date was 03/12/10 but the new estimated submittal date is 04/02/10.
- The review panel for these projects consists of Jill Wick, Gina Dello Russo, Anders Lundahl, and Yasmeen Najmi. The review panel communicated via email about meeting prior to the 5/7 comment due date in order to review all the compiled comments and to avoid contradictions. They will probably meet again when the contractor's final response to comments has been submitted. The revised schedule is:
 - 05/03 or 05/04 – tentative HR review panel meeting to review all compiled to avoid contradictions or conflicts;
 - 05/07 - HR review comments dues to Monika Mann;
 - 05/28 – Tetra Tech's written response to comments due;
 - 06/08 or 06/09 – tentative HR review panel meeting;
 - 06/11 - Final HR review comments due;
 - 07/12 - Final report due;
- There is the possibility of a RM 83 alignment workshop to present the final proposed option(s); estimated cost of the workshop is a total of \$15,000 (the Program portion would be \$10,000) that needs to be approved.
 - The work group discussed how the workshop could be used to focus on the habitat aspect since the actual report was very strong in the geomorphic and hydrologic components but was more lacking in terms of how habitat was framed and analysis of impacts to the habitat. The RM 83 project, supported by the Program, is supposed to focus on the physical attributes of the alternatives but the benefits to the species and how the habitat changes should be included.
 - Part of the total \$15,000 estimate cost for workshop is travel reimbursement to get the contractors here. Members questioned the remainder of the estimated cost and asked that Cheryl Rollands present a scope of work for the workshop at next HR meeting. It was shared that Tetra Tech has offered a brief presentation for free.

Action: Gina Dello Russo will contact Cheryl Rollands about scheduling the free Tetra Tech presentation for the April HR meeting and about a potential draft scope on \$15,000 workshop costs.

Action: Anders Lundahl will send the RM 80-89 workshop summary/synopsis to HR members.

Action: Monika Mann will send the compiled comments on the RM 80-89 (or RM 83?) to all the reviewers

HR Deliverable/Report Review Process

- Monika Mann provided hard copy handouts of deliverable and peer review schedules. It is assumed that a minimum of 4 weeks is needed for a single peer review – although each review is project specific. The sponsoring work group is responsible for developing a list of questions that to the peer review panel to be provided to the peer review panel through Jericho Lewis or Yvette McKenna. The peer review process would be during the periods between draft reviews so that questions and comments are addressed in the final report development.
 - The RM 83 project and Velarde are the 2 HR peer review suggestions. RM 83 would need a scope out as soon as possible. A scope would have to be provided to Jericho as soon as possible in order to be concurrent with the contract modifications in process. The work group would like to have the peer review panel look at the draft at the same time as the work group and also would like the peer reviewers to look at the work group comments to be able to review the contractor's response to the HR comments.
 - *Velarde*
 - The work group briefly discussed sending both the Albuquerque and Velarde A&Rs for peer review but it would require contact modifications.
 - Velarde has potential for a 10J population (i.e., whether or not to reintroduce a minnow population above Abiquiu) but it would require further study based on comments from the Service.
 - The work group prioritized peer review recommendations as: (1) RM 83; (2) Velarde A&R; and (3) Albuquerque Reach A&R although it was suggested to not submit the A&R reports at this point.

Action: Ondrea Hummel will contact Jericho Lewis with questions on Velarde and the peer review scope questions; his responses will be forwarded to the work group.

Action: Monika Mann will start the draft scope of work for RM83 peer review.

- *San Acacia (SA)*
 - The work group would like to have follow-up discussions on what the peer review panel discussed about the SA A&R. This will be an agenda item for the April 20th HR meeting.
 - In a brief review, it was shared that the peer review has a “pool” of experts that are selected based on the report being reviewed; the same reviewers or “standing” team can be used but it was cautioned that after a few years there can enter a bias as reviewers become familiar with the Program area and the Program itself.
 - There were enough comments from the peer review panel to have the SA A&R report updated had the report been in a draft stage and not final. But the purpose of this peer review was to test pilot the *peer review process* not necessarily the report itself.
 - Other comments included a critique of how projects were placed within the whole reach and the contractor didn't discuss what affects a project could have up or down stream; there was also no discussion of project longevity. The A&Rs should be including what possible affects an implemented as suite of projects could have on the surrounding areas.

Program Update

- The River Maintenance work shop has been scheduled for September 21st to replace the regular HR meeting to encourage maximum participation.
- Stacey Kopitsch (FWS's new PMT) created a draft Program Scientific Code of Conduct document that is currently out for work group review and comments. Comments are due to Stacey no later than March 24th.
- The Executive Committee (EC) will be meeting this Thursday. The Program video will be available for distribution.
- The Long-Term Plan (LTP) will be discussed later in today's meeting, but the priorities for the future activities need to be sent to Monika Mann by the end of this week or early next week. Project summaries for the highest priority projects are due no later than April 14th; summaries on the lower priority activities are due no later than April 28th.
- No responses have been received regarding volunteers for co-chair.

Los Lunas Fisheries Report: reviewer report out

- The work group discussed the Los Lunas Fisheries report review as an effort to "jump start" the work group process to attempt review and educate members on the results/outcomes/information of Program reports and documents.
- Anders Lundahl reviewed the Los Lunas Fisheries report and drafted a 2 page synopsis with the highlights that could be easily shared with other members.
- Since everyone is very busy, it was suggested that only a few people need to review or read an entire report provided they could report out at the meetings and/or draft a synopsis that others could quickly read. This should include monitoring reports and yearly updates. If possible, all contracted projects should have provisions for presentations to the work group.
- The PMT liaison was asked to help keep a list of upcoming reports: expected available date, who is reviewing, and scheduling a review report out with brief written summary.

Action: Anders Lundahl will send the Los Lunas Snags report synopsis to HR members.

Announcements

- The RFP for EMP ID/IQ is currently out. There has been talk about extending the submittal deadline for an additional week since the original deadline only allowed contractors 1 week to bid. A TPEC has been proposed for the end of the month (March 24th and 25th) to review proposals and to choose at least one contractor. The TPEC could decide to request more proposals to be able to award to a second contractor. Task Order 2 should be issued at the beginning of April. However, if flows come up before a contractor is on board (especially if contractor doesn't have existing permit), it is feasible that agencies with permits could be used (as a back up). The back up would require using the Corps' ID/IQ with Tetra Tech/SWCA to perform the high intensity monitoring.
 - Attendees discussed the predicted natural flow of 5,000 cfs to be extended (or increased) with a Cochiti Deviation resulting in a total of 5,800 cfs for a 5 day spike.
 - A 5,800 cfs spike for 5 days translates into between 4,500 to 5,000 cfs down in San Acacia.
 - The work group would like to discuss deviations in more detail at another time; discussion should include whether or not to save deviations for the poor water years versus using deviations to extend short peaks even in good years. Members were reminded that an inundation deviation is not necessarily just a "minnow" deviation.

- There is motion to move forward with the deviation this year; it will be presented at the EC this Thursday.

LTP Update and Working Session

- Rick Billings shared the Program direction explaining that the newest revisions to the table (that was distributed to all work group members as an attachment in an email sent yesterday afternoon) includes the following changes: (1) lead work groups were assigned to each project; (2) bolded italicized categories in the original table were based on the *draft* recovery plan but are still being compared to the final recovery plan for accuracy and consistency - some additional changes or corrections are still being found; (3) some of those category changes made by the PMT have been shaded in gray in the revised table; (4) for bolded italicized projects (from recovery plan) that did not have specific activities identified underneath, the PMT reviewed to determine if the category was itself specific enough to be considered an activity; if appropriate, the category was assigned a lead work group but the project will remain bolded and italicized font to signify it is a category heading from the recovery plan but a project too; and (5) flycatcher information provided by Reclamation's Denver flycatcher expert has been incorporated into the table.
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- The work group began assigning priorities in a line-by-line basis starting in Table 7.1 Physical Habitat Restoration and Management. Only projects that contained HRW as the lead or joint work group were discussed. Due to the necessarily sequencing and needed priorities identified by the work group, all HR projects in Table 7.1 were assigned a Priority 1. The actual changes were captured in an electronic version of the table; changes were highlighted in yellow.
- *HR Future Activity Priorities Discussion (to complement the updated Table 7.0)*
 - The work group discussed that the protecting of existing flycatcher sites was identified as the #1 priority for flycatcher. The activity of "achieve protection of occupied habitats" was reassigned to HRW instead of MPT.
 - The work group expanded the generic restoration projects list (original Table 7.1, Line 25).
 - Table 7.1.A.2 Line 20 (Hold Regular Workshops) was discussed. The state of habitat restoration (what has been learned or shown through monitoring and projects, what adaptive management has been necessary, changes to construction on the ground, etc.) was made a Priority 1 to begin in FY11. It was suggested that activity summary include clarification of "regular intervals."
 - Table 7.1.A.4 (Identify O&M; originally Line 31, now Line 45) was assigned a Priority 1 to begin in FY10.
 - The work group discussed having a special meeting to review the A&R reports for project selection/organization for specific inclusion in the LTP. For the time being, the work group just listed the specific reaches in the LTP table (see 7.1.A.3 Habitat Development/Restoration new lines 28 through 41).
 - For the SA Reach, refugial habitat is the most important; for the Albuquerque Reach residential habitat is the most important; and for the Cochiti reach residential habitat would be

- priority. Also for the Cochiti reach, process, floodplain, and fish passage/connectivity issues all need to be considered.
- Attendees discussed that the lack of minnow populations outside the MRG implies lack of appropriate habitat. This means that the Program will eventually have to support restoration outside the middle valley (Velarde, Cochiti, etc.) to meet the recovery goals.
 - Table 7.1.A.1 Lines 14 and 16, the work group added HRW as a co-work group with ScW. Members discussed how monitoring associated with many HR projects make it difficult to assign a Priority 2 or 3 – these projects have to have a Priority 1 assignment in order to get started. It was suggested the activity summary include phrasing similar to: “...utilize existing and priority floodplain projects to incorporate into the studies...” The activity summary couples them and still allows for implementation of adaptive management in the first round.
 - Table 7.1.A.8 Original Line 52/New Line 66 (Evaluate Habitat Management) was originally assigned to the MPT work group. However, the MPT charter was understood to be “monitoring” only; however, the phrase of “adaptive management” has since been added. MPT shouldn’t be the lead work group – instead there should be an AMT or the adaptive management team ad hoc group or at least spell out the work groups involved in the MPT.
 - Table 7.1.A.1 Line 15 should be tied to Line 24 (see Line 25) as the goals should be tied to the carrying capacity we have.
 - Original Lines 146, 147, 148 (Tiffany Basin Feasibility Study; RM 80 to 89 project implementation including adaptive management component; and RM 89 to RM 90 river channel transitioning feasibility study) all should be assigned to HRW instead of SAR. These are huge scale projects. It was recommended they be removed from the LTP table but kept on a list somewhere for future consideration. Instead, the work group agreed to move the projects to 7.1.A.3, under the San Acacia Reach specific projects (new Lines 31, 32, and 33).
 - Original Lines 158 and 159 were discussed as extremely important for both the minnow and the flycatcher so they are in the appropriate “multispecies” category. They were assigned a Priority 1. It was suggested that the activity summaries include the notation that much of the work may already be done and that the future projects should “utilize (or build on) existing work.”
 - Members would like to have the word “death” omitted from the Research Reach Specific Habitat types activities.
 - The work group discussed that since this is a long-term plan, there may have to be some additional priority choices made for budgeting purposes at some point; however, all the HR future activities need to begin sooner instead of later making them all a Priority 1 at this time.
 - The next step, once all HRW projects have been prioritized, is to develop the 1 page activity summary for each Priority 1 project (due to Monika Mann no later than March 26th). Monika will develop the list of all Priority 1 projects for HRW and assign members 5 projects each to write the summary following the template.

Action: Rick Billings will make a “first pass” going through the rest of the Table 7.0 (7.2 to 7.10) to assigning priorities to HRW projects and distribute to Monika Mann for compilation.

Action: Monika Mann will compile all HR project rankings to develop a list of HRW Priority 1 projects. She will then assign each member 5 HR project to draft the summary. The assignment list will be distributed along with a copy of the activity summary template and the updated/revised Table 7.0 to members. The email will include an assignment list of which member will be writing the summaries for which 5 projects. Members to include are: Yasmeen Najmi, Anders Lundahl, Gina Dello Russo, Brian Wimberly, Colin Lee, Peter Wilkinson, Ondrea Hummel, Rick Billings, Jill Wick, and Sarah Beck.

Action: HRW Priority rankings and activity summaries are due to Monika Mann no later than March 26th.

Next HRW Meeting April 20th, 2010 1:00pm to 3:00pm at COE

- Tentative agenda items include: (1) Cheryl Rollands to present on the RM 83 workshop cost of \$15,000; (2) draft RM83 peer review scope of work; (3) Jericho Lewis to explain procedure with Velarde; (4) SA peer review summary report out, late in the agenda to accommodate Gina; (4) volunteers for co-chair; (5) Anders Lundahl to report out on the Los Lunas Snags report; and (6) Environmental flow (E flow) workshop report out.

**Habitat Restoration Work Group Meeting
16 March 2010 Meeting Attendees**

NAME	POSITION	AFFILIATION	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS
Colin Lee	---	KeWa (Santo Domingo) Tribe	465-0055	clee@sutilities.com
Monika Mann	PMT	USACE	342-3250	monika.mann@usace.army.mil
Ondrea Hummel	HR Member	USACE	342-3375	ondrea.c.hummel@usace.army.mil
Jill Wick	HR Member	NMDGF	476-8091	jill.wick@state.nm.us
Rick Billings	HR Chair	ABCWUA	796-2527	rbillings@abcwua.org
Anders Lundahl	HR Member	ISC	383-4047	anders.lundahl@state.nm.us
Peter Wilkinson	HR Member	ISC	827-5801	peter.wilkinson@state.nm.us
Gina Dello Russo	HR Member	FWS	575-835-1828	gina_dellorusso@fws.gov
Sarah Beck	---	USACE	342-3333	sarah.e.beck@usace.army.mil
Marta Wood	Admin support	Tetra Tech, EMI	259-6098	marta.wood@tetrattech.com