

Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program
Habitat Restoration Workgroup Meeting
15 June 2010 –12:30pm - 3:30pm
Interstate Stream Commission

Decisions

- The May 18, 2010 Meeting Minutes were approved with no changes.

Actions

- Jill Wick will send information on the 2010 New Mexico Watershed Forum to HRW.
- Ondrea Hummel will provide volunteers with more information on the time frame for the HR Construction Evaluation Team.

Meeting Summary

- Rick Billings called the meeting to order and introductions were made around the table. An announcement from Santo Domingo Pueblo was added to the agenda.
- The May 18, 2010 Meeting Minutes were approved with no changes.
- Peer review questions for San Acacia Fish Passage have been sent out to Program workgroups for review. If Habitat Restoration Workgroup (HRW) members would like to participate in the review they can get a copy of the questions from Rick Billings (rbillings@abcwua.org).
- Santo Domingo Pueblo announced that they are planning restoration work in the north part of the Bosque. They are putting a proposal together and would like people to provide input on what they have planned.
- In a Program update the HRW was briefed that the Coordination Committee (CC) had not yet reviewed any of the HRW Long Term Plan (LTP) Future Activity Summaries. The CC is still working through the Science workgroup (ScW) LTP Future Activity Summaries.
- The HRW was given an E-flows Presentation by Susan Kelly. Susan's presentation covered talking points from the E-flows Workshop. It was explained that the purpose of the workshop was to jumpstart a preliminary evaluation plan for identifying streams at risk from hydrologic alteration in New Mexico. Topics in the presentation included strategies being pursued in other states and Ecological Limits of Hydrologic Alteration (ELOHA), a new framework for developing regional environmental flow standards. One outcome from the workshop was the formation of a technical group to put data together to begin the hydrologic vulnerability assessment.
- The Pueblo of Sandia showed a presentation "Pueblo of Sandia Riverine Habitat Restoration Project." The purpose of the presentation was to show HRW the current plans for the project. Some of the objectives of the project are to create new habitat for Rio Grande Silvery Minnow and to enhance existing habitat. The majority of the work will be destabilization and vegetation removal in the islands. The construction phase is anticipated to begin in September 2010.
- The HRW would like to follow through with writing summaries for project reports. HRW members picked four reports and volunteered to read and write summaries for them if they had not already done so. Three people will read and summarize a report and one person will compile the summaries for the report.
 - "Development of Rio Grande Silvery Minnow Refugia at Drain Outfalls in the Isleta Reach of the middle Rio Grande, New Mexico." – Gina Dello Russo, Jill Wick, and Anders Lundahl.

- “Annual Report for the City of Albuquerque’s Rio Bravo North and Rio Bravo South Habitat Restoration Projects: 2007-2008” – Colin Lee, Rick Billings, Ondrea Hummel.
- “Rio Grande Silvery Minnow Population Estimation Program Results From October 2009 – Final” – Rick Billings, Peter Wilkinson, and Sarah Beck.
- ISC 2009 report – Ondrea Hummel, Rick Billings, and tentatively the new Bureau of Reclamation representative.
- The 2010 New Mexico Watershed Forum will be September 28th -30th. The forum will focus on collaborative efforts for watershed planning and restoration. Those interested in attending or presenting should register at watershedforum.org. Jill Wick will send information to the HRW workgroup.
- Ondrea Hummel, Gina Dello Russo, Rick Billings, and Jill Wick volunteered to be part of the HR Construction Evaluation Team. Ondrea Hummel will provide volunteers with more information on the time frame.
- Meeting attendees discussed River Mile 83 under closed session. Please contact HRW Chair for further details.
- The next HRW meeting will be July 20, 2010 from 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm at ISC. Possible agenda items will be a Sandia Monitoring Plan Update and a PVA HEC-RAS Data Presentation.

**Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program
Habitat Restoration Workgroup Meeting
15 June 2010 –12:30pm - 3:30pm
Interstate Stream Commission**

Meeting Minutes

Introductions and Changes to Proposed Agenda

- Rick Billings called the meeting to order and introductions were made around the table. An announcement from Santo Domingo Pueblo was added to the agenda.

Approve May 18, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Decision: The May 18, 2010 Meeting Minutes were approved with no changes.

San Acacia Fish Passage Peer Review

- Peer review questions for San Acacia Fish Passage have been sent out to Program workgroups for review. If Habitat Restoration Workgroup (HRW) members would like to participate in the review they can get a copy of the questions from Rick Billings (rbillings@abcwua.org).

Santo Domingo Announcement

- Santo Domingo Pueblo announced that they are planning restoration work in the north part of the Bosque. This area of the river seems the most promising for restoration because the southern area of the Bosque is too channelized. A recent survey found 22 migratory Southwestern Willow Flycatchers in that wetland area. Santo Domingo is putting a proposal together and would like people to provide input on what they have planned.

E-flows Presentation (Susan Kelly)

- The HRW was given an E-flows presentation by Susan Kelly that covered talking points from the E-flows Workshop. Hard copies of the presentation were distributed.
- It was explained that the purpose of the workshop was to jumpstart a preliminary evaluation plan for identifying streams at risk from hydrologic alteration in New Mexico. There is a lot of information from EPA monitoring sites. One of the outcomes from the workshop was that a technical group was formed; Shann Stringer with Tetra Tech was thought to be the point of contact.
- The presentation included some of the strategies being pursued in other states.
- The information from Colorado has more to do with policy; how policy was developed and what the constraints are.
- The information from Wyoming tracked the history of the different hydrology methods used. It was not thought that habitat monitoring on the middle Rio Grande had been done on the same levels as in Wyoming.
- The policy in Texas was thought to be interesting. In Texas there is a very comprehensive statute that identifies stakeholder groups for each basin. Everything is very structured yet there is still controversy.
- Ecological Limits of Hydrologic Alteration (ELOHA) was also covered in the presentation. ELOHA is a new framework for developing regional environmental flow standards. Susan provided the HRW with the citation for the 2009 paper on ELOHA. One thought about the paper was that it points out that things are happening to river systems at such speeds that it is going to be impossible to do river by river assessments needed to support management actions.
- Suggestions from the workshop were to get permission to use water and even if you have junior rights it gives standing when decisions on a stream are made. In those instances science doesn't have to be perfect. When water rights are going to be apportioned then the science has to be as good as it can be.
- A thought that came out of the workshop was that New Mexico needs to have an organized approach and there needs to be a home for it.
- It was asked if water needs to be adjudicated first.
 - In Wyoming the water is not fully adjudicated and that given the timeframe needed for that to occur it was not thought that it was needed though it should be acknowledged as something that should be considered in river management. A settlement of different rights is going to be critical but it should not be necessary before looking at flow regimes.
- It was not thought that there were legislative barriers to E-flows in New Mexico.

Habitat Restoration Update (Pueblo of Sandia)

- The Pueblo of Sandia showed a presentation "Pueblo of Sandia Riverine Habitat Restoration Project." The purpose of the presentation was to show HRW the current plans for the project.
- The project is finally through planning and is almost through compliance stages.
- Some of the objectives are to create new habitat for the Rio Grande Silvery Minnow and to enhance existing habitat.
- The construction phase is planned to begin in September. The majority of the work will be in the islands doing destabilization and vegetation removal.
- The HRW was shown images of the layout of the project sites.
- In the coming months the contract with the construction contractor will be signed. Planning of logistics and the securing of final permits is occurring.

HR Construction Evaluation Team

- Four people are needed. Ondrea Hummel, Gina Dello Russo, Rick Billings, and Jill Wick volunteered.
- Gina may not be able to participate at the beginning of July.

Action: Ondrea Hummel will provide volunteers with more information on the time frame.

Program Update

- The Coordination Committee (CC) has not yet reviewed HRW Long Term Plan (LTP) Future Activity Summaries. The CC is still reviewing the Science Workgroup (ScW) Future Activity Summaries. The summaries that have not yet been completed can still be worked on.
- It's taking a while for the summaries to be reviewed. This was thought to be a good thing because it gets people thinking about the projects.

“Annual Report for the City of Albuquerque’s Rio Bravo North and Rio Bravo South Habitat Restoration Projects: 2007-2008” (Rick Billings)

- Rick Billings wrote a synopsis on this City of Albuquerque project. The report is available on the Program website.
- The HRW discussed writing synopses. For consistency three people will summarize each report with one person taking the lead and compiling the summaries. This will be separate from technical review of reports. The summaries should be short. It was suggested that funding information and project costs, if available, should be added to the template for writing reviews. HRW members volunteered to write synopses on four reports.
 - Gina Dello Russo, Jill Wick, and Anders Lundahl volunteered to summarize “Development of Rio Grande Silvery Minnow Refugia at Drain Outfalls in the Isleta Reach of the middle Rio Grande, New Mexico.” Anders will be the lead for this report.
 - Colin Lee, Rick Billings, and Ondrea Hummel volunteered to summarize “Annual Report for the City of Albuquerque’s Rio Bravo North and Rio Bravo South Habitat Restoration Projects: 2007-2008”. Rick will be the lead for this report.
 - Rick Billings, Peter Wilkinson, and Sarah Beck volunteered to summarize “Rio Grande Silvery Minnow Population Estimation Program Results From October 2009 – Final”. Peter will be the lead for this report.
 - Ondrea Hummel, and Rick Billings volunteered to summarize the ISC 2009 report. The new Bureau of Reclamation representative will be asked if they would also like to summarize this report.
- The four reports are available on the Program website.

Next Meeting and Agenda Items

- The next HRW meeting will be July 20, 2010 from 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm at ISC. Possible agenda items will be a Sandia Monitoring Plan Update and a PVA HEC-RAS Data Presentation.

Announcements

- The 2010 New Mexico Watershed Forum will be September 28th -30th. The forum will focus on collaborative efforts for watershed planning and restoration. Those interested in attending or presenting should register at watershedforum.org.

Action: Jill Wick will send information to the HRW workgroup.

Closed Session Discussion

- Meeting attendees discussed River Mile 83 under closed session. Please contact HRW Chair for further details.

**Habitat Restoration Work Group Meeting
15 June 2010 Meeting Attendees**

NAME	POSITION	AFFILIATION	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS
Colin Lee	---	KeWa (Santo Domingo) Tribe	465-0055	clee@sdutilities.com
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
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