

Coordination Committee Meeting
December 8, 2010

Meeting Materials:

Meeting Agenda

Meeting Minutes

Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program
Coordination Committee Meeting
December 8, 2010 Meeting – 9:30 am – 2:00 pm
Bureau of Reclamation

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR LUNCH!

Toll free number: 9-1-888-677-1684

Participant passcode: 80971#

(1st Committee member or contractor to arrive, please dial in)

Draft Meeting Agenda

- Introductions and Agenda* Approval
- **Decision** - Approval of 11/10/10 CC meeting summary*
- Action Item Review (see below)
- **Decision** - Review Revised FY11 Planning Budget Spreadsheet* (for presenting to EC)
- **Decision** – Approve next phase of revised LTP development (GenQuest editing of CC-reviewed future activity summaries)
- Review - Competition and Predation (minnow) and Predator/Non-native control (flycatcher) LTP narratives*
- Discuss recovery plans legal and policy actions relevant to LTP development
- Update on contracts
- Discuss EC Requests (from Nov 18 mtg):
 - CC review the Program's contracting process (especially for end-of-year funding that becomes available on short notice) and provide a step-by-step outline; the CC will identify any issues or concerns and provide recommended solutions for addressing issues in future years
 - CC discuss the USGS groundwater monitoring activities, reporting issues, and discuss what portion of the work is still needed/appropriate
- Review Revised Adaptive Management Plan Schedule*
- Review Program Contacts and Meeting Schedules*
- Update on Annual Report (for calendar years 2008 and 2009)
- Reminder - Cost Share Request due December 15
- Significant Non-Decision Items to Brief EC

Next meeting – December 22 @ Reclamation **TBD**; January 12, 2011

****denotes read ahead***

Upcoming meetings:

Joint ScW, HR and MPT meeting – December 14 from 9:00 am – 12:30 pm @ ISC

Service Training on ESA - December 15 from 8 am – 12 pm @ Reclamation

EC Meeting – January 20, 2011 from 9 am – 3 pm (proposed) @ Reclamation

Action Items:

- Rick Billings will take the “new” HR future summary regarding work group coordination (which used to be a ScW summary) and the *Develop and Implement Streamlined Compliance Templates and Processes for HR Projects* summary to the HR work group to be reviewed.
- Yvette McKenna will make sure the proposed updated schedule for Adaptive Management coincides with the Adaptive management contract. – *Ongoing*
- The PMT will review both the flycatcher and minnow Recovery Plans for the legal and policy actions to determine which sections are relevant to the LTP and will report the findings back to the CC (*continued from October 4*). *Ongoing – will be discussed at the Dec 8 CC meeting*
- Jim Wilber will work with Leann Towne to draft the Water Management LTP narrative (*continued from October 4*).

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Actions

- Stacey Kopitsch will ask the ScW Co-chairs to provide an updated activity summary for the *Gear Evaluation* activity that describes a possible second year if the evaluation warrants it.
- Grace Haggerty will ask Page Pegram if the Regional Water Plan has any information that might be needed for “*Floodplain Encroachment: Analysis of encroachment problem areas in the San Acacia Reach*” SAR activity.
- Tetra Tech will research the EC notes and provide the previous HR reach prioritizations
- Jen Bachus will see if the FWS flycatcher lead is aware of where the verbiage that additional habitat would have to built within 5 miles of existing habitat comes from.
- CC members will review the Competition and Predation (minnow) and Predator/Non-native control (flycatcher) LTP narratives and get any comments or edits to Yvette McKenna by December 17th.

Decisions

- The November 10, 2010 CC meeting summary was approved with no changes.
- The formatting of the “FY11 Planning Budget Spreadsheet” table was approved with a heading change to reflect the change in prioritizations.
- There was CC approval for GenQuest to begin editing of CC-reviewed future activity summaries as they are concurrently revisited by the CC.

Meeting Summary**Introductions and Agenda Approval**

- The meeting was brought to order. A brief discussion on the Population Viability Analysis (PVA) was added to the agenda. Initially a quorum was not present so the agenda was rearranged for decision items to be discussed once a quorum was reached.

PVA 12/6 -12/7 Meeting

- Meeting attendees were updated on the PVA meeting that occurred on December 6th and 7th.
 - At the PVA meeting there was in-depth discussion regarding integration of the Population Habitat Viability Assessment (PHVA) URGWOM model with the PVA models. The PVA wants to look at 50 year sequences but URGWOM can only produce 10 year sequences. The proposed solution from PHVA was to link together five 10-year sequences. There was concern surrounding linking sequences, and whether the PHVA models would be adequate for the modelers’ needs. Dave Gensler and the PVA modelers will be drafting a document that voices their concerns to share with the PHVA. PVA will propose to have a joint meeting with PHVA to further discuss model integration.

- There was also the question from some members of the PVA workgroup of how the Adaptive Management Plan would be using the PVA models. Some members suggested that a document be prepared with thoughts on the utility of the PVA to adaptive management that will be sent directly to the Executive Committee (EC), circumventing the Coordination Committee (CC). There was also confusion on the schedule for adaptive management.
- The CC discussed whether there was consensus from the PVA workgroup about the document that the PVA workgroup will be sending to the EC. Statements were made at the PVA workgroup meeting that the CC should not see the letter. Dave Campbell, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Co-Chair for PVA, was not present for these PVA discussions. Representatives from the Service were present but no one was substituting as Co-Chair.
- PVA workgroup attendees were asked to really review the meeting summary/minutes. It needs to be ensured that the 2 documents are approved by the PVA workgroup and that they are sent through the proper channels of CC then EC. Any comments or afterthoughts to the PVA workgroup meeting should also be recorded as comments in the meeting summary. There should be discussion on what can be done to ensure that workgroup Co-Chairs are able to attend meetings and that there is facilitation at meetings that need it. Several attendees agreed that there should be facilitation at the tentatively scheduled January PVA/PHVA joint meeting (After the 12/8/10 CC meeting it was noted that there will be no joint PVA/PHVA meeting at this time). There might be a need to discuss workgroup structure in regards to adaptive management before the next EC meeting.

Discuss recovery plans legal and policy actions relevant to LTP development

- It was discussed that in the silvery minnow recovery plan, legal interpretations or reviews about floodplain encroachment are generally not a priority 1 action. So for development of the LTP, the CC has time to explore and decide how deeply they will find projects that fit in this category. Within the draft LTP these issues are not relevant to things that the Program or its individual agencies have control over.
- Meeting attendees discussed the Revised San Acacia Reach (SAR) Floodplain Encroachment Study. Floodplain encroachment has been a big concern for the SAR workgroup because there are not currently any floodplain or zoning maps for SAR and if structures are built on the floodplain overbanking could be restricted. It was discussed that the CC had previously recommended that the SAR workgroup get their white paper activity done first but SAR workgroup has been adamant that floodplain encroachment should be their number one priority.
 - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) has no restrictions for building on the floodplain but must control releases so that no structures are damaged. This can be problematic because the floodplain is always changing and it is difficult to keep up with where new structures are being built and the areas that are prone to flooding change. Local regulations, local building codes, the flood plain administrator, and FEMA are entities that make regulations to protect waterways.
 - One concern with this project is that neither the Program nor its agencies have the authority to create ordinances or laws and unless Socorro County is open to receiving information to build the case for establishing policy this activity should not be implemented.

- There is also the possibility that the Regional Water Plan and agencies such as the Save Our Bosque Task Force might already be addressing floodplain encroachment. The Corps levee planning might also have done a risk assessment for flooding possibilities. Grace Haggerty will ask Page Pegram if the Regional Water Plan has any information.
- Another concern with this project is whether or not encroachment is an issue for the minnow or flycatcher. The Program goals are to avoid jeopardy and push recovery. If encroachment is not a “take” issue then what is the Program’s role at all? Though overbanking is important for the minnow life cycle, big development that might decrease overbanking is not likely with the state of the economy.
- The first level of this study might be to focus on SAR but this could apply to the whole MRG.
- More clarity is needed on what the product will be. What are the goals for the SAR workgroup besides finding out how much encroachment has happened? A report that will be easily readable by county commissioners and presentations geared for public education may be needed. This could be contracted to someone that is good at talking to counties and it could be incorporated as a master plan.
- From the discussion the CC was able to agree on questions and recommendations for the SAR workgroup.
 - Has the county requested this information?
 - What type of coordination has occurred with the Save Our Bosque Task Force?
 - Has Paul Gutierrez, Executive Director, NM Assoc. of Counties, been contacted for broader county requirement?
 - Should this be broadened to the entire MRG?
 - Has the county requested floodplain maps from FEMA?
 - Has the USACE levee rehabilitation study been reviewed/considered?
 - Identify goals, product (piece of master plan?), and target audience.
 - Ensure that the resulting report would be conducive to public outreach and targeted to the appropriate audiences(s).
 - How is this a potential threat to silvery minnow or flycatcher, particularly in San Acacia Reach?

Action Item Review – Meeting attendees performed an action item review.

- **Rick Billings will take the “new” HR future summary regarding work group coordination (which used to be a ScW summary) and the *Develop and Implement Streamlined Compliance Templates and Processes for HR Projects* summary to the HR work group to be reviewed.**
 - The Habitat Restoration (HR) workgroup will be discussing this at their upcoming meeting.

- **Yvette McKenna will make sure the proposed updated schedule for Adaptive Management coincides with the Adaptive management contract. – Ongoing**
 - Complete. This was done with the contractors last week. Yvette is waiting for a revised schedule from the contractor. Some windows for dates for workshops and planning sessions in 2011 are February 1st – 4th, this could include one day of site fieldtrips as the contractors didn't get to see Pueblo HR sites; April 4th – 8th would be a working meeting; the window for the Adaptive Management Plan workshop is May 18th – 19th.
 - The CC received feedback that the contractor was happy with the interviews and that they were pleased as well as very overwhelmed with the amount of information they received. Yvette will distribute the revised schedule once it becomes available.
- **The PMT will review both the flycatcher and minnow Recovery Plans for the legal and policy actions to determine which sections are relevant to the LTP and will report the findings back to the CC (*continued from October 4*). Ongoing – will be discussed at the Dec 8 CC meeting**
 - This action was addressed in the recovery plans legal and policy actions relevant to LTP development discussion. This is still ongoing. When the recovery plan was reviewed it was found that these are priorities 2 and 3 so there is time to work with them.
- **Jim Wilber will work with Leann Towne to draft the Water Management LTP narrative (*continued from October 4*).**
 - Complete. The narrative is in review and should be available at the next CC meeting.

Update on contracts

- Meeting attendees were given a contracting update by Jericho Lewis (Reclamation Contracting Officer).
- There have been concerns from the Species Water Management (SWM) workgroup that deliverables for the Groundwater/Surface water IA are not being received on a timely basis. Jericho has recognized this issue and will be meeting with USGS on Tuesday (12/14). It hasn't really been discussed how this item will be proceeded with or continued in the future. Some options are competing on an open market or continuing the IA. Amy Louise (SWM Co-Chair/PMT Liaison) was invited to the meeting with USGS to provide information back to SWM.
- At the last HR workgroup meeting Jericho spoke with the attendees about the HR Construction for FY11 RFP and funding opportunity announcements. It was confirmed at the last meeting that the reaches in the funding opportunity announcements were listed as priorities a) SAR, b) Cochiti Reach, and c) Albuquerque Reach. However the SOW developed by the HR workgroup does not specify that the listed reaches are in any descending order of importance. Jericho would like to put out the SOW exactly as the workgroup has written it but would like to verify that there will be no issues with the reaches not being prioritized.
 - Attendees discussed the HR workgroup prioritization of the reaches. There was disagreement by some in the CC with this prioritization with a request for written justification from the HR workgroup so that the CC can advocate for what the

workgroup wants. The CC was informed that the EC has already prioritized the reaches several years ago, but if technical people in workgroups feel that the prioritization should be different then it may be time to reanalyze the prioritization. The Program Manager asked Tetra Tech to research the EC notes and provide the previous HR reach prioritizations. This might be the opportunity for the EC to take a look at all the evidence and history and re-evaluate prioritizing the reaches in coordination with the CC and HR workgroup.

- It was discussed that Cochiti is on the workgroup's prioritized list but it is currently believed there are few silvery minnow there. Though the EC has directed that Cochiti should be looked at first for reintroduction it was questioned as to why HR should occur there when there are other reaches with silvery minnow that would benefit from restoration. For example, the area between the 380 Bridge and the San Acacia Diversion Dam (SADD) has a sediment plug and HR work has not been done there.
 - An issue with doing restoration in the area between the 380 Bridge and SADD is there are private landowners. The RFP could be used to see if there are any private landowners who have enough land or want to put their land together to have work done on their land. The land would need to be adjacent to the river or within 5 miles of existing habitat. It was asked where the concept that habitat must be within a certain distance from existing habitat comes from. Jen Bachus will see if the FWS flycatcher lead is aware of where the verbiage that additional habitat would have to be built within 5 miles of existing habitat comes from.
- It was discussed that the 2003 BO says that 60 acres should be restored at a time. It was explained that the acreage numbers from the BO were specific for getting rid of salt cedar and regrowing vegetation in SAR because that was the focus for HR at the time. If there are adjacent territories for flycatcher that is a good reason to have that reach as a high priority. At the time of the 2003 BO it wasn't thought that the minnow needed restoration but lots of information has been developed since.
- It might be a good time to do an HR workshop for systematic evaluation across all reaches for prioritization and as an approach to future projects. With there being a lot of salt cedar in SAR and the potential beetle problem SAR might be the best place to start with flycatcher restoration. It would be helpful to have the new Reclamation flycatcher specialist attend HR workgroup meetings. The RFP could be put out but not yet funded, and then after the workshop occurs proposals could be evaluated to see if they address issues from the workshop.
- Meeting attendees discussed whether the SOW for HR Construction should be revised to reflect reach prioritization. The way the SOW is currently written gives flexibility; if the reaches were prioritized work could not be done in Cochiti or Albuquerque Reaches until SAR had been exhausted. Even with a Program prioritization of reaches, leaving it open in the RFP would leave flexibility once it is issued. Opening it up to include Isleta Reach would also increase flexibility. The CC approved letting out the RFP without prioritization and adding Isleta Reach.
- Panelists are currently being selected for the Population Estimation Peer Review. This peer review process will be the same as the San Acacia and Fish Passage peer

reviews. Potential panelists should not be affiliated with the Program or its entities nor should they have a professional connection to individuals involved with the study. The Population Estimation contractor was told that the Program would like him to participate in discussions with the peer review panel. The contractor has requested the opportunity to review names before panelists are finalized, as it is not possible for Reclamation to know everyone with whom the contractor may have a conflict of interest or associations. Though the contractor is correct in stating that Reclamation will not know all his associations or conflicts, the panelist applicants should be able to identify any such associations. There was a desire by the CC to remain consistent with past peer review procedures and to keep the peer review as independent as possible. The CC agreed to remain consistent with the current process and not let the contractor participate in panelist selection.

Decision - Approval of 11/10/10 CC meeting summary* - The November 10, 2010 CC meeting summary was approved with no changes.

Decision - Review Revised FY11 Planning Budget Spreadsheet* (for presenting to EC)

- The CC reviewed the format of the “Revised FY11 Planning Budget Spreadsheet”. It was thought that the heading for Criteria 3 should be changed to reflect the changes in prioritizations that were made as some of the workgroup recommended activities in the Criteria 3 section are actually Criteria 1 activities as they support the 2003 BO.
- The formatting of the “Revised FY11 Planning Budget Spreadsheet” table was approved with the heading for Criteria 3 changed to “Draft Criteria 3 (Including criteria 1 and 2 items to be considered)”.
- Meeting attendees briefly discussed whether or not the Equipment Study and Age and Growth studies should be included in the “Revised FY11 Planning Budget Spreadsheet”.
 - The Age and Growth study is only a 1 year study. The results are not out yet due to a delay in processing at the Academy of Science.
 - The Equipment Study may have a second year if the workgroup decides a second is warranted. The possibility for a second year should be reflected in the “Revised FY11 Planning Budget Spreadsheet” as well as in the activity summary. Stacey Kopitsch will ask the ScW Co-Chairs to reflect in the activity summary that there may be a 2nd year if the evaluation warrants it.
 - There is the option to modify the project to include a 2nd year but the modification will need to be completed around January or February.
 - It might be too soon to decide if a 2nd year is warranted as the first year will not be completed until February. The contractor had given the ScW a presentation that was very preliminary but there may be consensus from the ScW that they could refine what was done. It would be good to not miss the opportunity to modify the contract but the ScW should not agree to something that they are not comfortable with.

Decision – Approve next phase of revised LTP development (GenQuest editing of CC-reviewed future activity summaries)

- The workgroup discussed whether GenQuest could begin editing and implementing CC changes to the future activity summaries for the CC to review for inclusion in the draft LTP due in March. There was agreement that GenQuest could begin editing the

summaries but the CC will begin reviewing them in January concurrently as the editing is taking place.

- The CC would like GenQuest to categorize the future activities by LTP category (7.1, 7.2, 7.3...) for the CC to review at their January meeting.

Prioritize Budget Spreadsheet

- The CC prioritized some of the workgroup proposed activities so there will be activities that have been approved and are in queue should extra funding become available. When there is available money there is not always time for transparency in the process and if there are things that have been vetted and approved it helps the process. The CC prioritized the activities that they had approved, focusing on the ones that support the BO. The following is the CC's prioritization.
 - CC 1 – Independent Peer Review (Genetics Program)
 - CC 2 – RGSM Studies specific to Fish Passage
 - CC 2 – Increase Understanding of RGSM Life History and Habitat Needs
 - CC 2 – RGSM Fecundity Study
 - CC 2 (if Corps cannot fund) – Evaluate water quality in the MRG in relation to the RGSM
 - CC 3 - HR Implementation
 - CC 4 – HR Design and Compliance Support
 - CC 5 – Develop White Papers on each agency/entity's current authorizations and strategies to address resource management issues in the San Acacia Reach
 - CC 6 – Application of Rio Grande Riparian Groundwater Models to Support the Program and Water Operations Assessments
- This is a working list and prioritizations may change. The estimated amount of funding for Independent Peer Review was increased to \$100,000 based on the cost of previous peer reviews. The "Evaluate water quality in the MRG in relation to the RGSM" activity may be funded by the Corps but was prioritized as a placeholder in case the Corps cannot fund the activity. The CC also recommends that SAR coordinate with PIO and PMT for the "Develop White Papers on each agency/entity's current authorizations and strategies to address resource management issues in the San Acacia Reach" activity.
- It was discussed that there are issues with getting SOWs created in a quick enough time frame to have them issued. It was suggested there could be multiple IDIQs in place for ScW projects and then task orders can be sent out and the numbers for the proposals could be compared. In the past non Program IDIQS have been used to benefit the Program but there is not an IDIQ that is Program specific. Though the IDIQs will be in place, work can still be dealt with on a case-by-case basis as some studies may need specialists that will not be under the IDIQ. It was stated this could be discussed further by the CC at a later date.
- There was brief discussion on the "CP Workshop/Forum". UNM would like to expand the workshop beyond just the technical Program people with students and a broader focus in mind. Additional funding beyond what Reclamation has given them might be needed and some tuition may be charged. This will not be prioritized until more information is obtained from Susan Kelly.

Review - Competition and Predation (minnow) and Predator/Non-native control (flycatcher) LTP narratives*

- Any comments or edits to the narratives should be sent to Yvette McKenna by December 17th.

Discuss EC Requests (from Nov 18 mtg):

- CC review the Program's contracting process (especially for end-of-year funding that becomes available on short notice) and provide a step-by-step outline; the CC will identify any issues or concerns and provide recommended solutions for addressing issues in future years**
 - It was thought that the majority of the concern is for when end-of-year funding becomes available on short notice. A process has been previously developed that was good but really complex. That process can be used as a baseline and then simplified so that it is less confusing and easy to use. Time should be set aside at a future meeting to refine a process.

Review Program Contacts and Meeting Schedules*

- This document lists the PMT contacts, workgroup recurring meeting. This will be provided to adaptive management contractors so they can schedule their meetings. This will also be posted to the website as a "who we are or" or "contact us". A minor change was made to remove lines from the document that separated workgroups.

Update on Annual Report (for calendar years 2008 and 2009)

- The PMT is reviewing the annual report for 2008 to 2009. The meeting attendees discussed the level of program review the draft form should have. Previously the draft has not been reviewed by the CC. The draft will be distributed as a CC read ahead and if there are any comments they can be submitted to Yvette McKenna.

Reminder - Cost Share Request due December 15

- The CC was reminded that cost share requests are due by December 15th.

Upcoming meetings:

Joint ScW, HR and MPT meeting – December 14 from 9:00 am – 12:30 pm @ ISC

Service Training on ESA - December 15 from 8 am – 12 pm @ Reclamation

- January 12th

EC Meeting – January 20, 2011 from 9 am – 3 pm (proposed) @ Reclamation

Coordination Committee 08 December 2010 Meeting Attendees

NAME	AFFILIATION	PHONE NUMBER	PRIMARY (P) ALTERNATE (A) OTHERS (O)	EMAIL ADDRESS
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