

Executive Committee Meeting
June 16, 2011

Meeting Materials:

Meeting Agenda

Coordination Committee and Program Manager Update



**Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species
Collaborative Program
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA
June 16, 2011
9:00 am – 1:00 pm**

LOCATION: Bureau of Reclamation, 555 Broadway Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM

1. **INTRODUCTIONS AND REVIEW OF PROPOSED AGENDA*** *5 minutes*
2. **APPROVAL OF MAY 19, 2011 MEETING SUMMARY and ACTION ITEMS*** *20 minutes*
3. **REVIEW DRAFT ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT WORKGROUP CHARTER** *20 minutes*
4. **REVIEW PROGRAM RESTRUCTURING EXAMPLE** *30 minutes*
5. **PVA WORKGROUP UPDATE** (*D. Gensler/D. Campbell*) *10 minutes*
6. **USFWS and BIOLOGY UPDATE** (*L. Robertson*) *15 minutes*
7. **PATH FORWARD TO BECOMING A RECOVERY PROGRAM*** *30 minutes*
8. **USACE UPDATE** *15 minutes*
9. **RECLAMATION and HYDROLOGY UPDATE** (*M. Hamman/L. Towne*) *15 minutes*
10. **COORDINATION COMMITTEE/PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT** *15 minutes*
(*B. Wyman, Y. McKenna*)
 - A. **Peer Review Process Update**
 - B. **Annual Report Update**
 - C. **Workgroup Updates**
 - D. **Contract Update**
11. **OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS** *5 minutes*
12. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
13. **NEXT SCHEDULED EC MEETING – July 21, 2011 (9:00 am to 1:00 pm @ Reclamation)**

**Denotes read ahead material provided for this topic*

Members

ABCWUA
ISC
NMDA
Sandia Pueblo
UNM

APA
Isleta Pueblo
NMGF
Santa Ana Pueblo
USACE

CABQ
NMAGO
MRGCD
Santo Domingo Tribe
USFWS
Reclamation

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Update

Following the **Adaptive Management (AM) Planning** Workshop, Executive Committee (EC) members were asked to provide feedback on the “Silent Generation Questions” posed by the contractors and any comments on the draft strategic design to Yvette McKenna by May 27. *This comment period was extended until June 17, 2011.* The full draft AM Plan will be submitted to the Contracting Officer’s Technical Representative (COTR) on June 30, with a subsequent Program review until August 15. Final revisions on the draft AM Plan are planned to be completed by September 30, 2011.

Information on adaptive management planning has been posted on the Program website (www.middleriogrande.com) under “Library >> Adaptive Management.” No logins or passwords are required to access this information.

The Program Management Team (PMT), as directed by the EC, began development of a charter for an Adaptive Management workgroup. It is envisioned that this workgroup would be made up of co-chairs from the Science, Habitat Restoration (HR), and Species Water Management (SWM) workgroups and from the Monitoring Plan Team (MPT), San Acacia Reach (SAR), Population Viability Analysis/Biology (PVA), and Population Habitat Viability Assessment/Hydrology (PHVA) ad hoc workgroups. Other technical representatives would be those appointed by EC members, preferably who have attended the AM planning sessions and workshop to date.

The PMT has also started to consider how the workgroups can be restructured for maximum effectiveness. PMT members are reviewing their ad hoc workgroup charters, current work plans, and schedules to best determine whether objectives have been met and the timeframe for completion. A draft AM charter and alternative Program structures will be provided to the CC for their next meeting on June 29, and to the EC for review and possible decision by July 21.

Coordination Committee

Peer Review Process

The EC requested that the CC develop a process to document the justifications for which peer review recommendations they suggest pursuing and explain why other peer review recommendations were not preferred. This topic was discussed again at the CC meeting on June 1, 2011. CC representatives are gathering information on how other programs address peer reviews, and looking into guidelines that academic institutions use to address peer reviews. Jericho Lewis will draft text describing the peer review process for the CC to review for inclusion in the *Peer Review Process* document. The CC will continue to review the draft document, and provide comments and additional information to Yvette McKenna to be consolidated by COB June 17. The revised document will then be provided as a read ahead for the next CC meeting on June 29, and to the EC for review and possible decision by July 21.

Revised Long Term Plan Development

The timeframe for the revised LTP is FY2012 to FY2023. Future activities are being reviewed at the workgroup level to address the San Acacia Diversion Dam Fish Passage Peer Review recommendations and with the ScW to plan for a targeted Rio Grande silvery minnow (RGSM) study.

The next CC meeting will be on Wednesday, June 29 from 12:30-4:00 pm at Reclamation where the CC will continue discussing the peer review process, view a presentation of RGSM Fish Health Study results recently shared with the ScW, review a draft adaptive management workgroup charter, and discuss Program restructuring.

Program Management Team

2008 and 2009 Annual Report Update

The PMT and the CC reviewed the Collaborative Program Annual Report for 2008 and 2009 and provided comments to GenQuest. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) utilized a technical editor and appropriate technical staff to submit comments. Comments are being reviewed and incorporated and the final report is expected on July 1, 2011. Work on the 2010 Annual Report will begin soon after the 2008 and 2009 report is finalized.

PMT liaison support for workgroups is as follows: Monika Mann for the DBMS ad hoc workgroup and the Habitat Restoration workgroup (HRW); Stacey Kopitsch for the ScW, Population Viability Assessment (PVA)/Biology and Monitoring Plan Team (MPT) ad hoc workgroups; Terina Perez for the Species Water Management (SWM) workgroup, the Population Habitat Viability Assessment (PHVA)/Hydrology and the San Acacia Reach (SAR) ad hoc workgroups; and Ali Saenz for the Public Information and Outreach (PIO) workgroup. The PMT liaisons are reviewing other recovery program structures, charters, and adaptive management programs to generate ideas and facilitate the development of an alternate Program organization to maximize effectiveness.

Jericho Lewis continues to assist with Albuquerque Area Office (AAO) obligations and is training new staff members. A Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for the Collaborative Program's habitat restoration projects has been posted on Grants.gov. You may access the FOA by going to <http://www.grants.gov> and searching for "R11SF40015," or through the link that appears below.

<http://www.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=h41tNvqQ9vISNxivTyYYvXhGg17THBTLhmtTINNsXPpRMddZ72mw!-1546227132?oppId=98535&mode=VIEW>

The closing date for applications is July 7, 2011 and interested applicants must not have currently accumulated more than \$200,000 in unexpended Collaborative Program funds from active grants.

Jericho will also be working on awarding the high intensity effectiveness monitoring and the RAMAS-based PVA model requirements once the scopes are finalized. Diana Herrera continues to work on: Program cost share updates, expenditure reports, water leasing obligations, and FY2012 and FY2013 Program budgets. Chip Martin, Edward McCorkindale, and Lisa Freitas, GenQuest, and Christine Sanchez and Marta Wood, Tetra Tech, continue to assist the Program in the revised LTP development, annual report preparation, and meeting support and summaries.

Habitat Restoration Workgroup

The HRW will meet on June 21 at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) where presentations/updates will be given on a Middle Rio Grande (MRG) Mesohabitat Project, the MRG Bernalillo to Belen Flood Risk Management Project, and the new maintenance/monitoring phase of HR work.

Regarding the Bosque Farms Entrapment Alleviation Project, comments were received from the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission (NMISC) and the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) in response to public review of the USACE Environmental Assessment (EA) during April 2011. One comment from MRGCD questioned if effects to the levee had been considered. USACE had coordinated with its geotechnical

staff as well as other agencies through the Collaborative Program during the development of the project and there were no levee issues raised at that time. However, further investigation upon receipt of the referenced EA comments revealed observations of seepage and sloughing of MRGCD ditches in 2005 and 2008 at this location. In addition, a draft “overbank study” conducted for USACE Water Operations Division was brought to the attention of the team. It also confirmed this particular location as a problem area with levee foundation seepage. Due to the seepage condition at this location, any increase in frequency or duration of inundation in this area poses a risk to irrigation infrastructure and potentially levee integrity over time. Repair to existing structures is beyond the scope of this project.

The next HRW will be held on July 19 at NMISC where several topics will be discussed including the CC’s request that the SADD Peer Review recommendations be revisited.

Science Workgroup

The Science Workgroup last met on May 17. Since then, a draft Statement of Objectives (SOO) for the SADD Fish Passage Peer Review Report recommendation, “Determine the impact that augmentation has had on silvery minnow genetic variability over time” has been completed, and there may potentially be a contract awarded this fiscal year. The next regularly scheduled ScW meeting will be on June 21 at the USFWS Field Office. Agenda items include discussion of the CC directives regarding the SADD Fish Passage Peer Review recommendations, and a potential USACE funded project to map mesohabitat throughout the Middle Rio Grande, similar to the recent U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) effort in Big Bend National Park.

Monitoring Plan Team ad hoc Workgroup

The MPT has not officially met since March of this year, as the workgroup members were scheduled to conduct low-intensity monitoring during the months of May and June. Due to this year’s low flows however, the Albuquerque and Isleta Reach habitat restoration sites have not reached their target inundation levels and therefore not much data has been collected. A final draft Statement of Work (SOW) has been developed for the high-intensity portion of the effectiveness monitoring, with a focus on habitat food availability. It is anticipated that a contract will be awarded this summer. The next regularly scheduled MPT meeting will be on June 21 at the USFWS Field Office.

Species Water Management Workgroup

SWM met on June 1 for a NMISC Atrisco Project Fieldtrip. Grace Haggerty led the tour which included a discussion of the project history and purpose. Several other river features, NMISC projects, and the USACE Route 66 Project were also identified and discussed. It was explained that NMISC expects to complete some seepage studies this year, and that the Atrisco site could be used in some capacity to help the RGSM this summer.

The workgroup continues to explore options for the continuation of the Ground Water/Surface Water (GW/SW) Interaction Project previously conducted by the USGS, and will be working on an updated activity summary and cost estimate for discussion.

The next regularly scheduled SWM meeting is on July 6 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), where tentative agenda items include a SWM Charter discussion and the GW/SW Interaction Project SOW. The workgroup is still in need of a non-federal Co-Chair.

San Acacia Reach ad hoc Workgroup

At the May 26 SAR meeting, attendees reported that the April field trip went well and was very informative. The meeting also included an update on the USACE portion of the Floodplain Encroachment Study, which is expected to be completed in July. The original SOW is currently being amended by the workgroup to reflect the portions that USACE is covering.

The workgroup continues to work on drafting a series of white papers on the low flow conveyance channel (LFCC)/Levee system, agricultural (AG) sustainability, Sediment Transport, Water rights/adjudication, Floodplain Land Use Development, and Habitat Restoration. Although the white papers may not be ready to

incorporate into a public document before the end of the year, SAR may still attempt to put together a workshop on one of the key topics. The workgroup also plans to have a meeting for Discussion of Floodplain Land Use Roundtable on July 28.

The next regularly scheduled SAR meeting will be on June 23 from 12:30 to 3:30 pm at Reclamation. Tentative agenda items include another update from USACE on their portion of the Floodplain Encroachment Analysis Project, a discussion on the modified floodplain encroachment analysis tasks SOW, planning for the Floodplain Land Use Roundtable, and the SAR future activity summaries.

Population Viability Analysis (PVA)/Biology ad hoc Workgroup

The PVA workgroup met for a full day on May 24. Topics of discussion included the March 29 EC meeting directives to the PVA workgroup, which included reaching a consensus data set, having discussions to compare and contrast the analysis conducted in each PVA model, and to reach a resolution regarding the incorporation of hydrology scenarios into the PVA models. Also discussed was finalization of a letter to the PHVA workgroup detailing the hydrologic data needs of the PVA models. A presentation was given to the group detailing the possible interactions between the PVA and Habitat Restoration workgroups. The current status of the RAMAS-based modeling contract was also discussed for which Reclamation drafted a Statement of Objectives (SOO). Comments on the draft SOO were received from the USFWS and MRGCD and are currently being incorporated into the SOO. It is planned that the SOO will be advertised as soon as possible so that development of the RAMAS-based PVA model can continue. The next regularly scheduled PVA meeting will be on June 28 at Reclamation.

Population Habitat Viability Assessment (PHVA)/Hydrology ad hoc Workgroup

The URGWOM tech team continues to work on model calibration in support of the Biological Assessment process. The PHVA workgroup will schedule their next meeting as needed via email.

Database Management System ad hoc Workgroup

The DBMS did not meet this month and continues to coordinate the Pilot DBMS training for September 2011. Logistics including number of participants, computers and software are still being discussed. The DBMS is continuously updated monthly with Program documents as they are uploaded to the Program website. The DBMS will meet next month on July 11.

Public Information and Outreach Workgroup

Julie Mass, co-chair for PIO, staffed a booth for the Collaborative Program at the Sandia Pueblo's Community Earth Day May 19 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. There were groups of students and teachers after classes let out in the morning and afternoon, and some members of the community attended - events like this offer lots of interaction and learning opportunities with other participating agencies. Santa Ana Pueblo will hold their Environmental Fair on August, 27, 2011. The PIO is seeking volunteers to staff a booth at the event. The PIO and PMT will be meeting June 29 to discuss the 10th Anniversary Open House with technical workshops. The dates suggested for the event coincide with the Congressional Fall Recess, October 7 and 8, 2011.