

**Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program  
Coordination Committee Focused Meeting  
November 17, 2011 – 12:30 - 4:00 pm  
Bureau of Reclamation  
San Juan Conference Room**

**Decisions**

- The October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011 CC meeting summary was approved for finalization with no changes.
- The PVA scope/statement of work for the Continued PVA Modeling project does not have to meet the December 16<sup>th</sup> deadline; the scope should be submitted tentatively by June 2012.
- After today's discussion and changes made to the FY12 funding spreadsheet and with the caveat that the 10(j) position funding was elevated to the EC, the CC approved the FY12 Funding Spreadsheet for \$3.65 million.
- The RGSM Life History statement of work should be submitted by February 1, 2012.

**Actions**

- Jen Bachus will double check the original ScW priority projects to make sure the recent changes to the FY12 funding spreadsheet are not misrepresented.
- ScW volunteers will meet on December 5<sup>th</sup> to work on the RGSM Life History project scope. The PVA will be asked for their data needs at the December 12<sup>th</sup> PVA meeting, which ScW will take into account when writing this SOW. The ScW group will coordinate with the COTR at the Corps (Mick Porter) to make sure there is no duplication of effort with ongoing studies.
- Susan Bittick will provide the Corps funding estimates for FY12 projects for inclusion in the Program's FY12 Funding Spreadsheet for presentation to the EC.
- Ali Saenz will distribute both FY12 Funding Spreadsheets to the CC and PMT– the updated detailed version and the EC condensed version. CC will be able to see the updated FY12 Funding Spreadsheets prior to distribution to the EC. PMT Liaisons will make the spreadsheet available to the workgroups.
- Susan Bittick will get with Cheryl Buckle to determine how to electronically submit the Strengths-Based Leadership test results.
- On Monday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, Susan Bittick will send out a Strengths-Based Leadership instruction email that will include a request for RSVP and directions to the Girl Scout Building.
- Even if not attending the Strengths-Based Leadership training on December 9<sup>th</sup>, CC members were asked to submit their test results anyway.
- All CC members will review and follow through with their prior action items from 10/05/11 and 10/26/11.

**Requests**

- It was requested that the deletion of the *Post Construction Monitoring/Maintenance of Complete HR Projects* from the FY12 work plan be discussed with HR work group.
- The HR work group should review the reduction of the *System Wide Monitoring* project estimate to <\$100,000; the group should review the project viability for this funding cycle (FY 2012) given the timing of the DBMS, adaptive management, and RIP development.
- It is recommended that ScW, as the lead work group, draft the scope on the RGSM Life History project, but as a courtesy the PVA will be asked for specific data that they need. The ScW will consider the PVA data needs in developing the project designs and descriptions.

**Projects That Need Scopes**

- Data Synthesis, including WQ (ScW)

- RGSM Fish Passage Study (longitudinal movement) – (HR/ScW; the study will be revisited in a joint session with consideration of the SADD peer review report and to ensure that it is ready to move forward)
- RGSM Fecundity Study (ScW)
- RGSM Life History and Habitat (ScW - – due February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012)
- RGSM Spawning Monitoring (ScW)
- RGSM Sexing Study (ScW; already done)
- Isleta Phase II Geomorphology Monitoring (HR)
- RGSM PVA modeling (ScW/TBD – due in June 2012)
- AM Development (CC led AM “focus group” – due in spring 2012)

**Next Meeting: TBD on December 9<sup>th</sup> based on the EC meeting and Strength Finder Workshop**

## Meeting Summary

**Introductions and Agenda Approval:** Jim Wilber brought the meeting to order and introductions were made. The meeting agenda was reviewed and approved with a correction to the ending time of 4:00pm.

- In a brief update on the Joint Work Group meeting from 11/15/11, it was shared that the work group co-chairs, specifically for Habitat Restoration (HR) and Science (ScW), expressed the need to be present/attend the pertinent CC budget decision meetings in order to facilitate communication of needs to the work groups.

**Decisions – Approval of 10/26/2011 CC meeting summary:** The October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011 CC meeting summary was approved for finalization with no changes.

**Focus on highlighted action item (Approval of \$3.6 million FY12 budget):** The focus on this action item ties into the decision item to approve funded activities within the expected \$3.6 million budget. *Jim Wilber, Brooke Wyman, and Yvette McKenna will re-organize the FY12 funding spreadsheet to better reflect required activities (BO requirements and those needed for new BA/BO development) versus BO supportive and workgroup recommended activities. The updated “walk-down” spreadsheet will be distributed to CC members before November 7<sup>th</sup>.*

- The main goal is to approve the FY12 projects so that the work group can begin scope development. In terms of prioritization, the comments provided at the last meeting were very helpful. As time progresses, some members would like to get the spreadsheet to a more “walk down” type table but that won’t be addressed today. There was general agreement that the detailed spreadsheet should be simplified for presentation to the EC.
- The “focus group” met earlier this week and updated the spreadsheet based on the comments from the last meeting and the additional information that Grace Haggerty emailed out.
  - Some of the changes to the spreadsheet include:
    - The Corps projects were lumped at the top of the spreadsheet and separated from the Program activities by a dark line.
    - The BO requirements were separated from the BO support and EC requirement activities.
    - In general, the project order remained fairly consistent to the recommendations that Grace provided.
    - The focus group also reviewed the estimated costs and made some changes that are captured in red (ex. PIO reduced from \$15,000 to \$10,000; Annual Report reduced from \$30,000 to \$25,000; Facilitation reduced from \$30,000 to \$25,000).

- All the same projects are on the spreadsheet compared to the last version (nothing has been omitted).
  - For presentation, all “like” projects (such as the 4 propagation projects) have been grouped together. This helps to see related projects as a set.
- *RGSM PVA Modeling in Support of New BA/BO*
  - This project was requested by the Service for additional (continuous) RAMAS model support and consultation after the development has been completed. However, the current statement of work is very vague at this point. The \$50,000 estimate should tentatively not be needed until summer of FY12 at the earliest. Due to the uncertainty regarding the project intent/purpose, there was general CC agreement to leave it in the FY12 budget as a place holder. There might be the potential to use the funds to purchase the user licenses - \$10,000 for up to 5 users on an annual basis.
  - It would be challenging for the PVA work group to be able to write a scope until there is a functional model and training. Because of this, the *RGSM PVA Modeling* scope is not due until tentatively June 2012.
- *Adaptive Management (AM) Plan Development*
  - Some members expressed concern with the \$150,000 estimated cost for the adaptive management plan development activity. Some members consider it “premature” at this time to pursue a full Version 2 of the plan since the hypotheses, questions, water issues, etc. are not known. There is not enough information to develop an appropriate scope. In order to attain a useful product, the scope needs to be focused and realistic and the adaptive management needs to be very clear in expectations and accountability.
  - Version 1 of the AM Plan has been completed and submitted to the Program. There was general agreement to strike pursuing a full “Version 2” from this year’s budget. The Program does need help in developing the process (more technical sessions, trainings, etc.) and to make sure everyone is “on the same page” about how AM could work for this basin.
  - There was general agreement to change the name of this project to “Development of AM Process.” Tasks under this activity could include training, facilitated meetings, etc.
    - The facilitation could be used for meetings focused on writing a 5-year RIP action plan, integrating the water management agreements, determining how to set up different scenarios to test, determining baseline(s), determining the “questions” to answer, etc.
    - Since there is no official Adaptive Management committee, it was suggested that the Program Manager invite volunteers from the previous AM process attendees, work group co-chairs, and any signatory who does not have work group representation to participate in the scope development.
- *Annual Report:* Some members had suggested that the Annual Report could be “skipped” for a year, but others advocated that since the report already spans a 2-year timeframe (funds won’t be requested again until FY14) and it is the only link to the congressional funding, the report should continue as scheduled. There was general CC agreement that the annual report is too important to skip.
- *Discussion on the Activities Below the Line:*
  - The CC spent the remainder of the meeting discussing the activities on the bottom of page 2.
    - *RGSM Life History:* Concern was expressed that the CC already approved this project for funding on 10/26/11 but it now appears that it won’t be funded at all.

It was clarified that this is a big study that could be broken down into smaller studies. The approved funding was only for the first 3 objectives.

- Concerns were expressed on the potential conflict of interest that could ensue with PVA involvement in the scope development. However, there should be PVA input in order to make sure the project meets their needs.
  - It is recommended that ScW, as the lead work group, draft the scope on the RGSM Life History project, but as a courtesy the PVA will be asked for specific data that they need. The ScW will consider the PVA data needs in developing the project designs and descriptions.
- *RGSM Fish Community Sampling Methodology:* The 2 years of the Fish Community Sampling Methodology study have been completed. At this time, there are no recommendations for additional work. If an additional study is identified, it would have to go out for RFP next year; but this allows sufficient time to review the report from the Sampling Methodology study, evaluate the results, and make a determination for any future work next year. There was general agreement to strike the Fish Community project since it is completed.
  - *RGSM Fecundity Study:* Concern was expressed that projects to support ongoing PVA work are not getting addressed.
    - The Fecundity Study is a PVA Priority 1 activity. The PVA workgroup needs this data to populate the models and make them as robust as possible.
    - Concern was expressed that moving the Fecundity Study up would mess up the ScW prioritization. However, it was explained that this is actually the original prioritization that came out of the work group.
  - *Riparian Model:* This activity was to fund utilization of the Rio Grande riparian groundwater model to evaluate HR projects.
  - *Floodplain Land Use:* This is the SAR work group's only project. The purpose was to complete the project work that the Corps funded by conducting the economics piece. Considering that this is SAR's only project (Priority 1), there was general CC agreement that with the limited funding it was not feasible to put forward at this time.
    - Due to the costing estimates, the Floodplain Land Use project was "flipped" with the Program-wide System Monitoring project – in case additional money becomes available (i.e., it is a smaller amount to fund the Floodplain Land Use project).
    - It was recommended that the SAR work group put together a scope for the Floodplain Land Use project in case the \$50,000 becomes available.
    - (*Update: this cost estimate has been reduced to \$30,000.*)
  - *System-Wide Monitoring:* The Corps is funding a pilot study that could be used to help determine the need and structure for system-wide monitoring. The activity sheet description ties the project to adaptive management and the Database Management System (DBMS). Since the project is closely linked to the DBMS database and adaptive management, it was recommended that the estimated cost be reduced since it is unlikely the project could be initiated until after June 2012.

- *Mesohabitat study*: This ongoing project is not currently reflected in the Corps project list on the spreadsheet.
- Additional changes included:
  - It was suggested the Design and Environmental Compliance project be lowered on the list since it is tied to the HR projects and there won't be any new projects at this time.
  - For the projects that had an original CC approval date of 10/26/11, a comment explanation was added - "approved contingent upon availability of year-end-funding."
  - The original estimates of \$500,000 and \$250,000 for the HR Implementation and Design and Compliance projects were reinstated, with both of these items moved to below the \$3.6M cut off line.

**Decision – Approve proposed Program activities within last year's approved funding (\$3.6M):** After today's discussion and changes made to the FY12 funding spreadsheet and with the caveat that the 10(j) position funding was elevated to the EC, the CC approved the FY12 Funding Spreadsheet for \$3.65 million.

- CC members acknowledged that once the real budget is known, the FY12 spreadsheet might have to be revisited and the priorities reconsidered with the actual funds. If the actual funding is less than \$3.6 million, then CC would have to reduce accordingly; however, if the actual funds are greater than \$3.6 million, other projects could be considered.
- Attendees then discussed how to present the FY12 funding spreadsheet to the EC.
  - It was suggested that any "zeroed" projects (ex. RGSM genetics, Program Technical Admin Support, etc.) be hidden to avoid any possible confusion.
  - There was general agreement that the EC version will contain: (1) the project title; (2) lead agency/workgroup; (3) FY12 estimated cost; (4) BO element (combined BO requirements and BO support); and (5) cumulative amount.
  - The Corps projects will be included on the bottom of the list for information purposes. The Corps funding estimates will be included in order to show the amount of contributions but there will be a footnote explaining that the Corps' funds are fully federally funded (not cost-shared).
  - The comments column and unfunded projects will also be hidden.

#### **PMT Updates**

- Michelle Mann will be the full-time Corps PMT liaison starting in January 2012.
- Terina Perez took a new position (promotion) within Reclamation; it is assumed that Reclamation will explore filling that position.

**Strengths-Based Leadership Training:** CC members agreed to meet on December 9<sup>th</sup> from 8:30am to 1:30pm. This allows for coffee in the morning and a ½ hour lunch break. Those attending were asked to please bring a lunch with them. Participants need to take the test (same test as before) and submit the results by COB on Monday, November 28<sup>th</sup>. Even if not attending the training, CC members were asked to take and submit their test anyway.

**Next Meeting:** TBD on December 9<sup>th</sup> based on the EC meeting and Strength Finder Workshop

**Coordination Committee Meeting  
17 November 2011 Meeting Attendees**

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