

**Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program
Habitat Restoration Workgroup (HRW) Meeting
17 January 2012, Tuesday
12:30-3:30 pm at Reclamation**

Actions

- As follow up to the action item “Grace Haggerty will check with Chris S. to determine options to decrease the predicted spread of depletions between OSE & ET toolbox” Gina Dello Russo will ask Grace for the equation that is used to calculate new net depletions.
- Michelle Mann will work with the Science Workgroup and Monitoring Plan Team Program Management Team (PMT) Liaison to find a location for the HRW meetings as all three of the those workgroups meet on the same day and there are several people who attend all of the meetings.
- Robert Padilla will find out if the shapefiles from Reclamation’s suitability monitoring can be provided to the HRW (*Ongoing 12/13/11*).

Decision

- The December 13th, 2011 HRW meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

Meeting Summary

- Rick Billings brought the meeting to order and introductions were made.
- The December 13th, 2011 HRW meeting minutes were approved with no changes.
- All action items were completed with the exception of 1 ongoing action: Robert Padilla will find out if the shapefiles from Bureau of Reclamation’s (BOR) suitability monitoring can be provided to the HRW. As follow up to the action item “Grace Haggerty will check with Chris S. to determine options to decrease the predicted spread of depletions between OSE & ET toolbox” Gina Dello Russo will ask Grace for the equation that is used to calculate new net depletions.
- Nathan Schroeder gave an update on the Santa Ana Restoration Project – Bar 3. In a brief history of the project attendees were reminded that in 2009 the bar was lowered to an inundation level of 5,000 cfs as a part of a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) project. Because there are areas of the bar that do not inundate the proposed plan is to create ephemeral channels and revegetate the bar to create Rio Grande Silvery Minnow and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher habitat. It’s planned for the bar to have an inundation level of 2,000 cfs after the channels have been cut. There were no objections from the HRW for the proposed work. Attendees were updated that the Santa Ana Restoration Project is on schedule.
- Tetra Tech presented the draft mapping files for the San Acacia Reach (SAR). The maps currently include completed projects, inundation depths, vegetation reports, and channel width.
 - The completed projects that are currently included in the maps are Socorro SWCD, herbicide treatment, exotic vegetation 2003 – 2006, and the BOR levee set back projects. Tetra Tech is working with USACE and Gina Dello Russo to

get more information on completed projects in Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge and other areas of the SAR. It was suggested that the State Forestry projects completed on the west side of the Rio Grande River be included if the information is available.

- Meeting attendees discussed different options for displaying inundation depth information on the print maps; this is one area of difficulty as there is already a lot of information included on the print maps and the print maps are meant to be a quick view of what the reach is like. Inundation depth is currently displayed in two categories: (1) 0.1 ft – 1.0 ft; and (2) 1.1 ft – 10ft. Attendees agreed that Tetra Tech should explore different category options for displaying inundation depth on the printed versions of the maps.
- The geomorphology components of the maps are still in progress; when the maps are completed they will include information on channel width, channel profile, cross section plots, sinuosity, channel perching, and bed material gradations.
- Tetra Tech will be revising the maps and will be available to present more complete versions of the maps at the next HRW meeting.
- Meeting attendees discussed the updated draft SOWs for the System Wide Analysis, Habitat Restoration (HR) Implementation, Design and Environmental Compliance Support for HR Projects, and Effectiveness Monitoring projects. Attendees were updated that the Design and Environmental Compliance Support for HR Projects and Effectiveness Monitoring can be included as a part of an IDIQ that BOR will be soliciting in 2012. There was some confusion as to whether the System Wide Analysis SOW for FY12 will be to continue mapping the reaches or for an evaluation of the system. The workgroup will need to follow up with Ondrea Hummel to find out how much of the mapping the Corps will be funding and whether the current System Wide Analysis SOW is meant to be an evaluation of the system or for more mapping; the HRW will need to make this clarification before they discuss the CC request: “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 given the timing of the DBMS, adaptive management, and RIP development”.
- It was shared that the SAR workgroup will be meeting on January 26th, 2012. The SAR workgroup will discuss disbanding and how to bring the projects they are working on to a close.

Next Meeting: February 21st, 2012 from 12:30 PM to 3:30 PM location TBD

- Michelle Mann will work with the Science Workgroup and Monitoring Plan Team Program Management Team (PMT) Liaison to find a location for the HRW meetings as all three of the those workgroups meet on the same day and there are several people who attend all of the meetings.
- Tentative agenda items: (1) Presentation on the ET Tower Project (Gina); (2) draft San Acacia Reach maps (Tetra Tech)

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17 January 2012, Tuesday
12:30-3:30 pm at Reclamation**

Meeting Notes

Introductions/Agenda Approval

- Rick Billings brought the meeting to order and introductions were made.

Announcements

- There were no announcements

Approve December 13th, 2011 HR meeting notes

Decision: The December 13th, 2011 meeting notes were approved with no changes

December Action Item Review

- ✓ **Tetra Tech will email the updated versions of the 2011 Accomplishments and the 2012 Work Plan to Monika Sanchez and Michelle Mann.**
 - Complete.
- **Ondrea Hummel will find out if inundation at different depths will be provided in the Tetra Tech maps.**
 - Complete. Inundation at different depths will be provided as part of the San Acacia Reach (SAR) maps.
- **Robert Padilla will find out if the shapefiles from Reclamation's suitability monitoring can be provided to the HRW.**
 - Ongoing. Ondrea has been working with Robert to get the shapefiles made by Darryl and Deb Callihan for the flycatcher territories.
- ✓ **Ondrea will email the pdfs of the Tetra Tech maps to the work group for comments.**
 - Complete.
- **Ondrea and Robert Padilla will ask Jericho if he still needs the System Wide Analysis project and the Design and Environmental Compliance SOWs**
 - Complete. The workgroup will be updated during the SOW discussion.
- **Ondrea Hummel will update the Design and Environmental Compliance Support for HR Projects and Habitat Restoration Implementation SOWs for CC review (Ongoing from 11/15)**
 - Complete. The workgroup will be updated during the SOW discussion.
- **Grace Haggerty will check with Chris S. to determine options to decrease the predicted spread of depletions between OSE & ET toolbox (Ongoing from 10/18).**
 - Complete. Though Grace provided the updated depletions policy for the State Engineer, the workgroup needs the equation that is used to calculate new net depletions. Gina Dello Russo will follow up with Grace to get the equation.

Action: As follow up to the action item “Grace Haggerty will check with Chris S. to determine options to decrease the predicted spread of depletions between OSE & ET toolbox” Gina Dello Russo will ask Grace for the equation that is used to calculate new net depletions.

Update on Santa Ana Restoration Project – Bar 3

- Nathan Schroeder gave the HRW an update on the Santa Ana Restoration Project – Bar 3. The workgroup was reminded that presenting updates and soliciting comments from the HRW is a part of the project proposal.
 - In a brief history of the project, attendees were reminded that in 2009 Bar 3 was lowered to an inundation level of 5,000 cfs and vegetated as part of a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) project. In the years since the project, the bar has had intermittent inundation and there are still areas of the bar that do not inundate. Because the bar is sandy it does not hold moisture and seedlings die within a short period of time. The proposed plan for Bar 3 is to cut ephemeral channels and revegetate the bar in the 16 acres of the project area. Santa Ana Pueblo will attempt to have the project coincide with a Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) river maintenance project just south of the bar so that soil from the project can be used for the river maintenance project. If the projects do not coincide then the soil will be moved to a spot near the dam until it is needed for the river maintenance project.
 - It was explained that the ephemeral channels are planned to be around 2-4 ft deep and will be cut around the major clumps of vegetation on the bar. The consultant will be using a model to determine the best order to cut the channels. Though ephemeral channels can silt back in, it’s believed that the channels will still be helpful.
 - In regards to replanting vegetation the project will model the findings of an analysis by Kathy Nashita that looked at the compositional structure of vegetation in terms of strata and competition in areas with high numbers of flycatchers. The goal of revegetation is to create habitat for Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (flycatcher). The vegetation will also, more immediately, create shelter and low velocity areas for Rio Grande Silvery Minnow. In regard to maintenance, it was explained that poles can be planted 8 – 10 ft below the surface to hit water and rooted vegetation may need to be watered but there are not plans for a lot of maintenance after planting.
 - The Biological Assessment has been submitted to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (U.S. FWS) and the Environmental Assessment is in progress. 404 and 401 permits will be needed for the project.
 - There were no objections from the HRW on the proposed work and the project will move forward.

Tetra Tech presentation of the .mxd reach mapping files

- Mark Horner, Walt Kuhn, and Mike Marcus from Tetra Tech presented the draft reach maps for the SAR.
 - One of the tasks of the project is to map the completed projects in the SAR. The completed projects that are currently included in the maps are Socorro Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), herbicide treatment, exotic vegetation 2003

- 2006, and the BOR levee set back projects. Tetra Tech is working with USACE and Gina Dello Russo to get more information on completed projects in Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge and other areas of the SAR.
- The first page of the print copy of the maps includes a map of the entire reach that flags project areas. Three smaller maps are also included that provide a close up view of the areas where the projects are concentrated.
 - The information on completed projects comes from data supplied for the SAR A & R.
 - It was commented that the foot mark of the herbicide treatment has a similar foot mark to the San Marcial fire.
 - It was suggested that the State Forestry fuel reduction work on the west side of the Rio Grande River be included on the maps if digital copies of the project areas are available. It was believed that the Socorro SWCD may have information on the fuel reduction work. The fuel reduction work was scattered around the area of river mile 94 to river mile 86 and was mostly completed on Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) lands. MRGCD does not have digitized copies of the footprints of the fuel reduction work.
 - The workgroup was advised that as more information is provided the layout of the maps may change.
 - It was explained that the vegetation report mapping has been condensed from the Hink and Omar codes into larger categories on the print maps so that it will be easier to see what type and structure of land cover is being inundated.
 - FLO-2D output for inundation for different flows has been included in the reach maps. Full FLO-2D output will be provided electronically as a GIS layer; however, on the print maps, inundation information is currently displayed in two depth categories that are representative for the entire SAR: (1) 0.1 ft – 1 ft and, (2) 1.1 ft – 10ft. It was explained that inundation depth was separated into two categories so that the user could easily see the underlying vegetation categories.
 - Feedback from meeting attendees was that the second category (1.1 ft -10 ft) may be too broad; including more detailed information for lower inundation depths might be more useful for quickly finding areas of opportunity. Meeting attendees discussed different options for displaying inundation depth information on the print maps; this is one area of difficulty as there is already a lot of information included on the print maps and the print maps are meant to be a quick view of what the reach is like.
 - One suggestion is to add a depth category from 1 ft – 3 ft. Though this option would add detail it would also add more symbols to the print maps.
 - Another option is to split the FLO-2D output for each 5-mile stretch into two categories instead of applying two general categories across the entire reach. This would provide a finer level of detail and the categories would be specific to each 5-mile stretch.

- Attendees agreed that Tetra Tech should explore different category options for displaying inundation depth on the printed versions of the maps.
 - It was also suggested that the vegetation categories be further condensed on the print maps.
- The geomorphology components of the maps are still in progress. So far, only channel widths have been included but Tetra Tech also plans to include channel profile, cross section plots, sinuosity, channel perching, and bed material gradations.
 - Attendees were asked if they like the way that geomorphology has been grouped with each 5-mile stretch or if they would prefer for geomorphology components to be a separate collection of maps. Meeting attendees expressed preference for having the components grouped by 5-mile stretch and not by topic.
 - Channel profile will need to be included on separate subreach maps from the other geomorphology components as it cannot be layered on top of the rest. Channel profile should help to show how the headcut has moved to get an idea of the speed and the areas affected.
 - It was discussed that one way to save space in regard to presenting geomorphology is to cut some the years that are included for geomorphology. One opinion was that it was helpful for SAR to have so many intervals but that if any of the intervals were to be lost it should be 1972 and possibly 1917/1918.
 - The cross section plots on the print maps will show aggradation and degradation at 10 cross sections throughout the reach.
 - The workgroup also requested that a set of historical cross sections within the reach be available electronically to visualize trend.
 - Meeting attendees requested that areas where a lot of research or monitoring has been done be flagged and that a reference that could direct the user to additional information be included. It was also suggested that river maintenance areas of concern also be flagged.
 - Meeting attendees discussed whether it would be possible to include the change in bar morphology over time.
 - It was shared that in 2006 Mike Harvey did a study that looked at bar morphology with the goal of determining the best types of restoration methods for different reaches using bars as an index for what is going on in the river. However, since there is not a lot of information available on bar morphology Tetra Tech would only be able to provide bar morphology on a cursory level.
 - Attendees agreed that bar morphology might be something to look at in future.
 - It was asked if there is aerial photography available for the SAR area from 1949 and forward.
 - USACE has aerial photography for the SAR area but it is a large amount of data and could not be stored in the .mxd. The aerial photography can be accessed from USACE when needed.

- Next steps:
 - Tetra Tech will utilize HRW feed back to revise the maps and continue to work on the geomorphology. More complete versions of the maps will be presented at the February 21st, 2012 HRW meeting.

Update on FY12 SOWs

- FY 12 SOWs include Habitat Restoration (HR) Implementation, Design and Environmental Compliance for HR Projects, Effectiveness Monitoring, and System Wide Analysis. Meeting attendees were updated that Ondrea Hummel has updated the draft SOWs for HR Implementation and Design and Environmental Compliance for HR Projects. It was shared that Jericho Lewis (BOR Contracting Officer) and Ondrea Hummel have been discussing including the Design and Compliance and Effectiveness Monitoring projects as a part of an IDIQ that BOR will be soliciting in 2012. This will enable the HRW to utilize contractors from the IDIQ to assist with design and compliance for habitat restoration projects.
- Meeting attendees discussed the System Wide Analysis SOW.
 - Attendees discussed that the reach mapping that is currently being completed for SAR is an initial step towards a system wide analysis and that maps for each reach will be completed. The SAR mapping has been funded by USACE but it's not known if USACE will be funding the remaining reach maps or if the workgroup will request Program funding to complete the maps.
 - There was some confusion as to whether the System Wide Monitoring SOW for FY12 will be to continue mapping the reaches or for an evaluation of the system. Some attendees were under the impression that the SOW would be for additional mapping, however it was noted that the current SOW seems like it would be for an evaluation of the reach.
 - If the SOW is for an evaluation of the reach it was suggested that the two year effectiveness monitoring that has been completed by the Monitoring Plan Team (MPT) be factored into the SOW and that references for documents that will be used be added to the SOW. It was also suggested that there be preference for a contractor who is familiar with the Rio Grande ecosystem.
 - The workgroup will need to follow up with Ondrea Hummel to find out how much of the mapping the USACE will be funding and whether the current System Wide Monitoring SOW is meant to be an evaluation of the system or to complete more mapping.

CC Request: “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 given the timing of the DBMS, adaptive management, and RIP development”

- Meeting attendees determined that they will need to clarify whether the current System Wide Monitoring SOW is meant to be an evaluation of the system or to complete more reach maps before they can discuss the CC request: “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 given the timing of the DBMS, adaptive management, and RIP development”.

- Attendees briefly discussed the Program's possible transition to a Recovery Implementation Program (RIP).
 - It was asked if the U.S. FWS is driving the Program's movement towards becoming a RIP.
 - It was recollected that in 2009 Program signatories agreed to move forward with developing Program Documents and an Action Plan to see if becoming a RIP would work for all the signatories.
 - Attendees were updated that a focus group made up of Executive Committee (EC) representatives was formed to look at different ways the Program could be managed as a RIP - being managed by the U.S. FWS is one of the ways that the focus group is considering.
 - It was asked whether adaptive management will be a part of the Program if it becomes a RIP.
 - It was believed that adaptive management will be included if the Program becomes a RIP but it was not known how it would be implemented and if there would be an adaptive management workgroup. The adaptive management plan is still a framework and the Program has not decided to adopt the plan.
- It was shared that BOR will be announcing their funding forecast at the EC meeting on January 19th and it's anticipated that Program funding will be around \$2.6 million.
 - It was one opinion that based on the future of the Program and future funding that it may be best to place the System Wide Monitoring project on hold. It may also be helpful to find out how much it cost for the SAR to be mapped and then adjust the estimated funding for the project based on that.
- Attendees briefly discussed Department of the Interior Secretary Salazar's visit.
 - It was shared that conservation, education, and recreation were some of the issues that were discussed and that a committee was formed to address those issues.
 - One of the points that Secretary Salazar wanted to drive was that he would like management to be driven by the whole river ecosystem and not just endangered species.

Program Update

- The next EC meeting is on Thursday, January 19th. The workgroup 2011 Accomplishments will be presented to the EC; the 2012 work plans will not be presented at this meeting. The EC will also discuss the draft RIP Program Document.
- Release of the draft Long Term Plan (LTP) will be put on hold until the RIP Program Document and RIP Action Plan have been developed as these documents will help to inform the LTP.
- The Population Estimation peer review results will be presented on February 16th, 2012 after the regularly scheduled EC meeting.
- The Database Management System (DBMS) will be tested again in April of 2012 with a deadline for feedback at the end of April. The final DBMS is scheduled to be released in June 2012.
- Robert Padilla (BOR HRW representative) is out on detail and will back in February 2012.

- The SAR workgroup will be meeting on January 26th, 2012 to discuss disbanding and how to finish the Floodplain Encroachment project and quickly outline the workgroups concerns on other issues.

Next Meeting: February 21st, 2012 from 12:30 PM to 3:30 PM Location TBD

Action: Michelle Mann will work with the Science Workgroup and MPT Program Management Team (PMT) Liaison to find a location for the HRW meetings as all three of the those workgroups meet on the same day and there are several people who attend all of the meetings.

- Tentative agenda items: (1) Presentation on the ET Tower Project (Gina); (2) draft San Acacia Reach maps (Tetra Tech);

**Habitat Restoration Work Group Meeting
January 17th, 2012 Meeting Attendees**

NAME	POSITION	AFFILIATION	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	P/A/O
Rick Billings	HR Member Co-Chair	ABCWUA	796-2527	rbillings@abcwua.org	P
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Michael Scialdone	HR Member	Pueblo of Sandia	771-5046	mscialdone@sandiapueblo.nsn.us	P
Jill Wick	HR Member	NMDGF	476-8091	jill.wick@state.nm.us	P
Danielle Galloway	HR Member Co-Chair	COE	342-3661	danielle.a.galloway@usace.army.mil	A
Gina Dello Russo	HR Member Co-Chair	USFWS	575-835-1828	gina_dellorusso@fws.gov	P
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Brooke Wyman	HR Member	MRGCD	247-0234	brooke@mrgcd.us	A
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