

Executive Committee Meeting  
*February 21, 2013*

Meeting Materials:

Meeting Agenda

Meeting Minutes



**Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species  
Collaborative Program  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETING AGENDA  
Thursday, February 21, 2013  
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. ***DECISION* – APPROVAL OF **January 17, 2013** EC MEETING SUMMARY\*** *10 minutes*
3. **FEDERAL AGENCY FISCAL PLANNING UPDATES** *45 minutes*
  - A. US Army Corps of Engineers (*LTC A. Gant*)
  - B. Bureau of Reclamation (*M. Hamman*)
  - C. US Fish and Wildlife Service (*M. Shaughnessy*)
  - D. Collaborative Program Projects (*R. Graham*)
4. **BIOLOGICAL OPINION SCHEDULE CONSULTATION UPDATE** *60 minutes*
  - A. Final Action Agency Biological Assessment submittals (*BOR/USACE/FWS-BdANWR*)
  - B. Reinitiation of Formal Consultation (*USFWS*)
  - C. RGSM Conservation Objective (*USFWS*)
  - D. Consultation Process Next Steps (*USFWS-Group*)
- BREAK** *15 minutes*
5. **RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM DOCUMENTS AND ACTIVITIES** *60 minutes*
  - A. Revised RIP Action Plan Update (*G. Haggerty*)
  - B. Program Document (*D. Freeman*)
  - C. Hydrology Forecast (*BOR*)
  - D. Minnow Action Team (*NMISC/MRGCD*)
  - E. Cochiti Reservoir Spring Deviation Update (*USACE*)
6. **RIP 3rd PARTY MANAGEMENT UPDATE** (*S. Farris/A. Moore/ R. Graham*) *20 minutes*
7. ***DECISION* – APPROVE REVISED FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ENTITY SCOPE OF WORK\***
8. **MEETING SUMMARY**
9. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
10. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
11. ***DECISION* - NEXT SCHEDULED EC MEETING March 28, 2013, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm**

*\*denotes read ahead*

**Members**

ABCWUA  
ISC  
NMDA  
Sandia Pueblo  
UNM

APA  
Isleta Pueblo  
NMGF  
Santa Ana Pueblo  
USACE

CABQ  
NMAGO  
MRGCD  
Santo Domingo Tribe  
USFWS  
Reclamation

**Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program**  
**Executive Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013**  
**9:00 am – 12:15 pm**

**Actions**

- ✓ Rhea Graham (interim Program Manager) will email the request for FY12 cost share reporting (October 1, 2011 through September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012) to EC members. She will include a copy of the most recent cost share report(s)/Program progress as an attachment(s). – *completed 2/22/13*
- A report out on the Coordination Committee's follow up/completion of EC actions will be added as a standing agenda item to be included in the EC meeting summaries.
- ✓ The Minnow Action Team meeting dates and location will be distributed and added to the Program calendars. *completed*
- The Minnow Action Team expects to provide written options in time for the March 28th EC meeting.
- Any suggestions on the necessary attachments or appendices to the RIP Program Document that might be needed near term should be provided to a Program Document Focus Group member as soon as possible.
- The most recent version of the RIP Program Document will be posted online.
- ✓ The Service will provide the Reinitiation of Consultation notification letter (once the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge's Biological Assessment has been submitted/received) for posting (online) to the Collaborative Program's website. – *completed 2/26/13*

**Decisions**

- The January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013 EC meeting summary was approved for finalization with the following changes:
  - The last sentence on page 4, under the *RIP Action Plan Sufficient Progress Metrics* subbullet "*Remember, sufficient progress metrics need to be approved by the Service*" will be omitted as it is addressed more thoroughly earlier in the discussion.
  - On page 3, the last sentence under *Final Action Agency Supplements (USACE)* update "*Both sides appear to be firmly entrenched in their positions*" will be retracted as it is a personal opinion statement.
- With a quorum present and no objections voiced, the EC approved the revised Financial Management Entity (FME) Scope of Work (SOW) to be provided to Reclamation's contracting office in order to move forward in the acquisition process with the understanding that while the EC cannot negotiate the contracting offices' revisions, the EC will be provided a summary of Reclamation's contracting office review before the acquisition is publicly announced.

**Requests/Recommendations**

- The Minnow Action Team has requested note taking support for their meetings since keeping detailed and organized notes would help facilitate the processing of technical discussion and information. However, Federal agencies are operating under Continuing Resolution (CR) at this time and there are still many unknowns regarding budgets.
- In a question regarding the seemingly multiple "standards" that exist (the jeopardy standards, the recovery standards, the "perfect world" standards presented today, sufficient progress metrics, etc.), it was shared that hopefully the RIP Action Plan will have some additional introductory explanation on the how the Conservation Objective "standards" relate to the RIP. The RIP Action Plan team will be requesting direction on how to address this suggestion.

**Next Meeting: March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM at Bureau of Reclamation**

- Tentative agenda items include: (1) Reclamation's Draft Milestone Schedule; (2) Service's Draft Conservation Objective for the Minnow white paper; (3) Minnow Action Team preliminary

recommendation(s); (4) Program execution and quarterly reporting – Rhea Graham; (5) CC report out on completed EC actions – to be a standing agenda item;

- Future Agenda Items: (1) Updated 10(j) population schedule and report out on FWS Regional Office approval to proceed; (2) Updates/continued discussion on the acquisition of past mesohabitat data;
- NOTE: Following the normal scheduling, the March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting would conflict with the Rio Grande Compact Commission meeting that same day. The March EC meeting was scheduled for March 28<sup>th</sup>.

### Upcoming Dates and Deadlines:

- February 22<sup>nd</sup> – expected date of formal consultation reinitiation; subject to change based on the receipt of the BdA NWR BA submittal
- February 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> – Engineer Advisors Meeting
- February 28<sup>th</sup> – 2003 BO coverage extended until new BO issued; based on formal consultation reinitiated on or before February 28<sup>th</sup> of this BO to ensure continued compliance with Sections 7 and 9 of the ESA
- March 13<sup>th</sup> – Minnow Action Team meeting
- March 14<sup>th</sup> – Minnow Action Team “working session”
- March 21<sup>st</sup> – Rio Grande Compact Commission meeting
- March 21<sup>st</sup> – March EC meeting read aheads due (including Reclamation’s Milestones Schedule, Service’s Draft Conservation Objective for the Minnow white paper, Minnow Action Team preliminary recommendation(s), Program quarterly reporting and/or cost share reports
- March 28<sup>th</sup> – EC meeting (delayed one week due to conflicts with the March 21<sup>st</sup> RGCC meeting)
- June 2013 – CPUE workshop
- July 7<sup>th</sup> – tentative expected date for new Biological Opinion; subject to change based on flexible scheduling to include as much pertinent information into the effects analysis and draft BO as possible

## Meeting Summary

**Introductions and review agenda:** Brent Rhees brought the meeting to order and introductions were made. The agenda was approved with no changes, but with a suggestion to change “deviation” language in Agenda Item 5E *Recovery Implementation Program (RIP) Documents and Activity: Cochiti Reservoir Spring Deviation Update* with “spawning and recruitment flow.”

**Decision – Approval of the January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012 EC meeting summary:** The January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012 Executive Committee (EC) meeting summary was approved for finalization with the following changes:

- The last sentence on page 4, under the *RIP Action Plan Sufficient Progress Metrics* subbullet “Remember, sufficient progress metrics need to be approved by the Service” will be omitted as it is addressed more thoroughly earlier in the discussion.
- On page 3, the last sentence under *Final Action Agency Supplements (USACE)* update “Both sides appear to be firmly entrenched in their positions” will be retracted as it is a personal opinion statement.
- Additionally, a potential “issue” was identified. On page 3, the end of the top paragraph contains discussion about the next steps including finalizing and approving the RIP documents. It was pointed out that the EC may need additional discussion about the nature of the approvals. This concern will be addressed under Agenda Item 4D rather than initiating any change to the previous meeting summary.
- It was clarified that EC meeting actions are reviewed and addressed (when/as appropriate) through the Coordination Committee (CC). However, completion of those actions is not currently captured

in the EC meeting summaries. It was suggested that a standing agenda item be added to the EC meeting summaries to capture action items closed-out at the CC level.

### **Federal Agency Fiscal Planning Updates**

- *US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps):* Federal agencies are operating under Continuing Resolution (CR) at this time and there are still many unknowns regarding budgets. The Corps is focusing on “mission critical” items and moving forward to the extent possible. There are a lot of discussions taking place within the Corps and the Department of Defense (DOD) on how to proceed. Furloughs are not off the table. While the Corps attempts to continue with “business as normal,” it is expected that agencies will have to “do more with less.”
- *Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation):* CR is expiring on March 27<sup>th</sup> but Congress could be dealing with sequestration and CR at the same time. It has been requested that Reclamation look at a 6% reduction throughout the agency. Reclamation is in process of prioritizing all contracts so that if/when cuts are required, the prioritizations have already been identified and provided.
- *US Fish and Wildlife Service (Service):* The Service has also been asked to look at various spending/budget scenarios and anticipate spending cuts and restrictions (travel, hiring, etc.) There is no clear direction at this time.
- *Program Cost Share:* The CC has discussed the priority of the FY13 contracts and grants that were approved by the EC in November. The internal issues have been addressed and the scheduling has been worked out. It was noted that there is not an “automatic” return of deobligated funds to the Program or even to the agency. It is requested that FY12 cost share reports (October 1, 2011 through September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012) be submitted. By allocating cost share programmatically, the cost share requirement is being met; however, it helps show the strength of the Program by keeping annual reporting current.

### **Biological Opinion Schedule/Consultation Update**

- Since the January meeting, the Corps and the Service were able to reach resolution and direction on the Biological Assessment (BA) submittal. The Service will be issuing multiple BOs – individual BOs issues to each of the action agencies. The EC expressed thanks and gratitude to both agencies for their efforts.
- *Final Action Agency Biological Assessment Submittals (BOR/USACE/FWS-BdANWR):*
  - *Reclamation:* Reclamation finalized and submitted their BA with supplements to the Service. Please note that the State, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD), and Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (ABCWUA) actions are described in Reclamation’s BA. As stated in January, the BA was submitted without the RIP documents as the documents have not been finalized and approved by the EC. This means that the RIP is not included as a conservation measure in the BA at this time. The goal is to achieve the finalization and approval of the RIP documents so that they can be provided to the Service in support of the RIP becoming a main conservation measure.
  - *Corps:* The Corps’ Final BA was submitted to the Service on February 15<sup>th</sup>. The Corps is looking forward to receiving the Service’s response and indication of initiation of formal consultation.
  - *Service:* The Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) has a new manager. The Refuge plans on submitting their revised BA tomorrow (February 22<sup>nd</sup>). At that point, the Service will have all the revised BAs and will be able to initiate formal consultation.
- *Reinitiation of Formal Consultation:* The expectation is that formal consultation will be initiated tomorrow (upon receipt of the Refuge’s revised BA) and the notification letter stating so will be issued to the Action Agencies next week.

- Based on the Solicitor’s interpretation of the 2003 Biological Opinion (BO) there should be “stop gap” coverage since the formal consultation will be initiated prior to the expiration of the 2003 BO. At this time, it appears that “all is well” in terms of coverage until the new BO is issued.
- *RGSM Conservation Objective:* The Service asked to describe/detail their perspective on the “needs” of the Rio Grande Silvery Minnow (minnow) in the Middle Rio Grande, and has discussed their perspective informally with some members of the Program. Since the Collaborative Program is transitioning to a RIP, the Service has begun to develop a Conservation Objective. The purpose of the Preliminary Conservation Objective is to provide an indication of minnow needs in “optimal conditions.” This is a short summary and the Service will be in a position to share a detailed description of its Conservation Objectives at a future meeting.
  - The Service is proposing the conservation objective to be accomplished and adjusted through the strategic application of Adaptive Management. This is based on the analysis of best available science and data of what the minnow would need in “optimal conditions” in the absence of conflicting water demands, drought, etc.
    - As such, this is not an edict but a long-term goal.
    - The Service realizes that in any given year, it may be that only some of the objectives will be possible due to varying weather, available storage, previous year’s water uses, current year’s hydrology forecast, etc.
    - The Service endorses the Collaborative Program’s effort to set up a RIP process/procedure to develop an annual water operations/management plan.
    - The Service recognizes that as the Collaborative Program implements the RIP Action Plan, Long-term Plan, and Adaptive Management that we may find that less water is needed to accomplish our minnow recovery objective(s).
    - In developing this Conservation Objective, the Service looked at alternative correlations [to the minnow population] other than water but found the state of scientific knowledge lacking in this area.
  - Scientific Foundation behind the Service’s Minnow Conservation Objective:
    1. The Service reviewed the life history and habitat requirements of the minnow.
    2. The Service reviewed the recovery plan objectives and threats that led to the listing of the species.
    3. The Service reviewed the available literature with an emphasis on the ASIR monitoring reports and the Service’s own salvage reports.
    4. The Service used information collected and analyzed through the Population Viability Analysis (PVA) process.
  - Goal:
    - To provide for recruitment, growth, and survival of the minnow to achieve survival and recovery.
  - The Service is seeking feedback on the proposed Conservation Objective but it is still in the refining process. Any questions or comments generated from this presentation are welcomed and everyone is encouraged to provide feedback once a draft document is made available (potentially before the March 28<sup>th</sup> EC meeting).
  - Some discussion occurred after the presentation; however, the Service was not yet in a position to make available its presentation, or to commit to future directions in question and answer discussion until a draft document is made available.
- *Consultation Process Next Steps:* As previously mentioned the Service should have all revised BAs by tomorrow. However, there are some elements – mainly the RIP - that are not yet included. The Service would like to analyze the full “expected” package instead of just pieces. The Service will be

completing an “effects analysis” of proposed actions and how those might impact the species. The results of the effects analysis would come out differently if the RIP was not available/included for review; the Service would be forced to move forward without analyzing the full benefit of the RIP.

- Based on conventional Section 7 timelines, if formal consultation is initiated tomorrow (02/22) then the Service has to issue the new BO by July 7<sup>th</sup>. However, this is not a “conventional process” because the proposed action doesn’t yet include the intended RIP. The Service will try to remain as flexible as possible in order to allow for the inclusion of the RIP. That may include delays and extensions beyond the July 7<sup>th</sup> date. Hopefully during the process the RIP documents will be shared as soon as they become available.
- Reclamation has begun developing a schedule of all the components, major milestones, and tasks that need to be achieved in the near future to arrive at the July target of a draft BO. Areas of emphasis include: finalizing the RIP documents – which is partially dependent on the Water Management Plan and identifying the final efforts/contributions to include in the RIP Action Plan; negotiations with the BA parties and the Service; continue focus on milestones and critical path items to get the RIP fully implemented; etc.
  - The intent is to have a consolidated package for Service’s analyses so that the draft BO holds no surprises.
  - Reclamation will continue to develop and refine the schedule and will strive to share the schedule with the EC by next month.
    - In terms of approving the RIP documents, it would be a lofty goal to have the Final Draft RIP documents available by May and still provide enough time for review and analysis.
    - It was clarified that “approving the RIP documents” this refers specifically to the EC endorsing those as the proposal to advance as part of the consultation; but the actual execution of the Cooperative Agreement which would establish the RIP would come later.
    - In response to a question regarding the multiple BOs in the basin and the “tie in” of those into the Program, it was shared that the Corps, Reclamation, and all the agencies included in Reclamation’s BA are already participating in the Program. It is assumed that the Refuge intends to participate in the RIP and include their actions in the RIP Action Plan. There are internal differences in how agencies might choose to represent their participation in this process, but the expectation is that agencies are willing to participate as long as the RIP is framed in such a way that they are able to.

**RIP 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Management Update:** The Program Management Subcommittee has continued meeting and developing the Statement of Work (SOW) for the Financial Management Entity (FME). The concerns regarding the detail, description, and Reclamation procurement-type details have been addressed in this most current version.

- The Background Section contains a description of the Program as it currently exists (Program activities, members, etc.) in order to provide information to potential bidders enough information on the Program and the decision to become a RIP. It includes and preserves the goals of the Program.
- The period of performance is described as 1 year from the date of the award with one potential option year.
- The SOW also contains description of the FME’s duties, roles, and responsibilities. Details on the various FME tasks have been added. It is not an exhaustive list but comprehensive enough to allow potential bidders to understand the expected FME roles.
- The last part includes a description of the work to be performed by Reclamation and the tentative scheduling.
  - The schedule is divided into each year based on the options.

- One of the main tasks of the FME is to hire the Executive Director; however, based on the scope of the funding and mechanics of the transition, the FME will probably end up hiring someone before Reclamation and other entities have developed the collective “pot of money” that the RIP will be implemented with. There was concern that the Executive Director would be hired at a professional salary only to “sit around twiddling their thumbs.” The suggested solution was to use this first year of employment as the “training period” to “get the Executive Director up to speed” as quickly as possible. This would be accomplished by working closely with the Interim Program Manager, Reclamation, Program working group/committees, and others to learn the Program, expectations, recruit the Science Coordinator and supporting administrative staff, and become experienced with the background contract work, scopes, advise Reclamation when projects/contracts are ready to proceed, etc. It was envisioned that the Executive Director would initially “phase in” with this work until the authority issues are sorted out on how funds will be pooled for use.
- **Questions:**
  - **Question:** We occasionally hear the reference to the establishment of a permanent funding source. Are we passing “the hat” to all signatories to see who is contributing how much in order to have a picture of what the expected funding is? Or will it be a federally funded pass-through?
    - **Response:** Because of existing legislation, there has to be a non-federal cost share at a minimum. Traditionally, non-federal partners have contributed more than what is required. The intent is to have both federal and non-federal contributions.
    - It was cautioned that every agency is struggling with budgetary issues and it is going to be challenging for the non-federals to fund a contract with cash. In the past, the cost share has been accomplished through in-kind services and non-cash contributions.
  - **Question:** It was mentioned that the year-to-year funding of the FME SOW might provide opportunity to replace entity if/as needed, but doesn’t that mean the Executive Director (hired through that FME) would be “lost” by extension? What would happen in the interim before finding replacements?
    - **Response:** There will need to be a transition plan in place that outlines how a replacement of one or the other would occur. The assumption is that the Executive Director would not necessary lose their position if the FME needed to be replaced.
    - The FME SOW will be reviewed by Reclamation’s contracting office. The EC will be provided with the opportunity to review any changes that the contracting office made. However, it would be a “go/no go” situation at that point should the EC have concerns with any contracting edits.

#### **Approve Revised Financial Management Entity Scope of Work (Decision):**

**Decisions:** With a quorum present and no objections voiced, the EC approved the revised Financial Management Entity (FME) Scope of Work (SOW) to be provided to Reclamation’s contracting office in order to move forward in the allocation process with the understanding that the EC will be given a chance to review any changes resulting from Reclamation’s contracting office review.

#### **Recovery Implementation Program Documents and Activities**

- **Revised RIP Action Plan Update:** The RIP Action Plan focus group continues to meet regularly. They are currently working on cost and scheduling and have had discussions on the sufficient progress metrics. The comments from the Service and the Corps have been addressed and incorporated into the RIP Action Plan. Now that the BAs have been submitted and the formal consultation can be initiated, the RIP Action Plan focus team can begin discussing the commitments and include details on those in the plan. It is unknown when a revised draft of the Action Plan will be available, but the team is aware of the timeframes and deadlines. The group will work toward having a revised draft available by late



March or early April in order to get feedback before it is submitted as an EC read ahead for endorsement. However, the Water Management Plan (WMP) is a companion process that will impact when the Draft Action Plan will be available.

- The group has been discussing how Adaptive Management will be discussed in the plan. Really, it is integrated throughout but the team is discussing “beefing it up” in the Action Plan.
  - There are some “initial” sufficient progress metric measures (for the interim) included in the Action Plan. The draft proposed sufficient metrics have been sent to the Service and the team is looking forward to their feedback.
- *RIP Program Document:* The RIP Program Document focus group has finished incorporating feedback from all the comments received thus far, including those from the Service and the Corps. The feedback from the January EC on the sequencing of RIP products that are updated annually was also incorporated. The group went through the lengthy list of appendices and prioritized which documents could be part of the RIP Program Document submitted to the EC for endorsement purposes versus those appendices that could be developed once the RIP is established.
  - The group agreed that the “package” for the EC endorsement should include: (1) the RIP Program Document itself; (2) the Cooperative Agreement; (3) the Section 7 Guidelines for Consultation; and (4) the proposed updates to the Program by-laws. Time permitting, the Long-term Plan (LTP) narrative and introductory materials could be “cleaned up.”
  - Other documents that the group thought could probably wait given the press of the timelines included: (1) committee and work group charters - which would be better informed once the RIP progresses; (2) the external peer review guidelines - since the EC approved interim guidelines, these could wait till after the RIP is established; (3) etc.
  - These will inform the next tasks for the Program Document group, if ok’d by the EC. The Draft Program Document itself is ready for EC review. The group will be working with the Service on the Cooperative Agreement and reviewing the draft Section 7 Guidelines and looking at the by-laws to see if they need adjusting.
- *Hydrology Forecast:* Based on the forecasts, the probabilities of the Southwest being warmer than normal are fairly high, particularly in Texas. There is also a high propensity for dryness. The recent storm events (February moisture) have kept the area “even” relative to the forecast. This means that the northwestern portion of the state is doing ok. Reclamation is preparing the reservoirs for diversions on the San Juan projects as soon as they are filled and the ice is away from the intake structures; this could occur as early as next week. Storage was started but the accounts might shift back to more equal rations between P&P (Prior and Paramount) and storage under the relinquished credit. Under Article 7, the assumed maximum storage will be about 80,000 ac-ft. The March forecast is assumed to be similar (about the same) as February. Everyone is trying to “plan for the worst and hope for the best.”
- *Minnow Action Team:* The Minnow Action Team is working on alternative recommendations to be as efficient with the runoff as possible and generate a spring peak. The team is looking at the forecasts and running URGWOM (Upper Rio Grande Water Operations Model) to see what the possibilities are and what the runoff might be. The group is discussing both hydrology options and the biology components (monitoring, etc.) More will be known in March and April. The Minnow Action Team would like to have a note taker attend their meetings as there is a lot of technical discussion and information. Keeping detailed and organized notes would help facilitate the processing stages.
  - The Minnow Action Team will be meeting next on March 13<sup>th</sup> for a regular meeting. A “working session” has been scheduled the following day on March 14<sup>th</sup>.
- *Cochiti Reservoir Spring Deviation Update:* The forecast is looking “dicey” to actually store enough water and perform/produce a deviation spike. However, in order to be prepared, the Corps is completing all the preparation work for a potential Cochiti Deviation regardless of the forecasts. The Corps will be presenting to the Engineer Advisors meeting and subsequently to the Compact Commissioners for approval. Only time will tell what the outcome will be.

**Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) Metrics and Methodologies Workshop Update:** The current timeframe is to hold the CPUE workshop by the end of June 2013. Rich Valdez wrote an Interpretation of the Minnow Population Estimate White Paper under contract to NMISC. They are seeking a specialized statistical review of this work product before it is released for purposes of the CPUE workshop.. This is not just a “normal” statistical review and there are only a few statisticians within the country who can perform the review.

### Meeting Summary:

- The February EC meeting was convened with a quorum of 9. Review and close-out of previous EC action items was added to the agendas for reporting purposes in the notes.
- The Interim Program Manager will request FY12 cost share and will include a copy of the most recent cost share report(s)/Program progress as an attachment(s).
- The Service will provide the action agencies with Letters of Notification of the initiation of formal consultation. “Stop gap” coverage exists until the new BO is completed.
- The Service committed to have the Minnow Biological Needs White Paper (Conservation Objective; as presented today) available for the March EC meeting.
- The Milestone Schedule will be presented to the EC at the March EC meeting.
- The endorsement of the RIP by the EC crucial for the Service’s effects analysis and a comprehensive BO.
- The EC approved the FME SOW to move ahead in contracting. There was general agreement that the Executive Director would use the first year as a “training period” and manage the statements of work until RIP authorization is received.
- The RIP Action Plan has Adaptive Management integrated throughout and includes some preliminary/proposed sufficient progress metrics; the Action Plan completion is dependent on the WMP.
- The sequencing of the Annual RIP products, reports, and draft updates are part of the RIP Program document; the Program Document will be submitted to the EC for endorsement with appendices on Section 7 Guidelines, Cooperative Agreement, updated by-laws, and if time permits, LTP narrative updates. The January 13<sup>th</sup> Program Document version will be posted for feedback.
- The current hydrology situation and forecasts was shared. We are essentially looking at a target storage of 80,000 ac-ft. under Article 7 conditions.
- The Minnow Action Team is requesting a note taker for meetings. The team expects to provide written options in time for the March 28th EC meeting.
  - The contracted note taking is not enough to cover all Program meetings until a new contract is competed for award. The Program cannot provide any additional contractor note taking at this time. Non-federal partners were asked to consider providing administrative support services during this time, if possible.
- The Corps reported that the forecast is “dicey” to be able to store enough water for a deviation but they are proceeding with preparations just in case.
- Rich Valdez’s white paper on the Minnow Population Estimation is in review stages and the CPUE workshop is tentatively set for June.

### Announcements

- The CC monthly meeting has been moved to the morning of the first Wednesday of the month, to avoid conflicting with recurring internal agency meetings in the afternoon.

### Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

### Next Meeting: **March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM at Bureau of Reclamation**

- Tentative agenda items include: (1) Reclamation’s Draft Milestone Schedule; (2) Service’s Draft Conservation Objective for the Minnow white paper; (3) Minnow Action Team preliminary

recommendation(s); (4) Program execution and quarterly reporting – Rhea Graham; (5) CC report out on completed EC actions – to be a standing agenda item;

- Future Agenda Items: (1) Updated 10(j) population schedule and report out on FWS Regional Office approval to proceed; (2) Updates/continued discussion on the acquisition of past mesohabitat data;
- NOTE: Following the normal scheduling, the March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting would conflict with the Rio Grande Compact Commission meeting that same day. The March EC meeting was scheduled for March 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Executive Committee Meeting Attendees  
February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013**

Attendees:

*Representative*

<i>Representative</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Seat</i>
Brent Rhees	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation	Federal co-chair
Janet Bair (A)	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Service
Subhas Shah (P)	Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District	MRGCD
Steve Farris (P)	NM Attorney General's Office	NMAGO
Mike Hamman (P)	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation	BOR
Rick Billings (A)	Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority co-chair	ABCWUA/Non-federal
LTC Antoinette Gant (P)	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	USACE
Matthew Wunder (P)	NM Department of Game and Fish	NMDGF
Frank Chaves (P)	Pueblo of Sandia	Sandia
Matt Schmader (P)	City of Albuquerque	COA
Alan Hatch (P)	Pueblo of Santa Ana	Santa Ana
Ryan Ward (P)	NM Department of Agriculture	NMDA

*Others*

Rhea Graham (Interim PM)	Bureau of Reclamation
Yvette McKenna	Bureau of Reclamation
Ali Saenz	Bureau of Reclamation
Jim Wilber	Bureau of Reclamation
Jennifer Falser	Bureau of Reclamation
Josh Mann	Bureau of Reclamation
Ann Demint	Bureau of Reclamation
Grace Haggerty	NM Interstate Stream Commission
Deb Freeman	for NM Interstate Stream Commission
Chris Shaw	NM Interstate Stream Commission
Kris Schafer (A)	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Susan Bittick	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Danielle Galloway	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Michelle Mann	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Mick Porter	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Beth Pitrolo	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Ryan Gronewald	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Bernard Lujan	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Lori Robertson	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Jennifer Bachus	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Janet Bair	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Wally Murphy	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ann Moore	NM Attorney General's Office
Brooke Wyman	MRGCD
David Gensler	MRGCD

Patrick Redmond	for MRGCD
Kyle Harwood	City of Santa Fe/BBD
Rick Carpenter	City of Santa Fe
Herman Quintana	Pueblo San Felipe
Alex Eubanks	Rep. Heinrich's Office
Marta Wood	Tetra Tech (Note Taker)