

Executive Committee Meeting  
*March 27, 2014*

Meeting Materials:

Meeting Agenda

Meeting Minutes

New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission Update



**Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species  
Collaborative Program  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETING AGENDA  
Thursday, March 27, 2014  
9:00am – 12:00pm**

**LOCATION: USACE, 4101 Jefferson Plaza NE, Albuquerque, NM 87103**

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| <b>1. INTRODUCTIONS AND REVIEW OF PROPOSED AGENDA*</b>   | <i>10 minutes</i> |
| <b>2. <i>DECISION</i> – APPROVAL OF <b>November 20, 2013</b> EC MEETING SUMMARY*</b>                                   | <i>5 minutes</i>  |
| <b>3. <i>DECISION</i> – APPROVAL OF <b>February 20, 2014</b> EC MEETING SUMMARY*</b>                                   | <i>5 minutes</i>  |
| <b>4. AGENCY FISCAL AND POLICY PLANNING UPDATES</b>  | <i>40 minutes</i> |
| A. US Army Corps of Engineers ( <i>LTC Gant</i> )  |                   |
| B. Bureau of Reclamation ( <i>M. Hamman</i> )  |                   |
| C. US Fish and Wildlife Service ( <i>M. Shaughnessy</i> )  |                   |
| D. Non-Federal update ( <i>TBD</i> )   |                   |
| E. Collaborative Program Projects ( <i>R. Graham</i> )   |                   |
| i. NMISC Letter to Editor ABQ Journal*   |                   |
| ii. Update: Cost Share was due 03/26/2014  |                   |
| iii. CC co-chair update on Work Group Transition Recommendations   |                   |
| <b>BREAK</b>   | <i>15 minutes</i> |
| <b>5. MAT 2013 Draft Recommendations Report (<i>G. Haggerty</i>)</b>   | <i>15 minutes</i> |
| <b>6. OTHER ACTIVITIES</b>   | <i>30 minutes</i> |
| A. Hydrology Forecast ( <i>M. Hamman/USACE</i> )   |                   |
| B. Species Update ( <i>USFWS</i> )   |                   |
| C. Report/update on Rio Grande Compact Commission Meeting ( <i>TBD</i> )   |                   |
| <b>7. RIP TRANSITION PLANNING</b>  | <i>10 minutes</i> |
| A. Update from Reclamation on the Program and Science Support Services Performance Work Statement ( <i>R. Graham</i> ) |                   |
| <b>8. MEETING SUMMARY</b>  | <i>5 minutes</i>  |
| <b>9. PUBLIC COMMENT</b>   |                   |
| <b>10. ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>   |                   |
| <b>11. <i>DECISION</i> - NEXT SCHEDULED EC MEETING April 17, 2014</b>  |                   |

*\*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  
March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014 – 9:00am to 11:30am**

US Army Corps of Engineers  
Conference Room 119  
4101 Jefferson Plaza NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87103

**Decisions**

- The November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 EC meeting summary was approved for finalization with no changes.
- The February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014 EC meeting summary was approved for finalization with no changes.

**Actions**

- Non-federal partners are asked to submit their 2013 Non-Federal Cost Share to Rhea Graham (and copied to Ali Saenz) as soon as possible. Please use the Cost Share Reporting Template (Document ID 4187) on the database.

**Requests/Recommendations**

- The Pueblo of Sandia requested follow up response on the Section 1135 (Project Modification for Improvements to the Environment) they submitted to the Corps last year.
- It was requested that the Corps look into changes for the document box (window) that appears on the Database Calendar. At it is now, document box is a fixed size and the read ahead (document files) titles are truncated. The box could be “adjusted” in size to show full titles or allow users to adjust the size.
- It was requested that Sandra Lucero ([sandra.lucero@bia.gov](mailto:sandra.lucero@bia.gov)), Acting Designated Engineer, be included on the Minnow Action Team (MAT) ad hoc group’s communications.
- It was clarified that the report from MAT on 2013 will be titled *2013 MAT Report* (instead of MAT 2013 Recommendations Report).

**Announcements**

- Federal agencies were encouraged to attend the New Mexico First Water Planning Town Hall meeting to be available to answer any potential questions.
- The Annual Operating Plan Meeting for the San Juan/Chama and Rio Grande Projects is scheduled for April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1:00pm at Reclamation.
- On Tuesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, the COA, MRGCD, and UNM are sponsoring a Continuing Education Forum on *Science, Environmental Education, and Climate Change* at the Natural History Museum. The monthly forum series will consist of a short presentation followed by a period of questions and answers.

**Next Meeting: April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from 9:00am to 1:00pm at Location To Be Announced**

- Tentative agenda items include: (1) Decision on MAT 2014 recommendations and options for potential spawn and recruitment flows; (2) Decision on CC report out on work group recommendations during transition;
- Potential Future Agenda Items: (1) Discussion on chartering (if/when) of MAT;

**Upcoming Dates and Deadlines:**

- April 2<sup>nd</sup> – Population Monitoring (CPUE) Workshop Planning meeting, 9:00am, at ISC
- April 2<sup>nd</sup> – CC meeting, *time changed to 1:00pm, at Reclamation*
- April 14<sup>th</sup> – MAT meeting 1:30pm to 4:30pm, at USFWS (tentatively)

- April 17<sup>th</sup> – EC meeting, 9:00am to 1:00pm
- April 23<sup>rd</sup> – Annual Operating Plan Meeting for the San Juan/Chama and Rio Grande Projects at 1:00pm at Reclamation

## Meeting Summary

**Introductions and agenda approval:** Brent Rhees brought the meeting to order and introductions were made. The agenda was approved with two additional items: (1) US Army Corps of Engineers' Minnow Monitoring Update (Agenda Item #6b); and (2) Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) Workshop Update (Agenda Item #4Eiiii).

### **Approval of the November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 and February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014 EC Meeting Summaries:**

- The November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 EC meeting summary was approved for finalization with no changes.
- The February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014 EC meeting summary was approved for finalization with no changes.

### **Agency Fiscal and Policy Planning Updates:**

- *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or the Corps):*
  - The Corps has received their 2014 work plan. There were no cuts to the Program funding. The Corps is optimistic that “decent” Program funding can be expected in future years as well. The 2016 budget is currently under development.
  - The Corps just completed a fiscal report on all their Program activities since the original authorization in 2009. Hard copies of the report were provided to EC members.
  - The Corps has also completed a contract modification to have the database migrated from Silverlight to .net. This reprogramming process will take 6 to 8 months to complete but will address the database access concerns. Apple products and mobile devices will be better supported after the migration is complete.
    - It was requested that the Corps look into changes for the document box (window) that appears on the Database Calendar. At it is now, document box is a fixed size and the read ahead (document files) titles are truncated. The box could be “adjusted” in size to show full titles or allow users to adjust the size.
  - The Corps is completing the revisions to their Biological Assessment (BA). The revised BA will be sent up through headquarters for review. While there is no indication how long the internal review will take, the approval is expected before the beginning of summer.
- *Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation):*
  - Reclamation’s 2015 budget looks “decent” as a minimum of \$3 million is available exclusively for the Program. It is likely that this funding level can be expected in future years.
- *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS or the Service):*
  - The Service remains in a hiring freeze, but the 2014 allocations have been received from headquarters.
- *Non-Federal Update:*
  - *NM Interstate Stream Commission (ISC):*

- The Rio Grande Compact Commission met in Santa Fe last week. While there is lack of agreement on accounting, it appears by all indications that NM is in a credit status. This means we have the most flexibility we could possibly have and that relinquishment water can be stored if the runoff is sufficient. Additionally, all requirements of the Compact Commission needed for the Commission to approve a Corps deviation are in place.
  - The Western States Water Council Roundtable meeting is in Washington D.C. next week and a number of the nonfederal members of the EC will be there. Non-federal members will take advantage of that event to visit with the NM Congressional delegation to discuss the impacts of the drought and seek their support for the Recovery Implementation Program (RIP) for the Middle Rio Grande (MRG).
  - ISC continues to meet with Reclamation, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD or District), and the Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (ABCWUA) to seek common ground and “forge a path forward to obtaining a Biological Opinion (BO) that will use the RIP as the conservation measure.”
  - ISC is working with the Service on new 5-year permitting and aims to house at least 30,000 fertilized eggs this spring at the Los Lunas Silvery Minnow Refugium (LLSMR) for rearing over the summer. The goal is to provide around 17,000 taggable sized silvery minnow to the Service for augmentation this upcoming fall.
  - NM legislature has authorized money (recently signed by Governor Martinez) for a number of water projects throughout the state:
    - \$450,000 habitat restoration project with ISC and MRGCD, primarily in the upper section of the San Acacia reach. This work is a start at addressing elements in the RIP Action Plan.
    - \$900,000 project to increase the rearing capacity at the LLSMR.
    - \$2 million for the Strategic Water Reserve for acquisition of water rights for endangered species and compact compliance purposes throughout the State.
  - ISC met yesterday with Reclamation to approve moving forward on an agreement to apply some of the Price’s Dairy water rights to Endanger Species Act (ESA) purposes.
- *Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (ABCWUA):*
    - The joint channeling project with the City of Albuquerque’s Open Space is nearing completion. They will continue their funding for the BioPark and hope to increase the amount.
  - *Collaborative Program Projects:*
    - *ISC Letter to ABQ Journal:* A copy of the ISC Letter to ABQ Journal Editor was provided to EC members as the Program was identified with the author. This letter was penned in response to the February 19<sup>th</sup> Albuquerque Journal Opinions and Editorials (Op Ed) published by WildEarth Guardians, which can be found here: [http://www.wildearthguardians.org/site/DocServer/There\\_are\\_better\\_solutions\\_than\\_killing\\_a\\_tiny\\_fish\\_opin.pdf?docID=12822](http://www.wildearthguardians.org/site/DocServer/There_are_better_solutions_than_killing_a_tiny_fish_opin.pdf?docID=12822) .
    - *Cost Share:* At their March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Coordination Committee (CC) requested 2013 cost share reports from participating non-federal agencies; however, no 2013 cost

- share reports were received. Cost share needs to be reported annually and can consist of both in-kind contributions and actual costs.
- Language in the 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act specifies that “non-federal share...may be in the form of in-kind contributions, the value of which shall be determined by the Secretary in consultation with the executive committee.” The cost share criterion needs to be clarified prior to the implementation of the RIP.
  - The Cost Share Template can be accessed through the database (Document ID 4187).
- *Program Website:* The old Program website is being migrated to the new database. The old web address will refer you to the new site. The database is query based. Users can search by various fields (group, document title, or by specific Document ID). Queries can be saved for quick access in the future.
    - The calendar is now publically available with no login necessary. This means that all the read aheads are also viewable by the public.
    - There have been several “calls for data” in the attempt to populate the database with missing and recent data and reports. Please use the Document Template (found under the User Support button on the left menu) on the database when submitting reports and data to the database.
    - Please note that Minnow Action Team (MAT) documents and files can be found under the EC, as it is an ad hoc group of the EC.
  - *CC Update:* The CC is in process of reviewing all recent and current Program working groups and subgroups. The CC intends to highlight the work group status and potential needs through the transition. One key discussion point is how to keep all the historical information and work group expertise into the new RIP structure. The CC will be providing their recommendation to the EC next month.
    - Please note that the regularly scheduled April 2<sup>nd</sup> CC meeting has been moved to the afternoon from 1:00pm to 3:00pm.
  - *Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) Workshop Update:* In July 2012, the EC approved the hosting of a CPUE workshop. Due to staff changes and other issues, the planning and organizing of the workshop is behind. The CPUE workshop is important to the sufficient progress metrics that will be under the RIP. Planning efforts are being “resurrected” with a focus on revising the workshop proposal, revising questions for the workshop to answer/address, updating the “outside” expert participant list, and evaluating dates and timeframes with venues. The current timeframe is late summer or early fall.

#### **Minnow Action Team (MAT) 2013 Draft Recommendations Report:**

- The forecasts and model prediction(s) will influence the majority of discussions for the MAT meetings. The March 1 forecast does not look good. The group has general agreement to pursue some spawning and recruitment flow, to the extent possible. This year presents a challenging situation because it is the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive poor year and options are not as robust as anyone would like.
  - The Corps has a project looking at low-lying flood areas to help determine what minimum levels of flows might produce a bottom-line goal. The initial results indicate a need between 1,200 and 1,800 cfs. However, much depends on the April 1 and May 1 forecast.
  - There is ~12,000 ac-ft of ABCWUA exchange water that, should there be sufficient natural flows, could possibly be utilized for a spawning and recruitment flow.
  - The ad hoc MAT will be meeting monthly as a larger group. Members agreed to also divide into smaller ad hoc subgroups to address the biology and hydrology components.

- The next MAT meeting is scheduled for April 14<sup>th</sup> from 1:30pm to 4:30pm at Reclamation. The group is still editing the 2013 MAT Report but is concentrating on the 2014 season and activities.
- At this time, MAT recommends not spending energy to charter the group this year but waiting until the group can be formed under the RIP. The active water management period is fast approaching and pursuing a formal charter would divert needed attention and energy.
- Due to the timing issues around the forecast and modeling process, expected peak flow timing, and the scheduled meetings, decisions on how to augment a spawning flow may have to be made prior to the May EC meeting and without a formal MAT recommendations report. To this end, MAT will verbally present the identified options for this year at the April EC meeting.

### Other Activities:

- *Hydrology Forecast:*
  - This year has had a slightly better storm pattern compared to last year. Hopefully, the storms will continue input into the system. Current predictions indicate equal chances for precipitation cycles to be either low or normal. Temperatures are expected to be above normal for the next 90-120 days.
  - There is approximately 84,000 ac-ft in Heron – however, about half of that is last year’s water for delivery through Abiquiu and the other half is this year’s water available for allocation (roughly 25% allocation available for all San Juan/Chama contractors so far).
    - The forecast for Heron predicts a nearly full supply (or above 80% allocation). If this is realized, then Reclamation expects an additional 10,000 to 12,000 ac-ft of supplemental water to be added to the existing 20,000 ac-ft.
  - All native water is continuing to be stored at El Vado through April 1. At that point, 100 cfs will be bypassed to the river for Rio Chama Acequia Association. There may be a quick impact on inflows when Colorado begins diverting on/around April 1. Reclamation will continue efforts to determine how to best “balance” all the needs and demands this year (ex. maximum storage at El Vado versus bypass needs for demands below Cochiti; the MRG Pueblo Coalition with storing for P&P versus maximum relinquishments for the District; etc.).
    - Maximizing storage at El Vado will be challenging. Reclamation may have to use supplemental water early in the season in order to keep the river wet, especially if there is a decent spawn.
  - ABCWUA has approximately 12,000 ac-ft of exchange water in Abiquiu. There are ongoing discussions about the potential utilization of this water to augment a natural peak flow for spawning and recruitment purposes. Reclamation is also aware and preparing for the possibility for extra losses that could occur outside of the normal loss profile this year.
- *Species Update:*
  - As previously discussed, there have been 4 consecutively dismal hydrologic years and this is reflected in the minnow data.
  - Using data from ASIR, FWS Fisheries, and Reclamation’s recent work and survey’s, the following species update was provided:
    - In February 2014, NM Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office only collected 2 wild silvery minnow and 6 tagged minnow in the Angostura reach.
    - In February 2014, Reclamation collected 65 minnow by electrofishing over 25 total miles of river; ¼ of those were wild (untagged). No minnow were captured

- in the Isleta Reach or in the Low Flow Conveyance Channel (LFCC) during this survey.
    - ASIR newest analysis estimates minnow densities (with statistical analysis) at 0.3 fish per 100 m<sup>2</sup>.
    - Stocking occurred in the fall and hopefully some of those fish will survive to spawn this season. On the positive side, there are some wild minnow the river.
  - The NM meadow jumping mouse final rule is scheduled for June 2014.
- *COE Habitat Restoration Monitoring for Fish*
  - The Corps presented on the minnow monitoring work they have been doing at 10 restoration sites. Using a dual seining process, the Corps sampled July through October and yielded a catch of 27 wild minnow – mostly in July and August. Some of the marked fish that were stocked in the fall were recaptured. Using a dual nets procedure provides provide additional data and other fish were captured. The average length of the wild fish (in standard length) was 69.6 mm with a maximum of 86 mm. While it is not possible to distinguish the specific ages of these individuals, there are obviously some healthy, larger adult minnow in the river. The last “major” spawn occurred in 2010 and the majority of fish captured would be consisted with those expected size ranges.
    - This monitoring work did not include any health analysis work. The fish were handled carefully and as minimally as possible so as to be returned to the river as quickly as possible. However, nothing terribly unusual was observed in the fish collected (ex. no apparent lesions or parasites). Additional information on fish health studies (including pathogens and parasites) can be accessed through the database.
    - In response to a question on the effect of the double seining process on the size of the caught fish, it was responded that the both larger and smaller fish were captured. Specifically, the minnows were distributed among the seines. This indicates an effective method. There was an increase in the 10-20 mm size fish in the second seine. This could be from the “wave” of weaker swimmers that get “pushed” as a result of the first seine pass. There were obviously some young of year minnow in the Albuquerque Reach indicating that there has been some reproduction but in low densities.

### **RIP Transition Planning**

- The Program and Science Support Service Performance Work Statement (as revised by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Management Subcommittee) is with Reclamations contracting office and is moving forward.

### **Meeting Summary:** Rhea Graham, Interim Program Manager, provided a brief meeting summary:

- The EC approved today’s meeting agenda with 2 additional agenda items.
- The November 2013 and February 2014 meeting summaries were approved for finalization with no changes.
- Many agency updates were provided. In general, the federal partners are optimistic on the 2014 budget and are currently working on the 2016 budgets.
- The Corps published a report on their Program activities and funding covering the period since they received their authorization.
- ISC shared that they will be seeking support for the RIP while in Washington, D.C. They are also working to repermit the LLSMR and expect to receive eggs.
- ABCWUA reported that the joint channeling project with the City of Albuquerque’s Open Space is nearing completion.



- The 2013 Cost Share Reports have not yet been received. The cost share criterion needs to be clarified prior to the implementation of the RIP. The old website should redirect users to the new, relational database.
- The next CC meeting is scheduled for the afternoon of April 2<sup>nd</sup>. The CC will report on their recommendations regarding the status of work groups at the April EC meeting.
- The CPUE Workshop has a targeted date of late summer or early fall. The planning group is looking for sponsors and external scientists/experts. The CPUE Workshop is important as it relates to sufficient progress metrics for the RIP.
- MAT updates were provided. A spawning and recruitment flow needs an estimated minimum of 1,200 to 1,800 cfs. There is the possibility of utilizing the ABCWUA Exchange Water to augment a natural flow peak. The MAT will present their 2014 recommendations at the April EC meeting for decisions on the timing of how to proceed. The report on 2013 will be titled 2013 MAT Report. There was brief discussion on the charter status of MAT.
- The hydrology forecast was shared. Diversion next week in Colorado could impact the situation. Reclamation is working to “balance everything” – P&P storage, relinquishment credits, etc.
- Using information from ASIR, Reclamation, and Fisheries, an update on the species was provided. Numbers of silvery minnow remain extremely low. Several monitoring efforts are collecting silvery minnow consisting of approximately 25% wild adults and 75% augmented adults.
- Young of year and larger size classes were caught during the Corps’ double seining monitoring efforts. Fish health reports are available on the database.

#### Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

#### Announcements

- Federal agencies were encouraged to attend the New Mexico First Water Planning Town Hall meeting in order to answer any potential questions.
- The Annual Operating Plan Meeting for the San Juan/Chama and Rio Grande Projects is scheduled for April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1:00pm at Reclamation.
- On Tuesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, the COA, MRGCD, and UNM are sponsoring a Continuing Education Forum on Science, Environmental Education, and Climate Change at the Natural History Museum. The monthly forum series will consist of a short presentation followed by a period of questions and answers.
- The Program and Science Support Service Performance Work Statement (as revised by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Management Subcommittee) is with Reclamations contracting office and is moving forward.

#### Next Meeting: **April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from 9:00am to 1:00pm at Location To Be Announced**

- Tentative agenda items include: (1) Decision on MAT 2014 recommendations and options for potential spawn and recruitment flows; (2) Decision on CC report out on work group recommendations during transition;
- Potential Future Agenda Items: (1) Discussion on chartering (if/when) of MAT;

**Executive Committee Meeting Attendees**  
**March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

Attendees:*Representative*

Brent Rhees  
Rick Billings (A)

*Organization*

Bureau of Reclamation  
Albuquerque/Bernalillo County  
Water Utility Authority

*Seat*

Federal co-chair  
Non-federal co-chair

Rolf Schmidt-Petersen (A)

Interstate Stream Commission

ISC

Janet Bair (A)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Service

Frank Chavez (P)

Pueblo of Sandia

Sandia

Subhas Shah (P)

Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District

MRGCD

Steve Farris (P)

NM Attorney General's Office

NMAGO

Mike Hamman (P)

Bureau of Reclamation

Reclamation

Matt Schmader (P)

City of Albuquerque

COA

Ken Cunningham (A)

NM Department of Game and Fish

NMDGF

Janet Jarrett

Assessment Payers Association of the MRGCD

APA

Mark Stone (A)

University of NM

UNM

Ryan Ward (P)

NM Department of Agriculture

NMDA

*Others*

Rhea Graham

Bureau of Reclamation

Ryan Gronewold

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Beth Pitrolo

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Michelle Mann

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Susan Bittick

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Danielle Galloway

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Kris Shafer (A)

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Mickey Porter

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

William DeRagon

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Lori Robertson

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Wally Murphy

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Stewart Jacks

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service /Fisheries

Kevin Cobble

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Ann Moore (A)

NM Attorney General's Office

Grace Haggerty

N.M. Interstate Stream Commission

Patrick Redmond

for N.M. Interstate Stream Commission

Brooke Wyman

MRGCD

Lacy Levine (A)

NM Department of Agriculture

Kyle Harwood

BBD/City of Santa Fe

Rick Carpenter

BBD/City of Santa Fe

Alex Eubanks

Senator Heinrich's Office

Marianna Padilla

Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham Office

Ed McCorkindale

Public

Marta Wood

Alliant Environmental (note taker)

**Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program  
ISC Update for March 27, 2014 Executive Committee Meeting**

- The annual Rio Grande Compact Commission meeting was held on March 20 in Santa Fe at the Round House. We want to thank Mike Hamman, Wally Murphy, and Colonel Gant for presenting on behalf of their federal agencies to the Commission. Thanks also to those who attended the reception and the meeting. We are happy to report that New Mexico remains in credit status; which means relinquishment water can be stored, if the runoff is sufficient. In addition, all the requirements of the Compact Commission needed for the Commission to approve a Corps deviation are in place.
- The Western States Water Council Roundtable meeting is in Washington D.C. next week and a number of the nonfederal members of the EC will be there. We are taking advantage of that event to visit with the New Mexico Congressional delegation to discuss the impacts of the drought and seek their support for the recovery implementation program for the Middle Rio Grande.
- Staff from the ISC and OSE has met several times since the last EC meeting with Reclamation, MRGCD, and the ABCWUA to continue to seek common ground and forge a path forward to obtaining a Biological Opinion that will use the RIP as the conservation measure. The State is committed to working with the BA partners and the Service to reach a scientifically defensible and mutually acceptable process to achieve the ultimate goal of a RIP as the vehicle for ESA compliance in the MRG.
- The NMISC expects to receive at least 30,000 fertilized eggs this spring at the Los Lunas Silvery Minnow Refugium's for rearing over the summer. The goal is to provide around 17,000 taggable size silvery minnow to the Service for augmentation this upcoming fall. We are working closely with the Service to receive a permit for these activities.
- Dr Hutson, Dr Tave, and Mr Ferjancic of HDR recently hosted a tour to a group of scientists from the School of Fisheries, Aquaculture, and Aquatic Sciences and the Biosystems Engineering Department at Auburn University, the USGS Co-op Unit at Auburn University, and USFWS Warm Springs Fish Technology Center, Warm Springs, GA. They are interested in developing a conservation aquaculture component on Auburn's E.W. Shell Fisheries Research Center and wanted to discuss design concepts and lessons learned in design, operations, and management of a conservation aquaculture facility.
- Governor Martinez recently signed capital expenditures legislation (HB 55 substitute) that provides funding for a number of water projects throughout the state. Of interest to the EC is funding to the ISC to coordinate with the MRGCD on a \$450,000 project for habitat restoration. The plan is to conduct the work primarily in the upper section of San Acacia reach. This work is a start at

addressing elements in the RIP Action Plan. We also had approved a \$900,000 project to increase the rearing capacity at the Los Lunas Silvery Minnow Refugium. And the Strategic Water Reserve received \$2 million dollars for acquisition of water rights for endangered species and compact compliance purposes throughout the State. This is the first time since 2007 that the SWR has received appropriations from the legislature and governor. One of the approved priorities for the SWR is the Middle Rio Grande.

- The Interstate Stream Commission met yesterday and approved moving forward on an agreement between the ISC and Reclamation on water rights Reclamation purchased from Price's Dairy as part of the Valle del Oro refuge acquisition. This will provide a way for approximately 157 AF of water rights to be used for ESA purposes in the MRG.
- The ISC staff is continuing to actively engage with other Collaborative Program participants on the MAT and the Population Monitoring Workgroup. The ISC is providing organizational assistance to the Population Monitoring Workgroup through Janet Wolfe (DBS&A). Additionally, staff is providing input to the 3rd party management group, and to the other standing workgroups. The ISC is willing to provide River Eyes support should it be needed, as well as support for MAT recommended hydrologic and species research and monitoring this year.