

**Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program
Executive Committee Meeting
January 14th, 2016 – 9:00am to 12:15pm**

**Bureau of Reclamation
555 Broadway NE, Suite 100
Albuquerque, NM, 87102**

Decisions

- The September 17th, 2015 EC meeting summary was approved for finalization with no changes.

Actions

- The RIP Subgroup will address the 4 points/requests identified at today's meeting. The revisions will be distributed electronically upon completion with a 30-day comment period (including EC members, agencies, and solicitors). Comments will be addressed as soon as possible with the intent to seek EC endorsement at the earliest possible meeting.
 - The 4 points/request identified are: (1) a continued terminology concern using "RIP Agreement"; (2) clarification on the role and scope of the Executive Director with specification that the Executive Director will not have unilateral ability to task the Budget Subcommittee; (3) issue of the Service's specific approval role - particularly in advancing the updates to the Action Plan; and (4) sequencing of the tasks for establishing the RIP with respect to getting an early understanding of the potential draft Sufficient Progress Metrics prior to the signing of the Agreement document.
- EC members are encouraged to review the revised Program Document and Draft Schedule and provide feedback as soon as possible.
- Ali Saenz will upload all available meeting agendas for upcoming meetings.

Requests/Recommendations

- It was recommended that the EC consider scheduling Rob Dudley's presentation (given at the Fish Population Monitoring Workshop) on the evaluation of the datasets through time for a future EC meeting.
- Some attendees requested that the next steps and discussions of the Fish Population Monitoring work (including the questions/concerns on the use of Catch Per Unit Effort) be initiated timely.
- The Technical Proposal Evaluation Committee (TPEC) for the Program and Science Support (PASS; formerly 3rd Party Management) contract will be convened in early March. The EC is encouraged to consider who will be their two (2) non-Reclamation representatives.
- Please contact Rolf Schmidt-Petersen (ISC) if you would like a copy of Senator Udall's draft drought legislation (copy dated August 2015).
- Interested parties should contact Leann Towne for a Microsoft Project file of the Draft RIP Schedule document; the PDF file version was provided as a read ahead.

Announcements

- Dave Campbell, with the Fish and Wildlife Service, has volunteered to serve as the Federal Co-chair for the Coordination Committee. Rick Billings, with the Albuquerque Bernalillo Country Water Utility Authority, will continue as the non-federal co-chair.
- The Minnow Action Team (MAT) ad hoc group intends to convene early this spring after the predications for 2016 are more precise (estimated March timeframe). The group will again look to providing recommendations for the spring and summer.

- At the February 3rd CC meeting, Nathan Frannsen, with the Fish and Wildlife Service, will be presenting Data Synthesis 101 based on the work of the San Juan River Recovery Implementation Program. All interested Program members are invited to attend.
- The Adaptive Management team is scheduled for their first meeting next week on Wednesday January 20th.

Next Meeting: February 18th, 2016 from 9:00am to 12:00pm at Reclamation

- Tentative February agenda items: (1) RIP Subgroup update – brief report out on received comments/edits to Program document; (2) RIP Subgroup - attorney report out on needed revisions/edits to the other RIP documents; (3) Adaptive Management Team updates (if applicable);
- Tentative March agenda items: (1) Decision Item: endorsement of revised RIP Program Document (if applicable); (2) Updates on Program and Science Support contract TPEC and selection (if applicable); (3) Discussion on Fish Population Monitoring Workshop draft report (if applicable); (4) Minnow Action Team updates (if applicable);

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines:

- January 19th – ScW/HRW Joint meeting, 9:30am to 11:30am at Reclamation
- January 20th – Adaptive Management team meeting, 1:00pm to 3:00pm
- February 3rd – CC meeting, 9:00am to 11:00am at FWS Osuna; Data Synthesis 101 presentation

Meeting Summary

Introductions and agenda approval: Rick Billings brought the meeting to order and introductions were made. A quorum was confirmed and the agenda was approved with no changes.

Approval of the September 17th, 2015 EC Meeting Summary:

- The September 17th, 2015 EC meeting summary was approved for finalization with no changes.

Agency Roundtable:

- *U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation):*
 - Reclamation has several restoration projects underway including the River Realignment near Bosque del Apache. This project is expected to “trigger” other projects. The Sevilleta project is a great collaboration and hopefully a model for future projects.
 - Future meetings will be held to determine specific restoration needs for the southern reaches.
 - The Fish Population Monitoring Workshop occurred in December. Overall, it was considered a successful and positive event. The draft report will be made available upon completion. Reclamation has a contractual relationship with the workshop experts that will allow for ongoing/future tasks to be accomplished.
 - *Contracting Update:*
 - As reported, the Fish Population Monitoring Workshop draft report is expected mid-February. The Draft FY2014 Annual Report is expected by early March. The Genetics’ Peer Review is expected to “ramp up” within the next few months.
 - Reclamation does not have a finalized budget yet, but all projects are in the contracting process under Continuing Resolution.
 - The Program and Science Support (PASS, formerly RIP 3rd Party Management) contract is moving forward with a Technical Proposal

- Evaluation Committee (TPEC) expected to convene the first week of March with a currently scheduled award date of mid- to late April.
- Some attendees expressed concerns that the PASS (as intended to be 3rd Party Management) is going through the TPEC process and what this means for the EC role/involvement.
 - Reclamation is seeking clarification, but it is currently understood that the EC can select two (2) non-Reclamation representatives to participate in an advisory capacity.
 - *Hydrology Update:*
 - El Niño and a wet time of year favor improvement or removal of drought across many areas and current predictions are optimistic. According to the National Weather Service, 2015 was a good year for short-term drought improvement in NM with state-wide precipitation levels above normal for the first time since 2010. Unfortunately, temperatures during the first three months of 2015 were well above normal. Long-term drought eased a bit, but is still solidly with us, and will be for some time to come. The outlook for upcoming months look to be favorable for above normal precipitation.
 - Snow pack in the Rio Grande Basin is around 120% of median. But it is still early in January. We are about half-way through the accumulation period meaning there needs to be more accumulation in order to end up better than average. Current projections indicate that Elephant Butte may be out of Article VII storage restrictions sometime in February allowing for storage upstream (at least until the Rio Grande project starts up in the March/April timeframe).
 - Some attendees cautioned that the optimism for this year should be tempered with the warmer-than-usual early months which can result in poor runoff (due to the snow disappearing quickly) or early runoff (March/April).
 - *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or Corps):*
 - The Corps is supporting Adaptive Management through a contract with GeoSystems Analysis (GSA) and the assessment process is underway. The Fish Population Monitoring Workshop was a great forum and the Corps is optimistic that the momentum achieved can be carried over to the adaptive management work. The guidance/information that comes out of the workshop is expected to go hand-in-hand with adaptive management. The adaptive management contract is set for 2 years and is a big step for the Program as we begin to apply what we have learned and direct our actions toward learning more.
 - There is a great opportunity this year as we are predicted to have a decent runoff.
 - GSA will be working with the Adaptive Management Team (AMT) and their designated species experts to identify key uncertainties surrounding the species science and management effects on species. This is a major focus of the AM plan.
 - *Pueblo of Sandia:*
 - Sandia sent their Water Quality Manager as a representative to the Fish Population Monitoring Workshop. There is concurrence that it was a good workshop. But for the Pueblo of Sandia, improving habitat (restoration) and better water management continue to be a top priority.
 - Several agency representatives acknowledged shared concerns and focus on river maintenance and restoration (in particular, the Corrales Siphon). Agencies are aware of the specific concerns raised by Sandia, conversations have been initiated, and discussions are ongoing.

- However, it was cautioned that agencies are not always able to accomplish identified work at the local level. Funding restrictions and declining budgets have resulted in only 1 or 2 new-start projects for many of the federal agencies.
- *Litigation Update:*
 - The judge supported MRGCD's Motion To Dismiss (on the scope of discretionary authority) leaving 3 outstanding claims (Species in Jeopardy; 7D Claim; and Take Claim) to be litigated. The process is still in the Administrative Record phase with Reclamation and the Corps having submitted their Administrative Records. The parties will meet end of this month to discuss the scope and content of the administrative record. WildEarth Guardians (WEG) has until February 12th to file on the administrative record(s).
 - Regarding the Corps' Motions to Dismiss, the Court was unable to rule (therefore no decisions or determinations) resulting in a request for more information.
 - It is assumed that the litigation will move into the next stage of filing motions which could take up to 4 or 5 months. This means the litigation process will not reach the merits until 8 or 9 months from now.
- *Fish and Wildlife Service (Service):*
 - *Species Update:*
 - *Rio Grande Silvery Minnow (minnow):*
 - As per the October 2015 monitoring and collection, the minnow population is 0.2 minnow per 100m². Please note that the December 2015 data aren't available yet (this explains the graph on the handout – the Decembers values are not zero, they are just not available).
 - *Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (flycatcher):*
 - Please see handout for graphical information on the flycatcher numbers. (Please note that the flycatcher numbers includes those in parts of Elephant Butte.)
 - *New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse (mouse):*
 - There is no new information on the mouse which is hibernating.
- *Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (ABCWUA):*
 - A brief recap of the Fish Monitoring Population Workshop was offered:
 - Three (3) external experts were contracted to provide feedback and guidance to the Program. Joining the experts were signatory (agency) scientists.
 - Several important topics were discussed at the workshop:
 - *Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) Metric:* Preliminary outcomes of the workshop discussion include the use of CPUE (or “numbers of fish per 100 m²”) is probably the best way to look at abundance of the species compared to other fisheries determination techniques (ex. mark recapture, sonic technology, etc.). But it is recognized that the minnow is a highly volatile species with potentially significant changes in volume one year to the next. The abundance can change by 2 orders of magnitude between years. For example, there can be hundreds of fish one year and the next year there can be hundreds of thousands of minnow. At the same time, the minnow is short-lived with a relatively low survival rate resulting in the population declining dramatically. All these factors make monitoring this animal difficult and challenging.
 - The workshop did not include discussion on the *utility* or *application* of CPUE (ex. what can CPUE be used for and what it not be used for).

- Some EC attendees commented on the disappointment that the utility of CPUE wasn't addressed as it was one of the main priority questions for the Program. It is considered very important that the next steps and next discussions are initiated timely.
- *NM Interstate Stream Commission (ISC):*
 - ISC reiterated the great coordination and collaboration that went into the Sevilleta Restoration Work Open House. ISC is looking to initiate more habitat work in the southern reaches over the next year (as early as this spring).
 - ISC expects a "flat budget" going into the legislative session, but funds could actually decrease for the upcoming year.
 - ISC is starting work with Reclamation to open the Delta Channel. If the opening is accomplished by March, that channel could be used for storage.
 - The Compact Status for 2016 is predicted to be exactly the same as 2015 with a net balance of 0 (a no credit or debit situation).
 - Senator Udall's Office has draft drought legislation containing potential authorizations for Socorro, river work at the Bosque del Apache, deviations, proposed National Academy of Science study, etc. If the California Drought Bill moves forward, parts of the NM bill might be attached. Realistically, California is very divided and it is very unlikely the bill will pass.
- *University of New Mexico (UNM):*
 - One preliminary outcome of the Fish Population Monitoring Workshop was the guidance that CPUE is the currently the best measure that we have. This is a significantly fluctuating population (either boom or bust) and we have to think about what is needed for the fish density to respond enough to rebound after a "bust" period (resilience). In other words, what is the minimum density that allows the minnow to recover after a year of decline (low numbers)?
 - In species recovery and conservation, there are 3 "Rs": (1) Resilience - having sufficiently large enough populations that the species can "recover" (increase); (2) Redundancy – having multiple groups of individuals that provide insurance against decline; and (3) Representation – saving existing elements of diversity.

Coordination Committee (CC) Updates:

- Dave Campbell, with the Fish and Wildlife Service, has volunteered to serve as the Federal Co-chair for the Coordination Committee. Rick Billings, with the Albuquerque Bernalillo Country Water Utility Authority, will continue as the non-federal co-chair.
- There was no quorum at the last meeting so no official decisions were made.
- Nathan Frannsen, with the Fish and Wildlife Service, will be presenting Data Synthesis 101 based on the work of the San Juan River Recovery Implementation Program at the February 3rd CC meeting. All interested Program members are invited to attend.

Biological Assessment (BA) and Biological Opinion (BO) Updates:

- Reclamation submitted the BA back in August 2015. The water managers have been meeting and discussing/searching for possible flexibilities in the system. While there may not be agreement on policies or perceptions, the conversations are informative. The Recovery Implementation Program (RIP) is an important part of the consultation and the subgroup is doing a tremendous job moving the related documents forward.
- The Service understands the urgency of getting the BO done, but there are other consultations in the queue that need to be completed before the Middle Rio Grande's. The positive side is that should water managers find new flexibilities, there is the ability to include those into the current consultation.

- In response to a question regarding the Minnow Action Team (MAT), it was shared that the ad hoc group intends to convene early this spring after the predications for 2016 are more precise (estimated March timeframe). The group will again look to providing recommendations for the spring and summer. The MAT is a useful forum for providing comprehensive information to biologists and hydrologists. The group is expected to continue at least for the near future.

RIP Subgroup Updates and Recommendations:

- Deb Freeman introduced the RIP Subgroup Update and Recommendations presentation. *Please refer to handouts for additional details.*
- RIP Subgroup members include: Dave Campbell (FWS), Jennifer Faler and Leann Towne (BOR), Patrick Redmond (MRGCD), Bill Grantham (NMAGO), Rick Billings (ABCWUA), Susan Bittick (COE), Deb Freeman (ISC), and Lacy Levine and Ryan Ward (NMDA).
- *Background:* At the direction of the EC, the subgroup met at the end of last year and continued into this year to address Program Document edits and revisions. In June 2015, the group identified 12 “issues” in need of updating or addressing. In an expanded meeting in October, the subgroup met with EC members and agency heads in a working session to address the 4 specific issues of concerns to the Service. The subgroup incorporated language and recommendations from that session to arrive at the draft version provided as a read ahead for today’s meeting. The draft proposed updates are shown in red-line on the July 2013 version of the Program Document that was previously endorsed by the EC.
 - This is only an informational briefing today – no decisions are being requested. It is envisioned that EC will endorse an updated version of the document to be tendered into the consultation; but a full revised version is not yet available for endorsing by the EC.
- *Item #1: Revise RIP Goals to Emphasize Self-Sustaining Populations in the MRG (pages 1-2):*
 - The Service had requested recognizing the goal of “self-sustaining” populations as part of the recovery. This concern/request was addressed at the expanded session. The language recommendations from that meeting have been included. Included in the language is recognition that the Program embraces the goal but has yet to reach agreement on how it can be achieved and how it will be measured (criteria).
 - The Program does have a general process mapped out describing how we will get to agreement on measuring recovery.
- *Item #2: Updated References for BA (pages 2, 5, 8):*
 - The phrase “hydrologically sustainable,” as a concept to guide the Program, had not been previously defined.
- *Item #3: Change Name of Cooperative Agreement to RIP Agreement (pages 5, 10, 30):*
 - The document establishing the RIP was originally titled “Cooperative Agreement.” However, previous concerns were expressed that “cooperative agreement” could implicate the Cooperative Agreement Act and convey something of value to entities authorized to receive. This lead to renaming the document “RIP Agreement” in order to avoid confusion or questions on who can or cannot sign the document.
 - It was shared that “RIP Agreement” still poses a problem for the Corps, as the RIP has to be tied back to the Collaborative Program and the resulting (existing) authorities. As suggested acceptable title could be “Agreement” or “the Agreement.”
- *Item #4: Delete Program Area Footnote (page 5):*
 - A Program Area footnote containing Elephant Butte channel(s) and future consultations was recommended for deletion.

- *Item #5: Conform Description of Proposed Actions to be Consistent with BA (pages 8-9; 25):*
 - Originally, the Program Document contained a section describing water uses and management operations for which the RIP would serve as the ESA coverage. In order to simplify and be consistent, it was recommended this section just refer back to the BA.
- *Item #6: Address RIP Interim Program Management (pages 11-14):*
 - Current interpretation of the Federal Acquisition Regulations prohibit federal funding to be used for program management services by a non-federal entity unless it has been specifically authorized with express language by congress. (In other words, Reclamation cannot give federal money to someone else to act on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior.) The current Program legislation is not viewed as having done that, so interim program management is being provided through a service contract with Reclamation. This is cast as “interim program management” but nevertheless recognized that the long-term plan is for Independent 3rd Party Management. These edits are captured in the current red-line changes pages 11, 12, and 13 and summarized in the June memo.
 - Movement from Interim Program Management to 3rd Party Management will require either (1) a change in congressional legislation and authorization or (2) a different interpretation by the federal agencies of their regulations and the law. Interim Program Management will be in place until one of those 2 options is realized.
- *Item #7: Bolster Description of RIP Outreach (page 13):*
 - The EC had requested more specific language on outreach.
- *Item #8: Identify Procedures to Address Impasse Issues – RIP Budget & Policy Committee (pages 15-16):*
 - Please recall there has been a lot of discussion on the potential need for an oversight or elevation committee. A significant amount of time was spent on this issue at the expanded meeting where it was clarified that the concern stems from how to drive movement on time-sensitive issues when there are possible delays. The recommendation was to bolster the role of the existing Budget Subcommittee (as framed in the Program Document) which already had an oversight role in terms of funding contributions. A second role was carved out for that committee to accept matters referred to it by the EC or Executive Direction and to act as a group to produce a consensus recommendation back to the EC.
 - Some attendees expressed concern regarding the guidance for the Executive Director on when issues are to be elevated and how does that interact with the Bylaws that provide process rules?
 - This referral option is not in place of the decision making framed in the bylaws which would remain intact. This is an opportunity to use the Budget Subcommittee group to quickly assemble, drill down, and focus an issue with a consensus recommendation back to the EC for action. *(Please note that the bylaws will need to be updated to include the RIP groups and committees, including the Budget Subcommittee).*
 - The intent is that the EC instructs the Executive Director and this would include addressing any ‘impasse’ issues. However, more specific language on when the Executive Director can or cannot go directly to the Budget Subcommittee can be included in the document.
 - *Please note that the previously approved language on the Budget Subcommittee was not edited/revised, but it was moved around. This explains the large blocks of red text.*
- *Item #9: Describe Phased Approach for RIP Establishment and Implementation (page 21):*
 - In agreement with the Service, it was decided that the RIP will be “phased in” pursuant to specified milestones contained in a schedule. The RIP will get established within 1 year

of issuance of the BO by the appropriate instrument or means (ex. RIP Agreement). Within 3 years of the issuance of the BO, the RIP will need to be geared up pursuant to those implementation milestones as the building blocks of the RIP. A draft schedule will be presented later in the meeting.

- This phased process is framed in the Program Document and the draft schedule has been developed. After the defined period, the Service will develop the sufficient progress metrics with the EC. *Please see Item #10 for additional information on the Sufficient Progress Metrics.*
- *Item #10: Clarify the Sufficient Progress Metrics Development Process (pages 21-23):*
 - In previous discussions, the EC and the Service reached agreement that the Service will work with the EC on the development of the sufficient progress metrics.
 - There is a comment box on page 23 explaining the subgroups proposal to delete the language that referred to “not using” CPUE demographic data during the first 2 years of RIP implementation. The reason is that the RIP Implementation Schedule tells us what will be done during those years including development of the sufficient progress metrics. The subgroup felt the language could lead to confusion especially considering all the documents and schedules that have to be consistent.
 - According to the proposed phased approach, once the BO issues, there is a 3-year “ramp up” period with identified tasks to be accomplished (ex. hiring of Executive Director and Science Coordinator, update the 5-year Action Plan, start the Annual Work Plans, begin Annual Reporting process, agree with the Service on the criteria for gaging sufficient progress, etc.).
 - Some attendees expressed concern regarding “reaching consensus” in terms of ESA compliance criteria which is the Service’s discretion to determine as the regulatory agency. Others expressed concern that there needs to be “reasonable comfort” in the criteria on which the participating agencies will be gauged.
 - The Annual Work Plans are going to be implementing the activities/actions required in the BO and will be updated through the adaptive management process. It is assumed that the Service (ES division), as a participating RIP member, will be at the table contributing to the discussions and agreements on the Annual Work Plans to be approved by the EC.
 - An opinion was shared that the RIP, as a whole, needs an element of “decoupling” from any specific consultation as there are agencies committed to participation in the group but are not part of the consultation and for agencies that already have existing BOs. Decoupling is important but the RIP is deeply imbedded in Reclamations (and partner’s) consultation.
 - It was suggested that a more formal “Service affirmation” step(s) be defined with specific time allotted for Service feedback. Included in the process could be documentation/records that the Service agreed to the Action Plan in order to avoid questions on “proof of support.”
 - There is a section in the RIP Action Plan describing the envisioned sufficient progress process; the Program Document is considered a “higher level” document which could include a section reference to the Action Plan document.
 - Other members questioned the timing of milestones and expressed concerns that agencies might be asked to sign the Agreement document before the development of the sufficient progress metrics on which they will be judged. There are foreseeable issues with being asked to make commitments without details on those commitments.

- It was suggested that the milestones (schedules) be sequenced in such a way to have draft metrics “in the works” prior to the signing of the agreement.
- *Item #11: Update Adaptive Management Section to Reflect Status of Corps Contract and to Include Reference to the Draft Hydrologic Objectives (pages 27-28):*
 - The subgroup attempted to (1) make reference to the draft Hydrologic Objective in this section (page 27) and (2) update the description of adaptive management to show the progress that the Corps’ (through contracting) is making toward refining adaptive management (page 28).
- *Item #12: Delete the Historical Funding Information (pages 32-33):*
 - Toward the end of the document, on page 32, historical funding details were included in the original document. The subgroup recommends deleting the historical budgeting information because it is viewed as bringing no value to the Program Document.
- *Item #13: No Additional Edits Regarding Newly Listed Species:*
 - There have been previous discussions on the issue of “newly listed species.” The yellow-billed cuckoo and NM Jumping Mouse were listed after the initial endorsement of the Program Document. There is signatory recommendation to not include those species in the Program Document at this time. However, the Program Document recognizes the EC’s authority to add species at any time (page 6). The RIP Implementation Schedule can include specifics for briefing the EC on the additional species and providing for future decisions on including them at the EC’s discretion.
- *Item #14: Other Program Documents (RIP Agreement; Bylaws; Action Plan; etc.):*
 - The subgroup is currently only working through the Program Document (broad umbrella document). Other Program documents (the Agreement, the bylaws, RIP Action Plan, etc.) have not yet been reviewed for consistency, updates, or edits.
 - The subgroup recognized a need to have legal experts confirm the relationship of the bylaws to the RIP – are we amending the original bylaws or making new bylaws for the RIP? How do these documents anchor back to the 2008 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), the original bylaws, etc.
 - In response to this need, a small attorney group was asked to review the other documents for potential gaps, redundancies, necessary tweaks, and iron out any potential inconsistencies. Members of the attorney group include Bill Grantham (NMAO), Josh Mann (solicitor’s office), Justin Tade, Patrick Redmond (MRGCD), Beth Pitrolo (Corps) and Chris Shaw (ISC).
 - Once the attorney group completes their review, the subgroup will report back to the EC on any discoveries and/or recommended changes/edits.
- *Item #15: Draft RIP Implementation Milestone Schedule (read-ahead):*
 - A draft “working” Implementation Milestone Schedule has been development but is intended to be refined and updated as needed/necessary.
 - Please note that many identified tasks and milestones are placeholders only right now and some dates are arbitrary.
 - The timeframes in this document are tied to the date 1 year after the BO is issued and do not currently reflect development of draft sufficient progress metrics prior the signing of the Agreement document.
 - If the signing of the Agreement document is delayed, the spreadsheet is set up to automatically delay all the remaining tasks by the same timeframe (since the signing of the document establishes the RIP and triggers all the subsequent RIP activities).

- Please note that the dates for hiring the Executive Director and Science Coordinator are the maximum time frames allowed by contracting, but the actual hire dates are expected to be much earlier.
 - Formalization of the Adaptive Management Committee as well as formulating the Sufficient Progress Metrics are currently tied to the hiring of the Science Coordinator.
- *Endorsement of Revised Program Document - Future Decision Item*
 - Endorsement of the Revised Program Document will be a future EC decision item.
 - The RIP Subgroup will address the 4 points/requests identified at today's meeting. The revisions will be distributed electronically upon completion with a 30-day comment period (including EC members, agencies, and solicitors). Comments will be addressed as soon as possible with the intent to seek EC endorsement at the earliest possible meeting.
 - The 4 points/request identified are: (1) a continued terminology concern using "RIP Agreement"; (2) clarification on the role and scope of the Executive Director with specification that the Executive Director will not have unilateral ability to task the Budget Subcommittee; (3) issue of the Service's specific approval role - particularly in advancing the updates to the Action Plan; and (4) sequencing of the tasks for establishing the RIP with respect to getting an early understanding of the potential draft Sufficient Progress Metrics prior to the signing of the Agreement document.

Meeting Summary:

- A quorum was present for today's meeting. The agenda was approved with no changes and the September meeting notes were approved for finalization with no changes.
- Agencies presented updates and announcements during the Agency Roundtable.
 - Many agencies spoke positively about the Fish Population Monitoring Workshop and expressed anticipation for the report and timely movement on the next steps.
 - Dave Campbell volunteered to be the Federal Co-chair for the CC.
 - Many agencies expressed optimism for the upcoming water year.
 - Reclamation (and partner's) BA was submitted to the Service at the end of August. Unfortunately, the Service has other priorities to address before they can begin the Rio Grande BO in earnest.
- The RIP Subgroup has been working diligently to fulfil the EC requested revisions to the Program Document. In an informational update, the revisions were presented to the EC during today's meeting. Four (4) additional needs/concerns were identified during today's discussion. The subgroup was tasked with addressing these. The 4 points/request identified are:
 - (1) a continued terminology concern using "RIP Agreement";
 - (2) clarification on the role and scope of the Executive Director with respect to the EC and with specification that the Executive Director will not have unilateral ability to task the Budget Subcommittee;
 - (3) issue of the Service's specific approval role - particularly in advancing the updates to the Action Plan; and
 - (4) sequencing of the tasks for establishing the RIP with respect to getting an early understanding of the potential draft Sufficient Progress Metrics prior to the signing of the Agreement document.
- Today's meeting concluded with a presentation of the Draft RIP Implementation Milestone Schedule. EC members are invited to provide feedback on both the Program Document and RIP Implementation Schedule. Endorsement of the Revised Program Document will be sought at the earliest possible meeting, potentially March 2016.

Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

Next Meeting: February 18th, 2016 from 9:00am to 12:00pm at Reclamation

- Tentative February agenda items: (1) RIP Subgroup update – brief report out on received comments/edits to Program document; (2) RIP Subgroup - attorney report out on needed revisions/edits to the other RIP documents; (3) Adaptive Management Team updates (if applicable);
- Tentative March agenda items: (1) Decision Item: endorsement of revised RIP Program Document (if applicable); (2) Updates on Program and Science Support contract TPEC and selection (if applicable); (3) Discussion on Fish Population Monitoring Workshop draft report (if applicable); (4) Minnow Action Team updates (if applicable);

Executive Committee Meeting Attendees
January 14th, 2016

Attendees:

<i>Representative</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Seat</i>
Rick Billings (A)	Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority	Non-federal co-chair
Brent Rhees	Bureau of Reclamation	Federal co-chair
Rolf Schmidt-Petersen (A)	NM Interstate Stream Commission	NMISC
Kris Schafer (A)	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Corps
Jennifer Faler (P)	Bureau of Reclamation	Reclamation
Patrick Redmond (A)	Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District	MRGCD
Jennifer Norris (A)	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	FWS
Janet Jarratt (P; via conference call)	Assessment Payers Association of the MRGCD	APA
Kim Eichhorst (P)	Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program	BEMP
Frank Chaves (P)	Pueblo of Sandia	Sandia
Tom Turner (P)	University of New Mexico	UNM
Bill Grantham (A)	NM Attorney General's Office	NMAGO

Others

Ali Saenz	Bureau of Reclamation
Leann Towne	Bureau of Reclamation
Ken Rice	Bureau of Reclamation
Brent Esplin	Bureau of Reclamation
Josh Mann	Solicitor's Office
Beth Pitrolo	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
William DeRagon	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Susan Bittick (A)	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Ryan Gronewold	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Julie Alcon	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Dave Campbell	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Wally Murphy	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Jennifer Bachus	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Joel Lusk	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Johanna Roy	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Kevin Cobble	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/BdA
Grace Haggerty (A)	NM Interstate Stream Commission
Chris Shaw	for NM Interstate Stream Commission
Deb Freeman	for NM Interstate Stream Commission

Rich Valdez	SWCA/ISC
Kyle Harwood	BBD/City of Santa Fe
Rick Carpenter	BBD/City of Santa Fe
Maria O'Brien	ABCWUA
Anne Marken	MRGCD
Marta Wood	Alliant Environmental (note taker)