

Fiscal Planning Committee Meeting
February 16, 2021

Meeting Materials:

Agenda

Minutes

MRGESCP Legislation 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act [read-ahead]

MRGESCP LTP [read-ahead, not included]

Program Planning & Signatory Input Timeline [read-ahead]

Charter for FPC of the MRGESCP [follow-up, not included]



Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program

Est. 2000

Fiscal Planning Committee (FPC) Meeting Agenda

Date: February 16, 2021

Time: 1:00 – 3:00pm

Location: Zoom Meeting

Zoom Call-in Information

Link: <https://west-inc.zoom.us/j/8983593120>

Call-In: +1-669-900-6833

Meeting ID: 898-359-3120M

Passcode: 1251

Meeting Objectives:

- Select FPC co-chairs
- Develop proposal for fiscal year 2021 (FY21) + cost share reporting
- Develop an administrative out-planning schedule for the Program

1:00 – 1:05

Welcome

- Introductions
- Agenda Review
- **Decision:** Approve meeting agenda

*Grace Haggerty,
Non-Federal Co-
chair; Lynette
Giesen, Federal Co-
chair*

1:05 – 1:15

Co-Chair Selection Recommendations

- Co-chair term
- Selection of co-chairs
- **Decision:** Selection of a Non-Federal and a Federal Co-Chair

*Julie Dickey,
Program Support
Team (PST)*

1:15 – 2:00

Cost Share Changes

- Purpose
- Changes

Group Discussion

Read-ahead:

- 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act
- ✓ **Action Item:** Summarize proposed changes to cost share reporting for review by the Program's Non-Federal signatories and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- ✓ **Action Item:** Continue the discussion, if needed, at the next FPC meeting, and prepare to report proposed changes at the July 2021 EC meeting

2:00 – 2:10	Break	
2:10 – 2:55	Administrative Schedule	<i>Group Discussion</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose • Components 	
	<i>Read-aheads:</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-Term Plan (LTP) schedule (Section 5.0 of the LTP) • Presentation on signatory input timeline 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Action Item: Refine the administrative schedule in the LTP to inform the Program’s and its signatory’s out-planning efforts 	
2:55 – 3:00	Meeting Review	<i>Lynette G., Grace H., and Julie D.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action items • Next meeting 	
3:00	Adjourn	



Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program

Est. 2000

Fiscal Planning Committee (FPC) Draft Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2021; 1:00 PM–3:00 PM
Location: Zoom Meeting

Decisions:

- ✓ Approval of February 16, 2021 FPC meeting agenda
- ✓ Co-chair selection:
 - Non-federal co-chair – Grace Haggerty, New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission (NMISC)
 - Federal co-chair – Debra Hill, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Action Items:

WHO	ACTION ITEM	BY WHEN
Program Support Team (PST)	Send out a Doodle Poll to schedule the April FPC meeting	2/18/2021
PST	Send the FPC Charter with the meeting follow-up	2/18/2021
PST	Prepare a proposal for changing cost share that can be facilitated by the Adaptive Management Relational Database (AMRDB), and used to inform annual report development	April meeting
PST	Edit the Long-Term Plan administrative schedule as discussed during the February meeting	April meeting
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)	Discuss changes to the MRGESCP's non-federal cost share requirement with the Department of the Interior Solicitor	April meeting
FPC	Review FPC co-chair selections in six-months (September [fall] 2021)	Fall 2021

Next Meeting: April 2021

Meeting Minutes

Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

Julie Dickey, PST, opened the meeting, led introductions, and reviewed the February 16, 2021 meeting agenda. The group briefly discussed the purpose of the FPC meeting, and participants made the following points:

- FPC members may want to discuss a way to share the activities their organizations are interested in contributing to, with money or staff hours (e.g., southwestern willow flycatcher projects). Group members may also want to share the expertise they bring to the fiscal aspect of the MRGESCP.
- All meeting minutes will be made available on the Program Portal.

✓ **Decision:** The FPC approved the February 16, 2021 FPC meeting agenda

Co-Chair Selection Recommendations

Julie D. opened discussion on co-chair selection with a brief history of the FPC, its purpose, and the role of the co-chairs. The main points are below:

- The FPC was formed to coordinate on resources for work products recommended by the MRGESCP.
- The PST will provide the EC-approved FPC Charter in the meeting follow-up.
- There is no set FPC membership. The meeting agendas determine the signatories that need to send a representative.
- The role of the FPC co-chairs is to work with the PST and the rest of the FPC to identify signatory funding needs, plan agenda topics, lead group discussions, and help ensure work products are completed.
- Co-chairs have one-year terms with the option for a one-year renewal.

The group then discussed co-chair selection. Main points are below:

- Lynette Giesen, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, stepped down as the FPC Federal Co-chair.
- Debra Hill, USFWS, was selected as the new FPC Federal Co-chair.
- Grace Haggerty, NMISC, will continue to serve as the No-federal Co-chair.
 - Grace requested that the subject of FPC co-chair renewal be addressed in six-months (September 2021) rather than in one year

➤ **Action Item:** The FPC will review co-chair selections in six-months (September 2021)

Cost Share Changes

Debbie Lee, PST, opened discussion on changes to cost share reporting. The main points are below:

- The EC requested that the FPC develop a proposal for how to change cost share to be less onerous, objective-driven, and useful to the MRGESCP.
- Current cost share reporting includes staffing hours and actual expenditures via contracts.
- According to the 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's budget for activities under the 2003 and subsequent Biological Opinions (BO) and activities under the MRGESCP's Long-Term Plan (LTP) entails a 25 percent non-federal cost share.
- At its last meeting, the EC discussed the continued need and utility of collecting and reporting cost-share information, as it is currently not being used.
 - The objective for collecting cost-share needs to be redefined.

- One use could be reporting cost share to Congress to try to get funding.
 - One reason to report cost share is that it is important for the MRGESCP to understand the effort being put into MRG issues.
- What would be helpful in reporting cost share to ensure continued signatory participation in the MRGESCP?
 - The City of Albuquerque Open Space Division could put out an annual report to capture the picture on activities happening in the bosque. It could include volunteer hours, amount of trees/shrubs planted, tracking funding to restoration projects.
 - That could be sent to the MRGESCP. It may get others interested in funding the activities.
- Big picture is more useful to the MRGESCP. Reporting should focus on MRGESCP accomplishments instead of costs so that the MRGESCP can tell its story as it supports science that informs management in the MRG.
 - Reporting big picture accomplishments is more helpful to USACE and others for continued funding.
- The conversation on cost share also informs changes to the annual report.
- Suggestion that one newsletter issue could cover signatory contributions; it does not have to be comprehensive and could highlight 10 accomplishments in a year.
 - It would be easy access before an EC meeting and could be discussed at the meeting if appropriate.
 - Newsletters come out more frequently than annual reports, and signatories could continually submit write-ups about their accomplishments. This would keep projects in the forefront of people's minds.
- The Adaptive Management Relational Database (AMRDB) will be a useful reporting tool also. Projects will be uploaded into the AMRDB to track their progress. The AMRDB also identifies links between projects and goals, objectives, etc. The information could be used to inform a big picture report on annual activities, including progress on addressing Program objectives and linked scientific uncertainties.
- Are we limiting what is considered part of the MRGESCP?
 - It is difficult for signatories to figure out what should be considered cost share.
 - Once a project is in the AMRDB, it could be part of the MRGESCP.
 - Projects (e.g., final reports, data, findings) should have to be shared with the MRGESCP and incorporated into the decision-making tools and recommendation process to be considered part of the MRGESCP.
- Instead of listing how many hours each MRGESCP participant contributed, the report can show signatory participation in each Program committee and ad hoc group and what the groups accomplished.
 - For what purpose? What story would that tell?
- There is interest in using the AMRDB to help identify contributing partners and resources for projects.
 - The MRGESCP needs to figure out a simple way to get that information from signatories.
 - Collaborative information can also be shared in other ways, including meetings.
- Suggestion that the annual report be made more useful in this effort, with the top three signatory accomplishments and some total stats. If there are specific projects that are very collaborative, those can be highlighted.
- The Potomac partners report is an example of a good annual report.
- The annual report could be four pages max and very graphical.

- The PST will put together a proposal to make cost share interface with the AMRDB and the annual report, including recommendations for a new annual report format.
- The FPC participants agreed to recommend that the 25 percent non-federal cost share requirement be removed.
 - Reclamation will discuss changes to the MRGESCP's non-federal cost share requirement with Department of the Interior Solicitor.
- Does the FPC find funding for projects?
 - Yes, there are projects (scopes of work) that have been developed from MRGESCP efforts, and the FPC has and will continue to work to identify funding for them.
 - There is interest in pursuing ongoing, reliable funding for projects versus one-time funding.
 - The FPC can help signatories go after grant money, develop messaging for non-federal partners to take to the legislature, and help create partnerships, so going after one-time funding is not as difficult.
- We may want to consider a new name for cost share, for example, "signatory reporting."
- **Action Item:** Prepare a proposal for changing cost share that can be facilitated by the AMRDB, and used to inform annual report development
- **Action Item:** Reclamation will discuss changes to the MRGESCP's non-federal cost share requirement with the Department of the Interior Solicitor
- **Action Item:** The PST will send the FPC Charter with the meeting follow-up

Administrative Schedule

Julie D. led a discussion on the administrative schedule in the LTP (see Table 2 in the LTP). The main points are below:

- The administrative schedule includes periods that inform funding cycles, planning schedules, and tasks to be done to maintain Program operations.
- The schedule is divided by the responsible Program group.
- How will the SAMC release priority activities?
 - The SAMC is still figuring out the process, but it was initially thought that the SAMC would determine priority objectives or scientific uncertainties based on the species conceptual ecological models (CEMs). Scientific activities are linked to scientific uncertainties, and can be prioritized based on the uncertainties. As uncertainties are addressed and CEMs are updated, priorities will change.
- Everyone should know priorities as early as possible to help organize funding.
- At a future meeting, the FPC needs to discuss the communication process between the FPC and SAMC in coordination with the Program Manager and Science Coordinator.
- The University of New Mexico submitted a request to the New Mexico congressional delegation for funding of MRGESCP federal signatory projects.
- With decreases in funding resources, Reclamation is promoting one-time funding sources, such as WaterSMART grants.
 - Signatories could request MRGESCP support to go after funding.
- Can WEST help pursue grants?
 - WEST can assist within the boundaries of the Program and Science Support contract.
- There are several reports listed in the administrative schedule, and the AMRDB will make preparing them easier.

- **Action Item:** The PST will edit the Long-Term Plan administrative schedule as discussed during the February meeting

Meeting Review

The FPC reviewed action items and discussed a date for the next meeting.

- The PST will send out a Doodle Poll to schedule a meeting for the end of April
- **Action Item:** The PST will send out a Doodle Poll to schedule the April FPC meeting

Meeting Participants

Alyssa O'Brien	City of Albuquerque Open Space
Anne Marken	Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District
Ashlee Rudolph	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Colleen McRoberts	City of Albuquerque Open Space
Debbie Lee	Program Support Team
Debra Hill	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Grace Haggerty	New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission
Julie Dickey	Program Support Team
Lynette Giesen	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Mark Kelly	Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Authority
Michelle Tuineau	Program Support Team

**MIDDLE RIO GRANDE ENDANGERED SPECIES COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM
Legislation**

OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2009, **PL 111-8**, March 11, 2009, 123 Stat 524

SEC. 106. Section 121 of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2006 (Public Law 109–103; 119 Stat. 2256) is amended by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

“(a) Hereafter, the Secretary of the Army may carry out and fund planning studies, watershed surveys and assessments, or technical studies at 100 percent Federal expense to accomplish the purposes of the 2003 Biological Opinion described in section 205(b) of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2005 (Public Law 108–447; 118 Stat. 2949) as amended by subsection (b) or any related subsequent biological opinion, and the collaborative program long-term plan. In carrying out a study, survey, or assessment under this subsection, the Secretary of the Army shall consult with Federal, State, tribal and local governmental entities, as well as entities participating in the Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program referred to in section 205 of this Act: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Army may also provide planning and administrative assistance to the Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program, which shall not be subject to cost sharing requirements with non-Federal interests.”.

SEC. 203. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this or any other Act may be used to pay the salaries and expenses of personnel to purchase or lease water in the Middle Rio Grande or the Carlsbad Projects in New Mexico unless said purchase or lease is in compliance with the purchase requirements of section 202 of Public Law 106–60.

SEC. 206. (a) Section 209 of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2004 (Public Law 108–137; 117 Stat. 1850) is repealed.

(b) The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) shall establish and maintain an Executive Committee of the Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program (referred to in this section as the “Executive Committee”) consistent with the bylaws of the Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program adopted on October 2, 2006.

(c) Hereafter, in compliance with applicable Federal and State laws, the Secretary (acting through the Commissioner of Reclamation), in collaboration with the Executive Committee, may enter into any grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, interagency agreements, or other agreements that the Secretary determines to be necessary to comply with the 2003 Biological Opinion described in section 205(b) of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2005 (Public Law 108–447; 118 Stat. 2949) as amended by section 121(b) of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2006 (Public Law 109–103; 119 Stat. 2256) or

any related subsequent biological opinion or in furtherance of the objectives set forth in the collaborative program long-term plan.

(d)(1) The acquisition of water under subsection (c) and any administrative costs associated with carrying out subsection (c) shall be at full Federal expense.

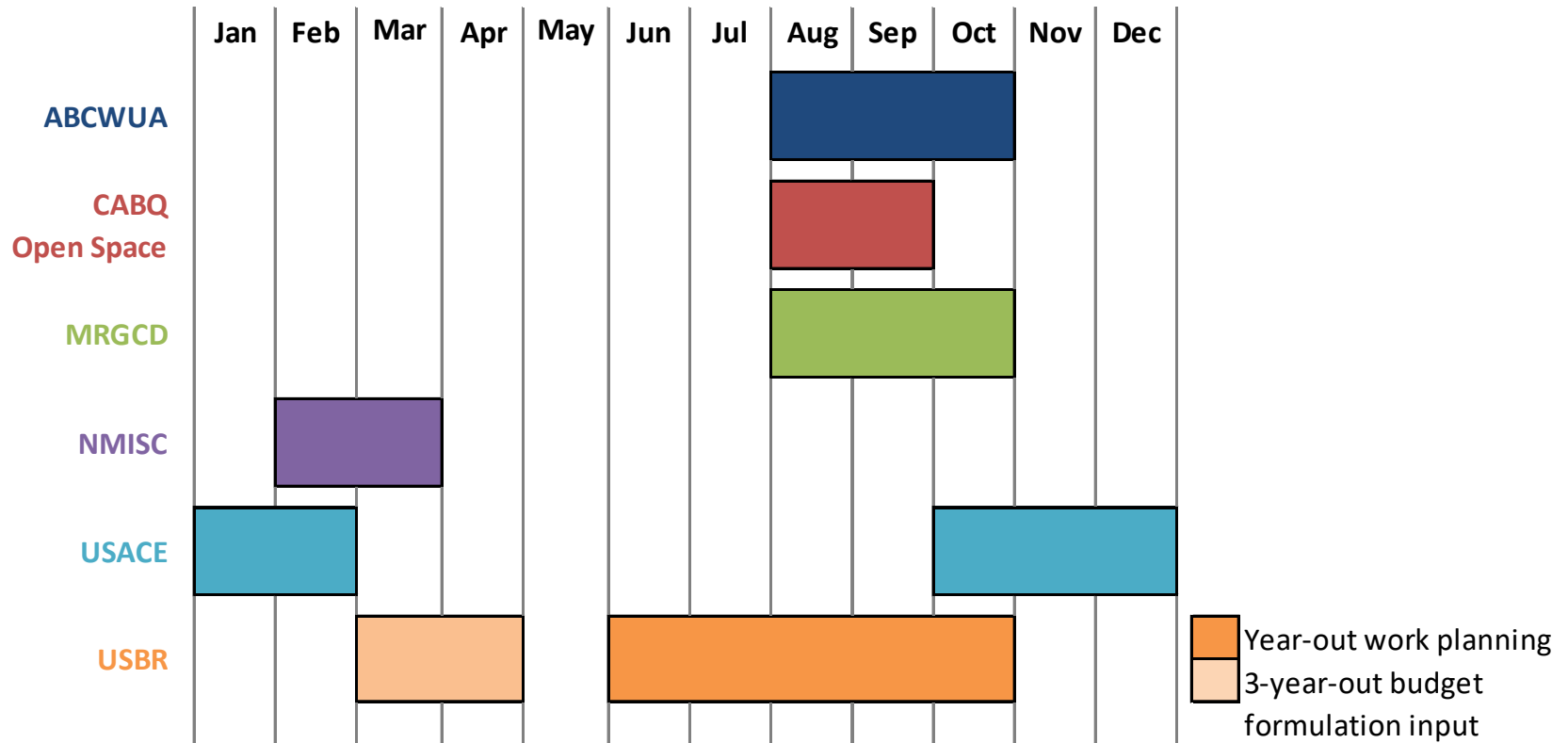
(2) Not more than 15 percent of amounts appropriated to carry out subsection (c) shall be made available for the payment of administrative expenses associated with carrying out that subsection.

(e)(1) The non-Federal share of activities carried out under subsection (c) (other than an activity or a cost described in subsection (d)(1)) shall be 25 percent. The non-Federal cost share shall be determined on a programmatic, rather than a project-by-project basis.

(2) The non-Federal share required under paragraph (1) 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.

(f) Nothing in this section modifies or expands the discretion of the Secretary with respect to operating reservoir facilities under the jurisdiction of the Secretary in the Rio Grande Valley, New Mexico.

Program Planning & Input Timeline



- ABCWUA → Fall (Aug - Oct)
- CABQ (OS) → Fall (Aug - Sept)
- MRGCD → Fall (Aug - Oct)
- NMISC → Feb - Mar
- USACE → Oct - Mar
- USBR → Mar - May & Jun - Oct