

Executive Committee Meeting

June 23, 2022

Meeting Materials:

[Agenda](#)

[Minutes](#)

[Management of Vegetated Islands and Bank-Attached Bars Workshop proposal \[read-ahead, draft\]](#)

[Peer Review Process Cover Memo for EC \[read-ahead\]](#)

[Draft MRGЕСP Peer Review Process \[read-ahead, draft\]](#)

[2022 Collaboratory Proposal \[read-ahead\]](#)

[Hydrology Update for MRGЕСP \[presentation\]](#)

Draft EIS for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project [follow-up, not included]

Proposed rule change for 10(j) experimental populations [follow-up, not included]

CASC FY23 Project Solicitation [follow-up, not included]

City of Albuquerque, Open Space Division planning projects [follow-up, not included]

America the Beautiful Challenge [follow-up, not included]

[Link to full Meeting Materials List](#)

Executive Committee Meeting
June 23, 2022

See the following meeting material on the page below:

Agenda



Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program

Est. 2000

Executive Committee (EC) Meeting Agenda

June 23, 2022; 1:00 PM– 4:00 PM

Location: Zoom

<https://west-inc.zoom.us/j/8983593120?pwd=bU54V3NGeG93bXVISlJFcElzcE9wZz09>

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

Meeting ID: 898-359-3120; Passcode: 1251

Meeting Objectives:

- Hear an update from the Program Support Team on MRGESCP activities.
- Discuss and approve a proposal for a fall 2022 workshop on management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars.
- Approve the draft peer review process.
- Begin planning for the December 2022 Collaboratory.
- Approve having a set membership for the Fiscal Planning Committee.
- Discuss opportunities to increase the management relevance of the Collaborative Program.
- Discuss the 2022 hydrology.

1:00 – 1:05	Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ground rules for hybrid meeting✓ Decision: Approval of June 23, 2022 EC meeting agenda	<i>EC Co-chairs</i>
1:05 – 1:10	March 2022 Meeting Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action items review✓ Decision: Approval of March 23, 2022 EC meeting minutes Read-ahead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Draft March 23, 2022 EC Meeting Minutes	<i>EC Co-chairs</i>
1:10 – 1:30	Program Support Team (PST) Update <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) status• SAMIS update (including EULA status)• Update on science activities	<i>Debbie Lee & Catherine Murphy, PST</i>
1:30 – 2:00	Proposed Workshop on Management of Vegetated Islands and Bank-Attached Bars <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposed plan for the workshop✓ Decision: Approval proposed fall 2022 workshop on management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars➤ Action Item: The PST and SAMC will coordinate planning and convening a fall 2022 workshop on management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars Read-ahead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Management of Vegetated Islands and Bank-Attached Bars Workshop Proposal	<i>Catherine Murphy & Debbie Lee, PST</i>

2:00 – 2:15	<p>MRGESCP Peer Review Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Decision: Approval of the MRGESCP Peer Review Process ➤ Action Item: The PST will update the Long-Term Plan for Science and Adaptive Management to include the Peer Review Process as an appendix <p>Read-ahead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Review Process Cover Memo for EC <input type="checkbox"/> Draft MRGESCP Peer Review Process 	<i>Debbie Lee, PST</i>
2:15-2:25	Break	
2:25 – 2:50	<p>Fiscal Planning Committee (FPC) Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Portal funding options • FPC membership ✓ Decision: Approval of having a set FPC membership ➤ Action Item: Each EC member will notify the PST of FPC membership of their signatory organization ➤ Action Item: The PST will revise the FPC charter to reflect having a set membership 	<i>FPC Co-Chairs Debbie Lee, PST</i>
2:50 – 3:10	<p>Increasing MREGSCP Management Relevance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of FPC conversation • Discussion of incorporating an ecosystem approach • Signatory input and identified opportunities ➤ Action Item: Assignments to follow up on identified opportunities 	<i>Facilitated Discussion</i>
3:10 – 3:20	<p>Collaboratory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals and themes of 2022 Collaboratory ✓ Decision: Approval of Collaboratory proposal ➤ Action Item: The PST will continue planning the Collaboratory and secure a meeting space <p>Read-ahead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 2022 Collaboratory Proposal 	<i>Debbie Lee & Catherine Murphy, PST</i>
3:20 – 3:50	<p>Discussion of 2022 Hydrology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected and actual spring hydrology • Forecast for rest of 2022 • Potential next steps ➤ Action Item: Request the SAMC look at factors impacting Rio Grande silvery minnow spawning and recruitment 	<i>Facilitated Discussion</i>
3:50 – 3:55	Announcements and Public Comment	
3:55 – 4:00	<p>Meeting Summary and Action Items Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Next EC Meeting: September 8, 2022, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM 	<i>EC Co-chairs</i>
4:00	Adjourn	

[Link to full Meeting Materials List](#)

Executive Committee Meeting
June 23, 2022

See the following meeting material on the page below:

Minutes



Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program

Est. 2000

Executive Committee (EC) Meeting Minutes

June 23, 2022; 1:00 PM–4:00 PM

Location: Zoom Meeting

Decisions:

- ✓ Approval of the June 23, 2022 EC meeting agenda
- ✓ Approval of the March 23, 2022 EC meeting minutes
- ✓ Approval to host the proposed fall 2022 workshop on management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars
- ✓ Approval of the Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program (MRGESCP) Peer Review Process
- ✓ Approval of having a set Fiscal Planning Committee (FPC) membership
- ✓ Approval to host the proposed Collaboratory

Announcements:

- ❖ The Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project is available. The comment period for the draft is open until August 1, 2022.
- ❖ The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is proposing to revise the regulations concerning 10(j) experimental populations of endangered and threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. The comment period for the revised rule is open until August 8, 2022.
- ❖ The Climate Adaptation Science Centers (CASC) is soliciting proposals for projects beginning in Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) that inform high-priority natural and cultural heritage resource management issues that can benefit from climate adaptation science and traditional knowledges. Statements of Interest are due by 5:00 PM EDT on July 21, 2022. Invited Full Proposals are due by 5:00 PM EDT between September 13, 2022 and October 27, 2022.
- ❖ The City of Albuquerque (CoA), Open Space Division has several upcoming planning projects. More information is available online at <https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/open-space>.
- ❖ Proposals for the America the Beautiful Challenge are due July 21, 2022.
- ❖ The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is anticipated to fund the Program Portal for \$300k through December FY23, which includes significant development.
- ❖ The Minnow Action Team (MAT) meeting will be held on June 24, 2022 from 1:00 to 2:45 PM.

Action Items:

WHO	ACTION ITEM	BY WHEN
Grace Haggerty	Send information on the proposed rule change for 10(j) experimental populations to share with the MRGESCP	6/23/2022
Colleen McRoberts	Send information on CoA planning projects to share with the MRGESCP	7/1/2022
Program Support Team (PST)	Share the hydrology update presentation in the meeting follow-up	6/27/2022
EC representatives	Contact the PST for the follow-up to the Bosque fire burn site visit	7/1/2022
PST	Update the Long-Term Plan for Science and Adaptive Management to include the Peer Review Process as an appendix and upload revision to the Program Portal	7/1/2022
PST	Revise the FPC charter to reflect having a set membership and upload revision to the Program Portal	7/1/2022
EC representatives	Notify the PST of FPC membership for their signatory organization	7/15/2022
EC representatives	Notify the PST of 1-3 individuals that will attend Science and Adaptive Management Information System (SAMIS) trainings and receive a log-in	7/1/2022
EC representatives	Share Public Information Office (PIO)/Public Affairs Office (PAO) names that should be a part of the public outreach/education for drying in the Angostura (Albuquerque) Reach Administrative (Admin) Ad Hoc	7/1/2022
PST	Convene an Admin Ad Hoc with developing public outreach/education strategies and talking points for drying in the Angostura Reach	7/15/2022
Signatories	Send any documents related to management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars to the PST	7/15/2022
PST and Science and Adaptive Management Committee (SAMC)	Coordinate planning and convening a fall 2022 workshop on management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars	September 2022
EC representatives	Let the PST know of any standing meetings in December that may conflict with the Collaboratory	7/15/2022
PST	Continue planning the Collaboratory and secure a meeting space	December 2022
PST	Coordinate with the FPC to develop a matrix for funding opportunities	Next FPC meeting
Signatories	Send funding opportunities to the PST for inclusion in matrix	7/29/2022
USACE, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), FPC Co-Chairs, and PST	Discuss options for future funding of the Program Portal (after December 2023) and present options to the EC	September EC meeting

SAMC	Coordinate with the appropriate management agencies to compile information related to past jiggles in order to recommend guidance for future jiggles	September 2022
PST	Customize the ecosystem approach for the MRGESCP, to be presented at the Collaboratory	December 2022
SAMC	Formulate options for the strategic management and response to drying in the Angostura Reach for 2023	January 2023

Next Meeting: September 8, 2022; 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Meeting Minutes

Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review

The Federal Co-Chair, Katrina Grantz, Reclamation, opened the meeting, led introductions, and reviewed the June 23, 2022 agenda. The EC approved the June 23, 2022 agenda.

- ✓ **Decision:** Approval of the June 23, 2022 EC meeting agenda

March 2022 Meeting Summary

Debbie Lee, the Program Manager, PST, reviewed the March 23, 2022 meeting minutes and action items (see March 23, 2022 Draft EC Minutes). The EC approved the March 23, 2022 meeting minutes.

Summary action item updates are below:

- The 2021 MRGESCP Annual Report was finalized and posted to the Program Portal. The PST can provide physical copies to interested signatories.
- The PST is working on SAMIS development and trainings. Catherine Murphy will give an update during the meeting.
- The hydrology links were fixed on the Program Portal.
- Kim Eichhorst, Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program (BEMP), provided information about BEMP sites to the SAMC.
- Jim Wilber, Reclamation, discussed the development of potential river drying scenarios with the PST. The SAMC will take next steps.
- The PST had a preliminary conversation with Grace Haggerty, New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission (NMSIC), on using Charles Yackulic's model to address potential river drying scenarios.
- A list of planned signatory 2022 activities was finalized and provided to the MRGESCP. Priority questions were provided to the SAMC.
- All signatories signed the MRGESCP's 2022 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).
- The PST will plan for a hybrid EC meeting in the fall.
- Wayne Pullan, Reclamation, was notified that he is the winner of the 2021 Rick Billings Award. Reclamation is coordinating the delivery of his award.
- The revised peer review process is up for EC approval.
- The PST is working with the signatories to submit 2022 activities for entry in the SAMIS.

- ✓ **Decision:** Approval of the March 23, 2022 EC meeting minutes

Program Support Team Update

Debbie L. and Catherine M. presented updates on MRGESCP activities. Summary updates are below:

- The MRGESCP organized a site visit to the bosque fire burn site behind Bosque School on June 17, 2022. There were 38 attendees. Contact the PST to get any follow-up from the visit.
- The End User License Agreement (EULA) for the SAMIS is close to finalizing.
- SAMIS trainings will begin when it is finalized. The PST will request names and contact information for 1-3 individuals that will attend SAMIS trainings and receive a SAMIS log-in. The PST will set up SAMIS trainings for each signatory.
- The cost estimates and cost share tracking features have been enabled on the SAMIS. Three cost types are tracked: initial estimates (used for scopes of work), refined estimates (for proposal submission), and actual costs. There is a check-box toggle to indicate whether a project is considered cost share.

- The SAMC have several Science & Technical (S&T) Ad Hoc Groups in the works.
 - The Rio Grande Silvery Minnow (RGSM) Conceptual Ecological Model (CEM)/Genetics S&T Ad Hoc is wrapping up modifications to the CEM. Delivery of their work product will initiate a review by a separate peer review S&T Ad Hoc Group. This group will use the new peer review process.
 - The RGSM Hypotheses Development S&T Ad Hoc will evaluate the findings in the Population Monitoring Work Group summary report and propose hypotheses to advance the research of RGSM. The PST will work with the group to prioritize hypotheses.
- Two new S&T Ad Hoc Groups are in development:
 - The Middle Rio Grande (MRG) Habitat Restoration (HR) Monitoring Guidance S&T Ad Hoc charge is under revision and will be reviewed by the SAMC soon.
 - A series of groups is being developed to address scenario planning for climate change. Every effort in the MRGESCP needs to account for climate change.
 - The CoA is working on a plan for the bosque and wants to incorporate climate change as a decision-making parameter. The CoA is interested in seeing how the MRGESCP incorporates climate change into its efforts.
- **Action Item:** EC representatives will contact the PST for the follow-up to the Bosque fire burn site visit
- **Action Item:** EC representatives will notify the PST of 1-3 individuals that will attend SAMIS trainings and receive a log-in

Proposed Workshop on Management of Vegetated Islands and Bank Attached Bars

Debbie L. presented the proposal for the MRGESCP to host on the topic of management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars (see proposal) for discussion and approval. Attendees at the HR Coordination meeting had a robust conversation around this issue and there has been a lot of support for a workshop on the topic. The workshop is tentatively scheduled for October 2022 and to be in-person. The objectives of the workshop are to define the state of and trends regarding vegetated islands and bank-attached bars in the MRG, clarify issues related to management, develop condition-specific criteria for guiding management decisions, determine future approaches to management, and identify strategies for managing under climate change. Outcomes are anticipated to be recommendations for short- and long-term management strategies for EC consideration, research questions, opportunities for partnerships, and topics for future seminars or workshops. There is no standard deliverables from workshops, but the workshop will be outcome-driven. The goal is to develop recommendations. The PST will coordinate a small group to help plan the workshop. A Collaborative Poll on the topic of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars was sent to the MRGESCP. This poll approaches the topic in terms of water, sediment, and vegetation, which should guide the thinking of workshop participants.

NMISC is concerned about the amount of vegetation encroachment due to narrowing of the river. There are past documents related to vegetated islands and bars that should be reviewed, although the research may be out of date. The PST is preparing an annotated bibliography and literature review to develop a summary of the findings in order to inform the workshop conversations. All signatories should send related documents to the PST.

Summary items that came up during the conversation include:

- The USACE recently carried out sediment studies that may be incorporated.

- The CoA is interested in aligning management strategies with river flows, as there are different actions for drier and wetter conditions.
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) used to mow much of the floodway and has good historic information on the topic. Robert Padilla with Reclamation’s River Analysis Group and Ari Posner, Reclamation, would be a good points of contact.
- USACE will provide a list of participants to be involved with the workshop.
- Esteban Muldavin with the University of New Mexico’s (UNM) New Mexico Natural Heritage Program led systematic surveys of vegetated islands in the MRG.

The EC approved the proposal to hold the Management of Vegetated Islands and Bank-Attached Bars Workshop without opposition.

- ✓ **Decision:** Approval to host the proposed fall 2022 workshop on management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars
- **Action Item:** Signatories will send any documents related to management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars to the PST
- **Action Item:** PST and SAMC will coordinate planning and convening a fall 2022 workshop on management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars

MRGESCP Peer Review Process

Debbie L. presented the draft Peer Review Process (see draft peer review process) for discussion and approval. Debbie L. reminded the group that she previously presented the highlights of the draft Peer Review Process at the December 2021 EC meeting as part of the background for forming the Peer Review Admin Ad Hoc. The Peer Review Admin Ad Hoc revised the draft process with SAMC approval. Changes made to the draft document are summarized in the Peer Review Process Cover Memo to the EC (see memo). The final Peer Review Process will be included as an appendix to the Long-Term Plan. The RGSM CEM will be the first test case for the new Peer Review Process.

The EC approved the Peer Review Process without opposition.

- ✓ **Decision:** Approval of the MRGESCP Peer Review Process
- **Action Item:** The PST will update the Long-Term Plan for Science and Adaptive Management to include the Peer Review Process as an appendix and upload revision to the Program Portal

Fiscal Planning Committee Update

Debbie L. gave an update on FPC activities.

Program Portal Funding Options

At the May FPC meeting, the group discussed Program Portal funding options. USACE is funding the Program Portal with its FY22 budget and is requesting approval to extend that budget through December 2023. FY23 funding is not yet certain, but USACE should know by August 2022. The FPC discussed the question of what happens after 2023 and how to secure consistent funding. Non-federal signatories have issues with providing funding for the Program Portal as many non-federal organizations are not set up to fund multiple years, and cannot ensure future funding; the Program Portal has not been updated in a couple years, so funding needs may be higher; and some organizations cannot directly contract with U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) due to USGS’s contracting limitations. It may be

easier for the federal signatories to fund the Program Portal. The Program Portal is a priority for consistent funding each year.

Ashleigh Morris, Office of the Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior, previously determined that pooling money to fund the Program Portal is not legally possible in MRGESCP. The EC considered rotating funding of the Program Portal, but the cost is too high per year for non-federal signatories like the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD). If funding is rotated, Reclamation can contract with USGS and other signatories can provide additional funding. Base maintenance of the Program Portal is 70k per year but there would be no updates to the mapper or new development. USACE is currently funding at 300k for 1.5 years with development included.

Signatories may be able to contribute to the Program Portal by funding specific improvements, developing tools that would be hosted on the Program Portal. For example, NMISC worked with USGS to develop the RioRestore geospatial database. It may be easier for non-federal signatories to fund specific improvements versus annual cost.

The EC will table the conversation for now, and the FPC will develop future Program Portal funding options to present to the EC at the September 2022 meeting.

FPC Membership

The FPC also discussed moving to a set group membership. Currently, the FPC agenda is sent to the EC prior to a meeting, and EC members decide which individuals should attend based on the topics to be discussed. It is difficult to plan and schedule meetings without knowing who will attend. The FPC recommends the EC approve moving to set membership. The EC will still be made aware of the FPC meeting agendas and will be able to send additional participants to the meeting. The FPC will not be more exclusive, but it would be more productive to have a set of point people from each signatory to plan around. The EC is asked to provide names for FPC membership.

The EC approved moving to set FPC membership without opposition.

- ✓ **Decision:** Approval of having a set FPC membership
- **Action Item:** USACE, Reclamation, FPC Co-Chairs, and PST will discuss options for future funding of the Program Portal (after December 2023) and present options to the EC
- **Action Item:** PST will revise the FPC charter to reflect having a set membership and upload revision to the Program Portal
- **Action Item:** EC representatives will notify the PST of FPC membership for their signatory organization
- ❖ **Announcement:** The USACE is anticipated to fund the Program Portal for \$300k through December FY23, which includes significant development.

Increasing MREGSCP Management Relevance

Summary of FPC conversation

Debbie L. opened discussion on increasing the management relevance of the MRGESCP. This topic came from the FPC; the group discussed the need to empower the MRGESCP and its signatories to go after and justify funding. Funding priorities have shifted to be more large scale (e.g., America the Beautiful Challenge and River Stewardship Program). To secure these long-term, stable funding opportunities, we need to connect actions for specific species to larger ecosystem priorities, like climate change and

habitat connectivity. This push is not just coming from funding opportunities but from management and science priorities as we deal with drastic changes to our system. Management for the future needs to be system-wide. There are potential big dollar needs in the MRG as water becomes scarcer and the river changes. There is funding available specifically for collaborative initiatives. The MRGESCP needs to react more quickly to stop missing funding opportunities. There may be a need to start scouring for grants and funding opportunities for MRG projects.

Incorporating an Ecosystem Approach

To meet the funding opportunities that have become available, the FPC proposes the MRGESCP move to an ecosystem approach when developing and implementing activities and pursuing funding. The MRGESCP would not move away from endangered species but would additionally incorporate big picture effects on the ecosystem. The ecosystem approach is an established concept that has a framework, which can be adapted for the MRGESCP.

The EC agreed that an ecosystem approach aligns with their goals and would bring broader funding opportunities. The group hopes the MRGESCP could become a model for similar programs in the Southwest. There was no EC opposition to moving to an ecosystem approach. The PST is adding evaluation criteria from funding opportunities into the SAMIS to quickly make connections to ongoing and proposed projects. The Collaboratory will help show the management relevance of the MRGESCP, which should also help with securing funding.

Funding Opportunities

The EC discussed available funding opportunities. Summary items are below:

- WaterSMART is increasing funding for restoration. It is suggested to submit proposals a month before they are due. Cost share may need to be coordinated.
 - Significant funding was given to WaterSMART grants. Katrina G. can share a one-pager on WaterSMART opportunities. There are potential additional funding opportunities due to drought.
- The CASC has a call for proposals concerning the vulnerability of the Rio Grande basin to climate change. The CASC encourages collaborative efforts.
- The PST can help coordinate information on funding opportunities, but cannot apply for funding. Individual partners will be needed to securing funding.
- Catherine M. attended the America the Beautiful Challenge application webinar. It was communicated that large-scale grant programs are targeting collaborative groups that have had difficulty going after funding in the past. The proposal process needs to be carried out quickly. The grant funds over a five-period.
 - Multiple organizations can go after the same grant. The FPC can help coordinate that process.
 - The America the Beautiful Challenge has many different categories for funding, each with different limitations.
 - The America the Beautiful Challenge includes funding for administrative-type efforts.
- The PST will start a database for all these funding opportunities, which should include their purpose, their time frame, whether they require cost share, who is eligible to go after the funding, whether collaborative programs are encouraged to apply, projects that may apply, etc. The FPC will determine what the MRGESCP should go after.

- **Action Item:** PST will customize the ecosystem approach for the MRGESCP, to be presented at the Collaboratory
- **Action Item:** PST will coordinate with the FPC to develop a matrix for funding opportunities
- **Action Item:** Signatories will send funding opportunities to the PST for inclusion in matrix
- ❖ **Announcement:** The CASC is soliciting proposals for projects beginning in FY23 that inform high-priority natural and cultural heritage resource management issues that can benefit from climate adaptation science and traditional knowledges. Statements of Interest are due by 5:00 PM EDT on July 21, 2022. Invited Full Proposals are due by 5:00 PM EDT between September 13, 2022 and October 27, 2022.

2022 Collaboratory

Debbie L. presented the proposal to hold the 2022 Collaboratory (see proposal) for discussion and approval. The Collaboratory is scheduled for December 2022 and will be in-person. The MRGESCP may need to rent a space for the event, which the PST will coordinate. The Collaboratory is designed to add management context to the science being done. It will be held every other December, alternating with the Science Symposium. Signatories will be asked to share their big planning efforts, management priorities, and major questions for the next two years, in order to ensure the MRGESCP is responsive to their needs. The goal this year is to enhance the management relevance of the MRGESCP. All signatories and interested parties are invited to attend. Anticipated outcomes include informing the Science Evaluation performed by the SAMC in 2023, updates to the CEMs, changing Science Objectives and Science Strategies to better align with management priorities, new research questions to design projects around, informing the 2023 Work Plan, and informing SAMC membership priorities. The PST will secure a location and schedule the dates for the event.

Katrina G. voiced support for refocusing the science in order to increase the management relevance of the MRGESCP, and suggested developing a one-page deliverable that can be attached to project proposals to show the work of the MRGESCP. MRGCD likes the opportunity to link up with SAMC efforts.

The EC approved the proposal to hold the 2022 Collaboratory without opposition.

- ✓ **Decision:** Approval to host the proposed Collaboratory
- **Action Item:** EC representatives will let the PST know of any standing meetings in December that may conflict with the Collaboratory
- **Action Item:** PST will continue planning the Collaboratory and secure a meeting space

Discussion of 2022 Hydrology

Debbie L. opened discussion on 2022 hydrology in the MRG. The purpose of this conversation is to share the summer forecast, discuss related activities, and identify opportunities for data collection and scientific research. Carolyn Donnelly, Reclamation, presented a Hydrology Update for MRGESCP PowerPoint presentation (see presentation). Summary presentation and discussion items are below:

- The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) streamflow forecast declined each month in 2022. The April forecast, which is used to develop the Annual Operating Plan (AOP), seemed believable but snowpack disappeared in April and May. The runoff dropped off sooner and more quickly than expected. This is caused by above average temperatures, relentless winds, dust-on-snow events, and lack of additional precipitation.
- Inflow at El Vado, Azotea Tunnel, and Otowi has been lower than expected with a quick drop-off. The 30-day and 90-day outlooks for monthly temperature is above normal and for monthly precipitation is below normal.

- El Vado is under construction and cannot store water. The only water for irrigation is natural flow and Prior & Paramount (P&P) water in Abiquiu (19,599 acre-feet [ac-ft]). Supplemental water is 4,550 ac-ft. When the Cochiti release falls to 250-300 cubic feet per second (cfs), supplemental release will resume at 30 cfs. Reclamation will work with MRGCD will work to maintain wetted habitat. River drying is likely in the Angostura Reach this summer.
- The modification to water operations known as the “jiggle” occurred and did not stimulate RGSM egg production. The parties involved are considering what may have led to this result.
 - Flows may have been too high leading up to the jiggle or the jiggle duration may have been too short, etc. The MRGCD could not take up much water to reduce flows before the jiggle.
 - RGSM eggs were not found prior to the jiggle. Temperatures were also low this year. This is the third year of low flows and a low density of RGSM may need to be taken into consideration.
 - Good information can be collected from the results of the jiggle this year. Every event and response is equally important to learn from and apply to the next time around.
 - If there is interest, the SAMC can do a deeper dive into the jiggle information to pull some lessons learned. Joel Lusk, Reclamation, is looking at the data associated with past jiggles.
 - The MAT will be discussing the jiggle at its upcoming meeting on June 24, 2022 from 1:00 to 2:45 PM Mountain Time.
- As rains continue to come in, MRGCD will continue to divert to meet demands. Flashing is expected below the dams and a lot of over-bank flows are happening. This is impacting egg collection. A Reclamation crew tried to collect eggs but the nets were filled with sediment and debris. Flows are too high to collect eggs.
- The Rio Grande Compact debit, which was at 127,100 ac-ft, increased to 173,000 ac-ft.
- There is now a need for a strategic plan for drying in three reaches, not just the lower two. Reclamation believes it would be a good management relevance opportunity for the SAMC to work on best management strategies for drying in the Angostura Reach to inform future operations.

The EC continued to discuss hydrology in 2022. The MRGESCP may not be the appropriate group to develop an emergency response plan for drying in the Angostura Reach for 2022. The group is large and not responsive enough to meet the quick demand. A smaller group like the MAT would be best for that effort. The MRGESCP and SAMC would better provide recommendations regarding longer term, strategic planning questions. The MRGESCP could produce a chart with specific scenarios and options, which may be helpful for managers.

The EC requested the SAMC provide recommendations on strategic management actions and responses to drying in the Angostura Reach by January 2023. These recommendations can be informed by the strategies carried out in the lower two reaches. Changes may also need to be applied to the lower two reaches due to drying in Angostura Reach. It is difficult to predict the needs in 2023. The MRGCD has maintained river connectivity during dry years by delaying the irrigation season. In 2022, the MRGCD carried out a staggered start-up. The MRGCD anticipates something similar in 2023 but cannot commit to that plan. There is also a limit to how much control water managers will have over potential drying in the Angostura Reach.

Debbie L. noted based on EC conversation that there are multiple kinds of recommendations the MRGESCP can develop, including what data to collect and how to report it, management actions in the short-term, and how to change hydrology infrastructure in the future.

The EC also discussed the need for public outreach and messaging around drying in the Angostura Reach. In a past year, Reclamation sent out a press release for drying in the Angostura Reach, which did not occur. There could be an educational component to messaging, which BEMP can help with. Multiple signatories are interested in sharing a message developed by the MRGESCP. The Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority put out a booklet on drought and a summarized version could be implemented on different platforms (posters, websites, trailheads, etc.). The EC approved formation of an Admin Ad Hoc Group to address public outreach and messaging on drying in the Angostura Reach. Reclamation cautions giving an exact date for drying as conditions change quickly and trust is lost when messaging changes. However, it is important to have a response ready for the public.

There is a question of what happens to the RGSM during drying. NMISC believes there may be a need for a more robust fish monitoring program in the fall. Charles Yackulic's integrated population model can help identify data gaps.

The EC supported the SAMC looking into lessons learned from past jiggles, and developing recommendations for future jiggles. The data on egg collection related to flows is available and needs to be pulled together. Joel L. may be working on this already. UNM believes additional RGSM monitoring will be important to this topic.

- **Action Item:** PST will share the hydrology update presentation in the meeting follow-up
- **Action Item:** SAMC will coordinate with the appropriate management agencies to compile information related to past jiggles in order to recommend guidance for future jiggles
- **Action Item:** SAMC will formulate options for the strategic management and response to drying in the Angostura Reach for 2023
- **Action Item:** EC representative will share PIO/ PAO names that should be a part of the public outreach/education for drying in the Angostura Reach Admin Ad Hoc
- **Action Item:** PST will convene an Admin Ad Hoc with developing public outreach/education strategies and talking points for drying in the Angostura Reach
- ❖ **Announcement:** The MAT meeting will be held on June 24, 2022 from 1:00 to 2:45 PM.

Announcements and Public Comment

- ❖ **Announcement:** The Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project is available. The comment period for the draft is open until August 1, 2022.
- ❖ **Announcement:** The USFWS is proposing to revise the regulations concerning 10(j) experimental populations of endangered and threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. The comment period for the revised rule is open until August 8, 2022.
- ❖ **Announcement:** The CoA, Open Space Division has several upcoming planning projects. More information is available online at <https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/open-space>.
- ❖ **Announcement:** Proposals for the America the Beautiful Challenge are due July 21, 2022.
- **Action Item:** Grace Haggerty will send information on the proposed rule change for 10(j) experimental populations to share with the MRGESCP
- **Action Item:** Colleen McRoberts will send information on CoA planning projects to share with the MRGESCP

Meeting Participants

EC Representative

Organization

Alan Hatch	Pueblo of Santa Ana
Anne Marken	Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District
Bill Grantham	New Mexico Office of the Attorney General
Blane Sanchez	Pueblo of Isleta
Colleen Langan-McRoberts	City of Albuquerque, Open Space Division
Debra Hill	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Grace Haggerty	New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission
Greg Kaufman	Pueblo of Sandia
Jim Wilber	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Katrina Grantz, Federal Co-Chair	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Kelsey Bicknell	Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility
Kim Eichhorst	Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program
LTC Patrick Stevens	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Luke Pierpont	Buckman Direct Diversion
Matthew Wunder	New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Paul Tashjian	Audubon Southwest
Rick Carpenter	Buckman Direct Diversion
Ryan Gronewold	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Shawn Sartorius	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Thomas Turner	University of New Mexico

Participant

Organization

Ari Posner	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Ashleigh Morris	Office of the Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior
Brittney Erdmann	Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District
Carolyn Donnelly	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Dana Price	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Jason Casuga	Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District
Kyle Faig	City of Albuquerque, Open Space Division
Lynette Giesen	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Matt Leister	Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program

Support

Organization

Catherine Murphy	Program Support Team
Debbie Lee	Program Support Team
Kevin Shelley	Program Support Team
Luana Sencio	Program Support Team
Michelle Tuineau	Program Support Team
Sarah Anderson	Program Support Team

[Link to full Meeting Materials List](#)

Executive Committee Meeting

June 23, 2022

See the following meeting material on the page below:

Management of Vegetated Islands and Bank-Attached Bars Workshop proposal [read-ahead, draft]

Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program
Management of Vegetated Islands and Bank-Attached Bars Workshop Proposal
For Executive Committee (EC) Review and Approval
June 23, 2022

The Science and Adaptive Management Committee (SAMC) is proposing a Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program-hosted workshop on the topic of management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars. Based on conversations that happened at Science and Adaptive Management Committee (SAMC) meetings, at Habitat Restoration (HR) Coordination meetings, and with individual signatories, there is sufficient interest, momentum, and management need to propose a 2022 workshop on the topic of interest.

Timing: Fall 2022 (tentatively October)

Location: In-person, TBD (with a virtual back-up plan)

Workshop Objectives:

- Define the state of and trends regarding vegetated islands and bank-attached bars in the Middle Rio Grande (MRG) today
- Clarify and organize the varied issues related to management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars
- Develop condition-specific criteria to guide management decisions regarding vegetated islands and bank-attached bars
- Determine future approaches to management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars
- Identify strategies for managing vegetated islands in a dynamic system under different climate scenarios

Participants:

- Organizations that plans and funds management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars
- Organizations whose work is impacted by vegetated islands and bank-attached bars
- Individuals with expertise in management of vegetated islands and bank-attached bars

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Summary of workshop products with which the SAMC can:
 - Recommend short- and long-term management strategies to the EC
 - Identify research questions for inclusion in SAMIS
- Opportunities for signatory partnerships
- Topics for future HR Coordination meetings

Next Steps:

Upon EC approval of this proposal:

- The SAMC will form a Science & Technical (S&T) Ad Hoc Group to help plan the workshop
- The S&T Ad Hoc Group will work with the Program Support Team (PST) to define the workshop objectives, plan workshop discussion, and develop an agenda
- The PST will coordinate the logistics for hosting an in-person, virtual, or hybrid workshop

[Link to full Meeting Materials List](#)

Executive Committee Meeting
June 23, 2022

See the following meeting material on the page below:

Peer Review Process Cover Memo for EC [read-ahead]



Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program

Est. 2000

DATE: June 23, 2022

TO: The Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program (Collaborative Program) Executive Committee (EC)

FROM: The Program Support Team (PST)

RE: Draft Collaborative Program Peer Review Process

At the December 7, 2021 EC meeting, members approved the charge for a Peer Review Administrative (Admin) Ad Hoc Group to review the draft Collaborative Program Peer Review Process, which was developed with input from the Science and Adaptive Management Committee (SAMC) during 2021.

During the December EC meeting, Debbie Lee with the PST presented an overview of the draft Peer Review Process. The Peer Review Admin Ad Hoc Group met on January 4 and March 10, 2022 to discuss the draft process. The main revisions they recommended were:

- Include review criteria and clear instructions to guide the peer reviewers
- Include a peer review plan for external reviews, in order to ensure a common understanding of the peer review charge and process
- Create and attach templates for:
 - Memos from the SAMC to the EC recommending an external review
 - A peer review plan
 - A review comment matrix
- Where appropriate, adhere to the Information Quality Act (IQA), a set of federal rules and regulations pertaining to data quality control and assurance necessary in order for federal agencies to make decision from that information

The SAMC then reviewed and revised the draft Peer Review Process, and recommended it for EC approval at the June 23, 2022 EC meeting. Highlights from the draft Peer Review Process are provided below.

The Peer Review Process delineates the following types of peer review:

REVIEW TYPE	DEFINITION
Content Review	Checking a document for completeness and accuracy of the content and cited literature

Statistical Review	Evaluating research and sampling designs, and application of statistical methods
Editorial Review	Evaluating a document's style, grammar, formatting, and references
Contextual Review	Evaluating a document's relevance to the Collaborative Program's mission, goals and/or management needs
Legal Review	Evaluating a document's relationship to policy, statute, and case law
Programmatic Review	Evaluating the entirety of a program or initiative with respect to efficacy and relevance of results or targets

The Peer Review Process also delineates and defines four categories of peer review:

- Internal peer review:
 - Internal Administrative Review
 - Internal Scientific Review
- External peer review:
 - External Expert Review
 - Independent Science Panel

The document also contains the following:

- A decision-support flowchart to help guide the SAMC in determining the appropriate type of scientific review to either implement or recommend to the EC
- Detailed steps for carrying out an internal scientific review
- Detailed steps for carrying out an external peer review
- Codes of conduct for reviewers, contracting signatories, third-party contractors, and management agencies to abide by in carrying out a peer review

[Link to full Meeting Materials List](#)

Executive Committee Meeting

June 23, 2022

See the following meeting material on the page below:

Draft MRGESCP Peer Review Process [read-ahead, draft]

Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program Internal and External Peer Review Process

I. Introduction

The Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program (Collaborative Program) is a forum to share, synthesize, and evaluate scientific findings related to the listed species of the Middle Rio Grande; and to use the results of scientific activities to inform recommendations on best management practices. The Collaborative Program's committees and groups are tasked with producing administrative and scientific work products in support of the Collaborative Program's operations and implementation of the Science & Adaptive Management Plan. Administrative work products include documents such as By-Laws, a Long-Term Plan, and annual reports. Scientific work products include documents such as technical reports, literature reviews, study designs, and scopes of work, as well as adaptive management tools like conceptual ecological models and population models. Administrative and scientific work products that are funded and administered by signatories independent of any Collaborative Program committees or work groups are not subject to this peer review process, but signatories are encouraged to adopt these procedures. An organization, whether a signatory or not, may also bring an external work product to the Collaborative Program for peer review.

The Collaborative Program incorporates peer review into its internal processes to ensure robust and defensible work products. Additionally, the Collaborative Program has procedures for seeking external reviews if an issue merits independent appraisal due to its importance for decision support or level of contention.

The Collaborative Program delineates four categories of peer review:

- Internal peer review:
 - Internal Administrative Review
 - Internal Scientific Review
- External peer review:
 - External Expert Review
 - Independent Science Panel

Each category can involve one or more type of review: content, statistical, editorial, contextual, legal and/or programmatic (Table 1). Specifying the type of review that is being requested expedites the process by focusing an individual reviewer's time and attention on appropriate aspects of the work product. The type(s) of review requested will be noted at the time of review.

Table 1. Definitions of Review Types

REVIEW TYPE	DEFINITION
Content Review	Checking a document for completeness and accuracy of the content and cited literature
Statistical Review	Evaluating research and sampling designs and application of statistical methods
Editorial Review	Evaluating a document's style, grammar, formatting, and references

Contextual Review	Evaluating a document’s relevance to the Collaborative Program’s mission, goals and/or management needs
Legal Review	Evaluating a document’s relationship to policy, statute, and case law
Programmatic Review	Evaluating the entirety of a program or initiative with respect to efficacy and relevance of results or targets

In carrying out an internal or external peer review, a clear charge will be given to the reviewers. The charge will identify:

- The item to be reviewed
- The type(s) of review expected
- Review criteria
- Timeline for the review, including relevant deadlines
- The expected deliverable from reviewers

Review criteria are specific guidance to reviewers to direct their review. The charge will indicate if the reviewers should evaluate the work product with regards to specified conditions, which may include:

- Compliance with Collaborative Program requirements
- Responsiveness to an initial charge
- Intellectual and scientific merit
- Broader Collaborative Program impacts
- Implications for management
- Connections to other projects

Internal Peer Review

Internal peer review is carried out within the Collaborative Program and administered by the Program Support Team at the direction of the Executive Committee (EC) or Science and Adaptive Management Committee (SAMC). The two internal categories of peer review utilized by the Collaborative Program, internal administrative review and internal scientific review, are summarized below (Table 2).

Table 2. Categories of Internal Peer Review Used by the Collaborative Program

	BEING REVIEWED	CONSIDERATIONS
Internal Administrative Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance documents (e.g., By-Laws, Science & Adaptive Management Plan) • MRGESCP-authored documents (e.g., Annual Report) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed by all signatories • Contributes to MRGESCP operations • One set of comments from each signatory
Internal Scientific Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S&T Ad Hoc Group work products (e.g., technical reports, scopes of work) • Science and AM tools (e.g., conceptual ecological models) • Signatory or external requests for review by the MRGESCP (e.g., study designs, monitoring plans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewers with relevant expertise • Performed or delegated by the SAMC • May include external reviewers if supplementary expertise is needed • Individual comment forms

Internal Administrative Review

Internal administrative documents that are authored by the Collaborative Program and/or are essential to Collaborative Program governance and operations are reviewed by all the signatories. Examples include the By-Laws, annual reports, and the Science & Adaptive Management Plan. An internal administrative review is conducted by the Program Support Team (PST), which compiles individual signatory reviews, incorporates changes and, as appropriate, catalogs edits and responses to comments when finalizing a document for EC approval.

Internal Scientific Review

Internal technical reviews are delegated by the Science and Adaptive Management Committee (SAMC) to one or more reviewers with appropriate qualifications and relevant subject matter expertise. This type of review is applied to Science & Technical (S&T) Ad Hoc Group deliverables, technical reports, study designs, models, and other work products relating to the science program. A request for a review by the Collaborative Program by an organization (either a signatory or external to the MRGESCP) may also be considered for internal scientific review.

Typically, reviewers are selected from Collaborative Program participants, but if a need for supplementary expertise is identified, the SAMC can request external individuals to participate in the review. Internal scientific reviews are collected via individual comment forms, on which reviewers can provide scientific justifications for their comments, when needed. All comments received are compiled and delivered to the originating authors and the SAMC. Changes and responses to comments are cataloged for future reference. If comments cannot be reconciled based on the strength or validity of findings, the SAMC will consider documenting the question as a scientific uncertainty in the Science and Adaptive Management System (SAMIS).

External Peer Review

External peer review is performed by individuals from outside the Collaborative Program. The review is administered by a third-party contractor to avoid bias. The two external categories of peer review utilized by the Collaborative Program, external expert review and independent science panel, are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Categories of External Peer Review used by the Collaborative Program

	BEING REVIEWED	CONSIDERATIONS
External Expert Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A singular work product (e.g., Science & Adaptive Management Plan, population models)• The topic has a medium-to-high level of contention• The work product may be administrative or scientific	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SAMC recommends & EC approves• Expert reviewers• Administered remotely• Does not require interaction between reviewers and MRGESCP experts• Individual comment forms or a report
Independent Science Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broad, complex and consequential topics• The topic has a high level of contention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Programmatic review• SAMC recommends & EC approves• Expert reviewers• Multi-day, in-person or virtually

- Requires interactions between review panel and MRGESCP experts
 - Panel report
-

External Expert Review

In the event that a work product has a large amount of influence on application of science, quality of management recommendations, or Collaborative Program operations, and involves a high degree of scientific uncertainty, the SAMC may recommend it for an external expert review (see Attachment A). Individuals from outside the Collaborative Program are nominated to perform the review, and support is provided remotely via conference calls or web conference. Reviewer comments may be documented with individual comment forms or a consensus report. The work product under review should be complete enough to provide all necessary information to the reviewers without further need to interface with the MRGESCP.

The administration of an external expert review would be contracted by a signatory organization to a third-party, adding time and cost burdens. Therefore, the SAMC must justify a recommendation to the EC to hold an External Expert Review. If approved, the EC directs the Fiscal Planning Committee (FPC) to coordinate with the signatories to decide which signatory will fund the external expert review. The SAMC may include in its recommendation the format of the deliverable required for the review, such as a consensus panel report or individual comment forms.

The third-party contractor administering the external expert review may be the PST. As part of the administration of an External Expert Review, the contractor develops a Peer Review Plan (see Attachment B) which provides upfront guidance to the reviewers, and establishes expectations regarding type of review, level of effort, deliverable, and deadlines. The contracting signatory shall provide an opportunity for the SAMC to review and provide comment on the Peer Review Plan.

Independent Science Panel

The Collaborative Program has sponsored several Independent Science Panels. These tend to be costly and time-intensive for both the reviewers and Collaborative Program participants. Independent Science Panels are multi-day, in-person meetings with technical presentations from Collaborative Program scientists to the panel members, who should spend time prior to the meeting reviewing relevant scientific literature and other background materials. Given the resource-intensive nature of Independent Science Panels, these are reserved for broad, complex issues that are consequential to scientific understanding and trajectory of research, and have influence on management decisions.

In the event that the SAMC recommends the use of an Independent Science Panel, appropriate justifications regarding scope, impact and uncertainty of the review topic are provided to the EC. An Independent Science Panel requires EC approval and a signatory contracting a third-party to administer of the panel. The third-party administering the Independent Science Panel may be the PST. The contractor should develop as part of the administration of an Independent Science Panel a Peer Review Plan (see Attachment B). The contracting signatory shall provide an opportunity for the SAMC to review and provide comment on the Peer Review Plan.

Following the formal meeting and panelist deliberations, the Independent Science Panel drafts a panel report, which is provided to the Collaborative Program for review. Signatories provide one consolidated

set of comments for their organizations. Comments received are compiled by the contractor and addressed, as appropriate, by the Panel. The findings and recommendations from the Independent Science Panel are presented to the Collaborative Program in a public seminar, and archived in the SAMIS.

Table 4. Comparison of the different categories of review used by the Collaborative Program.

	<u>INTERNAL PEER REVIEW</u>		<u>EXTERNAL PEER REVIEW</u>	
	INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW	INTERNAL SCIENTIFIC REVIEW	EXTERNAL EXPERT REVIEW	INDEPENDENT SCIENCE PANEL
Cost	\$	\$	\$\$-\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$
Time commitment	Low	Low	Medium	High
Clear charge to reviewers	X	X	X	X
Expert reviewers		X	X	X
External reviewers		If needed	X	X
SAMC recommends & EC approves			X	X
Paid reviewers			X	X
Contracting needs			X	X
Panel report			If needed	X
Multi-day meeting				X
Interaction between reviewers and work product authors/ technical experts				X

The detailed process for carrying out an internal or external scientific peer review is found in Section II.

II. Scientific Peer Review

Decision-Support Process for Scientific Peer Review

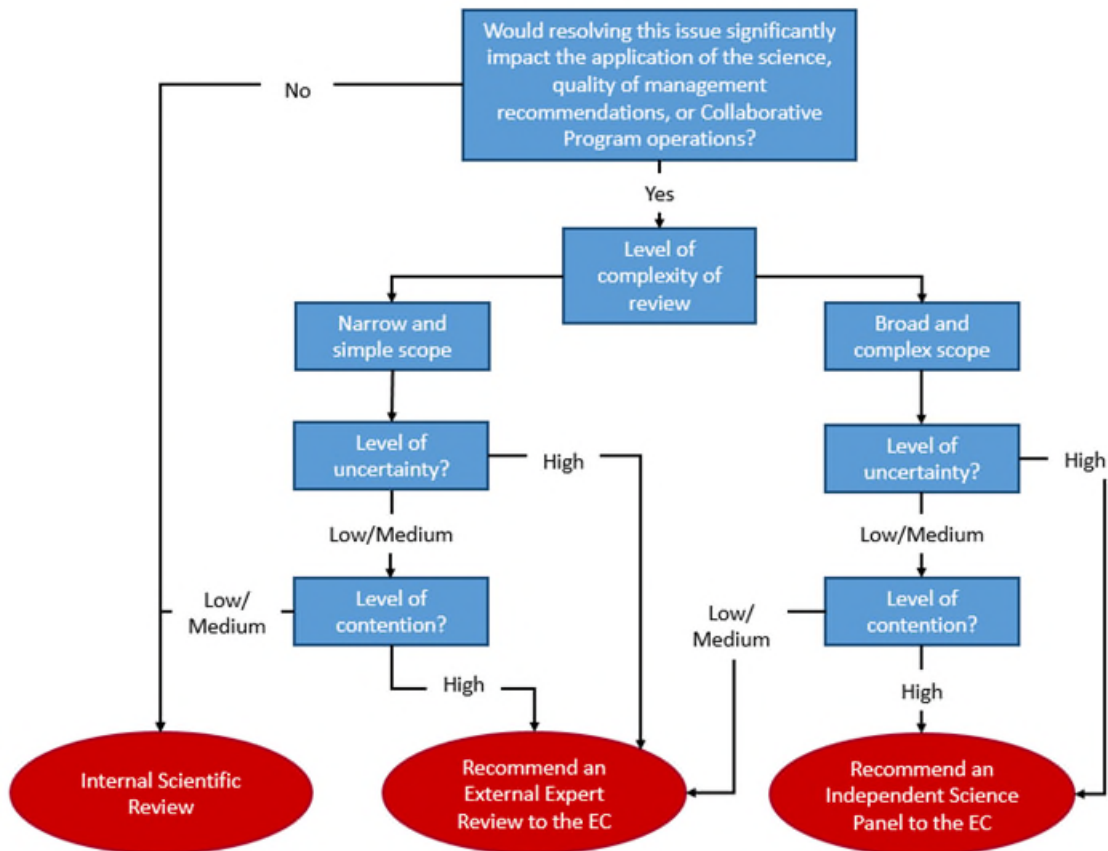
The process of peer review involves different types and levels of assessment, based on the item under review. Considerations for selection of the appropriate type and level of peer review include the scope of the topic, the level of contention involved, the expertise that is available, and availability of time and funding. All applicable reviews should be completely transparent, unless a reviewer or the Collaborative Program specifically requests and justifies anonymity. For a review of an external work product, the originating organization may request an anonymous review process.

Internal scientific review is built into the Science and Adaptive Management Plan and is routinely undertaken for all technical work products produced by the Collaborative Program. External peer review

requires contracting a third-party to administer the review, a greater time commitment on the part of the reviewers, greater costs, and, in the case of an independent science panel, a significant time investment on the part of Collaborative Program subject matter experts.

The SAMC recommends the appropriate level of peer review for a particular work product or topic, as well as the type(s) of review (Table 1) that are needed: content, statistical, editorial, contextual, or programmatic. The flow chart shown in Figure 1 provides guidance for selecting the appropriate level and type of review. This decision flow chart is based on four aspects of the work product or topic in question: the topic’s significance, complexity, uncertainty, and level of contention.

Figure 1. Decision flow chart for the appropriate category of scientific peer review



Internal Scientific Review Process

Each of the Collaborative Program’s technical work products receives some level of internal scientific review. Work products may include, but are not limited to: technical reports and papers; conceptual, statistical and mechanistic models; and literature reviews and syntheses. Most work products are produced internally by S&T Ad Hoc Groups, although the Collaborative Program may get an external request to provide a scientific review of a manuscript, report, study design, monitoring plan, or other item. All internal scientific reviews are under the purview of the SAMC and supported by the PST.

The following steps comprise the Collaborative Program’s internal scientific review process:

1. When the SAMC forms an S&T Ad Hoc Group, it indicates if there is a need for a review of the deliverable(s) in the group's charge, including a list of proposed reviewers and the type of review. Not all S&T Ad Hoc Group deliverables will require a review, but if the topic is influential for scientific understanding due to level of uncertainty or incompatible findings, then the additional review is warranted.

The S&T Ad Hoc Group lead may also submit a request for review of the group's deliverable to the SAMC.

2. After the S&T Ad Hoc Group delivers a draft product, the PST validates all cited references prior to internal scientific review and/or SAMC review. This entails checking that all references have been cited correctly and are accessible. If a reference cannot be validated, the PST will communicate with the S&T Ad Hoc Group lead to either correct or remove the citation.
3. If the SAMC indicates the need for a deliverable review in the S&T Ad Hoc Group's charge, potential reviewers are contacted. Once the reviewers are confirmed, they are given a clearly-stated charge (e.g. type(s) of review to perform, review criteria, and due date), the work product to be reviewed, and individual comment forms to record their comments and provide additional references. If an editorial review is requested by the SAMC, editorial changes can be tracked directly in the document, for convenience.
4. The PST compiles the individual comments received and provides them to the S&T Ad Hoc Group lead, who then incorporates changes and addresses each of the reviewers' comments. If the work product under review is a request from an external organization, the compiled comments are conveyed to the originating authors, and no further steps are required.
5. The revised work product is delivered to the SAMC along with the archive of comments received with responses and changes made. The SAMC reviews the work product and determines whether the findings, conclusions, and recommendations are well-supported or require further investigation or analysis.
6. Supported findings, conclusions, and recommendations from the work product are entered into the SAMIS. Topics identified as needing further investigation or analysis during the internal scientific review or subsequent SAMC review are noted in the SAMIS as scientific uncertainties, where applicable.
7. As appropriate, the SAMC may include recommendations for future scientific work in the next update to Long-Term Plan, to be approved by the EC. Recommendations for best management practices may also be generated during review of these work products and inform the larger context of the science program.

External Review Process

When a scientific topic or question is broad and complex, with a high degree of scientific uncertainty and influence on management recommendations, the SAMC may consider resolving it through an external review. Given that external reviews (i.e. External Expert Reviews and Independent Science Panels) require more resources than internal reviews, the SAMC must justify the need when

recommending an external review to the EC. If the EC agrees and approves such a review, it then directs the FPC to coordinate resources. The signatory that contracts the external review coordinates with the SAMC regarding the charge for the reviewers to accommodate any contracting requirements.

The following steps compose the Collaborative Program's external scientific review process:

1. The SAMC considers a work product or topic for external review based on its scope, complexity, uncertainty and influence on policy, and/or in the event of a deficiency of required expertise within the Collaborative Program.
2. The SAMC completes the proposal to the EC to recommend holding an external review, including: the category of review (External Expert Review or Independent Science Panel), a draft charge for the review panel, the required expertise and desired qualifications for the reviewers, and the specified deliverable and timeline. (See: Attachment A)
3. The EC reviews the SAMC proposal and decides on the external review at its next meeting. If approved, the EC then sends the proposal to the FPC to coordinate resources.
4. The contracting signatory tasks a third-party contractor with the administration of the external review, including the following:
 - a. Developing a peer review plan (See: Attachment B).
 - b. Identifying and vetting of potential reviewers, in coordination with the SAMC
 - c. Subcontracting of reviewers, including collecting conflict of interest disclosures and agreements pursuant to the code of conduct (Section III)
 - d. Providing the appropriate literature and supplemental information to the review panel
 - e. Facilitating the review:
 - i. For an External Expert Review, the review is conducted remotely. The contractor compiles and organizes individual comments, and hosts conference calls or web conference meetings, as needed, with the External Expert Review panel.
 - ii. For an Independent Science Panel, the third-party contractor plans a multi-day meeting, including:
 1. Securing meeting space and handling meeting logistics
 2. Identifying appropriate Collaborative Program technical experts to present to the review panel, and coordinating the content, scope and order of the presentations
 3. Developing a meeting agenda
 4. Running the multi-day Independent Science Panel meeting
 5. Note-taking at the meeting and summarizing discussions
 6. Any necessary follow up
5. The reviewers for either type of review documents their findings.
 - a. External Expert Review: The review panel may submit individual reviewer comment forms, which the third-party contractor compiles and presents with a cover memo to the SAMC for evaluation and recommendations to the EC (skip to step 9). An External Expert Review may, at the request of the contracting signatory, instead provide a consensus panel report (continue to step 6).

- b. Independent Science Panel: The panelists must produce a panel report, which includes findings, recommendations, areas of disagreement amongst the panelists, and all appropriate references (continue to step 6).
6. The SAMC conducts an initial content review of the draft panel report, focusing on responsiveness to the original charge and noting areas where additional clarity may be needed.
7. Collaborative Program experts are given the opportunity to review and provide comments on the draft panel report. The third-party contractor is responsible for distributing the draft report and comment forms, collating and compiling received comments, and providing the compiled Collaborative Program comments to the panelists.
8. In coordination with the panelists, the third-party contractor documents the received comments and how they were addressed in revisions to the panel report.
9. The External Expert Reviewers or the Independent Science Panel panelists finalize their respective work product and the third-party contractor delivers the final version to the SAMC.
10. The third-party contractor and/or reviewers/panelists deliver a presentation of findings and recommendations to the Collaborative Program. The presentations are open to an audience of all interested Collaborative Program participants.
11. The SAMC synthesizes the External Expert Review or Independent Science Panel findings, submits a cover memo that recommends next steps in support of the science and adaptive management program with the finalized deliverable to the EC.
12. The PST records all findings and recommendations in the SAMIS. Important topics that demonstrate incompatible or inconsistent findings, with appropriate evidence, are classified as potential critical uncertainties in the SAMIS. Results of external reviews are communicated to the full Collaborative Program by the contracting signatory and contractor with support by the PST via meeting announcements, the newsletter, the Program Portal, and the Science Symposium or Collaboratory¹. Based on the review, the results may also be included in the annual report. The results and recommendations from an external review will also be used to inform the list of recommended activities in the next update to the Long-Term Plan.

III. Scientific Peer Review Code of Conduct

Peer review is integral to the scientific process and improves the quality of the scientific work products being produced by the Collaborative Program. To ensure the integrity of the peer review process, reviewers and those administering reviews must adhere to the following code of conduct, in addition to the Collaborative Program's own Scientific Code of Ethics and Scientific Principles.

¹ The Collaboratory is a biennial workshop where a synthesis of the past two year's scientific findings are presented in the context of the Collaborative Program's scientific objectives, strategies, and identified uncertainties. Collaboratory participants then discuss planned management actions and identify potential priority questions for the Collaborative Program to address over the next two years.

Reviewers

By consenting to participate in a peer review of a work product, reviewers agree to:

- Disclose any conflicts of interest prior to their agreement to participate in the review.
- Review the work product according to the charge assigned.
- Provide scientific justification for their comments with citations.
- Provide reviews in a professional and constructive manner.
- Have their comments made available to the work product authors, the SAMC, the PST, and to have them documented in SAMIS.

Contracting Signatory

External Expert Reviews and Independent Science Panels are contracted to a third-party to administer. In order to ensure an unbiased and independent review, the signatory that manages the contract agrees to:

- Incorporate the charge developed by the SAMC and approved by the EC into the performance work statement, to the extent possible given contracting requirements.
- Allow the third-party contractor to perform its work of administering the external review without attempting to influence the process, the selection of reviewers, or the findings and recommendations from the reviewers.
- Direct the third-party contractor to follow the peer review process outlined above in Section II, including coordinating with the SAMC on the panel charge, identification and vetting of potential reviewers, and incorporating a SAMC content review of any panel report in the work plan.
- Provide any comments on the panel report as part of the Collaborative Program's opportunity to review (step 7 above).
- Any review by the contracting signatory outside of the Collaborative Program's opportunity to review should focus on contract requirements and not on the content of the panel findings.
- Deliver the reviewer comments or final panel report to the SAMC without further revisions.

Third-Party Contractor

A third-party is contracted by a signatory to administer an External Expert Review or an Independent Science Panel. This entity is vital to ensuring the independence of the review process. To that end, a third-party contractor must:

- Disclose any conflicts of interest prior to being selected as the third-party contractor.
- Protect the integrity of the external peer review process.
- Administer the review in a transparent manner consistent with the steps outlined in Section II.
- Ensure the reviewers have equal access to all relevant information and data in order to carry out the review.
- Remain neutral and unbiased in its treatment of all signatories and technical experts.
- Facilitate reviewers in their work without influencing the outcome of the review.
- For an Independent Science Panel, ensure the panelists hear from presenters representing the full range of scientific opinion.
- Include a Collaborative Program review and comment period for the draft panel report, and ensure the documentation of comments received and how they were addressed.
- Ensure communication of the reviewers' comments, findings, and recommendations to the SAMC.
- For a panel report, ensure presentation of the report's findings to the Collaborative Program.

Management Agencies

The results of a peer review may relate to one or more natural resource management agencies' activities. If a Collaborative Program signatory's activities relate to the outcome of a peer review, the signatory shall:

- Consider the peer review recommendations when implementing relevant activities.
- Communicate to the EC whether a peer review recommendation was implemented.
- If a peer review recommendation was not or cannot be implemented at this time, communicate this to the EC with the justification.

Attachments:

- A. Template for a memo from the SAMC to the EC
- B. Template for a peer review plan
- C. Template for a review comment matrix
- D. Individual signatory requirements for peer review and quality assurance

MEMORANDUM

Date: [DATE]

To: Executive Committee

From: Science & Adaptive Management Committee

Re: Recommendation of [TOPIC] For External Peer Review

On DATE, the Science & Adaptive Management Committee (SAMC) recommends to the Executive Committee (EC) an [External Expert Review/Independent Science Panel (pick one)] on [TOPIC]. The SAMC members, using their best professional judgment, believe that TOPIC has sufficient importance, impact, and relevance to warrant a review, and with a high enough level of uncertainty and/or contention to necessitate the review be administered external to the Collaborative Program. This memo summarizes the SAMC's justification for this opinion, and its recommendations for components of an external peer review.

Importance to Science, Management, and the Collaborative Program

Based on the relationships identified in the Science and Adaptive Management System (SAMIS) and the relevant literature, the SAMC believes that a review of [TOPIC] will help address the following questions and uncertainties:

- [LIST]

These are directly relevant to future scientific activities and management recommendations in [details here]

Additionally, addressing these questions will help the Collaborative Program move forward in its activities related to the Program goals and objectives. Specifically:

- [LIST: i.e., relationship with approved objectives, relationship to management questions, need to address this question in order to initiate future studies, etc.]

Potential next steps from an external peer review of [TOPIC] include:

- [LIST: i.e., New Ad Hoc Groups, updates to CEMS, management recommendations, new projects]

Level of Uncertainty

The SAMC determines the uncertainty related to [TOPIC] to be [high/medium/low (pick one)] based on:

- [LIST: i.e., discussions with Collaborative Program technical experts, published literature, unpublished gray literature, gaps in understanding in the CEMs]

Level of Contention

The SAMC determines the uncertainty related to [TOPIC] to be [high/medium/low (pick one)] contention based on:

- [LIST: i.e., discussions with Collaborative Program technical experts, relevance to management decisions, relevance to policy]

Based on the above, the SAMC recommends the EC authorize [TOPIC] to undergo an [external expert review/independent science panel (pick one)].

Recommended Review Considerations

If an external review is approved, the SAMC further recommends the following for reviewers and their charge.

External reviewers should include the following areas of expertise:

- [LIST]

In their charge, the reviewers should be asked to undertake a [TYPE OF REVIEW]. Specifically, the reviewers should review [TOPIC] with respect to:

- [LIST OF REVIEW CRITERIA]

In sum, it is the SAMC's professional scientific opinion that the Collaborative Program's interests will be significantly furthered with an *[external expert review/independent science panel (pick one)]* of [TOPIC]. We welcome any questions from the EC for further information that will help the EC in their deliberations.

**Review Plan for *[Independent Science Panel/External Expert Review]* of
*[TOPIC]***

Date of Plan:

Contracting Signatory:

Contractor Administering Review:

Contracting Roles:

Contracting Officer (Representative):

Contractor Point of Contact:

Subject of Review:

Anticipated Number of Reviewers:

Charge to Reviewers:

Final deliverable: *(Panel report or individual reviewer comments)*

Type of Review:

Review Criteria:

Timeline of Review:

TASK	BY WHEN

**[TOPIC] Review
Reviewer Comment Form**

Reviewer Name:

Reviewer Organization:

Date of Review:

Comments:

Page	Section	Concern	Justification for Concern <i>(Attach any cited literature with your review)</i>	Recommended Action	Comment Response <i>(For Reviewers Use Only)</i>

Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program
Individual Signatory Requirements for Peer Review and Quality Assurance

Collaborative Program Federal partners must follow the Information Quality Act (Pub. L. 106-554) as amended, and supplemented by agency-specific policies, directives, rules, and regulations (collectively “IQA”) toward “Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility and Integrity of Information Disseminated”; and any CP action or decision that has a federal nexus or influences the operation of authorized Federal facilities or project(s) is subject to IQA requirement.

For Reclamation any Collaborative Program action or decision that relate to the Middle Rio Grande, Rio Grande, or San Juan-Chama Projects trigger implementation of its Policy [CMP-P14: Peer Review of Scientific Information and Assessments](#) that includes requirements toward the application and protocol of peer review of influential scientific information and its dissemination.

Collaborative Program committees and groups will identify potential action or decisions that invoke various IQA requirements; and working with their federal partners, plan how to include IQA requirements within this peer review process.

[Link to full Meeting Materials List](#)

Executive Committee Meeting
June 23, 2022

See the following meeting material on the page below:

2022 Collaboratory Proposal [read-ahead]

**Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program
2022 Biennial Collaboratory Proposal**

*For Executive Committee (EC) Review and Approval
June 23, 2022*

The Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program (Collaborative Program)'s Biennial Schedule has provisions for a December Collaboratory workshop to alternate every other year with the Science Symposium. The Program Support Team (PST) is requesting the EC review this proposal for a 2022 Collaboratory, and approve the PST to coordinate the planning and convening of the workshop.

Timing: December 2022

Location: In-person, TBD

Collaboratory Objectives:

- Summarize and communicate scientific findings
- Define management priorities for the next two years
- Increase management relevance of the Collaborative Program
- Integrate the efforts of the Collaborative Program and the individual signatories to better inform adaptive management

Theme:

Enhance the management relevance of the Collaborative Program by:

- Addressing management priorities
- Proactively planning for the future
- Capitalizing on collaborative opportunities and strengths
- Utilizing system drivers and stressors to strengthen recommendations

Participants:

- Collaborative Program signatory participants
- Any organization managing the Middle Rio Grande
- Individuals conducting science activities with management relevance in the Middle Rio Grande and its listed species

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Inform the Science and Adaptive Management Committee (SAMC)'s Science Evaluation to align science priorities with management needs
- Identify uncertainties for development of research hypotheses
- Identify potential charges and tasks for new Science & Technical Ad Hoc Groups to be considered by the SAMC
- Potential updates to conceptual ecological models

Next Steps:

Once the EC approves this proposal, the PST will:

- Work with the SAMC and EC Co-Chairs on a Collaboratory agenda
- Schedule the Collaboratory
- Secure meeting space
- Coordinate other logistics

[Link to full Meeting Materials List](#)

Executive Committee Meeting
June 23, 2022

See the following meeting material on the page below:

Hydrology Update for MRGESCP [presentation]



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

Hydrology Update Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program

Executive Committee Meeting

June 23, 2022

2022 Forecast vs. Observed Flows

- NRCS' forecast streamflow declined each month
- April forecast seemed believable
- In April and May, much of the snowpack disappeared
 - Above average temperatures
 - Relentless winds
 - Dust-on-snow events
 - Lack of additional significant precipitation
- As a result, runoff dropped off much more quickly than expected

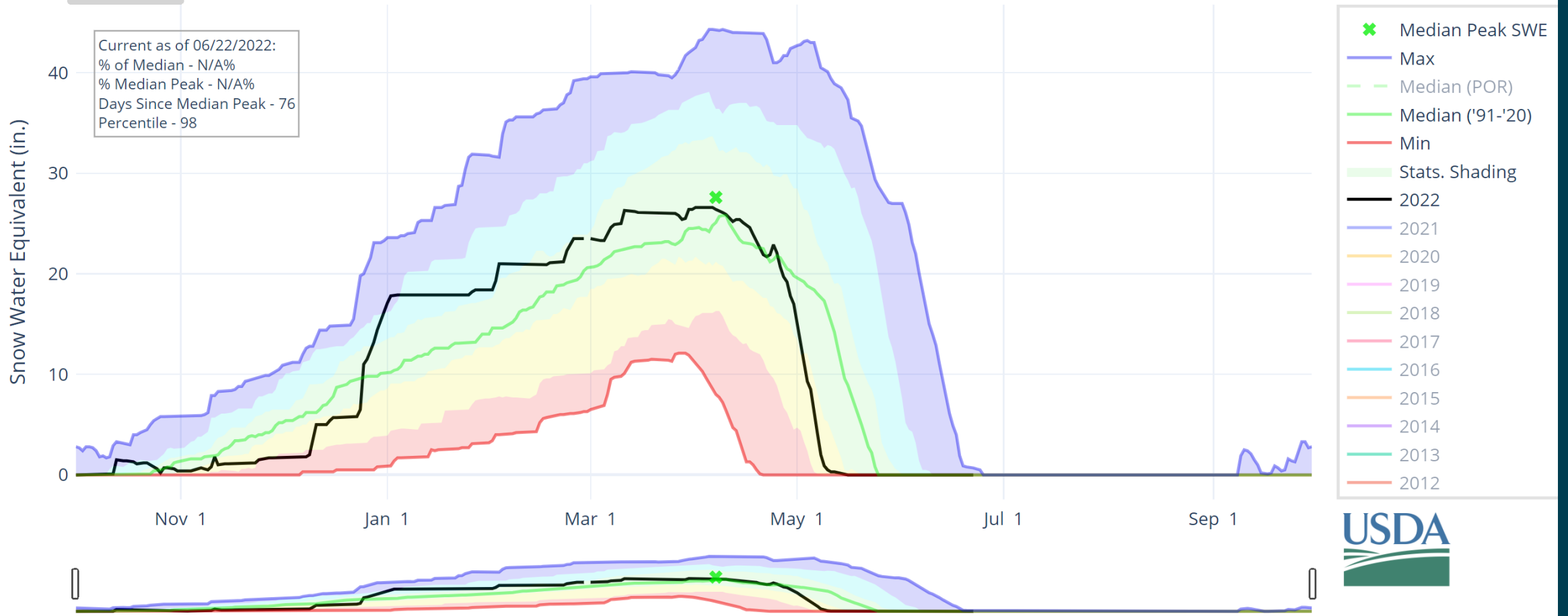


SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT AT CUMBRES TRESTLE

Reset Range

[Link to data: CSV / JSON](#)

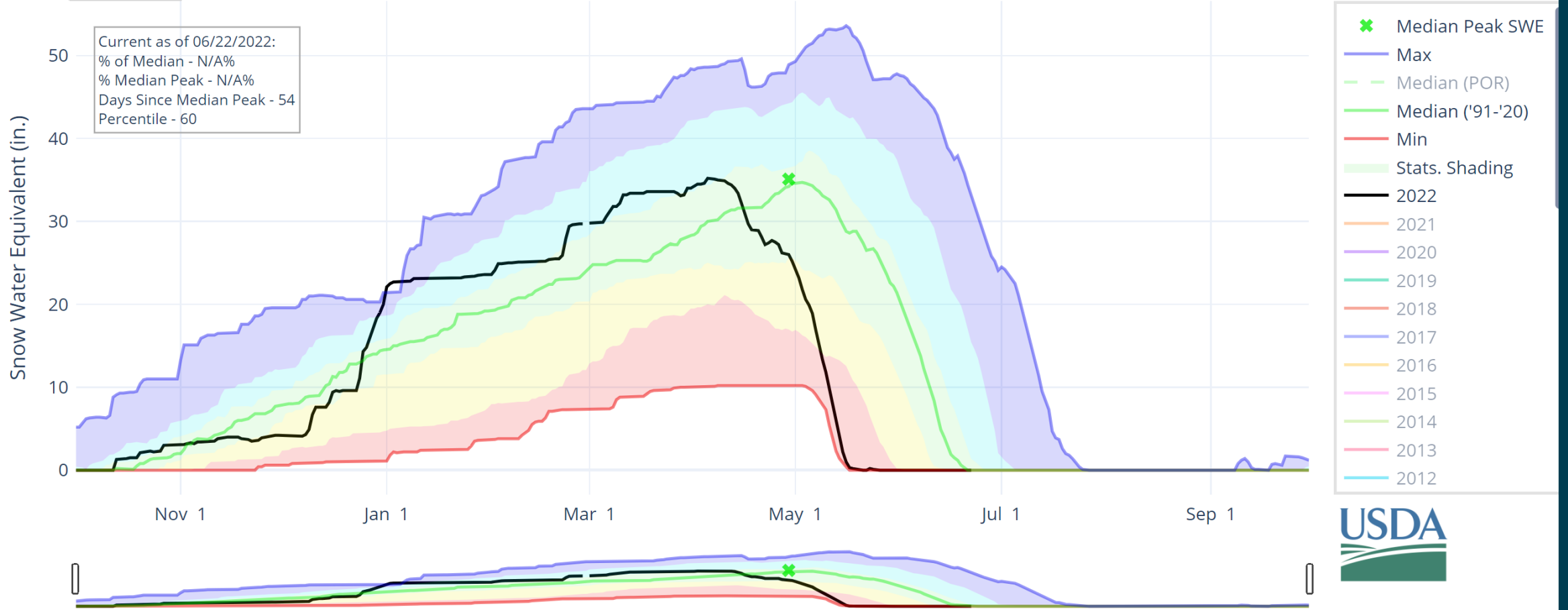
Current as of 06/22/2022:
% of Median - N/A%
% Median Peak - N/A%
Days Since Median Peak - 76
Percentile - 98



SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT AT WOLF CREEK SUMMIT

Reset Range

[Link to data: CSV / JSON](#)

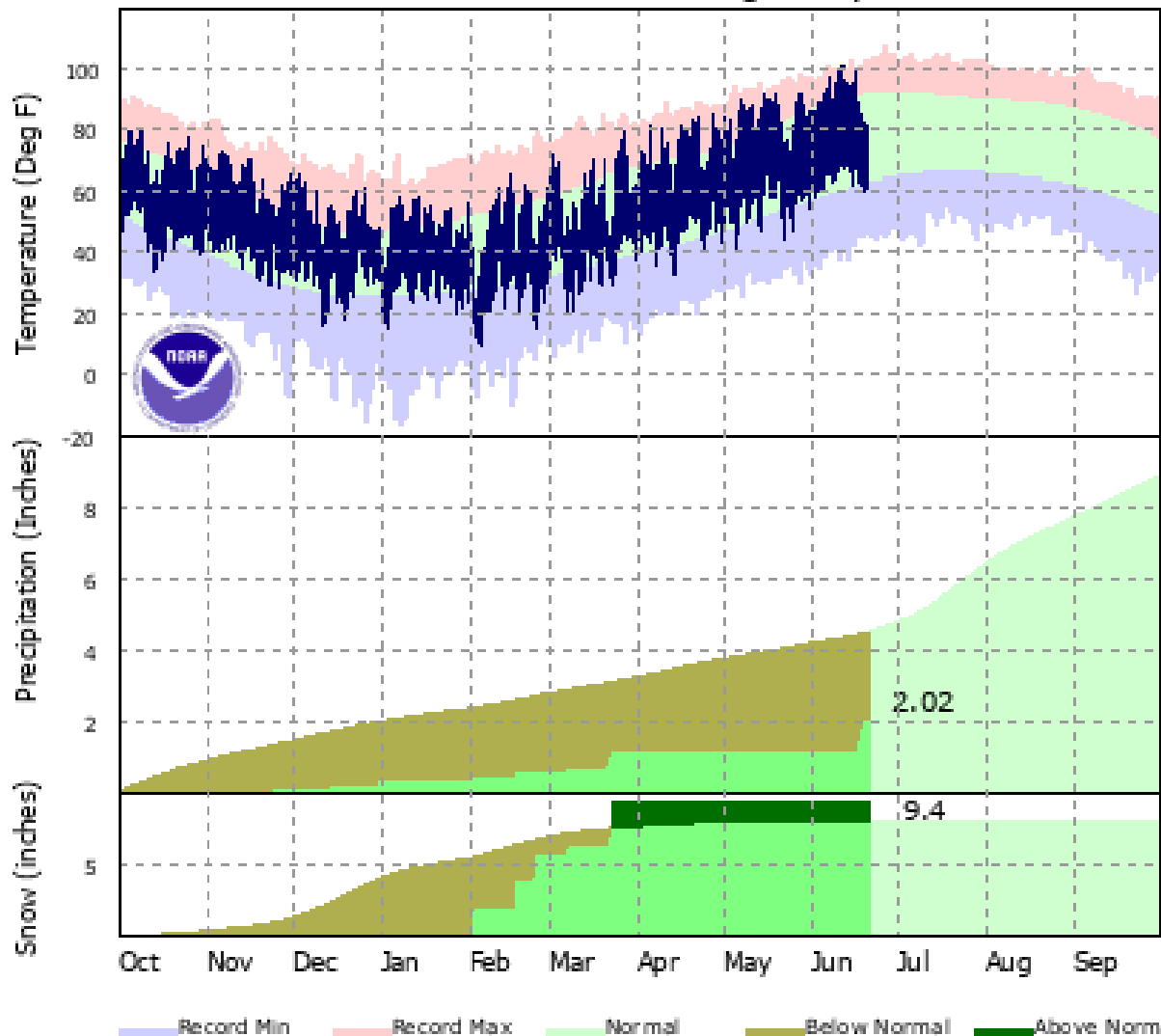


Statistical shading breaks at 10th, 30th, 50th, 70th, and 90th Percentiles
For more information visit: [30-Year Hydroclimatic Normals](#)

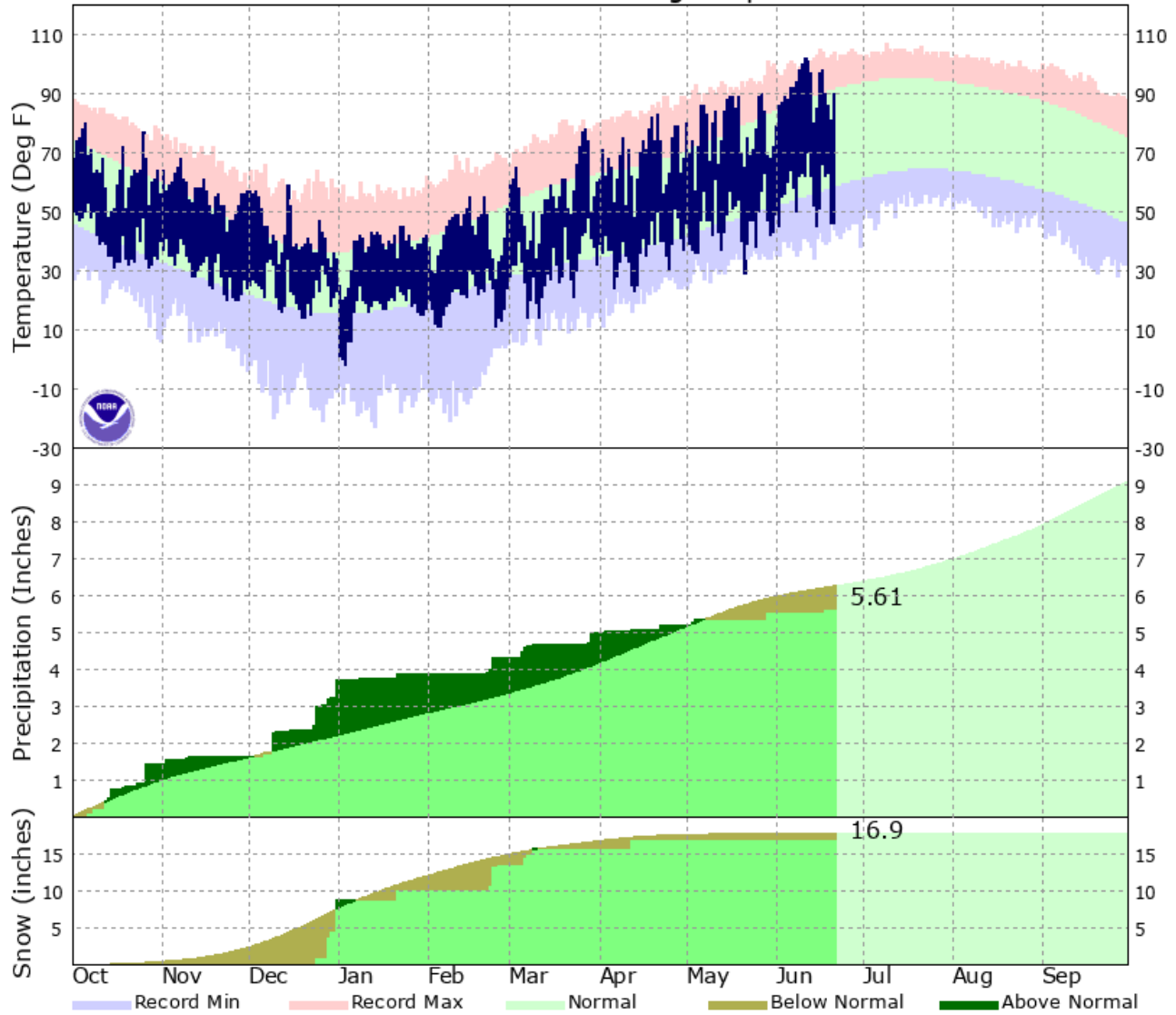
[Feedback](#)



KABQ - Oct 2021 Through Sep 2022

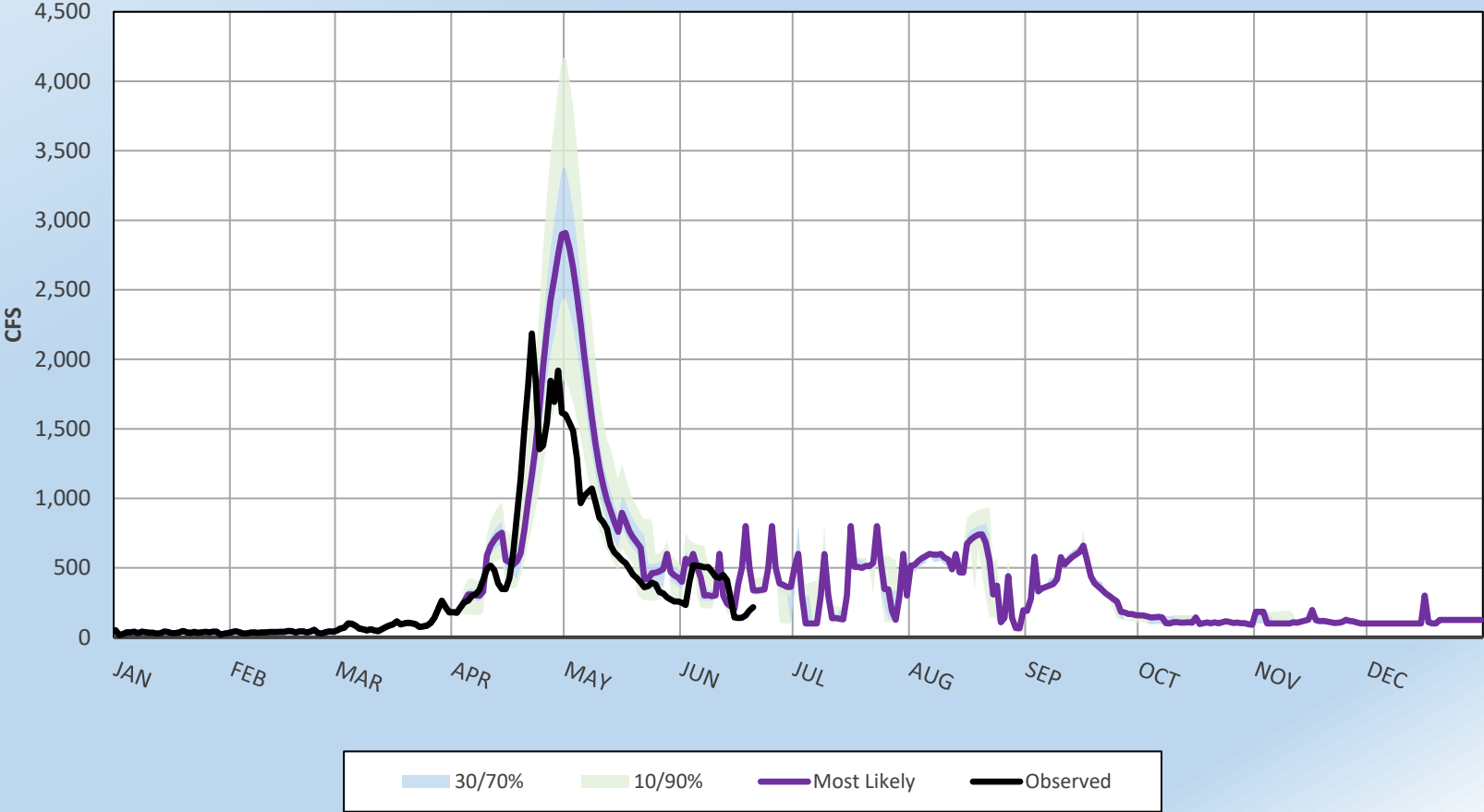


KGJT - Oct 2021 Through Sep 2022



El Vado Inflow

El Vado Inflow



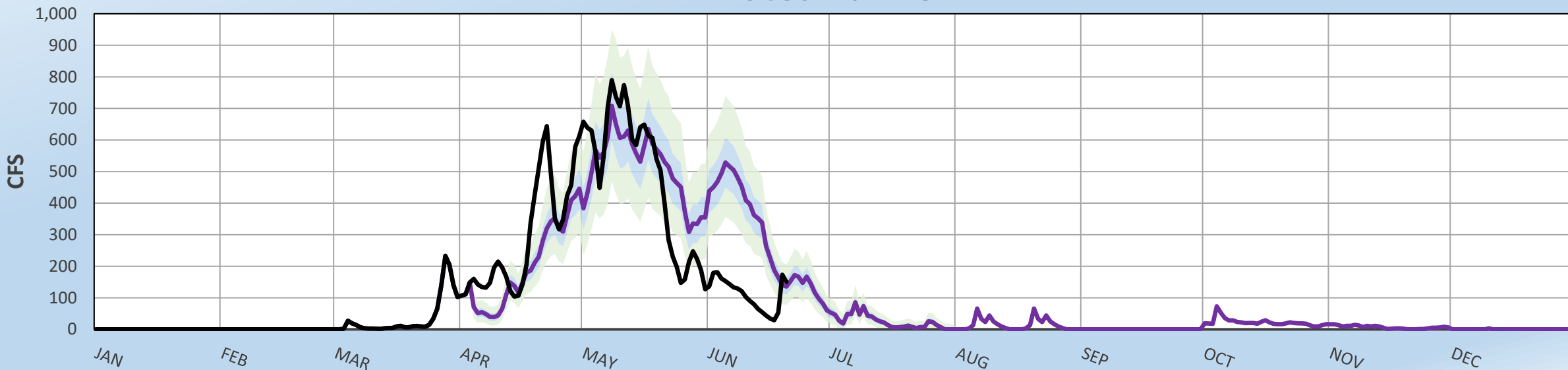
NRCS Most Probable (50%)

March - July El Vado Forecast Inflow

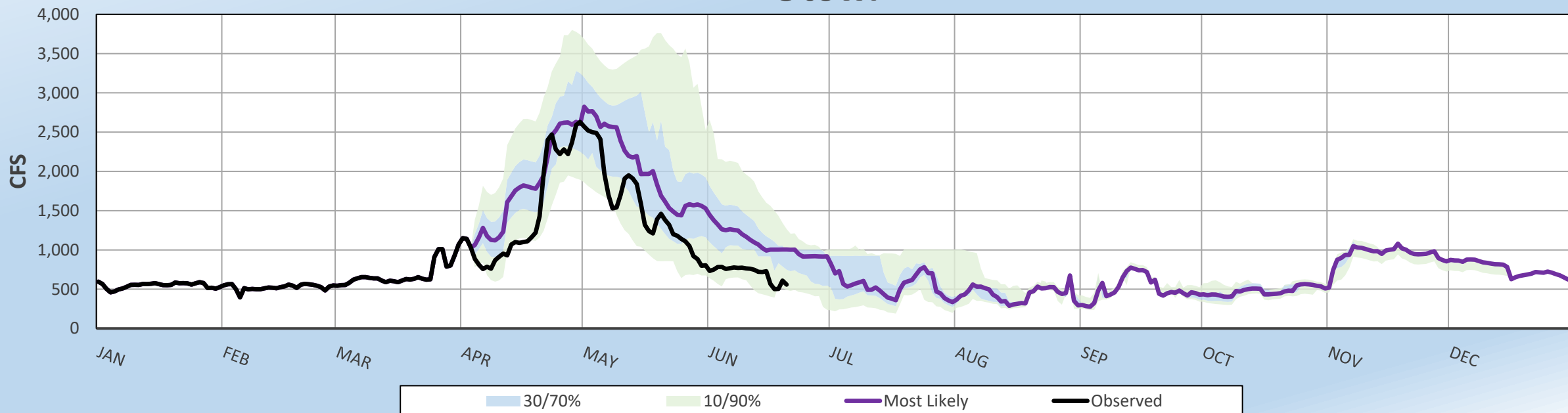
Forecast Month	KAF
January	240
February	164
March	164
April	150
May	124
Observed to 6/20	104



Azotea Tunnel



Otowi



CPC 30 Day Outlook

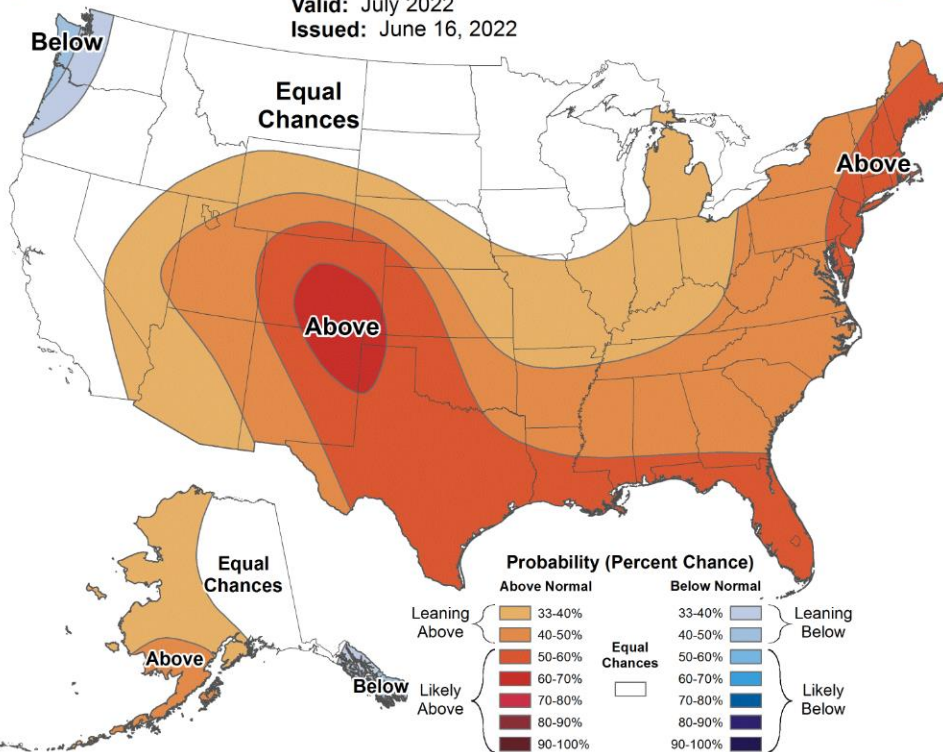
OFFICIAL 30-Day Forecasts

Issued: June 16, 2022



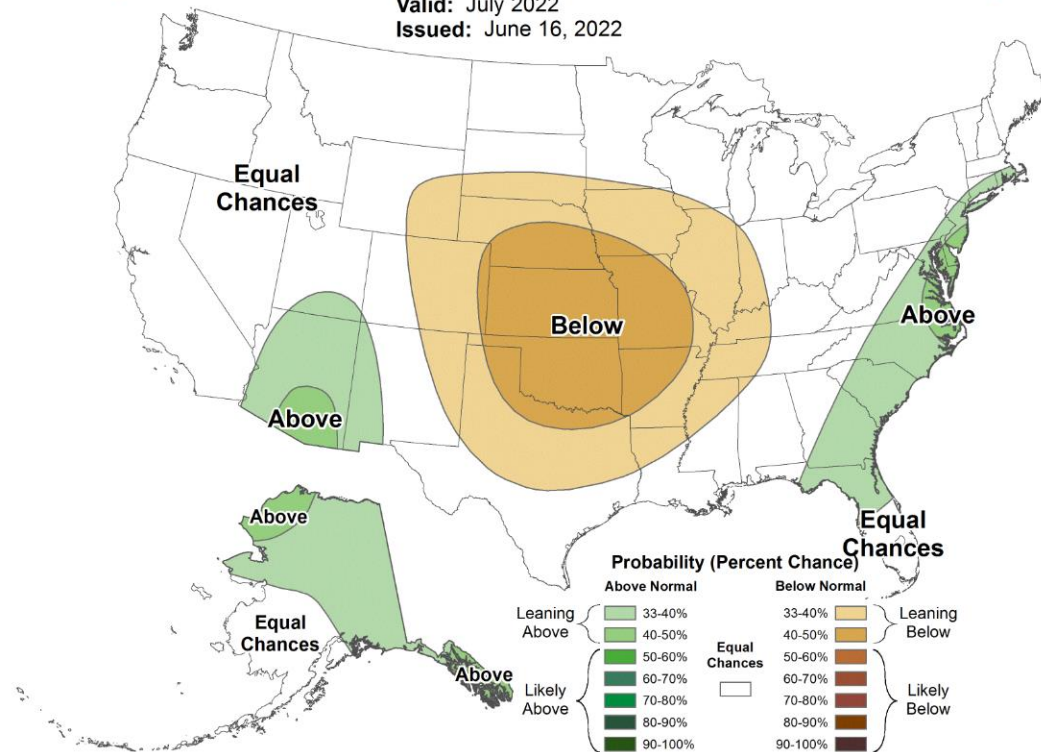
Monthly Temperature Outlook

Valid: July 2022
Issued: June 16, 2022



Monthly Precipitation Outlook

Valid: July 2022
Issued: June 16, 2022



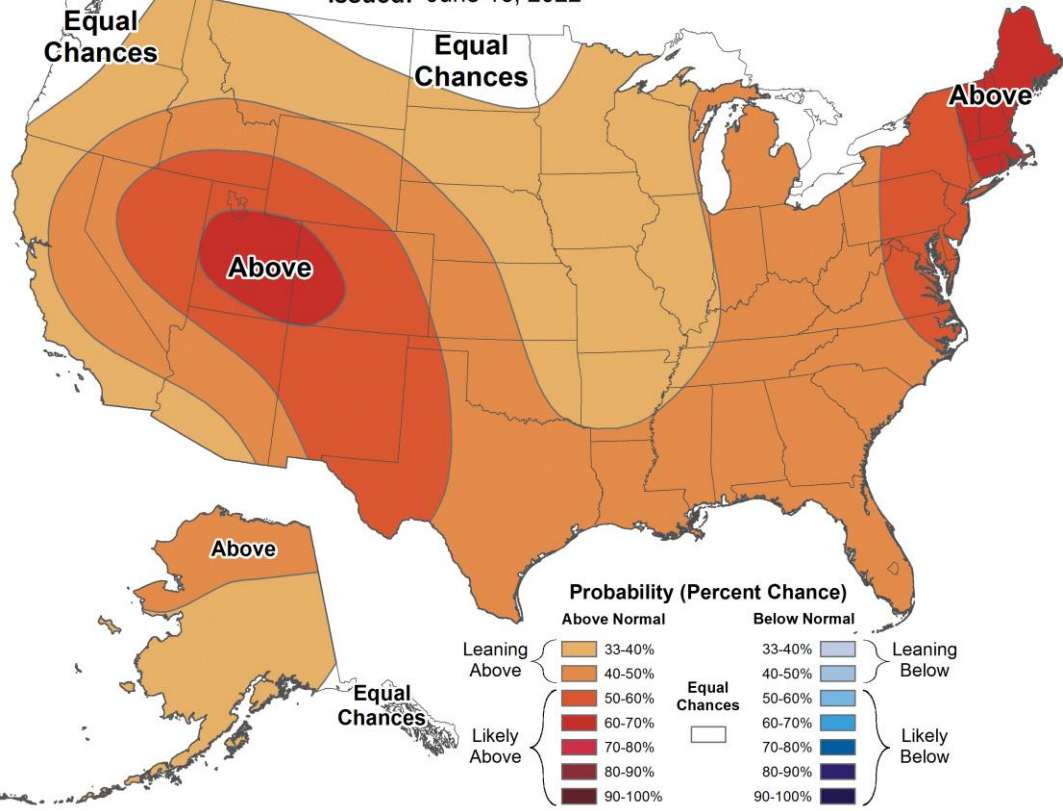
CPC 90 Day Outlook



Seasonal Temperature Outlook



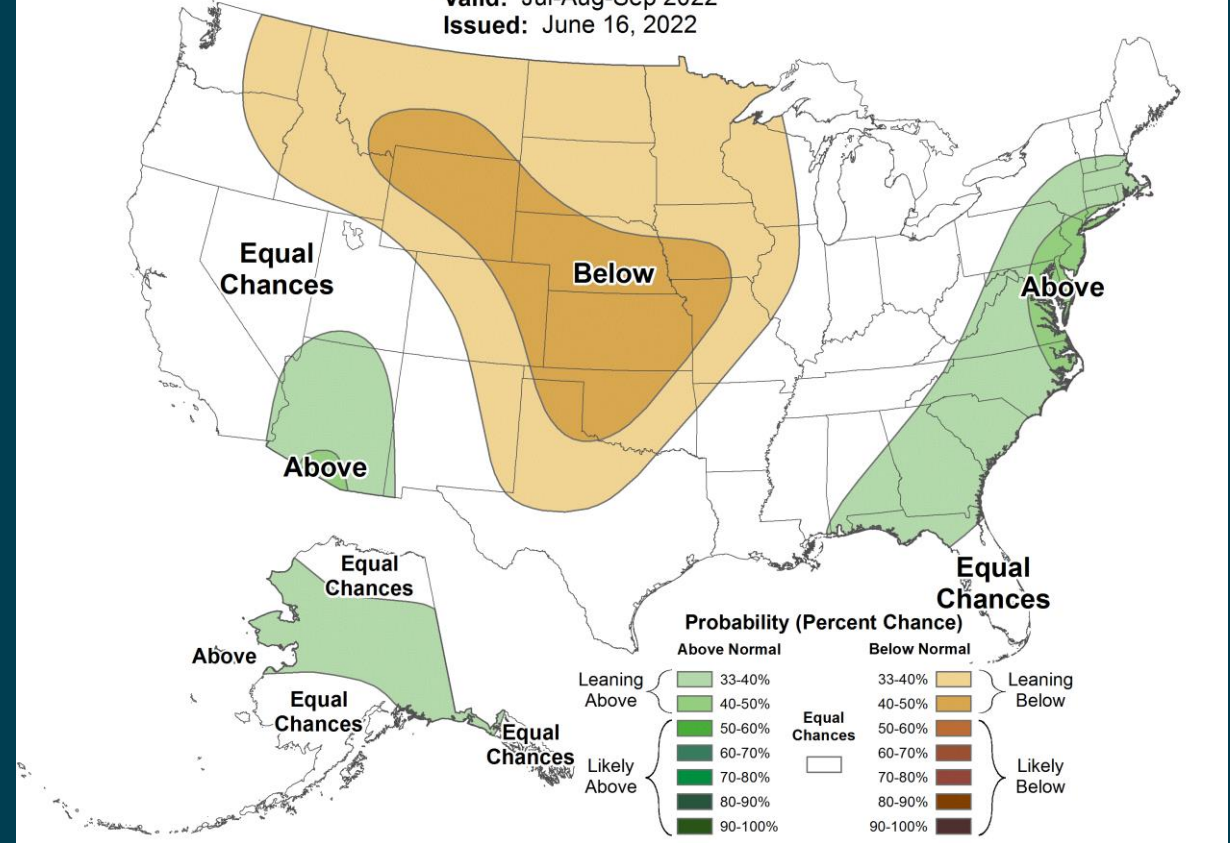
Valid: Jul-Aug-Sep 2022
Issued: June 16, 2022



Seasonal Precipitation Outlook



Valid: Jul-Aug-Sep 2022
Issued: June 16, 2022

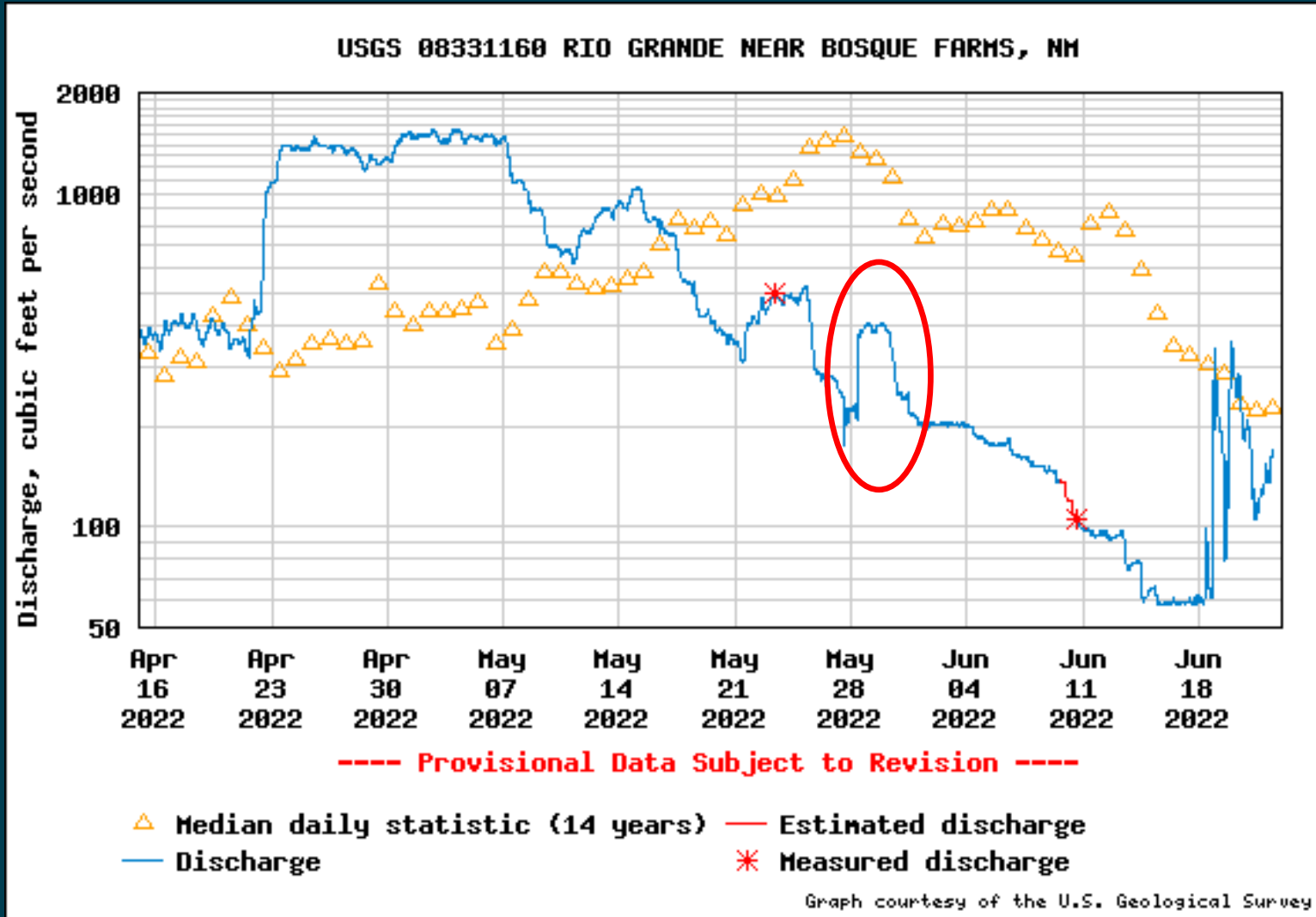


Outlook for Rest of 2022

- Only water for irrigation:
 - Natural flow – could fall to 250-300 cfs
 - P&P in Abiquiu (now 19,599 ac-ft)
- Supplemental water – 4,550 ac-ft
- When Cochiti release falls to 250 – 300 cfs, supplemental release will resume at 30 cfs
- Angostura bypass will likely be minimal
- Reclamation, MRGCD will work to maintain some wetted habitat
- River drying in Albuquerque area very likely this year



“Jiggle” at Isleta Diversion Dam



- Was flow too high leading up to jiggle?
- Was duration too short?
- Natural flow dropped at same time
- More supplemental water released than planned
- Conditions made it difficult for MRGCD to extend duration



Questions?



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION