

Fiscal Planning Committee Meeting
December 14, 2023

Meeting Materials:

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[Draft 2023 FPC Summary Report \[read-ahead, draft\]](#)

[FPC Memo to EC on Program Portal Funding Options \[read-ahead\]](#)

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Fiscal Planning Committee Meeting
December 14, 2023

See the following meeting material on the page below:

Agenda



Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program

Est. 2000

Fiscal Planning Committee (FPC) Meeting Agenda

December 14, 2023; 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM MT

Location: Microsoft Teams

Microsoft Teams Log-In:

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 228 951 777 411

Passcode: uteJMw

Meeting Objectives:

- Review action items from the August 2, 2023 FPC meeting.
- Approve August 2, 2023 Meeting Minutes.
- Hear update on Climate Futures Planning Workshop.
- Review the 2023 FPC activities summary report.
- Open discussion on future of FPC.
- Discuss how the FPC can inform the project priorities of Signatories and support Signatories in the pursuit of funding.
- Discuss integration of the FPC and Science and Adaptive Management Committee (SAMC) related to supporting Signatories.
- Discuss the Funding Opportunities Matrix related to supporting FPC and SAMC integration.

1:30 – 1:35	Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Decision: Approval of December 14, 2023 meeting agenda 	<i>Program Support Team (PST)</i>
1:35 – 1:40	August 2023 Meeting Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action items review ✓ Decision: Approval of August 2, 2023 meeting minutes Read-Ahead: <input type="checkbox"/> Draft August 2, 2023 FPC Meeting Minutes	<i>PST</i>
1:40 – 1:45	Update on Climate Futures Planning Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postponement update • FPC role post workshop 	<i>PST</i>
1:45 – 1:50	Update on the Funding Opportunities Matrix <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Portal link ➤ Action Item: PST provide links to the Funding Opportunities Matrix on the Program Portal ➤ Action Item: FPC provide feedback on the Funding Opportunities Matrix on the Program Portal ➤ Action Item: PST work with USGS to update the Funding Opportunities Matrix as needed 	<i>PST</i>

1:50 – 1:55	<p>2023 FPC Summary Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft 2023 FPC Summary Report • Giving update at the January Executive Committee (EC) meeting <p>Read-Ahead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Draft 2023 FPC Summary Report 	<i>PST, Group Discussion</i>
1:55 – 2:25	<p>Open Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FPC discussion on how the FPC should function moving forward • Informing project priorities of Signatories and supporting the pursuit of funding • Integration of FPC and SAMC efforts 	<i>Group Discussion</i>
2:25 – 2:30	<p>Action Items, Next Steps, and Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Upcoming Events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>EC Meeting</u>: January 18; 1-4 PM ○ <u>Science Symposium</u>: February 2024 ➤ Next FPC Meeting: January-March 2024 	<i>PST</i>
2:30	<p>Adjourn</p>	

[Link to full Meeting Materials List](#)

Fiscal Planning Committee Meeting
December 14, 2023

See the following meeting material on the page below:

Minutes



Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program

Est. 2000

Fiscal Planning Committee (FPC) Meeting Minutes

December 14, 2023; 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM
Location: Microsoft Teams

Decisions:

- ✓ Approval of December 14, 2023 FPC meeting agenda
- ✓ Approval of August 2, 2023 FPC meeting minutes

Announcements:

- ❖ Hira Walker, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), announced that USACE will fund the Program Portal through February 2025.

Action Items:

WHO	ACTION ITEM	BY WHEN
Program Support Team (PST)	Provide the WEST presentation slides, PST resumes, and Communications Plan to the FPC	12/18/2023
PST	Provide links to the Funding Opportunities Matrix on the Program Portal	12/18/2023
FPC Co-chairs	Meet with the PST to review the revised draft 2024 Work Plan	First week of January
FPC	Provide feedback on user experience for the Funding Opportunities Matrix on the Program Portal	1/12/2024
Anne Marken	Report out the 2023 FPC Summary Report at the January Executive Committee meeting	1/18/2024
PST	Work with U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to update the Funding Opportunities Matrix as needed	1/29/2024
PST	Seek available information on past signatory/PST one-on-one conversations and summarize as best possible	Early 2024
PST	Schedule the next FPC meeting in early 2024 to continue open FPC discussion	Early 2024

Next Meeting: January-March 2024

Meeting Minutes

Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

The December 14, 2023 Meeting Agenda was approved by attending FPC members.

Aubrey Harris, USACE, joined the meeting as the Science and Adaptive Management Committee liaison on the FPC.

The PST recapped the Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc. (WEST) staffing presentation that occurred on November 29, 2023. There were good takeaways, but WEST may have come off as cold to the EC. WEST appeared to be solely focused on the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation rather than all signatories of the Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program (MRGESCP). The PST noted the importance of the PST building new relationships with all MRGESCP members and the level of effort needed to do that. The PST acknowledged that there had been personnel changes on the PST that affected all MRGESCP members. The PST stated that resumes for current key PST personnel and a Communications Plan would be provided to the FPC. The PST noted that the shift due to personnel changes will take time to adjust to and MRGESCP members have expressed worry about losing momentum. The PST is striving to continue the good efforts that have been ongoing. The PST also stressed that the shift in personnel was an internal WEST decision and not related to the MRGESCP. The decision was motivated by health issues that have repeatedly come up on the PST. The workload of the MRGESCP has historically been difficult for PST members, which has been acknowledged by MRGESCP members. PST members need to be able to identify when the workload is too much, and WEST has a stop work policy to intervene to prevent health issues from escalating.

The PST is considering developing listening sessions after the January Executive Committee (EC) meeting, which would serve as a forum for MRGESCP members to have an open discussion. The PST suggested framing the change as an opportunity to reshape the MRGESCP. The PST plans to listen, react, and adjust, but not give up on everything that worked in the past. The PST asks signatories to engage and reflect.

Ginny Seamster, New Mexico Department of Game & Fish (NMDGF), asked about the structure of the listening sessions. The PST clarified that the format of the listening sessions are completely open to suggestion, but the PST wants to be strategic.

Ginny S. referred to the one-on-one meetings with signatories recently held by Debbie Lee and Catherine Murphy, former members of the PST. She elaborated that a lot of what would be shared at the potential listening sessions was shared at the one-on-one meetings. The one-on-one meeting format was preferred by EC members as they could be more forthcoming. Instead of holding listening sessions, Ginny S. stated it would be better to summarize the outcomes of the previous one-on-one meetings first. The PST stated the one-on-one meetings informed some of the work of the PST and were a good way to keep a finger on the pulse, but no notes were compiled from those meetings or shared with the full PST. The PST will look into the availability of notes from the one-on-one meetings. The current PST would like to develop relationships that enable some of the same kinds of conversations.

- ✓ **Decision:** Approval of December 14, 2023 FPC meeting agenda
- **Action Item:** PST provide the WEST presentation slides, PST resumes, and Communications Plan to the FPC

- **Action Item:** PST seek available information on past signatory/PST one-on-one conversations and summarize as best possible

August 2023 Meeting Summary

Updates on action items from the August 2, 2023 FPC meeting are provided below:

- Senator Maestas attended the Habitat Restoration (HR) Coordination Group's field trip to the Candelaria Nature Preserve on August 22, 2023. Mark Kelly, Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority, was interfacing with the senator and may have more information on the status of providing him project recommendations.
 - Some adjustments were made to the Funding Opportunities Matrix. A version was uploaded to Portal and needs more review and adjustments. The FPC will be able to review it following the meeting.
 - The Sandia-to-Isleta project meeting between USACE and potential partners was completed.
 - The optional meeting on potential projects for Senator Maestas was completed following the HR Coordination field trip. There were a few folks in attendance.
 - The Climate Futures Planning Workshop was postponed to 2024.
 - The meeting to discuss Albuquerque area HR projects has not yet been hosted. It may be better to schedule it in 2024.
 - PST will provide a short video tutorial for the Funding Opportunities Matrix using the version on the Portal, which will be reviewed by the FPC.
 - The FPC will reconvene after the Climate Futures Planning Workshop in 2024 to support the workshop outcomes.
 - The memo on Program Portal funding options was submitted to the EC in September 2023. USACE is looking into the option to accept pass-through funding to fund its existing contract with USGS.
- ✓ **Decision:** Approval of August 2, 2023 FPC meeting minutes

Update on the Climate Futures Planning Workshop

The PST provided updates on the Climate Future Planning Workshop. Due to personnel shifts and to ensure that there is adequate staffing and support for the workshop, the workshop was postponed to March 2024. The date of the workshop will be partly determined by the date of the Science Symposium, which was postponed due to construction delays at its original location. The Science Symposium will be in February 2024.

The PST asked if there was opportunity for those outside the small planning groups to give feedback on the Science Symposium and Climate Futures Planning Workshop. Lynette Giesen, US Bureau of Reclamation, stated the EC approved proposals for both events and it would be better to focus on FPC tasks related to the Climate Futures Planning Workshop.

The workshop is intended to produce a list of well-formulated research or project ideas related to endangered species habitat and focused on climate resilience with potential collaborators. The FPC will attach potential funding streams using the Funding Opportunities Matrix.

Update on the Funding Opportunities Matrix

- Funding Opportunities Calendar:
<https://webapps.usgs.gov/MRGESCP/funding/funding-opportunities-calendar>

- Funding Opportunities Graphic:
<https://webapps.usgs.gov/MRGESCP/funding/funding-opportunities>
- Application Due Dates:
<https://webapps.usgs.gov/MRGESCP/funding/application-due-dates>

The PST previewed the Funding Opportunities Matrix on the Program Portal and asked the FPC to provide feedback on user experience. The links will be provided with the meeting follow-up.

Aubrey H. stated that the Funding Opportunities Matrix is working towards a strategy but is not there yet; there still needs to be connection to proposal development, collaboration opportunities, and integration with the SAMC. Lynette G. confirmed that the Funding Opportunities Matrix would support a larger strategy, but the MRGESCP isn't there yet. Aubrey H. related that USACE shared perspectives on this effort at the previous one-on-one meeting with the PST. USACE also talked about the Science and Adaptive Management Information System (SAMIS), a desire to facilitate inter-agency projects, the Request for Proposals (RFP) approach, and ways to get at SAMC/FPC integration.

Ginny S. stated that the NMDGF can offer advice and contribute knowledge to projects but has limited ability to help with project implementation. Ginny S. stated the importance of discussing what folks can bring to the table before moving forward. The PST confirmed that information can help make decisions when pursuing funding.

- **Action Item:** PST provide links to the Funding Opportunities Matrix on the Program Portal
- **Action Item:** FPC provide feedback on the Funding Opportunities Matrix on the Program Portal
- **Action Item:** PST work with USGS to update the Funding Opportunities Matrix as needed

2023 FPC Summary Report

PST gave a brief update on the 2023 FPC Summary Report. Summary items are below:

- All FPC tasks are included on the summary report.
 - The 2024 MRGESCP Work Plan is in development.
 - The SAMC has a lot of tasks and provided suggestions for revising it.
 - There aren't as many tasks related to the FPC. This has also been true of past work plans.
 - More FPC tasks can be added based on FPC discussion, which there was not enough time for today.
 - The PST will work with the FPC Co-Chairs to review the draft work plan and add FPC tasks as needed.
 - Anne Marken, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District and FPC Co-Chair, volunteered to give the summary report at the EC meeting in January 18, 2024.
- **Action Item:** FPC Co-Chairs meet with the PST to review the revised draft 2024 Work Plan
 - **Action Item:** Anne Marken report out the 2023 FPC Summary Report at the January Executive Committee meeting

Open Discussion

There was no time left for an open discussion. Grace Haggerty, New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission, suggested that the meetings should be longer -- at least 1.5 hours. The PST will include time for an open discussion on the next FPC agenda.

- **Action Item:** PST schedule the next FPC meeting in early 2024 to continue open FPC discussion

Action Items, Next Steps, and Announcements:

Upcoming Events:

- EC Meeting: January 18, 2024; 1-4 PM
- Science Symposium: February 2024
- **Next FPC Meeting**: January-March 2024

Announcements:

- Hira W., USACE, announced that USACE has extended its funding for the Program Portal through February 2025.

Meeting Participants

FPC Representative

Anne Marken, Non-Federal Co-Chair
Danielle Galloway, Federal Co-Chair
Aubrey Harris, SAMC Liaison for the FPC
Cetan Christensen
Dustin Chavez-Davis
Grace Haggerty
Hira Walker
Kim Eichhorst
Lynette Giesen
Virginia Seamster

Organization

Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority
City of Albuquerque, Open Space Division
New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
New Mexico Department of Game & Fish

Support

Kevin Shelley
Michelle Tuineau

Organization

Program Support Team
Program Support Team

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Fiscal Planning Committee Meeting
December 14, 2023

See the following meeting material on the page below:

Draft 2023 FPC Summary Report [read-ahead, draft]

**MIDDLE RIO GRAND ENDANGERED SPECIES COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM
2023 FPC Summary Report**

The following are status updates and notes for 2023 Fiscal Planning Committee (FPC) activities, prepared for the December 14, 2023 FPC meeting.

	Item	Status	Notes
✓	Develop a plan for continued Program Portal funding	ONGOING	FPC memo on Program Portal funding options sent to the Executive Committee for September 2023 meeting.
	2024 Work Plan	ONGOING	To be reviewed and approved by the EC at the January 2024 meeting.
✓	Annual Program Evaluation	COMPLETE	Annual Program Evaluation was conducted January-February 2023. Results presented at the March 2023 EC meeting.
✓	Habitat Restoration (HR) Coordination Group meetings	COMPLETE	One virtual meeting was held in April 2023. Three field trips were held in February 2023 (HR areas on or near Pueblo of Sandia), August 2023 (Candelaria Nature Preserve), and November 2023 (Plant Materials Center).
	Provide updates on implementation of signatory activities from the Long-Term Plan	ONGOING	Need proposal for providing regular updates.
	Funding Opportunities Matrix	ONGOING	Developed the Funding Opportunities Matrix in January 2023. Revised the matrix for review at multiple 2023 FPC meetings. Added the matrix to the Program Portal for FPC review in December 2023.
✓	Biennial Schedule	COMPLETE	Added FPC tasks to the Biennial Schedule in January 2023. Revised the Biennial Schedule in April 2023. Revision approved by the EC in June 2023.

[Link to full Meeting Materials List](#)

Fiscal Planning Committee Meeting
December 14, 2023

See the following meeting material on the page below:

FPC Memo to EC on Program Portal Funding Options [read-ahead]



Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program

Est. 2000

DATE: September 28, 2023

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

FROM: MRGESCP Fiscal Planning Committee (FPC)

RE: Program Portal Funding Options

The MRGESCP website, the Program Portal, is contracted out to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is currently funding maintenance and development of the Program Portal and has committed to doing so until the end of calendar year 2024. USACE cannot commit to funding the Program Portal past that date. Baseline funding for Program Portal maintenance is approximately \$72,000 a year; this includes staff labor and software and hosting fees, but does not include any additional development.

The EC had requested the FPC discuss potential options if USACE cannot continue funding the Program Portal. The FPC identified the following options for EC discussion:

1. Signatories provide pass-through funding to USACE to fund USGS to continue supporting the Program Portal.

If USACE is willing to accept pass-through funding from other signatories, they will remain the contracting entity with the USGS. This option may limit who can provide money. It is easier for USACE to accept money from other federal agencies.

2. Another signatory takes on the USGS contract.

Several signatories have indicated the full contract amount is more than they can take on. USGS may also be limited with what entities it may contract with.

3. Signatories pool money to fund USGS with one signatory taking on the contracting role.

The Collaborative Program signatories have legally not been able to pool money into a general fund. However, it is unclear whether the signatories could pool money for a specific contract. Exploration of this option will require input from legal and contracting experts.

4. Signatories rotate who holds the contract with USGS.

USGS has indicated this is not preferred, as it causes logistical difficulties each time the contracting agency changes.

At this time, the FPC does not recommend changing to another website developer from USGS as it would require a complete redo of the Program Portal, as it is currently integrated with the USGS infrastructure.

The FPC recommends the EC present its top option(s) to legal and contracting experts for further input, as that would provide clarity on the feasibility of the different options.