



# Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program

Est. 2000

## 2020 Science Symposium Q&A – Day 1

December 1, 2020

### Science and Adaptive Management Committee (SAMC) Lightning Round

**Q. From Mike Marcus, Assessment Payers Association of the MRGCD:** Reclamation had been about to begin a Middle Rio Grande (MRG) Basin Plan for developing options for future water management. How is the Program coordinating with this effort?

**A. Answered live by members of the SAMC.**

**Q. From Todd Caplan, GeoSystems Analysis, Inc.:** Couple of points and considerations: It's great that the SAMC members all acknowledge the need for reservoir/dam operational flexibility to meet multiple demands on limited water resources. Suggest that much of the science needed to justify that flexibility already exists.

**A. Answered live by members of the SAMC.**

**Q. From Yasmeen Namji, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District:** Adapting and managing a riparian system through climate changes brings a lot of long term questions about how habitats will change and what is possible and desirable.

**A. Answered live by members of the SAMC.**

**Q. From Grace Haggerty, New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission:** Habitat restoration does have lots of monitoring showing success. I think the communication is what is lacking, so the Program will be able to compile that information.

**A. Answered live by members of the SAMC.**

### Loss of Open Areas and a Changing Albuquerque Bosque and River, Mary Harner, University of Nebraska at Kearney

**Q. From Catherine Murphy, Program Support Team:** How can the Collaborative Program help with promoting greenspaces and encouraging public engagement, especially over the next few months?

**A. From Mary Harner:** In terms of promoting green spaces, one suggestion is to cross post information about the Rio Grande Valley State Park and associated maps: <https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/open-space/lands/rio-grande-valley-state-park>. Also, sharing information about times of the year that wildlife, especially birds, may be especially sensitive to human activity and suggesting ways that people may adjust their activities to minimize disturbance could be helpful. For educating visitors about different types of open spaces and parks and why they are managed distinctively—one suggestion would be to create a StoryMap about what these different open spaces and parks offer—for people, habitat, and wildlife.

**Q. From Yasmeen Najmi:** I think the bosque and open spaces have provided much needed public spaces, connections and activities during the pandemic. There has been a huge increase in the visitation to the bosque and other public lands this year. A key question in my mind is the impacts to habitat and wildlife, especially during the migratory bird breeding season. And how we can better design access in the Albuquerque bosque to provide opportunities to interact, provide important habitat and protections and educate visitors on the different types of open spaces and parks and why they are managed distinctively.

**A. Answered live by Mary Harner.**

### **Applied Remote Sensing in the Middle Rio Grande, Chris Sanderson, Tetra Tech, Inc.**

**Q. From Este Muldavin, Natural Heritage New Mexico:**

Are the depth to hydrology models publically available and where?

**A. From Ondrea Hummel, Tetra Tech, Inc.:**

Este, we would have to coordinate through the client. Email me or I'll email you. Thanks!

**Q. From Kate Mendoza, Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority:**

Were the burn severities verified using soil surveys in the burned areas? Did restoration occur according to the maps you produced?

**A. Answered live by Chris Sanderson.**

**A. From Ondrea Hummel:** The plans were delivered to Sierra Soil & Water Conservation District, Save Our Bosque Task Force, and Reclamation. I don't believe any implementation of the plan has occurred yet.

**Q. From Este Muldavin:** How cost effective will this be going forward? How often should it be repeated?

**A. Answered live by Chris Sanderson.**

### **Role of Restored Floodplains in Conservation of the Endangered Rio Grande Silvery Minnow, Rich Valdez, SWCA Environmental Consultants**

**Comment. From Mick Porter, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:** The first Collaborative Program HR site project was at Los Lunas in 2001-2002. The virtual tour examines the evolution of the project.

**Q. From: Thomas Archdeacon, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:** Blue catfish and flathead catfish aren't known to occur upstream of Isleta (or really upstream of San Acacia). Did you get vouchers or photos of those species in the Angostura reach?

**A. Not yet answered.**

**Q. From Andy Dean, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service:** Much of the habitat restoration in the MRG occurs at smaller site-specific areas and are relatively short lived because of the river incising and/or banks aggrading, disconnecting the river from the floodplain. The disconnect could occur after what could be as little as a couple years. Because many of those restoration efforts may only provide floodplain habitats for a short amount of time and at smaller scales, do you think it's more important to continue

conducting those restoration efforts or is it more important to provide flows that provide edge habitats within the channel that have similar characteristics as floodplains (i.e., slower flow rates, shallower depths) throughout more of the longitudinal area of the river?

**A. Not yet answered.**

**Q. From Yasmeen Najmi:** In light of Andy's question, what role might adaptive management of some these existing restoration sites such as addressing bank aggradation in areas where there is not a clear trend of bed degradation?

**A. Not yet answered.**

### **Preparing the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher for the Tamarisk Leaf Beetle in the Middle Rio Grande, NM, Ondrea Hummel and Joe Schroeder, Tetra Tech, Inc.**

**Comment. From Grace Haggerty:** I think your lessons learned are particularly important for all of us to take into consideration as we look at restoration opportunities and the most efficient/effective ways to make these determinations.

### **S&AM Tool Presentation: AM Database, Shay Howlin, Program Support Team**

**Q. From Elizabeth Milford, Natural Heritage New Mexico:** Will the database include spatial layers, like the H&O maps?

**A. From Catherine Murphy:** This AM Database is more informational. There is a spatial mapper tool located on the portal for spatial layers.

**Q. From Elizabeth Milford:** So does that mean it will just hold the info about what projects are going on, but not the actual data from the projects?

**A. Answered live by Shay Howlin.**

**Q. From Mike Marcus:** Since the Program had been funding and coordinating projects for 20+ years, how far back is the time limit for projects included in the DB? Interest here is avoiding "reinventing the wheel."

**A. Answered live by Shay Howlin.**

**Q. From Mick Porter:** Are there other examples for AM Databases in the literature?

**A. Answered live by Shay Howlin.**

**Comment. From Grace Haggerty:** Think about how you might want to construct reports out of the database. That might help organizing it.

**Q. From Alyssa O'Brien, City of Albuquerque, Open Space Division:** Will the database have information on what the potential impacts of the projects will have on the ecosystem? For example area will need to be cleared of vegetation for access, where and what equipment will be used, chemicals used, etc.

**A. From Catherine Murphy:** We can include information like that for sure, if folks can provide it. The important part will be finding the appropriate place for it and linking it to other elements to maximize utility. I like to start by clarifying the question or need to be addressed.

**Virtual Field Tour: Results of 17 Years of Monitoring at the Los Lunas Habitat Restoration Site, S. David Moore and Rebecca Siegle, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**

**Q. From Yasmeen Najmi:** What's the % difference in the cottonwood overstory between the burned and cleared plots?

**A. Answered live by Dave Moore and Rebecca Siegle.**

**Q. From Todd Caplan:** LLHR project documents state that portions of the overbank area were designed to begin inundating at flows of approx. 1500 cfs and entire site to be inundated at 2500 cfs. From your field observations, does any portion of the project area inundate via overbank flooding (as opposed to rising groundwater) at the design discharge levels of 1,500 to 2500 cfs?

**A. Answered live by Dave Moore and Rebecca Siegle.**

**Q. From Ondrea Hummel:** Did you start surveying for YBCU in 2014? Or before that? Or maybe got some incidental ones before you officially started surveying? Just curious as to when they may have started stopping at the site.

**A. Answered live by Dave Moore and Rebecca Siegle.**

**Comment. From Lynette Giesen:** This one of many projects that the Corps had to cut funding for, as our budget was cut. I think it is important that we, as the Collaborative Program, think about how to continue some type of monitoring of this site- whether it is yearly, every other year, etc - and how best to incorporate all of the information for future restoration projects.

**Q. From Grace Haggerty:** What do you think will happen in 10 more years? Has inundation of site been reduced over the years? How much of the total project inundates and at what flows? Are the maintenance actions suggested?

**A. Answered live by Dave Moore and Rebecca Siegle.**

**Q. From Este Muldavin:** Had Ravenna grass invaded?

**A. Answered live by Dave Moore and Rebecca Siegle.**

**Q. From Este Muldavin:** What would be the cost of occasional treatment of RO before it overwhelms the site?

**A. Answered live by Dave Moore and Rebecca Siegle.**

**Q. From Elizabeth Milford:** Have you seen any Tree of Heaven in this site?

**A. Answered live by Dave Moore and Rebecca Siegle.**

**Comment. From Mick Porter:** One lesson learned is the sedimentation of the floodplain features.