November 1, 2002

San Juan River Basin
Recovery Implementation Program
Coordination Committee
September 25, 2002
Draft Meeting Summary

Coordination Committee Members	Representing:
Joy Nicholopoulos, Chairman	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Joel Farrell	U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Bob Krakow	U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
Scott McElroy	Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Tom Pitts	Water Development Interests
Stanley Pollack	Navajo Nation
Randy Seaholm	State of Colorado
Lester Taylor	Jicarilla Apache Nation
Brent Uilenberg	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
John Whipple	State of New Mexico

Hydrology & Biology Committee members present:	Representing:
Ron Bliesner	U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
Steve Harris	Water Development Interests
Paul Holden	Jicarilla Apache Nation
Randy Kirkpatrick	Water Development Interests
John Leeper	Navajo Nation
Bill Miller	Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Pat Page	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
David Propst	State of New Mexico
Bernadette Tsosie	Navajo Nation

Shirley Mondy, Program Coordinator	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Marilyn Greenberg, Program Assistant	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Introductions and Review of Agenda Items

Joy Nicholopoulos welcomed everyone and the agenda was reviewed. The agenda was approved with the following additions: discussion of the possibility of critical habitat flows of 350 cfs through March 2003; contracting procedures; policy regarding late projects; capital budget and propagation facility needs; and Hogback reimbursement.

Review of November 2, 2001 Meeting Summary

In the November meeting summary, it said that Senator McClousky's committee and public law 106-392 states that ... "will also provide benefits to other native fishes and prevent them from becoming endangered in the future." Tom Pitts stated that it should be clarified that the above statement was taken out of context and public law does not authorize the expenditure of funds for other than endangered species.

Tom Pitts also asked about revisiting the question about the 20% overhead charges that the FWS charges in their scopes of work from the November 2, 2001 meeting. Shirley Mondy pursued this before and found that exemptions are on a case by case basis. Committee members would like to see this pursued again. ***Shirley Mondy will check with the Denver Finance Center about a waiver of the overhead charges, with help from Tom Pitts and others.***

The November 2, 2001 meeting summary was approved as amended.

Delay in Funding of FY02 Scopes of Work

Brent Uilenberg explained that initially there was a delay because of Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) problems with cash flow. Then there were staff transition delays. Ron Bliesner, Vince LaMarra, and Bill Miller do not have funds yet. As of July 15, Tom Chart said that money was sent to BIA, but that money has not been found, and according to Bob Krakow, never did get to BIA.

Due to these funding delays, the Biology Committee research integration is delayed. Tom Pitts requested that the Coordination Committee be notified if this were to happen again in 2003. Brent Uilenberg agreed to provide notification to the Coordination Committee if there were further, or future, delays.

Long Range Plan Status

Bill Miller, Chairman of the Biology Committee explained that the Long Range Plan (LRP) has been in revision for 2 - 3 years. The August 21st version was handed out and included comments from the Hydrology Committee and the Biology Committee. It is now ready for Coordination Committee review. Input is needed to determine what, if anything, needs to be changed or clarified. It was suggested that a Coordination Committee subcommittee review the current draft and make suggested changes. Tom Pitts, Randy Seaholm, John Whipple, Stanley Pollack, and Brent Uilenberg agreed to be part of the subcommittee. The subcommittee will get Hydrology and Biology Committee involvement and feedback as needed and appropriate.

Clarification of Flow Recommendations

Bill Miller said that Reclamation asked the Biology Committee for recommendations on the low

flows in May or June, 2002 - due to difficulty in maintaining 500 cfs in the lower reach. Bill Miller stated that the intent of the Biology Committee recommendation was to maintain flows in the majority of the critical habitat. In looking at how to create language in the flow recommendation to maintain the intent of the flow recommendation, the Biology Committee came up with the July 16th memo (see Attachment B).

The July 30th memo (see Attachment C) was a recommendation specifically for this summer based on this being an extremely low water year. There were concerns that these language recommendations represent a change in the flow recommendations. Another concern is that flow recommendation changes should be reviewed periodically and that step should be incorporated into the LRP.

Stanley Pollack clarified that this was an emergency year. The Biology Committee acted responsibly and allowed the flows to be reduced for this year. The Biology Committee's actions are appreciated.

Others responded that there was a shortcoming in that we did not act soon enough. Colorado sent email to Reclamation because of the low snowpack and potential shortage conditions. It was mentioned that every other basin on the Colorado River experienced shortages for the users, but this basin did not.

Ed Warner from Reclamation stated that this work does demonstrate that in an extremely dry year, we can come together to deal with extreme conditions. We could leave the recommendations as they are. Joy Nicholopoulos stated that the FWS's intent is to use the expertise of the Hydrology and Biology Committees when deciding what effects the flows will have on the fish.

Shirley Mondy asked Reclamation representatives what procedures they would follow in the interim. Would they continue to take the two highest gages, any 2, or what? Reclamation responded that they will take the flow recommendations and operate the Dam accordingly. It was noted that it is an extremely dry year and that Reclamation will do what it can to save some water and get through this year. Brent Uilenberg commented that 350cfs is being maintained through the habitat range right now. It was suggested that the Biology Committee memo be called a clarification and add a trigger to determine when to deviate from the 500cfs minimum.

Some of the options that the Committee discussed were:
1. Ask the Hydrology Committee to develop triggers or a set of recommendations of what conditions would trigger an extreme condition. [The Committee agreed to this option.]
2 Look at flows based on the three gage concept, while the Hydrology Committee is developing triggers, so we do not end up in jeopardy. Reclamation will talk among themselves and then with the Hydrology Committee. If we continue to make the 500cfs releases during the winter, the flood release for next spring will be at risk.
3. Use the July 30 memo through March 1, 2003 - using the three gages procedure.

Ron Bliesner commented that all the memos have done is modify the process of using the average of two gages, to using the average of three gages. The Biology Committee would not authorize going to 350 cfs based on using the average of two gages.
The duration needs to be analyzed by the Biology Committee, based on data and research from

this year. The Biology Committee has not reviewed the lower flows for the winter, and cannot approve the use of the 350 cfs beyond November 1, 2002 at this time.

Reclamation will consult with FWS on deviations from the flow recommendations. FWS will consult with the Biology Committee

Stanley Pollack's motion to recommend that Reclamation extend the 350 flows in the critical habitat through April 1, 2003 was seconded. The motion passed by a vote of the Committee.

(This will be put on the next Coordination Committee meeting agenda.)

Legislative Update

Tom Pitts stated that a mirror image of the House bill is on the Senate floor that would extend the authorization of capital projects until 2008.

Navajo Dam EIS Update

Brent Uilenberg explained that Reclamation is conducting public meetings on October 1, 2, and 3 regarding the draft Environmental Impact Statement. Comments on the document are due November 4, 2002.

Hydrology Committee Update

Pat Page stated that he took over as the Hydrology Committee chairman in January 2002. The budget for 2002 was $363,400 for the development of the 3rd generation model, plus $10,000 for model runs. An additional $2300 was budgeted for checking gages one additional time per month. The model schedule has slipped due to staff availability; the Navajo Dam EIS, and the Animas LaPlata project. There were additions to the work load of tasks that Hydrology Committee members were going to do, and modelers ended up doing.
Modeling is very technical work that is being done by committee which takes extra time and money. A couple of contracts were awarded this year, but not until February and March, which contributed to delays. In actuality, about 70% of the work will be complete by the end of the fiscal year.

Biology Committee Update

Integrating the standardized monitoring has been delayed due to delayed funding. There was one integration meeting, in September instead of in May. The population model has been delayed. Fall monitoring is taking place now. The next sub-group meeting is scheduled for early November for the Biology sub-group. The Physical group will meet once funding is in place for Vince LaMarra and Ron Bliesner.

The Biology Committee had determined that the integration would take approximately 200 days. The Biology sub-group will have draft results of the standardized monitoring in November. It was hoped that the Physical sub-group could meet then, but it will probably be closer to January when they can meet.

Tom Pitts asked if the Coordination Committee would see a draft summary before field season next year? Bill Miller explained that they would not know until Ron Bliesner receives his funding. There is no money to do the data analysis yet, which has to be accomplished before

integration can be done. The integration will indicate whether any changes need to be made to the monitoring. Ron Bliesner stated that he thinks that the integration can still be completed, at least a draft report, before field season next year. Bill Miller added that a preliminary draft needs to be submitted to the peer review committee and that hopefully a draft can be available by next spring.

Tom Pitts stated that evaluation is pretty important and urged the Biology Committee to make sure that it gets done as soon as possible. He asked if additional resources or staff were needed to get this done, and Bill Miller responded that more staff or resources were not the issue, just the funding.

Tom Pitts also asked about how the final recovery goals adopted by FWS were being factored in? Bill Miller responded that they have not been discussed yet, but they can be discussed at the next meeting. Miller added that the Biology Committee goals were the same as the FWS recovery goals.

Tom Pitts asked if the last draft of the augmentation plans would be updated to include the recovery goals. Bill Miller responded that he did not know what stage the plans were in at this time,

Randy Seaholm was hoping to have an integration report available for the review of the LRP. He stated that anything that could be made available as soon as possible would be appreciated. Bill Miller responded that If the Biology Committee sees something that can and needs to be added right away, it would be brought to everyone's attention.

Program Coordinator Update

Shirley Mondy recapped that Marilyn Greenberg has been updating and maintaining the website. Most documents are on the website, and it will continue to be updated. The Briefing Book and the FY 02 Budget/Work Plans are also on the website. The FY 02 budget is now finalized. The FY 03 budget will be finalized and spiral bound when complete. The recovery goals were finalized and there is a link to them from the website.

Shirley Mondy acknowledged Cindy Schultz for the work she did on the minor depletion log.

Shirley Mondy will coordinate the hiring of someone to develop a logo for letterhead and the website so that a distinct symbol can be used to represent the Program.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) wants to dispose of the $50,000 from the City of Durango that has been there for a while. It was set aside to work on ponds for raising endangered fish. It has not been used and is just sitting in the account. That $50,000 could be used for private ponds. Some Committee members suggested that it could be given back to Durango.

Tom Pitts asked if consultation would have to be reopened if the money is given back to Durango? Would Durango want to go through the process of reopening their Biological Opinion? If Durango does not wish to reopen it, we can spend the money. Shirley Mondy agreed to contact Durango. If they don't want it back, the Program will spend it on ponds as specified in the Biological Opinion. Randy Seaholm and Steve Harris agreed to help.

Shirley Mondy stated that the Program Document has been scanned in, edited, and sent to Stanley Pollack and Tom Pitts for first review. Tom Pitts suggested that a summary of public law and a summary of the recovery goals be included. Please let Shirley Mondy know of any other changes that may be needed. She plans to have the Program Document back out to the Committee within the next 2 weeks.

Tom Pitts suggested that the Committee develop a policy/procedure regarding late projects and asked Shirley Mondy to keep track of the deliverables in the Scopes Of Work (SOW), add them to a late report list when they are late, and circulate this report to the committees so that they can act appropriately and keep track of what is due. A comment column can be used to indicate reasons and resolutions; and a column to indicate when it will be done.

Tom Pitts also would like to see Reclamation include a statement in all contracts that 25% of funds would be retained until the project is complete. He feels that it is a good practice to make sure that some of these projects get done. Ron Bliesner commented that the contractors for some long projects (5 years) will have a problem with holding 25% of the entire project until end. Would only 25% for each year be held? Steve Platania asked how this could be done without placing undue burdens on some entities? Brent Uilenberg will check with the Reclamation contracting staff. Ten percent was offered as an alternative to the 25%.

Review of FY03 Scopes of Work

Updates and Maintenance of a GIS Database

Tom Pitts was concerned that some Biology Committee members said they would not use this type of interface and that no one had talked to the Biology Committee about what they wanted. There are also policy decisions to be made on how to share this data with the public. The costs are quite high, and there are continued costs through 2005, such as ongoing maintenance costs.

Shirley Mondy stated that the Biology Committee has already approved all of these SOWs. It currently costs $24,000/year to maintain the existing database.

Steve Platania stated that those currently involved in field research saw this database as having beneficial long term implications for future integration work. He agreed that there is a suite of policy decisions which will need to be addressed outside of the Biology Committee. This database will reside on a mirror webserver at FWS, connected to the current website. Ron Bliesner is currently maintaining this data. Once it becomes an online database, it will be passed on to the FWS to be maintained as an integrated database.

This was originally a five year project. The Biology Committee said it needed to be done sooner in order to have data available for integration, so collapsing it into a shorter time frame will increase the cost in the first year. It will be very time consuming in the first and second year. The third year is the transition year - moving to maintenance.

Regarding questions about what the online database will allow the Biology Committee to do, Steve Platania explained that it can be queried across different data sets, compare species, and used to access and to use each other's data. There are ongoing maintenance costs to maintain the data base/website, just as there are ongoing costs to distribute a CD for data each year with Ron Bliesner's project. A CD will continue to be distributed in the interim, until people determine that it is no longer needed. User limitations will need to be defined by the Biology

Committee in coordination with the Coordination Committee. There will be a control mechanism and password protection.

Randy Seaholm commented that it would be nice to see if this information/data could be exchanged between Programs, like the Upper Basin. Steve Platania replied that someone would have to look at merging this or making it compatible with other Programs.

Tom Pitts commented that the Coordination Committee will have to address the accessibilty of this data at some point. **Steve Platania stated that a template/guideline could be provided to the Coordination Committee to use in addressing accessibility before the next Coordination Committee meeting. Steve Platania will contact the Upper Basin to determine interchangeability.**

Modeling Scope of Work

Bill Miller said that the work was not completed in 2002 and has been pushed into 2003. The next step is to run "what if" scenarios, stocking different size classes of pikeminnow. Miller will add that they will be looking at the numbers needed to get to recovery goals under "Methods".

Trophic Relationships

Tom Pitts asked if this research project is looking at the role of the roundtailed chub? Dave Propst replied that it looks at the entire prey base, and looks at the chub for response to changes.

The Biology Committee said that they would approve this research for one year and then look at the results to determine whether the information gained justifies going on to the next year of the project. An estimation of the caloric value of the different food systems that are out there could be used in Vince LaMarra and Bill Miller's modeling work to achieve integration.

Tom Pitts asked why couldn't data from the Green River be used to determine this information? Dave Propst responded that the Green River has a different fish community and fauna. Artificial streams will allow us to see what the native fish are actually doing. Stable isotopes is a very new technology. They give a cumulative record of what the fish have eaten long term; they do not just show what has been eaten most recently.

Randy Seaholm asked if it is appropriate to look at what has been accomplished in existing research in the Upper Colorado Basin and determine what is applicable? Dave Propst responded that any existing/available research will be used. Bill Miller added that the available existing data has not used a biometric approach; an exhaustive review of the existing research has already been done. Nothing is available on a trophic levels; there is no energy/caloric content data available. This research would give us a better idea of the energy content needs that are out there. In the recovery goals for the pikeminnow, we looked at an estimate of caloric value of the prey base that was out there.

There was a lengthy discussion about unsolicited proposals and the general contracting process. After considerable debate, this scope of work was approved for one year. The vote was 8 approved, 1 abstain.

In addition, the Coordination Committee agreed to form a subcommittee to look at the overall budget process, including the request for proposal method. Brent Uilenberg will lead the

subcommittee.

Monitoring Summary Proposal
Tom Pitts asked Paul Holden about the Monitoring Summary proposal. Bill Miller stated that comments have not been received back from the Biology Committee yet. This proposal would create a 15 page summary document. It would get the salient points summarized up front. The Biology Committee will get back to the Coordination Committee once they have reached a conclusion regarding the Monitoring Summary proposal.

PAH Study
How long should we continue with this study? This is done by BLM to fulfill their Biological Opinion requirements. Some members thought that this should no longer be required. The Service will review the Biological Opinion and scopes of work.

Hogback and Cudei Reimbursement
$2 million repayment to BIA will be made for Cudei and Hogback from 02 funds. John Whipple asked what the state cost shares will be. New Mexico has received no invoices yet. If money is received from New Mexico in FY03 it can still be attributed to FY02.

The Upper Colorado Program has approximately 100 acres of ponds either under lease or at hatcheries. It may be more than what the Upper Colorado Program needs. Before we fund $405,000 for rearing ponds, we should look at what might be available in the Upper Basin Program. The Biology Committee is asked to coordinate with the other Program to determine the feasibility of utilizing their extra pond space. $405,000 is a placeholder in the event that additional ponds are needed.

Hydrology Model
New Mexico is concerned that the model may not be more accurate than monthly results. New Mexico does not support completion of the 3rd generation model as it stands now. Colorado is frustrated with not getting reliable and adequate data from New Mexico and the lack of river administration that goes on. Colorado supports going ahead with the model and implores New Mexico to provide the data to make the model a more usable tool. John Whipple explained that the State of New Mexico has been understaffed and has not been able to produce some of the data needed for the model. Reclamation has replicated some of the data needed and New Mexico has made comments regarding the adequacy and accuracy of this data.

The Coordination Committee approved the 2003 Workplan. [8 approved, 1 abstained]

Review Action Items
How much to reimburse BIA for Hogback and Cudei has not been finalized. BIA is asked to come back to us with a proposal. $2 million was approved for reimbursement, the rest is up for discussion. This item will be added to the next meeting agenda.

Set Next Meeting Date
The next Coordination Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, Feb 26, 2003, starting at 9:00 am. Location to be determined.

Others Attending:	**Representing:**
Rob Ashman	Public Service Company of NM
Steve Austin	
Dave Barr	
Mike Buntjer	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Gary Horner	
Cindy Murray	Public Service Company of NM
Bill Ostheimer	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Bob Oxford	
Steve Platania	University of New Mexico
Ed Warner	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Carl Wollfolk	