**PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (PRRIP or Program)**

**Adaptive Management Working Group (AMWG) Virtual Meeting**

October 08, 2020

**Attendees** – **Jeff Runge**, USFWS; **Jim Jenniges**, NPPD; **Dave Zorn**, CNPPID; **Andy Caven**, Crane Trust; **Matt Rabbe**, USFWS; **Mike Drain,** CNPPID; **Brock Merrill,** USBR; **Jojo La**, State of Colorado; **Jason Farnsworth, Malinda Henry, Patrick Farrell, Chad Smith** – Executive Director’s Office (EDO)

EDO Power Point presentation slides attached as PDF

Menti results attached as PDF

**Welcome & Administrative**

* Henry welcomed the group and discussed the general framework for the agenda today and meetings going forward.
* No agenda modifications.

**Virtual Tools Tutorial**

* Discussion of use of MS Teams.
* Discussion of use of AMWG room on PRRIP website.
* Discussion of use of Mural and Mentimeter as feedback and brainstorming tools in virtual meetings.
* Group participated in several Menti exercises.
* Helpful tools, look forward to how they are used in future meetings.
* Discussed options for large gallery mode to see more individuals on screen; appears you needed to be signed into a Teams account to use those features.

**Terms of Reference**

* Henry introduced the AMWG Terms of Reference.
* Would like to see a written process (described) for the AMWG; steps for voting, getting to “decisions”, moving from AMWG to the TAC; role of each member of the AMWG including the role of those that are more policy-oriented; role of EDO as facilitators or subject-matter experts or decision makers. Would like to separate subject matter experts from decision makers.
* Bring some more framing and structure to this process.
* From an organizational structure standpoint, the first AMWG was an effort to work on issues (models, AMP, etc.) that were broader than typically dealt with by the TAC; many early models were related to flow and geomorphology; it wasn’t so much a subcommittee of the TAC, it was an *ad hoc* committee for reporting to the GC; if this AMWG functions similarly, can we assume what we are doing here gets elevated to GC, not to TAC
* It was “sold” to the GC that the work of the group would at least be presented to the full TAC and get their feedback.
* This group won’t be setting real policy, but will present options and ideas for the GC to consider in terms of policy decisions
* Last year we embarked on the process of updating the AMP, but what we saw internally was that the EDO was doing work and then asking for TAC and AMWG feedback; we didn’t involve the technical experts as directly and deeply as we wanted them to be; the AMWG became a “super TAC”; this group should dig into hypotheses and alternative hypotheses, wrestle with science issues, leave policy to the GC; not brute force, want things discussed at this level, find areas of agreement and disagreement, etc.
* Appreciate historical knowledge, but my expectation is we are not starting from scratch; need to know where things have already been decided to help set direction
* Expect this group will be able to dig deeply into issues of science, think about hypotheses, be open and vulnerable to discussion and allow for wide-ranging discussions; want people to speak freely and be creative thinkers

**Where Are We Now?**

* Smith summarized work to date on a revised AMP for the Extension.

**Questions To Address**

* Henry discussed EDO proposed process for moving through aspects of revised AMP.
* After reading ahead, SDM process worked because there was a clear problem statement and decision space identified; there are different scales of problems (i.e. things like low fledge rates); when we get into things like predator management, that is a different decision context with other problem statements, decision criteria, etc.
* This group may need to consider separation between the least tern and piping plover; given the proposed delisting of the least tern, wondering why we do not separate them out; could make argument that we will be in maintenance mode for least tern; question whether the actions for these two species are really the same? Can we explore that with this group?
* May have an answer on least tern very soon, which will help define what the Program should do
* Adding a problem statement is good; Will our current actions effectively "maintain" a metapopulation of PIPLs in the CPRV in the long term? Who is right Catlin et al? Plissner et al.? Or Lutey? Right below the management objective, we should work at framing the question.
* Practically speaking we can’t change the management objective, but we can focus on remaining uncertainties and what we need to learn.
* We could spend an extensive amount of time on one aspect of the conceptual model that is not totally on point to the bigger issues, so we should stay focused on those big things.

**Terns & Plovers – Management Objective**

* Henry – what does improve mean? What time scale? How do we measure it; will work through this during the next meeting, idea of problem statement, performance indicators.
* Constraints over money and water.
* Menti exercise

**Terns & Plovers – Performance Indicators**

* Henry – should we set benchmarks? What is our reference point (in terms of literature or information)? How do we proceed in terms of measuring our goals?
* Original AMP has two indicators; increased nest pairs and increased fledge ratio; how do we use these, where do the new ones come from?
* Paper recommendation - Haig et al. 1988. Distribution and Dispersal in the Piping Plover. The Auk 105:630-638; another recommendation for performance indicators - "Population Connectivity"; Haig et al. 1988 - takeaway, most (83%) of breeding dispersal is <10 KM, but natal dispersal is further in general (67% > 10 KM). How are genetics in our metapopulation??? (I have no clue)

**Terns & Plovers – Incorporating Prior Learning**

* Farnsworth asked if the group had any questions about the learning that went into the tern/plover synthesis chapters leading up to the SDM process, then summarized that process; MCA habitat on-channel by Chapman bridge; new Lexington pit is off-channel habitat; Service said if you do these things, we will judge the Program as having met its management objective.
* Did you say when the amount of acres of off- and on-channel habitat were set, the Service said we could consider the management objective fulfilled? If so, why are we talking about this?
* I wouldn’t characterize it exactly that way; the discussion that led to the agreement looked at current habitat and numbers of terns and plovers being produced, if the Program can maintain or increase that then that should be acceptable under the recovery plans; did not say ESA compliance if meet a specific threshold; Farnsworth agreed this is correct.
* Critical uncertainties are connectivity and emigration/immigration, and have you run any simulations based on Lutey or Plissner and what is the acceptable range? How do we establish an appropriate framework (i.e. 90% of the population survives for 100 years)?
* There is a bunch of data coming out of Missouri River work and a new 5-year plover review coming out so that will be instructive on these questions.

**Preparation For Next Meeting**

* Henry pointed out literature for AMWG to review prior to the next meeting (listed on agenda, available in AMWG room of PRRIP website).

**Meeting Review & Wrap-Up**

* Group did some meeting scheduling.
* Keep notes general in terms of origin of comments.
* Request for a very general list of topics to be addressed as the group moves through the process
* How to decide what literature is relevant without inundating the group
* Additional literature should be for AM learning, which articles point out what is known and what is yet uncertain; not trying to convince someone of something or win a battle of documents. May not be any literature out there on the subject, which is why we need to create our own CEM and investigate.
* **Next meeting** – October 20, 2020; 1:00-5:00 PM Central Time

Meeting adjourned at 3:25 PM Central Time.