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PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM
Technical Advisory Committee Conference Call Minutes
December 18, 2007

Attendees

Mark Peyton, Chair
Mike Fritz
Jim Jenniges
Mark Czaplewski
Ted Kowalski
Becky Fulkerson
Greg Wingfield
Jeff Runge
Martha Tacha
Mark Butler
Mike Besson
Lisa Fotherby
Kevin Urie
Chad Smith
Pat Engelbert, HDR

Welcome and Administrative

Mark Peyton called the meeting to order and the group proceeded with a roll call. No agenda modifications.

Spring & Fall Whooping Crane Monitoring

Mike Fritz mentioned two changes in the draft RFP that related to removing language about “protocol development” and specifying the database needs. Mark Butler noted that the contract should reference possible cost escalation related to increasing fuel costs. Ted Kowalski said the contract should address any reasons that the Program might want to back out of the contract, such as a change in Program direction. Fritz said one reason might be the loss of contractor experience required to properly implement the protocol.

A group discussion commenced about Gary Lingle’s comments on the current protocol related to the need to collect river profile data at each of the decoy locations. Jeff Runge noted the utility of the decoy sites and said he agrees that for low dependent variables (depth, width) you need to be able to tie them to water elevation. He said the contractor should have the basic survey equipment to get basic elevation data. Lisa Fotherby said the current transect data at decoy locations is not tied to elevation and it is just a relative measurement. It would be more useful if we could tie them to a set elevation. Jim Jenniges said other protocols in the Program call for use of GPS survey equipment. That could be made to work in the whooping crane monitoring protocol, but it would take more time. Fotherby agreed that using survey-grade equipment would get the level of necessary detail. Greg Wingfield said a good approach might be to not include this level of detail as part of the RFP, but collect just the basic data and have others complete the work at a later date. Jenniges said we could have the whooping crane monitoring contractor hammer in rebar on the north or south bank of the main transect at the decoy locations

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and take the appropriate GPS coordinates. A survey crew or geomorphology researchers can come back and get the necessary data at a later time.

The TAC consensus was to move ahead with the RFP after adding a bullet point that directs the contractor to place two permanent rebar markers on the north or south bank of all surveyed whooping crane sighting transects (including decoy locations) and then note relevant GPS coordinates.

The TAC recommends the following members for the Whooping Crane Monitoring Proposal Evaluation Team – Greg Wingfield, Ted Kowalski, and Felipe Chavez-Ramirez.

Stage Change RFP

The TAC recommends the following members for the Stage Change Study Proposal Evaluation Team – Kevin Urie, Lisa Fotherby, Mark Czaplewski, Rick Holland, Mike Besson, Mark Butler, and a representative from the Water Advisory Committee.

Pulse Flow RFP

Chad Smith explained the purpose of the RFP. Fotherby said a goal is clearly to collect water data, but that we should also ensure it is a test to show what infrastructure is impacted by flows. Efforts related to the 2008 pulse flow should really focus on data collection and we should decide on modeling issues later. Mike Besson said transducers don't really give depth and elevation data. Jenniges said cooperators can survey to any level of detail needed by the Program, and they just need to know specifically what needs to be done.

Tern/Plover Foraging RFP

Jenniges asked Martha Tacha about the need to calculate fledge ratios from birds marked during the foraging RFP. He said it would be nice to have an evaluation of fledge ratios to double-check the accuracy of ongoing monitoring, but it would seem to change the scope of project. Tacha said it would be helpful information, but it is not necessarily something she has to see in the RFP. Wingfield noted that the RFP should clearly reflect that the foraging study would encompass birds using both sandpit and riverine colonies. Jenniges said we should wait until the next TAC meeting to talk about monitoring efforts and see if this needs to be included in the RFP.

Closing Business

The next meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee will be on Monday, January 28 from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Central time in Kearney, NE. The discussion will focus on 2008/2009 monitoring intentions and how to integrate river monitoring efforts.

Mark Czaplewski asked about the status of the WEST, Inc. 2007 report on tern and plover monitoring. He also asked if WEST could do a report summarizing data collected on terns and plovers during the Cooperative Agreement process. Smith said he would discuss both with Dale Strickland and Clayton Derby.

Meeting adjourned.