



PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM
Technical Advisory Committee Conference Call Minutes
September 30, 2008

Attendees

Mark Peyton, Chair
Chad Smith
Mark Czaplewski
Becky Mitchell
Jeff Runge
Mike Fritz
John Shadle
Jason Farnsworth
Lisa Fotherby
Felipe Chavez-Ramirez
Greg Wingfield
Jim Jenniges
Ted Kowalski
Kevin Urie
Mike Besson
Brock Merrill
Ed Peters

Welcome and Administrative

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

Pallid Sturgeon Information Review

Ed Peters provided background as to how he developed the draft Pallid Sturgeon Existing Information Review and walked through various pieces of the draft report for discussion. There was a group discussion about dissemination of PDF copies of all literature, given certain copyright restrictions. It was agreed the overall report would be available publicly, as well as a table listing the literature. However, PDF copies of all the references would only be available internally in the Program unless and until copyright issues are resolved. Mike Fritz asked about the inclusion of related literature, particularly literature tied directly to shovelnose sturgeon but which may be relevant to an assessment of pallid sturgeon information given that shovelnose are sometimes considered a surrogate for pallids. Lisa Fotherby suggested focusing on bedform in terms of geomorphology as a way to draw a line about what geomorphology-related information to include. Fotherby asked, for example, if there is any information about changes in bedform in relation to flows and pallid response. Peters said the main references to that issue come from Robb Jacobson and the USGS in Columbia, Missouri and those are included in the reference list. Jeff Runge asked about the ability to include additional information in the review to assist with relating that information to Program priority hypotheses. Peters discussed which level of information could be added before embarking on a much larger review effort. **The group**



generally agreed the final version should incorporate suggestions from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and other TAC reviewers for additional information within the context of the Platte but should not extend to a larger review of pallid sturgeon not directly related to the Platte.

Integrated Monitoring and Research Plan Updates

Chad Smith discussed the status of several ongoing FY08 budget items:

ISAC-1 & PD-3: ISAC/Peer Review Panels

Smith expects a draft report from PBS&J by the end of this week providing their recommendations for ISAC and peer review panel members. The ISAC Selection Panel and the Peer Review Working Group will convene in October to discuss the draft report and the recommendations.

G-5: Monitoring the Geomorphology & In-Channel Vegetation of the Central Platte River

Smith reported that eight proposals were received in response to the RFP. The Proposal Selection Team will review and rank those proposals over the next two weeks.

WC-2: Analysis of CA-Collected Whooping Crane Monitoring Data

Smith reported that WEST is completing the final report, including analysis of the width-to-depth ratio and including some management recommendations. Smith expects a final report in October.

TP-4: Tern/Plover Foraging Habits Study

Smith summarized the selection process for the study and said the Proposal Selection Team decided to award the study to the USGS. Smith mentioned the proposal team led by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission has concerns about the selection process and would be filing a formal Letter of Inquiry outlining their concerns. Smith said the Proposal Selection Team would consider that letter and decide on a proper response. Mark Peyton mentioned that a question came up about why the proposal selection process did not come back to the TAC for review and approval. Peyton said the reason is that proposals are reviewed and selections are made according to the Program's Procurement Policy through the ED Office and the appointed Proposal Selection Team, not as a sub-group of the TAC.

TP-5: Analysis of CA-Collected Tern/Plover Monitoring Data

Smith reported that WEST completed the data analysis. The final report was distributed to the TAC on September 29.

PS-2: Lower Platte River Stage Change Study

Smith is waiting on update from the HDR Team as to the work completed in 2008 and plans for field work and model development in 2009.

WQ-1: Platte River Water Quality Monitoring



The group discussed the need for mercury monitoring. Mike Besson suggested maybe a better way to approach it would be to just sample one fish sample and determine from that if mercury is present, then do water samples from there. Fotherby suggested metals could maybe be sampled just every five years to help reduce costs. Jim Jenniges mentioned that fish samples could be taken during implementation of the Program's forage fish protocol. Runge said the FWS contaminant specialist suggested moving ahead with water and fish tissue sampling for mercury in 2009 and then adjust in the future based on the findings.

2008 High Flow Events report

Smith said the ED Office continues to work on compiling information from the past summer's high flow events and developing a report discussing the results. **Jenniges requested that the report also include a comparison of July 2007 and July 2008 photos.**

Draft FY09 Budget

Chad Smith walked through the estimated numbers for the draft FY09 budget. Smith discussed his intention to develop a contracting mechanism for implementation of the tern/plover and forage fish monitoring protocols. The idea would be to enter into a contract with a Program cooperator like NPPD to organize the field effort and implement the protocols each summer to ensure the work gets done, that the protocols are followed, and that data is collected and reported properly. The group generally agreed that was a good approach. Felipe Chavez-Ramirez said there is a green light on the whooping crane telemetry project. Peyton asked who would be conducting the study, and Chavez-Ramirez said he is the PI and project coordination is at the Trust. Ted Kowalski said at the WAC meeting, at least among Colorado representatives, there was strong support for spending Program money on invasives. Kowalski also talked about having \$1M in a reserve each year to deal with EA-bypass costs in accordance with the EA Bypass Agreement, as well as a separate line item for bypass costs that would be more readily available. Kevin Urie agreed that was his understanding of the two bypass-related budget line items.

Future Meeting Dates and Locations

The next meeting of the TAC will be a conference call on Wednesday, January 7th, 2009 from 10:00 a.m.-noon Central time.

Meeting adjourned.