



PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting Minutes
 ED Office Conference Room – Kearney, NE
 May 6, 2010

Attendees

Mike Besson – State of Wyoming (Chair)
 Jerry Kenny – ED
 Chad Smith – ED Office
 Dave Baasch – ED Office
 Jason Farnsworth – ED Office
 Mark Peyton – Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District
 Jim Jenniges – NPPD
 Rich Walters – The Nature Conservancy
 Mark Czaplewski – Central Platte Natural Resource District
 Martha Tacha – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 Matt Rabbe – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 Kevin Urie – Denver Water (via teleconference)
 Ted Kowalski – State of Colorado (via teleconference)
 Steve Smith – ED Office (via teleconference)
 Jennifer Schellpeper – Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (via teleconference)
 Jeff Runge – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (via teleconference)
 Greg Wolterstorff – V3 Companies (consultant)

Welcome and Administrative

Besson called the meeting to order and the group proceeded with a roll call. No agenda modifications were offered. Besson and Tacha offered edits to the March 2010 TAC meeting minutes:

- Line 91, Page 2 “state” should be “stated”
- Line 224, Page 6 “state” should be “stated”
- Line 105, inflows are upstream of Grand Island gage (instead of near)

Czaplewski moved to approve the March 2010 TAC minutes as amended. **Minutes approved.**

PRRIP Tern and Plover Monitoring and Research Protocols

Baasch provided an update on changes to the monitoring and research protocols since last discussed at the TAC and GC meetings. Jenniges suggested changing the definition of nest furniture to include everything (do not exclude any non-living material) – **Baasch agreed to make the change.** Baasch said all nests would be marked ten feet to the north of the nest and asked if marking nests with a paint stir stick six inches above ground is acceptable – **the TAC agreed.** Czaplewski moved to approve changes to monitoring protocol as discussed; Jenniges seconded. **Changes approved.**



Baasch discussed changes to the tern and plover research protocol. Chad Smith said the protocol would stay in draft form this year since implementation during the 2010 nesting season is designed to test methodology and refine data collection efforts. In the fall, the protocol will be finalized by including any changes related to 2010 implementation and the final protocol will include links to priority hypotheses, specific objectives, predictions, decision criteria, and other details important to assess progress toward management objectives in the Program's Adaptive Management Plan. In addition, 2010 implementation will help to modify and refine the current draft set of minimum habitat criteria developed by the TAC in 2008. Czaplewski suggested changing the sandpit habitat criteria to say sandpits within the associated habitats; **the TAC agreed.**

201 Tern and Plover Monitoring and Research Activities

Baasch provided an update on implementation of tern and plover monitoring and research activities so far in 2010. Baasch and the three Program summer technicians completed the first river survey of the year (the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conducted the survey from Grand Island to Chapman) and saw piping plovers as well as additional species. Program staff and technicians also implemented the research protocol in the two focal areas for 2010.

AMP Implementation Update

Chad Smith provided an update on several AMP implementation activities:

Wet Meadows – The Platte River Whooping Crane Maintenance Trust was selected to perform the work and an agreement is in process. The initial budget estimate from the Trust was within the existing approved budget for this project.

Cottonwood Ranch Off-Channel Sand & Water (OCSW) and Flow Consolidation – The InterFluve/EA team was selected to perform the work. A kick-off meeting is scheduled for May 19 in Kearney. Farnsworth said the Program is still looking to start construction of OCSW this fall. Czaplewski asked about status of bridge construction at Cottonwood Ranch. Farnsworth said there was a kick-off meeting last week and work should begin late summer.

FSM Proof of Concept – Smith discussed the current study design and monitoring protocol for the FSM Proof of Concept experiment at Elm Creek. Program staff are cleaning up the monitoring protocol, prioritizing and sequencing priority hypotheses, developing decision criteria and predictions, and developing a budget for the work. These materials will be pulled together into a package for TAC review likely in June. Jenniges asked if the 14 monitoring transects included in the monitoring protocol would be measured this summer before actions occur in the fall. Farnsworth said that is the plan if we can get agreement with NPPD for doing this in the channel.

Pallid sturgeon – Smith discussed the highlights of the pallid sturgeon assessment memo developed by the ED Office for the June GC meeting. Peyton moved to recommend to the GC that the Program submit the stage change study for peer review; Jenniges seconded. Urie said we need a TAC recommendation on peer review. Kowalski said the IMRP pallid sturgeon



activities suggest that it is understood peer review would be part of the process. **Motion approved.**

1-D model – Steve Smith provided an update on the status of the 1-D model project. The HDR/Tetra Tech team was selected to build the model and this will be peer reviewed by Golder. The original scope was to build the model from Lake McConaughy to Chapman but the initial budget estimate was too high. The current scope is now from North Platte to Chapman. The steady state model will be done in July and the unsteady model with sediment transport will be done in October. Runge asked to what extent the SEH modeling at North Platte could be integrated into this project. Kenny said they have modeled only a short stretch that we could consider incorporating, but their modeling is over such a short reach that he is not too inclined to add it to the scope.

Meeting and Workshop Scheduling and Closing Business

The TAC set two meetings:

June 23 – Tern and plover priority hypotheses workshop (Kearney)

September 1 – TAC meeting (Kearney)

Chad Smith will work with Felipe Chavez-Ramirez to find a date for a whooping crane hypotheses workshop in July.

Summary of Action Items/Decisions from May 2010 TAC meeting

- 1) Approved March 2010 TAC meeting minutes, with changes.
- 2) Approved changes in the PRRIP tern and plover monitoring protocol, including changes suggested during the meeting.
- 3) Agreed to change the sandpit minimum habitat criteria to read “sandpits included in the associated habitat”.
- 4) Recommended that the GC approve submitting the stage change study for peer review.
- 5) Set a workshop on June 23 to discuss tern and plover priority hypotheses.
- 6) Set the next TAC meeting on September 1.