



**PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**  
**Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**  
Staybridge Suites Conference Room – Denver, CO  
November 30, 2011

**Wednesday, November 30th**

**Meeting Attendees**

**Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)**

**State of Wyoming**

Mike Besson – Member (Chair)

**State of Colorado**

Suzanne Sellers – Member

**State of Nebraska**

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service)**

Matt Rabbe – Alternate (via phone)

**Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)**

**Environmental Entities**

Rich Walters – Member

**Upper Platte Water Users**

**Colorado Water Users**

Kevin Urie – Member

**Downstream Water Users**

Jim Jenniges – Member

**Executive Director’s Office (EDO)**

Jerry Kenny – Executive Director (ED)

Chad Smith

Dave Baasch

Jason Farnsworth

Steve Smith

**Other Participants**

Jeff Runge (FWS)

Pat Goltl (Nebraska DNR)

Dave Marmorek (ISAC Chair)

David Galat (ISAC)

Kent Lofton (ISAC)

Robb Jacobson (ISAC)

Phillip Dixon (ISAC)

John Nestler (ISAC)

Chester Watson (Special Advisor)

Brad Anderson (Anderson Consulting)

Bob Mussetter (Tetra Tech)

Darcy Pickard (ESSA Technology Ltd.)

**Welcome and Administrative**

*The TAC meeting followed the November 29-30 ISAC meeting so all attendees listed above may not have been present during the TAC portion of the meeting.*

**Sediment Augmentation Pilot-Scale Management Action**

C. Smith provided an update on the status of the Sediment Augmentation Pilot-Scale Management Action and noted the technical memo and the monitoring plan were updated following the TAC meeting in October and the meeting between EDO staff, Tri-basin NRD, and the Corps. C. Smith stated Atkins is searching for a 3-person panel to review the Technical Memo and that the TAC will be asked for their support of a panel via email or conference call in December.



### Stage Change Study Peer Review

C. Smith discussed the peer review comments provided for the Stage Change Study. C. Smith stated most comments were editorial and would be addressed if a new Report is written. S. Smith worked with the Stage Change Study team (Tom Riley, Bob Mussetter, Pat Engelbert, and Mark Pegg) to address some of the more significant peer review comments and suggestions. C. Smith indicated he didn't see any indication the peer reviewers found fatal flaws in the Stage Change Study Design.

Runge asked if the TAC could provide written comments. C. Smith said written comments would be fine, but asked Runge if he felt the Service would accept the peer review work and if the Service would recommend redoing the Stage Change Study. Runge stated he felt it would be better to provide thoughts on the study and peer review process in writing. Jenniges stated the comments tended to be editorial or in reference to the scale at which the study was done at. Runge stated the study was conducted downstream of Salt Creek and Elkhorn River confluences and that Program water management actions may be more detectable or significant upstream of these inflows. C. Smith stated replicating the Stage Change Study upstream of the Elkhorn Confluence would be outside the Program Associated Habitats and would require a GC decision. Jenniges emphasized that the peer review was to determine whether the Stage Change Study was sufficient or not. C. Smith stated the review was to determine whether the design and methodology of the study were sound and that the TAC was being asked for a recommendation for the GC to accept or reject the peer review. Urie and Jenniges stated the first phase would be to decide if we accept the peer review of the Stage Change Study, the second phase would be close the book on the initial study (i.e., the contractors did what they were supposed to do), and the third phase would be to decide whether the Program should conduct additional studies. **Runge made a motion to recommend support of the peer review for the Stage Change Study; all agreed.**

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### Water Quality Monitoring RFP

S. Smith led the discussion on water quality monitoring on the Platte River as well as the Kearney Canal including the proposed addendums. Rabbe recommended adding flow consolidation as a 'major event' and all Service target flow releases as a 'minor events.' Runge asked what the process would be for developing the data analysis portion of the RFP. S. Smith stated the contractor would develop the data analysis plan for the study when developing the addendum to the current scope of work.

**Besson moved to recommend GC support of the RFP with revisions Rabbe discussed during the meeting (add flow consolidation and Service target flow releases to the study RFP); all supported the motion.**

**TAC recommended selection panel: Steve smith, Mark Czaplewski, Kevin Urie, and Mike Besson.**

### Habitat Availability Analyses

C. Smith led discussion on the 2007-2012 WC habitat availability analysis as well as the 2007 & 2012 LTPP habitat availability analysis. Recommendation was to have Rainwater Basin Joint Venture (RWBJV) perform the work, however, the EDO considered putting the project out for bid, but realizes RWBJV won't submit a proposal given the fact they are a non-profit organization not looking for additional work. EDO staff envisions it will most likely be much more expensive to conduct the work through the ED office or to hire a contractor to perform the work through the competitive process and suggests the Program contracts RWBJV for the work.



Besson asked what type of organization the RWBJV is; Walters and Farnsworth stated they believe RWBJV is labeled a Bio-1-C3 and that RWBJV is specialized in this type of work and can't compete for this type of work. Jenniges asked how this analysis and the whooping monitoring analyses could overlap; Baasch stated the 2 projects do not overlap as one is an analysis of data points collected by the monitoring crew and the other is a classification of habitat availability on an annual basis. Jenniges stated we should develop habitat criteria before committing to this type of evaluation. Farnsworth and others stated it really didn't matter what the Program defined as minimum habitat criteria for this type of analysis because the contractor would apply whatever criteria the Program deemed relevant to the imagery and other data we provide to determine availability of habitat on an annual basis. Jenniges stated he wasn't comfortable promoting the proposed work to NPPD's GC member without knowing what the habitat criteria are and what the product of the work would be. Baasch stated the products of this work would be similar to the tern and plover habitat availability analysis; acres and distribution of Program defined available habitat. C. Smith stated the proposed work would be on the agenda at the TAC WC Minimum Habitat Design Workshop in January and a decision on how to proceed would be discussed then and will be voted on by the GC in March 2012.

### **Closing Business**

#### *Upcoming Meetings*

1. TAC email or conference call meeting to recommend a panel to review the Sediment Augmentation Technical Memo and Study Plan
2. Next TAC Workshop previously scheduled for January 12, 2012 in Kearney.
3. AMP Reporting Session scheduled for March 27-28, 2012 in Denver.

### **Summary of Action Items/Decisions**

1. The TAC will be asked for their support of a peer review panel for the Sediment Augmentation Technical Memo and Study Plan via email or conference call in December; date to be determined.
2. The TAC recommended GC support of the peer review for the Stage Change Study.
3. The TAC recommended GC support of the Water Quality Monitoring RFP with addendums and revisions discussed during the meeting (add flow consolidation and Service target flow releases to the study RFP).
4. TAC will discuss how to proceed with the WC habitat availability analysis during the January WC Minimum Habitat Design Workshop.