PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Notes
Conference Call
October 30, 2013

Meeting Participants

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Table

State of Wyoming
Mike Besson – Member (Chair)

State of Colorado
Suzanne Sellers – Member

State of Nebraska
Brandi Flyr – Alternate

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service)
Matt Rabbe – Member

Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)
Brock Merrill – Member

Environmental Entities
Rich Walters - Member
Mary Harner – Alternate

Upper Platte Water Users

Colorado Water Users
Kevin Urie – Member (WebEx)

Downstream Water Users
Mark Czaplewski – Member
Jim Jenniges – Member
Mark Peyton – Member

Executive Director's Office (EDO)
Chad Smith
Jason Farnsworth
Dave Baasch

Other Participants
Barry Lawrence – (Wyoming)
Tom Econopouly (FWS)
Mike Fritz (NGPC)
Eliza Hines (FWS)

Welcome and Administrative

Besson and Smith called the conference call meeting to order and asked for agenda modifications; none offered.

TAC Minutes

Smith asked the group if there were any changes to the June 26, 2013 TAC minutes. Besson and Urie stated there were several editorial and typographical edits needed throughout the minutes; Baasch said he would re-read the minutes and make the changes. **Urie moved to approve the July 26, 2013 TAC minutes with edits suggested during the meeting; Merrill seconded the motion; all supported the motion.**

FY2014 Program Budget Discussion

Smith led the discussion and went through line items in the AMP section of the FY2014 Program budget and asked the TAC to provide feedback where needed. Notes included below only highlight Line Item budgets that changed between the time the packet was distributed to the TAC and the time of the call and for Line Items where meeting participants provided feedback.

- PD-12 (model application) – Smith said this line item was changed to $0 for FY2014.
- PD-13 (Sediment Augmentation) – Czaplewski asked if the plan was to augment sediment at a couple of sites; Smith indicated it was. Urie asked if we anticipated it would cost $100,000 to obtain permits to augment sediment; Smith and Farnsworth said it cost about that much in FY2013, but the actual cost may be a little lower if we don't mine and pump sand into the river. Czaplewski asked if the $100,000 permitting cost was separate from permitting costs in PD-15; Smith said it was.
- LP-2 – Rabbe asked if Smith distributed Appendix A that referenced in the work plan; Smith noticed he forgot to send the appendix to the TAC and did so during the call. Farnsworth summarized the content of Appendix and said most costs for 2014 were property maintenance types of costs. Rabbe asked if there was money in the budget to remove trees at Martin Meadow or Binfield; Farnsworth said tree removal on Martin Meadow would show up in LP-4 and that there was not money in the FY2014 to remove trees on Binfield, but money was included in the FY2013 budget that could be rolled over as an unliquidated obligation if the GC decided to move forward with removing trees on Binfield.
- PD-18 – Czaplewski asked if costs in the work plan table were monthly costs; Smith said the $80,000 number in the budget table was a solid estimate, but that the table in the work plan needed to be updated.
- Econopouly asked if the EDO knew how much the 2013 SDMF release cost the Program; Smith said he wasn't sure at this point because expenditures in the budget were only current as of July 2013.
- IMRP-2 – Econopouly asked the lateral erosion research would be a modeling exercise or field data collection; Farnsworth said the EDO was discussing potential options with Natasha Bankhead and Andrew Simons, but that it would be field study and would be combined with

ongoing modeling efforts to calibrate the 2-D model for the FSM projects. Econopouly asked if the EDO felt the contractor would be able to get a well calibrated 1-D model; Farnsworth said we were able to capture good LiDAR data in 2012 and would capture LiDAR data in November of 2013 and that he felt they would be able to come up with a good model for the Program.

- WC-1 – money obligated for the habitat selection analysis during 2013 will be carried over to 2014 so the line item reflects costs of seasonal monitoring and reporting. Besson asked how the contractor was performing during the fall migration season; Baasch said the EDO had several discussions with WEST (Clayton Derby) prior to the migration season and he felt things were going well this fall.
- WC-3 – Smith stated the ISAC members encouraged the EDO to pursue opportunities to continue the telemetry project if possible. Smith said the EDO planned to look at options to continue the telemetry project possibly in place of the current monitoring protocol. Besson asked if this would be a topic of discussion at an upcoming TAC meeting; Baasch said the EDO definitely planned to have discussions with the TAC to seek support and develop study plans and objectives. The Program would also need to have conversations with USFWS, Canadian Wildlife Service, and others to obtain permissions and support. Hines asked why the Program wouldn't continue the telemetry project as it is currently structured; Baasch and Smith said the GC has expressed concern with the current arrangement for the telemetry project and seemed to feel where the Program has contributed most of the cash for the project it should be able to do what it wants with the data. Hines asked if the Program might sell the data to wind energy companies or how the Program's financial contribution would be reduced; Smith said it appears there are a lot of wind energy companies that want the data and having control over the data Harner said the partnership is made up of 5 partners that have contributed a lot of time and effort to the project and the discussion needed to be a broader TAC discussion. Smith agreed and stated with the trapping efforts ending in 2014 and given the ISAC's strong recommendation, the EDO has recently began discussions internally to game out potential scenarios. Farnsworth added the ISAC seemed to support using the data on a real-time basis rather than sitting on it for several years. Peyton supported the EDO looking into options to continue collecting telemetry data if possible. Urie asked if the telemetry agreement was scheduled to terminate in 2016 and if there had been any discussions amongst the telemetry team about continuing the project; Baasch said the telemetry team had not discussed extending the trapping effort into the future and that the current agreement would expire in 2019 to allow time for data analysis and reporting. Urie asked what the anticipated timeframe of data collection was; Baasch said, depending on the life of the existing transmitters, he suspects we would continue to obtain data from the marked birds well into 2015. Czaplewski suggested the TAC plan to initiate discussions early in 2014. Baasch agreed and said the Program may need to include a little additional money in the FY2014 budget to purchase transmitters, etc. during summer months for the fall trapping effort to buy time to get other agreements in place to help fund the continuation of the study. Jenniges, Peyton, and Besson suggested there likely is enough money in the Program budget that can be moved around in the event the Program obtains all the needed permissions to continue the telemetry project. Czaplewski agreed that if the Program was allowed and decided to continue the telemetry project we could potentially use money obligated for the fall WC monitoring effort.

- WC-6 – Harner said the Trust has a cooperative agreement in place with USGS and views itself as a 'cooperator' rather than a sub-contractor to the USGS; Smith said the Program has a contract with the USGS and if the USGS wants to have a sub-contract and the Trust is identified, than the Program language will be used. Smith added the cooperator language is only in the USGS-Trust agreement and the EDO has had a lot of discussions with the USGS this fall to get the agreement to conform to USGS-Program agreement.
- WQ-1 – Smith said the line item included $0 for FY2014; Jenniges asked the EDO to confirm the Kearney Canal monitoring had been performed for 3 years as specified in the agreement; Farnsworth said the monitoring had been done for 3 years and the EDO was looking at ways to evaluate the data.
- PD-3 – Fritz asked if some of the 8 documents identified on page 70 of the draft work plan could be moved to 2015 to allow the EDO to develop and work through the process; Smith said the peer review process hasn't changed so reviewing 8 documents will only mean the Program will go through the process more times during 2014 than we have in the past. Smith added a potential issue with reducing the number of peer review documents would be that it may end up postponing decisions in the future if the Program followed the ISAC guidance of only moving from 1-thumb to 2-thumbs up or down when all the foundational information used to make the decision have been peer reviewed. Fritz said identifying ISAC replacement members seemed out of place for a peer review line item; Smith agreed, but stated the contractor used to identify peer review panels would also be tasked with identifying new ISAC members. Hines asked if there was money in the budget to revise reports if the Program's peer review process identified a need to make modifications. Hines added her concern would be that if peer reviewer comments aren't addressed in the report and the comments get separated from the report, future readers may not be aware of reviewer comments. Smith used the Stage Change Study as an example and said he believed there was only 1 version of the Stage Change Study Report that included a cover letter stating the GC approved the study, report, and peer review as final; the revised report; and attachment(s) with peer review comments and author and EDO responses. Smith added similar steps and procedures will be followed in the future. Rabbe suggested the reviewers provide comments for what changes they would require in order to move a report from 'not accept' or 'accept with major changes' to 'accept.'
- Rabbe stated he read the ISAC recommended the Program publish the Stage Change Study and asked if the EDO planned to publish that data or not. Smith said the Stage Change Study would be added to the list. Czaplewski asked if the TAC or Service would have an opportunity to weigh in or prioritize the lists that were developed for publication and peer review. Smith said the EDO developed the initial list of 16 reports and studies to be peer reviewed and/or published, but would welcome any comments or suggested revisions the TAC may have to offer.

Additional AMP Item Discussions

Smith provided the TAC an update on the status and plans for the 2013 and future State of the Platte Reports. Rabbe said some of the Service comments included in the 2013 State Report need to be revised; Smith said he would remove any comments and positions Rabbe didn't want included in the report.

Smith said the EDO received a list of potential ISAC candidates from Atkins and the EDO will provide the TAC an EDO recommendation for potential replacement ISAC members. Besson suggested the EDO provide the EDO recommendations via email and if the TAC cannot reach, consensus they could schedule a conference call at that time.

Rabbe and others expressed concern with having an ISAC member (Kent Loftin) rotate off the ISAC panel and immediately serve in an advisory role for the Program.

Closing Business

Meeting adjourned at 3:00pm Central time.

Summary of Decisions from January 2013 TAC Meeting

1. The TAC approved the June 26, 2013 TAC minutes with edits suggested during the conference call.
2. Smith will email the TAC an EDO recommendation for replacement members for the ISAC for 2014. If the TAC cannot reach consensus on potential replacements, the EDO will schedule a conference call at that time to develop a recommendation to move on to the GC.