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COLORADO

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## SDM Workshop

1 message

**Sellers - DNR, Suzanne** <suzanne.sellers@state.co.us>

Thu, May 26, 2016 at 11:47 AM

To: Don Ament <d.ament@hotmail.com>, "Berryman, Alan" <aberryman@northernwater.org>, Kevin Urie <Kevin.Urie@denverwater.org>, Deb Freeman <dfreeman@troutlaw.com>

Hi Team,

There are three outstanding SDM decisions, which the GC will address in June:

1. How much off-channel habitat to commit to and whether and how to acquire new land,
2. Whether the benefits of an on-channel MCA component to the Whooping Crane and Sediment Supply PMs are worth the additional cost and effort to implement it, and
3. Whether and how to include a flow component during the nesting initiation period for terns and/or plovers.

Below are my thoughts...

### To address Question 1 - Off-Channel Habitat Alternatives:

My preferred alternative is C6 because STC and A1 do not meet the plover recovery plan criterion and its cheaper than C1. This translates to "Endorse" C6.

C6 is A1 (102 off-channel acres) plus a Hybrid Approach to acquiring 60 additional acres, with the following make up:

- ☐ 20 ac. on existing PRRIP land, and habitat built using new construction
- ☐ 20 ac. purchased, and habitat built using mine-operator agreements
- ☐ 20 ac. leased, and habitat built using rehab methods.

### To address Question 2 - On-channel Habitat (MCA)

My preferred alternative is no MCA, but I am not opposed to "giving" this to the service at a long term cost of \$700K which translates to "Accept" MCA.

### To address Question 3 - Nest Initiation Flows

For the choice of whether or not to include a Nest Initiation Flows component, the TAC concluded:

- That the release of water for plover nest initiation flows is not generally justified on the basis of the estimated benefits for plovers;
- That such releases should in general (in the absence of special circumstances) be considered a lower priority than releases for other purposes (no specific special circumstances were identified);
- That the most efficient use of water for plovers occurs in years immediately after a flood year when there is new naturally-formed habitat;
- That if water is released for plovers, even under the most favorable conditions, the benefits, if any, would not be measurable.

Despite these findings, I can "Accept" option C) which involves providing guidelines to be used to inform real-time decisions that are made annually, in consideration of hydrology, and possibly other relevant factors, but leaves the decision maker (in the context of Environmental Account releases, the USFWS) with discretion to make final decisions (because this decision does not require more water obligations). I recommend that this be made with the caveat that the guidelines would indicate that this use would not interfere with the primary work that needs to get done using water.

Thanks,

**Suzanne M. Sellers, P.E.**

**Program Manager**



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