



**PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Conference Call / Webinar
March 8, 2017**

Meeting Participants

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Table

State of Colorado

Suzanne Sellers – (Chair; phone)

State of Wyoming

State of Nebraska

Carol Flaute - Alternate

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service)

Matt Rabbe – Member

Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)

Brock Merrill – Member

Environmental Entities

Rich Walters – Member

Upper Platte Water Users

Colorado Water Users

Kevin Urie – Member

Downstream Water Users

Jim Jenniges – Member

Dave Zorn – Member

Mark Czaplewski – Member

Executive Director's Office (EDO)

Jerry Kenny (ED)

Chad Smith

Jason Farnsworth

Dave Baasch

Patrick Farrell

Kaley Keldsen

Other Participants

Mike Fritz (NGPC)

Jason Marks (Denver Water)

Mike Drain (CNPPID)

Harry Labonde (Wyoming)

Bob Mehling (Upper Platte Water Users)



Welcome and Administrative

Sellers and Smith called the meeting to order and asked for agenda modifications; no modifications offered.

TAC Minutes

Sellers asked the group if there were any suggested changes for the February 13, 2017 TAC Minutes. Baasch informed the group that Sellers had made a minor change to the minutes that was not included in the TAC packet. **Jenniges moved to approve the February 13, 2017 TAC minutes; Walters seconded the motion; all supported the motion.**

Predator Studies

Baasch informed the TAC that we had purchased 18 cameras to monitor predator fences during 2016 and that those efforts would continue in 2017. Urie asked if we were able to document any breaches of the wing panels; Baasch said only deer and blue heron were detected within the nesting area, but that we had captured several photos of predators outside the fence.

Baasch informed the TAC we would be purchasing 18 additional cameras to be placed in the nesting area to document predator activity within 3 off-channel nesting sites. He said the plan was to place the cameras throughout the site and set them to record time lapse photos every 5 minutes. Walters and Fritz suggested 5 minute intervals may not be frequent enough to capture predator activity and suggested we program cameras to capture a photo every 3 minutes or so as well as setting the cameras in hybrid mode to detect and capture predator movements within the site. Baasch expressed a little concern about the volume of pictures (2.8 million) that would be generated if we set the cameras to capture photos every 3 minutes; Fritz said we could use a master naturalist to help review photos; Baasch said we had discussed having some UNK undergrads help review the photos as well. Rabbe asked if the study would require any permitting changes; Baasch said we would be operating within our current permit. Zorn asked if Keldsen would be required to obtain an IACUC permit since she is using this for her graduate study; Baasch said she would be obtaining a permit if for no other reason just to get that experience; Fritz said she would need a state permit. Jenniges asked how many sites we would be monitoring; Baasch said we would have enough predator cameras to monitor 3 sites and enough fence cameras to monitor 5 sites. Jenniges said the District's Monitoring Meeting was coming up and the group could discuss the potential of obtaining more cameras to monitor additional sites. Urie suggested the possibility of using remote download

Baasch also informed the TAC 5 nest-cameras would be purchased to document band combinations to fulfill USFWS banding requirements.

Whooping Crane Chapter and WEST Report Update

Farnsworth, Farrell, and Baasch discussed some of the more substantial comments from the peer review and stated there were suggestions such as reformatting the WEST Report, include life history about WC, include information regarding the importance of the Platte River to whooping cranes, etc. that the EDO wanted TAC feedback on whether changes such as these should be made or not. Farrell also said the peer reviewers also suggested plotting data from the 10th to the 90th percentile, the statistician (Cade) suggested removing the appendices and develop models based on



systematic unique locations, but develop models based on ‘all’ of our data which could mean all systematic data or all systematic and opportunistic data. The issue with including the opportunistic data is that 4 individual WC observed prior to monitoring at the Trust cause an extreme increase in the tail end of the distribution near 1,200 feet. Farnsworth said all response curves were identical in that they initially peak near 500 feet, but including opportunistic observations causes the tail of the final plot to increase again. The correct interpretation of the model results when opportunistic observations are included is WC select 400 and 1,200 foot channels 2 times more than 800 foot channels. Rabbe stated the State of the Platte Report indicates more use of 1,200 foot channels than availability would indicate there should be. Rabbe wanted assurance the TAC would not start recommending the Program manage wide channels down to 600 feet; several stated that wouldn’t happen. Farrell asked the TAC what set of data they felt should be used to develop the final models. Jenniges said the Program developed the monitoring protocol to collect systematic data to avoid observation bias so he felt we should only include the systematically collected data. Rabbe and others agreed WEST should use systematically collected data to develop the final model. Farnsworth said we planned to explicitly describe how the Program will interpret each of the plots in the final report. Fritz suggested information be included in the report acknowledging opportunistic data was collected, Farnsworth said we would explain why the opportunistic data was not included in the analyses (observer bias).

Farrell said a concern a reviewer had was that we limited availability to 10 miles and wondered if results were sensitive to this definition; Farrell said additional analyses were not sensitive to what was defined as available. Rabbe said we need to state that results were not sensitive to defining available habitat between 5 and 10 miles and not the entire AHR. Farnsworth state a reviewer pointed out the EDO calculated UD incorrectly, but that we had made the change and model results didn’t change. Farrell said the EDO focused our results on point estimates and a reviewer suggested we acknowledge the uncertainty in the estimates.

Farrell said the EDO was waiting on NAIP imagery so we can compile data for Chapter 3 that is similar to how measures were collected in Chapter 2 and then will re-run the analysis. Farrell also informed the TAC the statistician (Cade) suggested we use quantile regression rather than linear regression in the analyses in Chapter 4. Rabbe asked if the results changed when quantile regression was used; Farrell said results were very similar.

AMP Addendum

Smith lead the discussions and presented information similar to what the GC had discussed earlier in the day.

Closing Business

Pallid Sturgeon Update – Smith informed the TAC Compass has been contacting GC members to get back ground information leading up to the September GC Workshop. The EDO suggests we establish a small working group to develop information that would be discussed with the entire TAC leading to documents that would be discussed with the GC at the Workshop in September.



Monitoring Protocols - Czaplewski asked if the EDO had updated the LTPP and WC monitoring protocols to reflect what data is currently being collected and if the Program had formally accepted the revised protocols; Baasch said the protocols had been revised, but the TAC or GC had not reviewed or approved them. Will be a topic of the next TAC meeting.

Upcoming 2017 TAC Meeting Schedule

No future TAC meetings were set.

The AMP Reporting Session is scheduled for October 17-18, 2017 in Omaha

Summary of Decisions from the February 2017 TAC Meeting

1. The TAC approved the February 13, 2017 TAC minutes as final