

FINAL MINUTES  
CAP FUND TRANSFER PROGRAM  
JOINT POLICY-TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
JANUARY 22, 2004

*Attendance:* Henry Messing (BR), Rob Clarkson (BR), Tom Gatz (FWS), Paul Barrett (FWS), Chuck Hayes (NMGFD), David Propst (NMGFD), Bruce Taubert (AZGFD), Rob Bettaso (AZGFD)

- Action items:*
1. Clarkson will see if ASU can continue to archive completion reports.  
*Communication with Paul Marsh since this meeting revealed that ASU libraries previously declined to undertake the archiving of fund transfer reports; Marsh was maintaining them in his ASU office only.*
  2. Clarkson will investigate why task 3-4, Bylas Springs geohydrology, was deleted from the list of projects. *The project was dropped because of SCAT concerns about the data becoming public.*
  3. Clarkson will draft a letter to be signed by all agencies that limits the amount of overhead the program is willing to fund for approved projects. Barrett will check on coop-unit and other institutional overhead rates.
  4. Barrett will proceed with a sole-source agreement and refinement of the statement of work and cost estimate for task 4-53, evaluation of the fund transfer program.
  5. Next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for June 21, 2004, at a site to be determined.
  6. Director's briefing on transgenic fish is scheduled for April 27, 2004 (*now rescheduled for July 1*). Bettaso will handle the meeting arrangements.

The meeting started at ~0945 hrs. Taubert requested an agenda addition to clarify NEPA and staffing funding. Hayes requested an agenda addition to clarify the status and need for FWS informational meetings describing the Fund Transfer Program.

*Status of projects:*

- 3-3 Topminnow stock maintenance at ASU—Taubert requested a list of stocks currently held. *Bettaso emailed the list of stocks to Policy/Technical committee members on January 22, 2004.*
- 3-4 Bylas Springs geohydrology—Taubert requested an explanation for the reason the project was dropped. *The project was dropped at the request of the FWS Fishery Resources Office due to data confidentiality issues.*
- 3-8 Verde River fishes habitat use—This project was dropped because it no longer fit within the criteria established for the program subsequent to the task identification.
- 3-11 Aravaipa Creek fish monitoring—This project was dropped because BLM is funding it.
- 3-13 Middle Gila River survey for spikedace—This project was dropped because BR completed the task under separate funding. Taubert requested that final reports of completed tasks be made available as .pdf files on a website.
- 3-14 Spikedace and loach minnow reestablishment—This project was dropped because of AZGFD staffing shortages.
- 3-24 Spikedace propagation techniques (yr 1 of 2)—The first year of this 2-yr project is completed; the final report is due April 30, 2004.
- 3-31 Redrock Ranch acquisition—This project was dropped due to landowner concerns and Section 7 issues.
- 3-46 Gila basin chub genetic differentiation—AZGFD will take 2-3% overhead off the top of the project budget to pass the agreement to ASU with a greatly reduced overall overhead

- rate. All agreed that the program should limit vendor overhead rates via establishment of an overhead policy letter to be signed by all agencies. Once this policy is established, future agreements will not use a pass-through agency to minimize overhead. Clarkson will draft the overhead policy letter for review by the Technical and Policy committees.
- 3-51 Helicopter support for Aravaipa topminnow stockings—The NEPA process is delaying the completion of this task.
- 3-55 Salt River repatriations (yr 1 of 4)—Taubert shared that the Apache tribes were concerned about the project, but a recent meeting with them went well. FWS has internal Section 7 issues to work out. Clarkson expressed concerns that continued delays of the project implementation could preclude its success if flathead catfish populations rebound.
- 4-1 Mosquitofish removal at Bos and Medicine springs—This project was dropped because it received independent funding and questions regarding data confidentiality.
- 4-4 Remove nonnative fish from Kingfisher ponds—This project was dropped because it was determined the ponds were within the lower floodplain and would be easily recontaminated.
- 4-5 White River fish barrier feasibility—Taubert requested that the continuation of a barrier project be investigated with FWS and White Mountain Apache Tribe, and the status finalized in the FWS progress report.
- 4-7 Piscicide development—This project was broadened to include investigation of integrated management techniques to control nonnative fishes.
- 4-15 Blue River fish barrier design—This project is on hold pending completion of NEPA by Reclamation.
- 4-26 Piscicide susceptibility of selected fishes—This project was dropped because of a low priority.
- 4-28 Transgenic fish feasibility study— The Policy Committee requested that further implementation of the study be delayed until agency directors were fully briefed about the project. That briefing is scheduled for April 27; names of experts to be invited should be provided to the Policy Committee. *The briefing has been rescheduled for July 7.*
- 4-43 Acquisition of chemical ichthyocide—It was explained that the amount of antimycin to be purchased under this task was based on worst-case Fossil Creek renovation needs.
- 4-53 Evaluation of the effectiveness of the CAP Fund Transfer Program—The Wildlife Management Institute is interested in undertaking this project. Barrett will proceed with a sole-source agreement and refinement of the statement of work and cost estimate.

*Proposed FY05 projects:*

RPA #3—Conservation of native fishes

- Continuation projects (Salt River repatriations yr 2 of 4, chub propagation yr 3 of 3, and pupfish genetics yr 2 of 3) were all approved.
- Loach minnow/spikedace data assembly projects for AZ and NM were approved; narrative and spreadsheets (with locality data) will be required as deliverables.
- Pupfish stockings at Gila Mountains ponds were approved, but we need to ensure that permittees are ok with the project. Use Section 10.a.1.A for implementation?
- Refugia development for rare populations was tentatively approved pending presentation of a full scope of work statement.
- Bubbling Ponds Hatchery development was approved.
- Cave Creek/Seven Springs renovation was approved.

RPA #4—Control of nonnative fishes

- Mechanical removal projects for the upper Gila and Verde rivers were approved.
- The transgenic fish development study was approved as a placeholder task pending Director briefings and successful completion of task 4-28 (feasibility).
- The Little Creek, NM, fish barrier design project was dropped in favor of a feasibility study. Propst will check if the Forest Service would be willing to take the lead for NEPA compliance. *The feasibility task will require hydrological modeling to determine W Fk Gila River flooding impacts on the barrier site. To accommodate the modeling and extra travel costs, the cost estimate for a feasibility project is \$25,000.*
- The mainstem W Fk Gila River fish barrier project was dropped from further consideration at this time.

*Transition from ITA:*

Barrett handed out a spreadsheet that itemized the status of pending tasks, and declared he was ok with the existing situation (post-ITA). Hayes proposed splitting Barrett's current position into a strictly technical position and a contract administrator position to reduce workloads. Aimee Roberson was proposed as the FWS technical position and Barrett as the contract administrator. The Policy Committee and FWS will discuss this idea and get back to the larger group later.

*NM funding agreement:*

FWS is working on a cooperative agreement to handle all NM tasks, but it may run into problems because current FWS guidance suggests each project should have separate agreements. A decision on which way to go should come soon.

*NEPA and staffing:*

Program funding for staffing and NEPA compliance are within the scope of program funding, but such needs will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

*Information meetings:*

Past meetings were good to spread the word about the program, but there are no plans to continue them unless specifically requested.