

Draft Minutes From November 10, 2003 Meeting Of The Cap Funds Transfer Program's Technical Committee

Paul Barrett

Attendees: Bureau of Reclamation – Rob Clarkson (Rob C.); Fish and Wildlife Service –Paul Barrett; Arizona Game and Fish Department – Rob Bettaso (Rob B.), New Mexico Game and Fish Department – David Propst (via telephone)

The meeting began at 10:00 am.

Barrett began meeting with an update on the contracting status of approved projects that are being administered by the Service.

Action items from the August 24, 2003 meeting were reviewed and discussed as follows:

1. Barrett will e-mail the CAP FTP PowerPoint presentation the Technical Committee for review. *Completed.*
2. Barrett will set dates for the informational meeting in Pinetop so that all FTP TC members will have the opportunity to attend. *Meeting cancelled.*
3. Barrett will set up a meeting with Agreements staff in Albuquerque to discuss the process for RFPs, sole sourcing, and other mechanisms to release contracts. *Still to be done.*
4. Bettaso will draft a form letter to be used for rejection notification. Initial draft written but requires revision. *Barrett will take lead on next draft.*
5. Barrett will contact Mueller to determine if he would be interested in this type of task, and what resources he would need to complete it. *Completed. Dr. Jeanette Carpenter of the Ft. Collins USGS Lab will be Principle Investigator.*
6. Clarkson will write up the “blurb” for native fish restoration in the upper Salt River. *Completed.*

Clarkson also suggested that because the Salt River Fish Repatriation project was time sensitive even though it is an FY05 project and the Modification to the Interagency Agreement has yet to be completed. If sufficient funds are available, the Service may be able to contract to Arizona Game and Fish Department to do the project.

Clarkson led a discussion of comments from Bruce Taubert (Arizona Game and Fish Department) on the FY04 projects and the 5-year Strategic Plan. After the discussion we agreed that Clarkson will respond directly to Bruce Taubert clarifying some issues raised in the comments.

FY05 Projects

Potential projects for funding during the FY05 cycle were discussed. Barrett began by relaying information on several potential projects suggested during a recent interagency spikedace/loach minnow meeting in Albuquerque.

Bill Wall of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest requested funding for a comprehensive survey of the native fishes of the Blue River drainage. Several of us thought Dr. Paul Marsh had conducted such a survey for the National Forest within the past five years. It was decided not to fund the project at this time, but rather to contact Bill Wall and request more specifics and justification for the project.

A proposal submitted by USFWS New Mexico Fisheries Resources Office, NMGF, and Gila National Forest (USFS) for a four-year program to evaluate efficacy of mechanical removal of nonnative fishes in the upper Gila River was discussed. Bettaso and Barrett previously had discussed a similar project for the Upper Verde River. Technical Committee concluded that both projects merit consideration by the Policy Committee. Barrett will contact Pam Sponholtz of the USFWS Arizona Fisheries Resources Office about doing the Verde River work.

Barrett also relayed a request from Mary Richardson of USFWS Arizona ES office for assistance in reviewing, summarizing and compiling information on spikedace and loach minnow. This is a need identified by the Interagency Spikedace/Loach minnow group. Richardson indicated that some assistance would enable more timely completion of this task. Propst will be compiling similar information for New Mexico and requested consideration of funding to support NM efforts. Technical Committee agreed to tentatively support projects. Barrett will contact Richardson for more details, draft a short project description, and relay it to Propst for review prior to submitting it to Technical Committee.

Clarkson discussed funding for existing multiyear projects that will require FY05 funds. These included the Salt River Fish Repatriation, Gila *spps.* propagation, and pupfish genetics. He then suggested funding the stocking of pupfish in Safford area pools constructed by the Bureau of Land Management, the development of refugia populations of rare native fishes, and future development of AZGF Bubbling Ponds fish facilities.

A request from Tom Huelin (sic) for native fish restoration to Cave Creek in the Phoenix area was discussed. We do not have sufficient details on the request, so Clarkson will contact Mr. Huelin for clarification.

Technical Committee agreed that Clarkson should put in a task for the development of a transgenic fish project in the FY04 projects as a place-holder should the Policy Committee agree to fund the project.

Miscellaneous

Other items discussed included the need for a status report from Dr. Phil Hedrick on his maintenance of topminnow stocks, and design for a Little Creek (NM) barrier and feasibility study. We also discussed the need to determine NEPA responsibility for the action.

Next Policy Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 14 at the Bureau of Reclamation offices. Concurrence from Policy Committee is needed. A Technical Committee meeting was set for June 8 and 9 in Albuquerque. This will probably also involve a field visit to Little Creek.

The meeting concluded at 12:00 h.

Action Items

1. Revise draft rejection notice – Barrett
2. Contact Bill Wall regarding Blue River Survey – Barrett
3. Contact Mary Richardson regarding details of assistance needed with Spikedace/loach minnow information compilation – Barrett
4. Request and update from Dr. Phil Hedrick on topminnow maintenance – Clarkson
5. Send out USGS Piscicide report for review – Clarkson
6. Return Transgenic Fish Development to FY04 project list – Clarkson
7. Finalize NM barrier feasibility – Clarkson
8. Determine NEPA responsibility for Little Creek project – Propst
9. Contact Policy Committee with preferred date of January 14 - All

PJB