

AMWG Comments on Goal 6

Andre Potochnik (GCRG) - Just to reiterate what I said yesterday that the riparian vegetation system, from the point of Grand Canyon River Guides, whose primary concern, not sole concern by any means, one of the primary concerns of our organization is camping beaches in the Grand Canyon and the availability of camping for the numerous people who like to recreate in the Grand Canyon and that that problem is exacerbated by two trends that we see at this time: loss of sand from the canyon as a result of relatively little input of sand, that is the erosion of sand, but also the loss of sand area for camping due to the encroachment of vegetation of cross-existing sandbars that is getting more and more abundant with time. That is probably something that has not been brought to the forefront in a lot of the conversations we've had in the past with this group but would like to bring it to the forefront for people's awareness now. For that reason, we don't place high value on lots of vegetation per se and especially in the sand beach community - the sand beach meaning below the upper high water zone vegetation tamarisk dominated community seen today. That is the area where most people camp in the Grand Canyon, the lower area, and is of concern to us. Not to say that there isn't value in some vegetation there, and that we don't value the ecosystem components of vegetation that might grow there but there is a problem from the point of view of ___ river corridor. We also have a concern about preserving OHWZ vegetation and a concern about the potential long-term loss and degradation of that community due to the loss of water perhaps and depletion of nutrients to that community and the potential impacts not only to the community itself but to the potential for the preservation of cultural sites in high terraces in the river corridor where that OHWZ vegetation primarily exists. There is a high value placed from the point of view of recreational river running community on the preservation of cultural resources in the river corridor. It's a very high societal value. There's also a high societal value placed by river runners on endangered species and the integrity of the data biotic community so I don't want to give the notion that that's not a concern. Those are our concerns.

Joe Alston (NPS) - Again, let me reiterate what I said yesterday that the old high water lines are important but don't think they should take priority over other mentioned communities.

Geoff Barnard (GCT) - Very simply, the four identified communities. We think there is a dynamic interaction among these communities and the language should recognize that, the dynamic nature of the system, and that the targets should somehow call for sufficient management flexibility to maintain the ecosystem patterns and processes for the communities so that there is basic distribution and how they interact with each other and the processes.

Pam Hyde (SW Rivers) - I won't go too long because I spoke a lot yesterday. Again, I think we need to capture this sense of the riparian zone being kind of an ecosystem unit as part of the river corridor and think about that in terms of the mix of the communities that comprise the whole zone, the different nature of those communities, and what sustains them and what their role is within the riparian zone and that differs particularly between the communities that are higher up in the riparian zone than those that are lower down. We have to incorporate in what we develop here in terms of the targets for this program that there are different regenerative capabilities between those communities within that zone, there is a successional process that goes on here that is dynamic in itself and also responsive to

the dynamics of the system and so that is something we shouldn't lose and we should capture all of those elements as part of what we're developing here and what we hope to see in the Grand Canyon. **Steve Magnussen** - Now I didn't hear you say "highest priority." Is there some significance I should read into your comments?

Pam - that I didn't use the word "priority?"

Steve - Yes.

Pam - I guess I'm trying to not use a buzz word that other people have a problem with because what I want to get across is the concept here and what I tried to get across is the sense that there are some communities in there that are less part of that element of regenerative capabilities and succession and respond differently than those communities.

Steve - I just didn't want to put words in your mouth.

Arden Kucate (Pueblo of Zuni) - I have no comment right now.

Perri Benemelis (State of Arizona) - I didn't hear the discussion yesterday.

Leslie James (CREDA) - I just have a couple of points. I think the inclusion and discussion about the communities was very important, not trying to get away from priorities but certainly all four of the communities we talked about are important in our view and we support the OHWZ community at whatever location that may occur under ROD operations. We had a lot of discussion yesterday about what level is this?

Ted Rampton (UAMPS) - I'd agreed that all the four zones are important but we won't take a priority on one particular one.

Dave Sabo (WAPA) - Funny I tend to agree with almost everything I've heard. I wonder why we had so many difficulties yesterday. I guess where I'm at is that I believe that we shouldn't be placing an emphasis on particular components of the ecosystem that might now could be considered to be temporal. In other words, and this goes along with most of what Pam was saying, that perhaps you don't place as much emphasis on the lower riverine communities but at the same time you have to recognize the temporal nature of the OHWZ also. The OHWZ hasn't been watered in at least 36 years if not longer than that and you're really not seeing a ____ ____ We'll all be gone and our kids will be gone before you can really tell whether there is a big marked change in the OHWZ ____ ____ to the establishment of a new OHWZ as a result of the dam under ROD operations. The concept of the community is extremely important in terms of how we fashion whatever it is going to be.

Rod Kuharich (State of Colorado) - Being new to the process, I guess I would have to say that the comments on support of the motion that failed yesterday. I have to agree with Dave and I do think that Congress has recognized in the authorization in the report language that the "hand of man" is a primary concern in the river system. As long as that dam is on the river, I would not support any activities getting up to the old high water line, that 120,000 flow. I do think that new high water line post-dam operations will probably be sufficient to deal with re-establishing what communities may have dried out. I think the streambed is very regenerative, much more so than we give it credit for and I think we do

need to recognize there is a postdam high water line.

Gerry Zimmerman (State of California) - My big concern and comment, is that we in looking at the post communities, the area between Separation Canyon and Lake Mead whatever elevation Lake Mead is at, those four communities are dynamic. They will be dependent upon the lake level that Lake Mead is at at that particular time, how it's evolved from where Lake Mead was to where it currently is. So that's a transitional dynamic as Andre said, to the communities that reside to that area and particularly as it relates to the Southwest willow flycatcher, maintaining any type of habitat or a population within that area, I believe is not there. Not acceptable. It wouldn't be in accordance with the court case that was handed down and I think our management needs to recognize the dynamics of that area.

Phillip Lehr (State of Nevada) - My concerns are echoed by Gerry and I also support a dynamic four zone area with a priority on the OHWZ because that is the OHWZ. I only hope that once the ad hoc group finishes with their work on this that the TWG is allowed to have some bigger discussion on this before it comes back to the AMWG.

Leigh Kuwanwisiwma (Hopi Tribe) - A couple of comments, one is just a question that I think Mary posed to the group yesterday in regards to 6.2 and the explanation of the successional processes that was coined by the TWG. _____ This still needs some kind of explanation. I suppose Mary has _____ My specific comments are relative to 6.5 about a question posed in terms of what is meant by "culturally informed species" and I have sought out an answer. That needs to be further discussed by the tribal consortium here to help define it a little bit better. With regards to the qualitative targets on 6.5, _____ make reference again to the charge of the National Park Service. I think one of the areas that necessitates a referral back to the TWG and the ad hoc committee is really to better understand the compatibility in regards to the overall charge of the Service as it relates to overall canyon and the charge of this process as it relates to the corridor. I think that begs for more work. One of the areas that has to be back into both charges is really the tribal participation and tribal interests _____ river corridor and the overall management of the park. That's my comment and I support _____.

Sam Spiller (USFWS) - I support management of the riparian ecosystem in its entirety as discussed but I would see focusing on all the zones equally at this time. I recommend referring back to the ad hoc.

Dave Cohen (Trout Unlimited) - I guess my concern goes more to the constitution of the ad hoc groups. Rarely do they reflect all the perspectives necessary to make a decision - scientific, cultural, social, institutional. Perhaps these ad hoc groups should go up with that kind of expertise. It will prevent the consternation we've had over the last couple of days because with respect to the goals and _____. Lacking that, then they should go back to the TWG to see if those perspectives can be changed.

Wayne Cook (alt. for State of NM) - I think that we recognize at the ad hoc group level the difficult

nature of this language and how much that language required some trust level amongst us around the table in terms of what we needed. I think we needed with “cold suspect eyes” it might lead you to believe that someone was looking at the flows that many of us recognize are not very probable of repeating, flows in the 120,000 range are not very probable to repeat for a lot of reasons - legal constraints being one of them, practical constraints. But I think we also recognize, it doesn't say it's the highest priority, it is a priority. Perhaps the language is put there really as an effect to try and underpin beach habitat building flows, recognizing the BHBF flows are presently contemplated, probably doesn't get as high as it would've but it still maintains or develops some high water zone habitat even though it may come back down. We recognized there was going to be a lot of paranoia in this language. It's obvious there is a lot of paranoia in this language. Dave, I think if there is lack of expertise on that group it's because the group came about as people volunteered to work on it. There has been a tremendous amount of work done there. We'll try to seek out and get more expertise that's not there and have tried to engage TWG too. Let us have it back and we'll work on it.

D. Larry Anderson (State of Utah) - I certainly support the concept of trying to maintain all four of these communities. I think the only problem I have was that for some reason the use of the language of “high priority” of the OHWZ and it didn't really seem to be any, that I couldn't hear any scientific fact about it that was proper, or that it hadn't been studied, so the language is what caused me some concern. I'll be anxious just to see what the committee comes up with in the language.

John Shields (State of Wyoming) - I would like to see a definition of “spring community” since that term is used in the goal within the Glossary. I think that most of the points that have been made around the table were certainly ones that the ad hoc group needs to take into consideration and I would urge everyone to remember that this truly is going to be a strategic plan that is going to be developed as a step-down plan. One of the items that was provided to this committee that we haven't even talked about is the draft detailed outline and so there is going to be a number of steps and if we think that just getting agreement on this language at this level in terms of setting out management objectives is going to sort of put an end to it, I would suggest that we will periodically have this discussion as we set the plan further and further down to the point of information needs, scopes of work, and how much money is available to do those sorts of things and so fundamental agreement amongst the table on really four or five major issues that get to *how big the box is* is what we got to do. We're kidding ourselves if we think we can sort of piecemeal these types of disagreements because they'll keep coming up seems to me. Thank you.

Bill Persons (AGFD) - Not sure if I can add anything to what Bruce said yesterday. I think you've got our comments. It's nice to hear the discussion around the table and would probably say that I agree with most of what I've heard. I think you can sort it out.

Bruce Taubert (AGFD) (*comments made on 1/11/01*) - *Go with the first part of the motion. Get rid of that wildlife, think we've discussed that until we're blue in the face, then have the group look at the rest of it but I think we still want to have a look at it and discuss. Am uncomfortable because we haven't discussed it more.*

Rick Gold (BOR) - I have a lot of faith in the process and I think we're in much more agreement than disagreement. I think Wayne probably nailed it. It's a product of some people who have worked on these words for a long time and they came to understand and trust what they meant but there are some flashpoints. I think the ad hoc committee ought to go back to work and they have a lot of good data but my sense there is more agreement than disagreement. The two key points for me are the recognition and maybe they're really the same point, is the recognition of a dynamic nature of the system and the regenerative nature of some points in that system. Those are critical points to understand and I have all the faith in the world that they will come back with a product.

Amy Heuslein (BIA) - I want to commend the ad hoc group. They have spent a lot of time and effort on this process and have a lot more work ahead of them. Not that I'm just a member of the group when I can get there, but I know they have done a lot and I want to give them my appreciation for all the hard work. It sounds like they have the support of this group, the AMWG, to continue on with that effort. I would encourage them to also look and take into account the comments that have been expressed around the table in regards to this. I think we're hearing what the feelings are of the group. Let us go back and re-work on this and try to bring something else back to you.