

**STATUS REPORT**  
**AMWG OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE**  
**JUNE 10, 2002**

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**Salt Lake City, UT**

This update covers four subjects: **(1)** The telephone conference of the subcommittee members on May 31, 2002; **(2)** Recommendations by Barry Wirth concerning outreach/scooping for the BHBF EA for the proposed experimental BHBF flow package now under consideration; **(3)** Proposed activities by a group of Federal employees participating in the Executive Potential Program (EPP) in support of outreach information efforts by the AMWG; **(4)** Subcommittee report and meeting associated with the upcoming July AMWG meeting.

**Telephone Conference Call:**

Three members of the subcommittee were able to join the call, including Andre Potochnik, Dave Busch, and Barry Wirth. Pam Hyde called Barry about an hour after the call to discuss the outreach program. Several of those unable to call did check in via e-mails.

Andre recapped the 1999 river trip in which plans were set in place for a subcommittee of AMWG to work on outreach and information programs. From that trip, and an AMWG meeting in 2001, the current subcommittee was formed.

The majority of the call was spent considering an idea proposed at the recent TWG meeting to conduct AMWG open house(s) associated with the July meeting or for later in the fall, more closely tied to possible experimental flows. Participants considered open houses in the model of the GCD EIS, in which members of the AMWG would be present to talk informally with interested publics, there would be displays set up, and there would be a period of the evening in which a brief program would be provided --- most likely in the middle of the open house. These meetings, and possibly others in locations where there was significant interest in scoping the GCD EIS, such as Salt Lake City and San Francisco, are envisioned to be large report-back sessions on all AMWG has accomplished since being chartered along with future program expectations.

The general consensus was that there isn't time to pull together displays and plans for a July open house to the size and scope desired (a variation of this is discussed in Item #2, EA scoping).

Participants agreed that the time has come for AMWG to be more active in providing information to the public and media. The focus of the past several years has been the Strategic Plan, and there has not been time to provide information on the

recommendations of AMWG and the scientific monitoring and research work on the river.

The need for a budget for outreach was discussed. Dave offered to review the GCMRC budget item identified for “information” and get a better feel for what resources might be available yet this fiscal year. Additionally, it was agreed that a budget for outreach/information must be carried in future AMP budgets.

Finally, there was some discussion concerning the public and media interest that will accompany a future initiation of a BHBF. Reclamation, as managers of the dam, will be heavily involved in dealing with media and balancing security issues against coverage opportunities. Reclamation has the experience of 1996 to draw upon. However, it was also recognized that the AMWG must develop information concerning the overall experiment to provide to the public and media.

The Subcommittee recognized that this work might have a linkage to NEPA compliance for the planned BHBF, which leads to item #2.

### **Recommendations concerning NEPA compliance for the BHBF:**

There is a tendency to focus upon the BHBF and lose sight of the other portion of the action--- the dam operations that would follow the BHBF including load following releases from Glen Canyon Dam with significant fluctuating flows. For purposes of this discussion, referring to the BHBF Environmental Assessment and Biological Assessment includes all proposed actions appropriate for NEPA review.

Conversely, this discussion does not include actions related to NEPA compliance for mechanical trout removal activities in the river by GCMRC and NPS. Those actions may require separate NEPA and ESA compliance, presumably conducted by either the GCMRC or NPS. GCMRC has permits for fish shocking from Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service, which would have to, at a minimum, be revised.

This discussion also does not cover the possibility that the 1996 BHBF EA and FONSI may have some applicability towards NEPA compliance for this planned event.

The proposed experimental flows will require NEPA compliance and Section 7 ESA consultation. This will most likely be achieved through a combined EA/BA and a Biological Opinion from the Fish and Wildlife Service. Such an EA/BA would tier from the GCD EIS and Record of Decision. Of course, per the NEPA process, it is possible that either public involvement or resource analysis could lead to an EIS. The reality is, if that happens it is highly unlikely that a BHBF could be conducted in January 2003, regardless of desirability due to late summer/fall tributary sediment input.

The 1996 BHBF was also the subject of an EA/FONSI, but it did predate the completion of the GCD EIS and ROD. There were no resource or public issues identified at that time that would have led to an EIS.

Public involvement requirements for EA's are less formal than for EIS's. The EA team may use the input of the AMWG or it may seek additional public comment. The AMWG membership is intended to represent the full spectrum of public interests and not just each member's agency, state, or public interest group.

There has been a mix of levels of public involvement in production of EA's concerning the Adaptive Management Program over the past years. While the GCD EIS is a model of exhaustive involvement and the recent draft temperature modification device EA drew heavy comment, others did not draw extensive public interest. They include the 1992 EA concerning Interim Flows and the 1996 EA on the BHBF. Since the Low Steady Flow test in 2000 was within power plant capacity, that test was covered by previous NEPA compliance and a Biological Opinion, and it did not require further public involvement. The Interim Flow and BHBF EA's and FONSI's were able to be done very quickly and made it possible for those actions to occur. In the case of the BHBF, any delay in the EA would have scuttled the test flow. Such is also the case with the upcoming BHBF EA/BA.

In my capacity as Reclamation's public affairs officer, I have recommended to the Manager of the Adaptive Management and Environmental Resources Division, Randy Peterson, that open houses related to scoping the EA be held in July in association with the timing of the next AMWG meeting. I recommend that one open house be held the evening of July 16, 2002, in Flagstaff, AZ, and a second open house be in Phoenix, AZ, the afternoon of July 18, 2002, following the adjournment of the AMWG meeting.

In the case of the Phoenix meeting, the AMWG ends at shortly after 1:00 PM. I suggest setting a time-certain for the meeting to end, such as 1:30. The scoping meeting would begin at 2:00 PM and continue until up to 4:00 PM in the same room.

These open houses should meet the sufficiency needs for scoping the EA. Additionally, they should meet public expectations for information and involvement in the process. This interest is expected, as evidenced by the public and media involvement in the draft Temperature Modification EA and recent media interest in the BHBF issues. Also, should an EIS be required, the scoping exercise will provide an informational base to use in starting scoping for such a document.

The open houses will be informal. While the details are not yet worked out, they will most likely include PowerPoint presentations and discussions with interested persons. A display may be developed that would provide information on the proposed experimental flows and related actions. This will have to be quickly worked out with those who will be drafting the EA. Generally, staff at Reclamation and the GCMRC will be expected to take the lead in provide information, PowerPoint presentations, and develop any exhibits. Staff that will develop the EA, along with key research managers from GCMRC will need to attend the public open houses.

## **Executive Potential Program Project:**

Participants in the Federal Executive Potential Program (EPP) have offered their services as a team project in support of the outreach program. The participants have reviewed numerous project proposals and selected the AMP as their desired activity. Members come from a number of Federal departments and agencies. The nine participants in this particular group include professionals at the GS-13, 14, and 15 levels from FAA, FDA, Forest Service, Department of Energy, OPM, Navy Department, USDA, NPS, and OPM.

Five of the nine members are located in the Washington D.C. area. One member, Bob Winfree, is located in Arizona with Grand Canyon National Park.

Reclamation and the National Park Service will provide staff support. The EPP participants account for their time and costs as part of their participation in that executive training program. Barry Wirth of Reclamation will be the coordinator between the group and AMWG's Outreach Subcommittee. Mike Gabaldon has agreed to serve as the SES sponsor for the activity.

The group will work on the project in conjunction with the requirements of their training program. They will continue to also work in their current positions and locations. Much of the work will be done via conference calls, e-mails, and the like.

The group will focus on removal of non-native rainbow and brown trout, which is intended to help protect rare and endangered native fish species. This was determined in a conference call between the group and Wirth as being the most immediate issue and need.

Just as with all the outreach efforts, there is no budget identified for the work. Reclamation has pledged to work within the AMWG and with GCMRC to seek funds for production of such products that come from the EPP group.

The EPP group will further consider the project at a team meeting this week in Virginia.

Several outreach products were considered on the conference call as a discussion starting point. They include:

1. Key Messages. All products need to be reflective of key messages that will have to be developed first.
2. Web-based Fact Sheets. These offer cost-effective flexibility. They don't require Departmental clearances to develop and print, they can be posted on the web and printed for hard-copy distribution. Reclamation's UC Regional Public Affairs Office can support the work with layout and web page design.
3. Briefing Statement Outline. A brief outline of facts, issues, and positions can be developed for use with the public, Congressional staffs, and media.

4. FAQ's. Frequently asked questions and answers can be developed in conjunction with the web-based fact sheets.
5. Op Ed Papers. Op Ed pieces can be developed for editorial pages expressing the AMWG recommendations and the scientific basis for those recommendations. Care must be taken that the Op Ed's do not speak for the Secretary or her management options.
6. Visitor Center Displays. Temporary displays are planned for the Glen Canyon Dam Visitor's Center. The EPP group may have input into those displays. Also, copies of the displays may be used by Grand Canyon National Park.
7. Other Items may include a time-line of the dam and AMP Program and a media orientation trip.

As reported, the EPP will meet in June in Virginia and in November. Barry Wirth cannot meet with the group at the June meeting, but intends to try to meet with them for a portion of the November meeting. Also, the EPP group plans to make its final presentation on their project to Mike Gabaldon in January 2003, which will fulfill their program requirement.

#### **Outreach Subcommittee meeting and report to the AMWG:**

The Outreach Subcommittee will report to the AMWG on July 17<sup>th</sup>. Unlike previous AMWG meetings, this time outreach will be discussed on the first day of the meeting, hopefully insuring a better opportunity for discussion. Subcommittee members who participated in the initial phone conference (Dave Busch, André Potochnik, and Barry Wirth) will lead that discussion. Bob Winfree from the EPP group will also be present and participate.

Following that report, and discussion by the AMWG, the Subcommittee members should plan to meet together at the end of the day. This appears to be the only time all members of the Subcommittee will be together. The meeting will be immediately following the AMWG meeting.

Immediate concerns for the Subcommittee include: budget for this fiscal year and in the future; determining "doable" projects; process for getting the work done; and, personal involvement commitments and availability of AMWG members.

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