

Budget Ad Hoc Group (BAHG) WebEx/Conference Call

May 20, 2014 (10:a – 1:30p, MDT)

BAHG Chair: Shane Capron

Minutes Prepared by: Marianne Crawford

Participants:

Cliff Barrett, UAMPS

David Bennion, WAPA

Kerry Christensen, Hualapai Tribe

Marianne Crawford, USBR

Dave Garrett, Science Advisors

Craig Ellsworth, WAPA

Helen Fairley, GCMRC

Chris Harris, State of California

Leslie James, CREDA

Vineetha Kartha, State of Arizona

John Jordan, TWG Chair

Glen Knowles, USBR

Jerry Myers, Federation of Fly Fishers

Don Ostler, New Mexico & Wyoming

Jack Schmidt, USGS/GCMRC

Bill Stewart, AGFD

Scott VanderKooi, USGS/GCMRC

Mark Van Vlack, California

Mike Yeatts, The Hopi Tribe

Reclamation's side of the budget is not yet complete. It will be posted when it is done and any questions will be answered.

The Science Advisors provided comments, see attached. Generally, questions relate to monitoring vs. research and detailed aspects of the program

Jack Schmidt provided background:

The work plan is a prospectus, an interim product for review, to provide information for feedback from this meeting. A final draft should be available by June 6. Budget allocations are provided but not final. USGS overhead is currently 16%.

Proposals for the work plan were considered based on how well they were written, how they relate to the programs desired future conditions and the project support from other agencies and stakeholders. Columns on the spreadsheet indicate potential funding status. (See page 6, 7, 8 of prospectus for funding allocations)

General Questions

- Only FY-15 shows on the budget what about FY 16, 17? The excel spreadsheet includes those years but is not expanded on this view.
- The projects have been labeled as numbers rather than letters as they have been in the past. This is a way of demonstrating they may not be perpetually funded.
- There are substantial changes in fish/chub related projects. A webinar to detail the changes can be scheduled.
- Project 10 - Mapping and Assessments of Aquatic Habitats Below Glen Canyon Dam. The HFE moved sand and created spawning gravel for trout, which may be creating more predators and competitors. This needs to be evaluated. This project is currently on the chopping block but could potentially be combined with 3.2 Sediment Storage Monitoring, which will map all of Glen Canyon in FY-15.
- What will the impact on the research budget be from the new building costs? Is this a decisional or contractual agreement? Overhead for FY-17 will be 26% between USGS and GSA. USGS receives 1 million/year to offset overhead. A call with Dave Lytle is requested before the AMWG meeting to reveal all overhead costs.

- Is there going to be an over-flight in 2017? No because the data isn't processed fast enough, there needs to be more progress demonstrated between over-flights.
- Project 5.1, Aquatic Foodbase Monitoring Beyond the CRE. This project is not funded; it is a controversial use of AMP funds because it is not in the Grand Canyon. WAPA may fund it. Several proposals have been written for research outside of the CRE. Western supports work on EPT in the Grand Canyon but is also looking at other river reaches including below Flaming Gorge. WAPA may fund other complimentary studies but this is still in progress.
- The prospectus suggests modifications to operations of GCD; potential effects of "weekend steady flow". This raises questions as to the effects to the hydrograph. More information is necessary and should be presented to TWG and AMWG.
- 13.1- Economic Values to Anglers and Boatmen. How does this relate to work done by NPS?
- 13.2 - Tribal Values and Perspectives. WAPA wants to be involved in further development specifically to identify values related to hydropower. There may be overlap in other efforts WAPA is involved in that emphasizes tribal perspectives on dam operations. What is GCMRC's take for some "hydro revenue"? What are the specific resources is there flexibility and tradeoffs, are there carryover dollars? -The current proposal only includes focus groups over a 2-year period. Resources have not been specifically identified yet.
- 6.8 -Lees Ferry Creek Survey- The creel survey is funded in FY-16 and 17 at 20K. Project 10 will provide a broader perspective in trout management flows and trout reproduction in Marble Canyon. The tailwater will be considered as all the way to the confluence of the LCR. A proposal is needed relating the physical to the biological environment.
- 3.1.3- Camera surveys. Will this work concentrate on a reach? It will cover a diverse topography. This is exploratory research and new technology that may prove to be effective and inexpensive.
- Could monitoring projects change if we have a ROD this year? Preferred alternatives will be necessary to determine changes to core monitoring however there is a robust program in place and most of the pieces are likely there.
- How does GCMRC charge there time to working on LTEMP? There is no charge account related to LTEMP. The AMP funding is effected.
- 7.1 – Juvenile HBC abundance estimates in the lower 13.6 km of LCR- This may be eliminated but the revised LCR monitoring plan will be expanded to cover it. In the past the FWS has requested travel for volunteers, these funds will go to AzGF to cover staff salaries.
- 7.2- Juvenile chub HBC monitoring in the mainstem. The importance of the LCR becomes apparent but it is effected by many other factors. Is the monitoring meaningful to adult chub numbers? The question has morphed over time. 500K is a high price, should we scale it down? The BO requires monitoring chub and trout. A reduction to 3 trips rather than quarterly trips would reduce the cost.
- 7.6- Potential for gravel substrate limitation effecting chub reproduction. This project needs support.
- 6.2-Aggregation recruitment. Otoliths are required for this project and may be available through surrogate species and incidental take.
- 6.3- Monitoring mainstem aggregations with Pit tag antennas. This may become a citizen science effort.
- 6.6- HBC mainstem augmentation. Funding is in FY-17. Would it be possible to use appropriated funds as the NPS does for translocations? This may require additional compliance work, could it be part of LTEMP and consequently cover compliance?

Follow up comments or questions are encouraged with Jack or any of the PIs. Scott Vanderkooi is the aquatic ecologist and can address those questions and discuss tradeoffs that result in combining some of these efforts. GCMRC will meet with the tribes/Cultural AdHoc Thursday to discuss the work plan and elicit comments.

Action Items

- Reclamation budget- will be posted when complete
- Friday May 22, 9AM - a call with Dave Lytle on new building and impact to the budget. Linda will set up the call and notify everyone.
- June 6 –tentative date for final draft work plan
- June 9th and 16th - potential dates for a webinar to develop recommendations for TWG