

DRAFT Minutes

Joint STF & SMP Work Group Meeting v.06-04-13

Date: April 22, 2013
Time: 10am-3:00pm
Location: Delta **Forest Service Office** (2250 Hwy 50, Delta, CO)
Conference Call Line: **970-874-4204** (Limited to 5 lines, no passcode needed)

Attendees: Sonja Chavez de Baca (STF Coordinator), Charles McMurdy (Montrose County Farm Bureau & Local Farmer), Jedd Sondergard (US Bureau of Land Management), John Sottolare & Terry Stroh (Reclamation), Ralph D'Allesandro & Dev Carey (Delta Conservation District), Steve Fletcher & Ed Suppes (Uncompahgre Valley Water Users Association), Paul Kehmeier (Tongue Creek Farmer), Barb Osmundson (Fish & Wildlife), Theresa McGovern, Mike Collins and Dave Dearstyne (Natural Resources Conservation Service), Dave Kanzer (Co River Water Conservation District), Ken Leib (United States Geological Survey)

SELENIUM TASK FORCE (Sonja Chavez de Baca, STF Coordinator)

- I. Introductions
- II. Discussion: Future STF meeting schedule and organization
STF stakeholders in general didn't feel like there was anything wrong with the current meeting schedule and meeting format (i.e. joint STF and SMP meetings). One member voiced his concern in maintaining STF anonymity.
Outcome/Decision: The group decided that there was no compelling reason to change the STF quarterly meeting schedule.
- III. Project Updates
 - A. STF and UWP shared OSM/VISTA
Sonja has been working on finalizing the VISTA Scope of Work and the MOA between the STF and Uncompahgre Watershed Partnership (UWP). Terry Stroh mentioned that Reclamation supported their WaterSMART grant funding application in which the UWP stated that they would work with lower Gunnison Basin stakeholders on selenium issues.
Action Item: The SMP Work Group asked Sonja to request a copy of the grant application from UWP.
 - B. STF Water-quality Monitoring Program Business
Dave Kanzer (DK) reported that Anna Santo has prepared an excellent draft report of the N. Fork Characterization of Selenium. DK, Ken, Dave Noe, Sonja, and Sarah Sauter were copied on the email request for a review.
Action Item: DK requested that Sonja send a copy of the report to Rhianna (VISTA).
Action Item: Sonja will send a copy of water-quality sampling sites (STF, USBR, USGS, CRWCD) to Steve Miller and Suzanne Paschke.
Action Item: Sonja will check with Anna to see if we can have her permission to send a copy of the draft Selenium Data report to Ralph D'Allesandro and Dev Carey as they may be able to provide valuable input into the final report.
 - C. Facilitation of On-farm BMP Demonstration Project

Sonja presented the general concept behind doing an on-farm BMP implementation /demonstration project with an ag producer in the Uncompahgre Project area. Sonja was seeking: 1) support from the SMP Work Group to continue to explore the project with the thought that there would be an opportunity to make a funding request for Species Conservation Trust Funds, and 2) targeting a date for a farm tour of the site.

Outcome/Decision: The STF supported the concept of doing an On-farm BMP implementation/demo and potentially funding the project hopefully with help under EQIP and SCTF. Steve Miller requested that someone with science/technical skills oversee the research/measurable results portion of the project.

Action Item: Sonja was directed to continue to facilitate the development of the project and to conduct an on-site visit with the SMP Science and Technical subcommittees on May 23rd.

D. Facilitation/Coordination of SMP Science Committee, etc.

Sonja informed the STF and SMP Work Group that she's been assisting in the facilitation and coordination of the SMP Science Subcommittee and the Water Quality Monitoring Program.

E. Other STF News or Announcements?

1) Concern over plans to reclaim a gravel pit site located in the "15 Mile Reach."

According to John Butler (Mesa Conservation District or MCD), a grower in the area made a complaint about dust generated from the Parkerson Gravel Pit operation. The gravel operation sits on an elevated bench above the Colorado river at 32 Road (south side of the river) near the Orchard Mesa Wildlife Area in the 15 Mile Reach. The information MCD received indicates that they are taking out 25 to 30 feet of overlay to get to gravel after which they reach Mancos shale. The reclamation of the site involves putting 2 feet of gravel over the shale, then 2 feet of overlay and then 2 feet of topsoil after which the area will be farmed. John feels that someone should be monitoring for salt and selenium.

Action Item: Sonja was directed to reach out to the gravel pit owner and the new director of CSSGA. Terry will provide Sonja with the owner contact information.

2) STF Financial & Other Mgt Support: DK asked if it makes sense for the STF to have a mgt committee to help Sonja get regular and timely feedback and input regarding on-going activities. Dave's been doing it for quite a few years.

Outcome: There were no volunteers for individuals to help serve as part of a management committee.

DK also reported that the STF continues to bump-up against funding and human resource issue related to the STF coordinator position. DK suggested that funds should be provided from SCTF to help support the STF coordinator so that they can continue to implement and facilitate further projects and also so that it would be easier to contract with someone like Mike Baker to help with the North Fork optimization.

Outcome/Decision: No action.

Ralph offered to work with DCD and STF to help facilitate a North Fork optimization planning.

SELENIUM MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (Terry Stroh, Reclamation Lead)

IV. SMP Organization and Responsibilities

1. Review and Approve Ground Rules & Decision Process

A. WORKGROUP COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND SUNCTION

Terry reviewed basic elements of the document and received further comments.

Recommendation: Terry recommended approval of the SMP Guidelines and suggested an annual meeting of the SMP Management Committee for the purpose of approving of any changes to the SMP Action Plan. Barb Osmundson supported the recommendation. DK stated that indicating a minimum number of meetings of the Mgt Committee wasn't necessary because so far we really hadn't needed them.

Decision: Reclamation asked that without objection the SMP would follow the processes described in the general guidelines. Changes were discussed and will be incorporated into the document and a final version will be forwarded to the management committee for their review and approval.

Action Item: While the Workgroup was supportive of the general guidelines, in the interest of time, Terry directed those who wished to provide further comments to do so via email.

B. SUBCOMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

a. Science & Research Committee members and function

Outcome/Decision: SMP Work Group was supportive of DK being the lead of Science Subcommittee.

b. Technical Committee members and function

Outcome/Decision: SMP Work Group was supportive of John Sottolare being the lead of the Technical Subcommittee.

c. Education and Outreach Committee members and function

Outcome/Decision: SMP Work Group was supportive of Sonja Chavez de Baca being the lead of the Education Subcommittee.

Outcome/Decision: The Education and Outreach subcommittee should help with trying to get entities to submit proposals for funding support for different projects.

V. 2012 Aspinall Operations Report

A. Annual SMP Report (Transmitted to Fish and Wildlife on Feb. 4th): The SMP Annual Report was included in the Aspinall Ops Report but did not include the annual selenium trend analysis which is in USGS internal review.

Recommendation: In the 2013 annual report include both 2012 and 2013 analyses as available which may mean that 2013 analysis will likely include provisional data.

Decision: Terry will be take recommendations on how to improve the SMP annual report for next year.

Recommendation: The SMP WG requested that Reclamation formalize the change in the SMP annual report due date to reflect a January deadline instead of June.

Decision/Action Item: Reclamation will send a formal request to the FWS requesting that SMP annual report due date be changed to January to be concurrent with other Gunnison Programmatic Biological Opinion reporting requirements.

Recommendation: The SMP Work Group would like the opportunity to provide comment and input to Reclamation on each year's Annual Report to FWS.

Decision: The draft annual report will be circulated to SMP WG members in October and a final review will take place at the annual January SMP WG meeting.

Recommendation: The WG requested that they be given an opportunity to review and provide input into the Trend Analysis provided to FWS.

Commented [Sonja1]: Terry, I think you stopped reviewing around here.

Outcome/Decision: Reclamation will distribute a copy of the draft Trend Analyses to the Workgroup for review and comment.

Other notes: USGS was asked if third party data will be utilized in the trend report. USGS responded that third party data may be used, subject to review and approval.

VI. 2013 SMP Action Plan Update (11:15-12:00pm)

1. Discuss process for review and approval of revisions
2. Action Plan progress review
3. Recommended additions to Action Plan

Action plan was reviewed.

Terry did we discuss how changes to the action plan would be reviewed and approved?

A. Status of Salinity Program Funding: Terry and John gave an update on the status of the federal budget as it relates to salinity funding. According to Reclamation, the Basin States Program (BSP) has not been impacted by budget cuts up to this point. Total current funding levels (both BSP and Basinwide) after the cut: approximately \$14 million for the Lower Gunnison Basin. Due to confidentiality rules, no additional information could be provided by Reclamation until all agreements have been signed.

B. Other items of discussion, decision, action items:

1. Canal Lining Demonstration Project (Phase 6A)

Recommendation: Steve Miller requested that the UVWUA provide a project summary of the Canal Lining Demonstration Project experience including for instance, accomplishments, problems, things they might do differently, project implementation budget, etc.

Action Item: John Sottolare work with the UVWUA to compare and contrast the UVWUA canal lining project with the GVIC canal lining project.

2. Uncompahgre East Side System Optimization: Dr. Charles Burt (lead consultant) is supposed to come out to look at the UVWUA system again now that water is in the canals and laterals.
3. Identifying other high selenium loading areas: The SMP WG discussed the need for the the SMP Science committee to identify areas with high selenium loading contributions in non-Uncompahgre areas of the Lower Gunnison in order to assist with optimization planning efforts.

Action Item: USGS will coordinate with CRWCD and Reclamation to share GIS shape files which show the ranking of selenium loading sub-basins.

Action Item: CRWCD will help with providing maps to the group.

4. On-farm BMP Implementation Concept proposed by the STF:

Outcome/Decision: The SMP Work Group supported the STF moving forward with additional on-farm BMP implementation/demonstration planning with the Science and Technical Subcommittee. The SMP Science and Technical members present agreed to meet at the Meaker Farm on May 23rd.

5. BLM RMP Update Selenium Input

Decision: The SMP WG would like to provide input into the BLM RMP Update to the Gunnison Field Office.

Action Item: Sonja will touch base with the BLM regarding having input into the RMP Update.

6. Process for incorporating regular review of the SMP Action Plan

Decision: All SMP Work Group members should review the action plan and provide comments to Terry.

Action Item: As a matter of SMP Work Group meeting procedure, Terry will review the action plan each meeting.

VII. Subcommittee Reports (1:30 – 2:45)

A. Science and Research Study Recommendations for SCTF. Note: Additional information about identified project can be found in the SMP Science & Research Subcommittee minutes from 4/19/13 or by contacting Sonja directly.

1) XRF Study (CGS)

Outcome/Decision - Funding approved (Amount uncertain as Dave Noe (CGS) has been directed to scope out the entire XRF study in collaboration with USGS and NRCS. CWCB purchase order through Shavano Conservation District.

2) Bostwick Park Hydrogeologic Assessment (CGS)

Outcome/Decision -Funding approved. Hydrogeological assessment of Bostwick Park. (\$5,350) CWCB P.O. through Shavano Conservation District.

Action Item: Ralph D'Allesandro will talk to Steve Miller about the potential for using the remaining \$8K with Delta Conservation District for starting system optimization planning work in Delta.

3) 10 well sampling (USGS)

Outcome/Decision: Funding approved (funding amount uncertain at this time)

Action Item: USGS has been directed to re-work the proposals to remove the VOC/pesticide sampling. If another entity is interested in VOC/pesticides, there may be opportunities to add it back to the program if the entity is willing to pay for.

4) 20 well expansion (USGS)

Outcome/Decision: Funding approved (USGS – potential \$40K; USBR - \$140K; SCTF - \$100K).

Action Item: The Science Subcommittee will discuss future well-access issues with the USGS in order to allow potential non-USGS entities to utilize the wells for future studies.

5) Mancos soil mapping and pond aerial photo analysis and field verification (NRCS/Shavano CD)

Outcome Decision: Funding approved (Amount \$20K). Mancos soil mapping and aerial photo analysis of perched ponds on the east side of the Uncompahgre as well as additional funding for future unidentified.

B. Current Project Updates

Barb Osmundson (FWS): Conducted study looking at selenium in fish muscle plugs in the Gunnison River. Barb received laboratory results back and will be working on the report. Barb needs our group to remain opportunistic about being able to access funds for future laboratory analysis of muscle plugs as she has some samples that currently need to be analyzed and she would like to take advantage of Co Parks and Wildlife offers to collect muscle plugs

for endangered fish when they are out doing their sampling. Cost of laboratory analysis is about \$100/sample. Barb has 7 muscle plug samples she needs analyzed.

Action Item: Reclamation (Terry) will help with \$700 of funding assistance.

C. Technical Subcommittee Update

1. Current Project Updates

There are two projects that need to have SCTF formally approved by the Technical Subcommittee. Given that the Tech Subcommittee has yet to be formed/formalized, the projects were brought directly to the SMP Work Group with recommendation for funding from the Science Subcommittee and are shown below.

a) Phase 9 Lateral Piping Cash Match

Outcome/Decision: Funding approved (Amount \$50K) for Phase 9 lateral piping.

b) UVWUA SCADA

Outcome/Decision: Funding approved for \$35K for Headgate Automation/SCADA.

D. Education and Outreach

1. Current Project Updates

Sonja proposed that members of the SMP Work Group focus the next 4 months on conducting education and outreach to local county commissioners, planning commissions, and planning staff.

Outcome/Decision: The SMP Work Group agreed to participate in outreach to local governments.

Action Item: Sonja will start making phone calls and will develop a summer schedule of outreach opportunities. Sonja will identify several members of the SMP to help deliver outreach messages to each entity.

2. North Fork Optimization

Action Item: Have technical subcommittee identify other high priority areas outside of the UVWUA so that additional planning can take place.

3. Science Plan Update

Ken reported that USGS (Suzanne Paschke) would like to organize a meeting focused on the science plan. USGS is seeking input into the development, basic content, help in identifying past work, studies, research. USGS would like to ensure that everyone is involved and invested in the final product.

Action Item: Sonja will remind Suzanne that she needs a copy of the Science Plan Outline to distribute to the rest of the SMP Work Group for input.

4. Other Notes:

Salinity forum work group meeting: Week of the May 15th at 2pm.

Action Item: Sonja needs to forward DK's announcement to the entire STF.

VIII. Meeting dates (2:45-3:00)

1. Next Joint STf and SMP meeting date (July 24th).
2. Future SMP ONLY meeting date - June 26 (Location TBD)