

SMP Work Group Minutes
10 am, Wednesday, November 2, 2011
Delta NRCS office

Attendees: John Sottolare (USBR), Terry Stroh (USBR), Mike Baker (USBR), Dale Woodbury (NRCS), Theresa McGovern (NRCS), Denis Reich (CSU), Dave Kanzer (Colo. River District), Sonja Chavez de Baca (GB/GVSTF), Tom Grett (Shavano CD), Jedd Sondergard (BLM), Frank Riggie on conf. phone (NRCS), Ralph D'Allesandro (Delta CD), Barb Osmundson (USFWS).

1. Status of the Program Formulation Document and final steps (final comments due by 12/10/2011)

Letter requesting stakeholder comments: A concern was brought up in that the letter was not sent to everyone in the SMP Work Group prior to it being sent out to the public. The letter was sent to conservation districts, conservancy districts, cities, counties, etc. asking for their comments. The purpose of the letter is to continue to solicit input. The letter went out on USBR letterhead, and this brought up the issue of whether or not the group is going to function with their own identity or under USBR? A question came up as to whether or not the SMP has their own letterhead.

Action Item: Add the issue of group identity and the way we will function to a future agenda.

Clarification point: Record of Decision will identify the SMP as a conservation measure. It will not be a "new" federal action. Environmental compliance for activities should be covered by individual agency programs such as NRCS EQIP and Basin States Funds. Much of the environmental compliance for projects under the salinity program is covered by the USBR, and they should be able to continue to do so.

Action Item: Consider adding discussion of a new "implementation" MOA for the SMP signatories to a future Management Committee agenda.

Action Item/Assignment: The SMP Work Group (WG) would like to have a letter of acceptance from FWS to USBR accepting the SMP PFD. In the letter, we might want to identify the frequency at which the Action Plan will be reviewed and modified along with the schedule for reporting and the requirements for reporting. Reclamation will work with SMP members to get status updates and then report to FWS.

Action Item: Recognize contributors to the development of the report, and add acknowledgement section.

2. Transition to full implementation of the SMP Action Plan
 - a. Partial implementation underway since 1988

b. Review of Action Plan

- The Basin States Program (BSP) conducted by the states of Colorado and Utah received the go ahead to start contracting and proceeding with projects at the Salinity Program Forum meeting last week.
- Recommendation that we use footnotes to clarify things in the Action Plan (like Footnote 1 in “Funding in Place” column: funding subject to appropriations)

Action Item: Sonja, DK, and Denis will work on some language with Pete Jacobson (CSSGA) for incorporation into the PFD. This addition will discuss the concerns and other potential action items/BMPs pertaining to gravel pit operations. One example discussed for a potential BMP was “gravel pit discharge water should not go into the backwaters near the mouth of non-compliant tributaries”.

c. Relationship to the STF Watershed plan - SMP vs STF objectives

Difference: The STF Watershed Plan includes estimated selenium reductions associated with action plan activities.

Same: Many sections are exact duplicates (There are a few sections that are different because they are required by the WQCD).

3. SMP structure, roles, and responsibilities

a. What are the roles & responsibilities of Reclamation, STF and others?

- Reclamation is caretaker and has principal oversight of SMP WG. They help to ensure that everyone is participating and that we’re staying on track.
- STF will continue to operate as a stakeholder in the SMP process and can cooperate w/the SMP workgroup to carry out certain specific activities in the SMP, like for instance, the education and outreach component.

b. Continue use of existing structure? - Management Committee, Work Group and subcommittees

Action Item: Keep the same organizational structure that we used under the SMP PFD development.

i. Committee roles to be filled; desired level of staffing

Action Item: Consider combining the science/research and technical review subcommittees

Action Item: Mike will send out an updated subcommittee structure table.

c. What commitments do the SMP partners need to make?

Action Item: The SMP WG does not recommend doing another MOA. We need to tell the Mgt. Committee that we do NOT recommend this action and find out whether they agree or disagree. Check-in/coordination with SMP Management Committee is required (see below)

4. Check-in/coordination with SMP Management Committee

Action Item: Group recommends that we keep the structure of the SMP Group. Do they agree or disagree?

Action Item: All agencies/participants need to talk to their managers to see if they (Mgt Committee) desire a meeting or conference call before proceeding. Barb will talk to Patty about how they would like to receive an update from the SMP WG (conference call, letter, face to face).

5. Next Work Group meeting:

a. December 5, 2011 to discuss any final changes to PFD.

b. January 20, 2012 in conjunction with the previously scheduled STF meeting.

6. Next Subcommittee meetings: TBD