

Final Notes
Bear River License Implementation
Environmental Coordination Committee Meeting
May 19, 2004
Grace, Idaho

Meeting called to order at 9:15 a.m. by facilitator Catherine Collis of SWCA, with the following ECC members present:

Jim Mende, Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Deb Mignogno, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Monte Garrett, Environmental Coordinator, PacifiCorp
Blaine Newman, Bureau of Land Management
Charlie Vincent, American Whitewater
Mary Lucachick, Idaho Division of Parks & Recreation
Lynn Van Every, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Scott Yates, Trout Unlimited
Marv Hoyt, Greater Yellowstone Coalition

Others Present:

Catherine Collis, SWCA
Eve Davies, PacifiCorp
Scott Pratt, PacifiCorp
Miriam Hugentobler, Project Coordinator
Jeff Seamons
Warren Colyer, Trout Unlimited
Scott Christensen, Greater Yellowstone Coalition
Michelle Weidner, SWCA
Greg Mladenka, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (arrived 10:30 a.m.)

Joining by Phone:

Jim Capurso, U.S. Forest Service
Jack Kolkman, PacifiCorp

Absent:

Hunter Osbourne, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
Susan Rosebrough, U. S. Park Service
Jena Borovansky, Idaho Rivers United

Decisions Made at This Meeting

- Extend the timeframe for the Bonneville Cutthroat Trout Study Plan.
- Form a working group to advise the ECC on scopes of work for the BCT Study Plan.
- Form a working group to advise the ECC on the Black Canyon Monitoring Plan.
- Draft a site-specific management plan for fencing of riparian areas.

- Begin the Gravel Baseline Study in Black Canyon
- ECC will review Recreation Site plans

Obligations Made at the May 19, 2004 ECC Meeting	
Warren Colyer and Scott Yates (TU)	Inquire into methods used in Wyoming to sample Bonneville cutthroat trout and report back to the ECC at the June meeting.
Michelle Weidner, SWCA	Revise Bonneville Cutthroat Trout Study Plan based on input from Jim Mende and Deb Mignogno (see Attachment A) and comments received at the ECC meeting.
Jim Mende (IDF&G) Jim Capurso (USFS) Deb Mignogno (USFWS) and Patrick Koelsch (BLM)	Form a working group to advise the ECC on scopes of work for the Bonneville Cutthroat Trout Study Plan. The working group will make recommendations on: 1) tasks that must be accomplished with available funding; 2) what to do with any remaining funds; 3) what existing information may be used in the studies. The working group will report back to the ECC at the June and July ECC meetings.
Jim Mende (IDF&G)	Bring information on BCT broodstock development to the June ECC meeting.
Lynn Van Every (IDEQ)	Revise work plan for Black Canyon Substrate Study to include the possibility of follow-up studies and include requirement that rebar used to mark permanent study sites be capped so that they are visible to boaters and swimmers.
Mary Lucachick (IDPR)	Check with Idaho's GIS Repository about storing GIS data generated during ECC studies.
Lynn Van Every (IDEQ) (chair) Jim Mende (IDF&G) Pat Koelsch (BLM) Charlie Vincent (AW) Warren Colyer (TU) and Jim Capurso (USFS)	Form a working group to advise the ECC on the Black Canyon Monitoring Plan. Report back to the group by the September regular meeting.
Jim Capurso (USFS)	Forward Feather River methodology to Lynn Van Every and Greg Mladenka.
Eve Davies (PacifiCorp) Jim Mende (IDF&G)	Draft a site-specific management plan for fencing of riparian areas with prescriptions for management.

April 21 ECC Meeting notes were approved with revisions from Charlie Vincent (American Whitewater) and Mary Lucachick (Idaho Division of Parks and Recreation).

Bear River Narrows Project Proposal

Jim Mende (Idaho Department of Fish and Game) updated the group on the Twin Lakes reservoir proposal. Mende said the proposal is moving forward and has opened the door for more proposals, based on "non-use" concerns (i.e., others may claim a right to unused water). It was noted that some ECC member's agencies have filed interventions regarding the proposal, and Nick Joston (Twin Lakes representative) has asked to be added to June ECC meeting agenda to discuss the proposal.

Scott Yates (Trout Unlimited) said that although the State of Idaho has granted Twin Lakes a loan for preliminary studies for the proposed reservoir, that does not necessarily mean that the state endorses the proposal. Yates noted that the state has no recourse to deny a loan. Yates said Twin Lakes is not the highest water priority for the state, and possibly not even for the Bear River, though the proponents are the loudest so far. Lynn

Van Every (Idaho Department of Environmental Quality) noted that a preliminary permit for a dam has been approved on the Bear River above Bear Lake in Idaho.

Update from PacifiCorp's Environmental Coordinator Monte Garrett

Facilitator Allocations

Garrett said he has spoken with FERC staff about facilitator allocations. FERC staff said they are not concerned about how the funding is allocated as long as deliverables are met and ECC members are satisfied.

Recreation Site Designs

Garrett passed out five sheets of recreation site designs to ECC members: 1) Black Canyon Put-In; 2) Black Canyon Take-Out; 3) Oneida Turn Around Loop; 4) Oneida Narrows Put-In; and 5) Oneida Narrows Take-Out. These plans are included in Attachment A of these meeting notes. Garrett said the designs were being distributed for informational purposes, but ECC members may direct any comments they have on the designs to him.

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan has been finalized. ECC members have had a 30-day review of the draft Implementation Plan. It was then revised by Michelle Weidner (SWCA) based on comments received from ECC members. The plan was then submitted to Garrett, who distributed it for an additional 10-day review by ECC members. Now final, the Implementation Plan will be mailed to FERC in about a week (5/27/04).

Bonneville Cutthroat Trout Study Plan

Weidner sent out the draft BCT Study Plan for a 30-day review on May 1. Mende and Deb Mignogno (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) have since worked on some portions of the plan and emailed these portions to the ECC on Monday (5/17/04) (a copy is included in Attachment A). Garrett said Weidner will incorporate these additions into the BCT Study Plan. The plan is due to FERC on the first of July, but scopes of work for the BCT studies still require work.

Warren Colyer (Trout Unlimited) noted that irrigation diversion/aerial photography task should be conducted in the June/July/August time frame, and that telemetry should be conducted in winter. Garrett said the irrigation diversion/aerial photography task probably won't be undertaken until next year (2005). Mignogno suggested undertaking aerial photography this year (noting that it may take 2 years to complete), with ground-truthing to start next year. Garrett said arrangements for the aerial photography probably can't be made in time for this year (June/July).

Garrett asked if genetic sampling was planned at Bear Lake. Garrett said it is a concern of PacifiCorp, as Bear Lake is not jurisdictional and PacifiCorp prefers not to spend Bear River Project mitigation funds in a manner that may suggest an operational relationship between the Bear River Project and Bear Lake. Thus PacifiCorp would prefer not to spend ECC funds at Bear Lake. In reviewing the new portions of the BCT Plan, Vincent

reiterated his concern about electroshocking of Bonneville cutthroat trout. He said he has heard mortality rates of 10-40 percent when electrofishing is used.

Questions were then raised by ECC members about which other states' existing data to use in the BCT genetics study. BCT are being sampled in Utah and Idaho. Colyer said Wyoming's data should be used. Colyer said he will find out what protocols are being used in Wyoming and report back to the group. Scott Yates (Trout Unlimited) offered to ask Wyoming to contribute towards the effort. Garrett noted that Mende and Mignogno's comments (and this discussion) should be added to the methods for the genetics study of the BCT Study Plan, so they can be lifted and put into the scope of work.

Mignogno called attention to ECC approval of scopes of work and contractors (see "Genetic Health of BCT Populations in the Bear River Drainage," methods section in revisions to the BCT Study Plan by Mende and Mignogno [Attachment A]). Vincent expressed concerns about the level of ECC review of the contract.

Jim Capurso (U.S. Forest Service) had comments on the 5/3/2004 draft of the BCT Study Plan. Capurso said he anticipates costs for aerial photography (and other areas) to be higher than estimated in this draft. Capurso also suggested using existing information for some items, rather than paying for someone else to collect the data again (as a cost-saving measure). Mignogno asked whether the ECC should convene a smaller work group to look into what existing information is available before preparing a scope of work for a contractor. Garrett said he appreciated the comment, and added that if bids come back higher than expected, the ECC may transfer funds from other areas.

Garrett recommended extending the time frame for the BCT Study Plan. A working group was proposed, consisting of Jim Capurso, Deb Mignogno, Jim Mende and Pat Koelsch. The goal of the working group is to make recommendations to the ECC on: 1) what tasks must be completed with available funding; 2) what may be done with any remaining funding; and 3) what existing information may be used. The working group will report back to the ECC at the ECC meetings in June and July 2004.

Black Canyon Substrate Survey

Lynn Van Every (Idaho Department of Environmental Quality) distributed copies of the Black Canyon Substrate Survey Work Plan & Budget (Attachment A). Cost for this task was estimated at \$5,000 for one week field work and report preparation.

Garrett asked how deep can the water be for the substrate (gravels) to still be useful to fish. He noted that some areas are already under 4-5 feet of water without the upcoming 80 cfs minimum flows. Velocity may also be important. Van Every said IDEQ plans to measure velocities at each substrate sample site. Garrett asked whether substrate will be measured again after flows change to the 80 cfs minimum. Van Every said the transects will be permanently marked with rebar embedded in concrete, so that study can be repeated once flows change. Vincent asked for rebar to be capped for the safety of boaters and swimmers who use the area. Garrett asked for approval of the work plan, so that it may be used to develop a contract for IDEQ. Garrett also asked Van Every to

include the possibility for follow-up studies in the work plan, for the record. He also noted that this study falls under the Black Canyon Monitoring Plan task (baseline study).

Mignogno asked where the GIS data will be kept, so that ECC members may access it. Lucachick said the state of Idaho has a GIS repository. Questions were raised regarding whether a contract with the repository would be needed, what format GIS information should be collected in, and who would serve as the contact person that everyone should send things to. ECC members agreed to look into this further.

Literature Review for the Black Canyon Monitoring Plan

Greg Mladenka (Idaho Department of Environmental Quality) distributed the results of a literature review for the Black Canyon Monitoring Plan (included in Attachment A). Mladenka said that for the literature review, he focused on disturbance studies. He and Van Every also walked the Black Canyon area. Mladenka said there is a lot of refugia for fish in the area, and it would be hard to imagine fish being washed out of the canyon by high flows.

In regard to the Feather River study (a similar study being conducted in California that was brought up at the April ECC meeting), Mladenka said some general observations were made in response to whitewater flows. Macroinvertebrates were observed moving downstream. Also, substrate baskets were used in the Feather River study. Baskets in higher flows were noted to have less biomass due to scouring by water. A Feather River contact person is sending their methodology to Jim Capurso. Capurso will forward them to Van Every and Mladenka as soon as he receives it (expected within the week beginning 5/24/04). He said Feather River, in retrospect, wishes they had used offsite “reference” reaches for comparison purposes.

A working group was formed to advise the ECC on the Black Canyon Monitoring Plan with the following members: Lynn Van Every (IDEQ) (chair), Jim Mende (IDF&G), Pat Koelsch (BLM), Charlie Vincent (AW), Warren Colyer (TU), and Jim Capurso (USFS). The monitoring plan is due to FERC by the first of the year. The working group will report back to the ECC by the regular September meeting.

Agenda for Next Meeting - June 16, 2004

- Continue work on the BCT Study Plan – The review period has been extended to include June. Jim Mende will bring more information on the broodstock development task.
- Meet with Rob Bundy – Bear Lake Wildlife Refuge Manager
- Discussion with Twin Lakes Reservoir representative Nick Joston
- Cove Feasibility Study - Update on progress (halfway through comment period).
- Update from the Black Canyon Monitoring Work Group

The ECC adjourned at noon with a field trip to Cove Dam to follow after lunch.

Cove Feasibility Field Trip

The ECC meeting continued at 1 p.m. with Garrett leading a field trip to nearby Cove Dam. Garrett said a consultant-prepared Cove Feasibility Study would be available next week (week beginning 5/31/04). The study considers three alternatives:

1. Decommission Cove Dam
2. Construct fish passage facilities
3. Connect the Grace outflow to Cove intake

Garrett said any comments that ECC members had on the alternatives following this field review would be passed along to the consultant preparing the feasibility study.

Garrett said that Alternative 1 – Decommission Cove Dam - would breach the dam, but leave part of the structure in place. It was described as a minimalist approach.

Alternative 2 – Construct fish passage facilities – would include installation of fish ladders and/or screens. ECC members were shown the remnants of the existing fish ladder on the west side of the dam, and options for fish screening in three locations. Garrett said that costs for fish screens and ladders were roughly equivalent.

Mignogno suggested that instead of installing fish screens in the afterbay, construct the screens farther down the concrete flume and use the existing spillway for fish return. Garrett said he would pass this idea along to the consultant preparing the feasibility study.

Alternative 3 – Connect Grace outflow to Cove intake – would involve building an open concrete canal between the tailrace and dam. A coffer dam would be built in stages and the existing dam would be breached.

Shoreline Buffer Zone Field Trip

The group then toured the riparian area between Cove Dam and the Grace facility, and discussed buffer zone fencing of the riparian area from Cove to the lower end of Black Canyon. Fencing would provide a buffer zone protection from grazing. A buffer zone width has not yet been established. PacifiCorp would pay 100% of fencing on PacifiCorp land and 25 percent of the costs for fencing on other private land, including 100 percent of the costs for maintenance.

Mignogno asked whether decisions on fencing should be delayed until aerial photography was complete. Garrett said that fencing would be done only on PacifiCorp property to start. Mignogno said that goals should be established before management (such as fencing) was put into place. Garrett suggested a site-specific management plan be drafted by Eve Davies (PacifiCorp), with help on management prescriptions from Jim Mende (IDF&G). Garrett said the plan would be used for decisionmaking on fencing of riparian

areas next year, with fencing of riparian areas on PacifiCorp land only to proceed this year.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Attachment A: Handouts

- A-1 Recreation Site Designs (submitted by Garrett)**
- A-2 Revised Portions of the BCT Plan (submitted by Mende and Mignogno)**
- A-3 Black Canyon Substrate Work Plan and Budget (submitted by Van Every)**
- A-4 Literature Review for the Black Canyon Monitoring Plan (submitted by Mladenka)**