

**Bear River Environmental Coordination Committee  
Final Meeting Notes  
February 17, 2010  
Pocatello, Idaho**

**ECC Members Present**

Blaine Newman, Bureau of Land Management  
 Warren Colyer, Trout Unlimited  
 Charlie Vincent, American Whitewater  
 Jim Capurso, Caribou-Targhee National Forest  
 Lynn Van Every, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality  
 Dave Teuscher, Idaho Department of Fish and Game  
 Mary Lucachick, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, by phone  
 Arn Berglund, Bureau of Land Management

**Others Present**

Eve Davies, PacifiCorp  
 Greg Mladenka, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality  
 Miriam Hugentobler, Project Coordinator  
 Shana Murray, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, by telephone (briefly)

<b>Commitments Made at the February 17, 2010 Meeting</b>	
All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and provide comments on Streambank Stabilization Policy. CC to Hugentobler.</li> </ul>
Project Sponsors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide landowner information for habitat enhancement project applications</li> <li>Refine project applications as needed. Due to Stenberg, Davies Mar. 8</li> </ul>
Stenberg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take pictures of Old Oregon Trail Road Bridge(Bailey Culvert) (and irrigation diversions)</li> <li>Provide Keeley's reference material to Cirrus</li> </ul>
Teuscher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check with Dr. Keeley for northern leatherside chub identification key and forward to Stenberg.</li> </ul>
Mladenka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate draft Streambank Stabilization Policy for Comment</li> </ul>
Hugentobler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compile (redline) comments on Streambank Stabilization Policy for next meeting.</li> </ul>
Capurso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check on billing for ANS signage project. Forward GIS information for aquatic nuisance species signage location to Davies for monitoring purposes.</li> </ul>

**Decisions Made at This Meeting**

- Continue with 16 flow-dependent whitewater boater flow releases during 2011. A downramp rate of one half foot per hour will be used.

## **Items Added to the Day's Agenda**

Oneida Fish Passage Proposal  
ECC Project Monitoring  
CAP Meeting Summary

## **December Meeting Notes**

December notes were approved without changes.

## **Review of December Action Items**

**Old Oregon Trail Road Bridge** - Stenberg offered to visit the Old Oregon Trail Road bridge and take photos as part of a larger discussion of culverts on Bailey Creek. Stenberg will include this information in his existing Bailey Creek PowerPoint and review at April meeting. Davies asked fisheries biologists if they had recommendations on which locations should be prioritized for culvert repair. Capurso said development of a management plan might be valuable in establishing priorities. He suggested identifying diversions and barriers and seeing how fish populations are doing there. Davies asked whether representatives of any organizations present might be doing this over the summer. Teuscher said he would check to see when IDFG is monitoring the area.

**Streambank Stabilization Policy Statement**– Mladenka has revised the policy statement based on additional information provided by the ECC. The revised policy will be circulated for comment via email. Davies suggested adding a statement of the ECC's objectives in funding projects for the information of potential applicants (i.e., a 'what does this mean to me' statement for applicants). She said it should be made clear that the ECC does not wish to undertake projects to simply stabilize people's property boundaries. Mladenka suggested including a list of examples of projects the ECC would/would not consider funding (bullet list).

Teuscher updated the ECC on IDFG fish sampling of Bailey Creek. He said IDFG last monitored the area in 2008. Bonneville cutthroat trout were found. BCT were also found there during the telemetry study, including one found dead just below the road. He said he agrees that it would be a good area to improve, based on connectivity. IDFG plans to sample again this summer, such sampling typically occurs during July/August.

## **Twin Lakes (Bear River Narrows Dam) – Shana Murray, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, by Telephone**

Murray was contacted by phone to respond to questions ECC members had regarding the proposed Bear River Narrows dam. Stenberg introduced Murray and asked whether she could answer some process questions, including timeline or the project's preliminary license, EIS, etc.

Murray said the FERC is working on a schedule with the Corps of Engineers for joint EIS development/review. She said there is no Preliminary Licensing proposal as yet, this will probably happen in October. Comments will be accepted, with a 90-day comment period. Response to comments will then be incorporated, with revisions complete by January. Murray noted that there is no required

timeline for PLP submittal as there is no existing license that will expire. The next step will be a draft license application. She said FERC examines for deficiencies, and will either reject it, or make an additional information request of the applicant. There will be a comment period on this when FERC determines it is ready for review. Agencies will issue terms and conditions at this point. The NEPA process will follow, possibly jointly with the COE, and includes a 60-day comment period. Colyer asked about alternatives. Murray said alternatives would include No Action, Proposed Action, and a third that includes agency recommendations. She noted that FERC only examines hydropower alternatives, while COE considers other types of alternatives in its NEPA process. Mladenka asked about 404 permitting being so far along in the process – he said that by the time it happens, the proponent will have spent millions, making it harder to say no to licensing. Davies clarified the previous question regarding whether this is a typical process for projects of this type, and added information about COE Section 404 Alternatives Analysis as opposed to NEPA alternatives analysis. Murray said she understands concerns about the proponent spending millions, but the process doesn't work that way, and that does not influence decisions. Teuscher asked about the comment period on studies. Murray said that applies beginning when the preliminary license proposal is filed. Comment period for final studies ends March 15, while no deadline has been established for interim reports. Capurso informed Murray of the ECC's Oneida Fish Passage project. He said studies have led to more information in the study area regarding BCT. He said trends are favorable for proceeding with fish passage at Oneida dam and the ECC has decided to move forward with fish passage studies. Stenberg said the ECC is beginning studies now (earlier than anticipated) to allow for planning, fundraising, etc.

### **2010 Grant Project Review**

ECC members reviewed the calendar for the 2010 grant review process. The ECC will vote on the subcommittee's recommendations at the April ECC meeting, which will be held on an alternative date because of conflicts some ECC members had on the regular meeting date. Alternative date is April 28.

### **Subform for Irrigation Diversion Projects**

No action needed on this item.

### **Current Grant Project Review**

Stenberg said the Harris project is now complete and Mathews is done or almost done. He noted that no bill has been received from USFS for aquatic nuisance signage. Capurso said he would check on status. Davies asked for GIS location of signs for monitoring purposes. Capurso said he would send and noted that a technician would update the information this summer. Stenberg said the Old Oregon Trail Bridge project has been cancelled. Stenberg said he has been checking the Kackley Spring site monthly. There recently was a problem with watercress spreading and inhibiting flow and it was dug out by hand.

### **2010 Habitat Enhancement Projects**

ECC members reviewed short forms received for 2010 projects to identify sponsors and any additional information needs.

**Alleman** - Capurso said potential partners are reviewing the project now. The project would involve about 0.5 mile of stream.

**Bunderson, Max** – The application will need a map.

**Bunderson, Roy** – OK

**Cub River Fish Tracking** – Colyer said the funding request is for tags. Other funding is not firm, but applicant is optimistic. Teuscher said he has reservations but would be more likely to approve the project if Colyer did surgery for tags. Stenberg noted that the project is out of the action area. Colyer said the project would provide good information on the effectiveness of the ECC's Cub River fish passage project.

**Georgetown Fish Ladder** – Capurso said the project was originally funded by the ECC. He said he would revise the application to include the design and total amount of project.

**Oneida Narrows Riparian Protection** – OK

**South Liberty Pipeline** – ECC members discussed streamflow in Liberty Creek's channel and whether the application should state that installation would guarantee 5 cfs bypass. Capurso said he would speak with the proponent. Colyer questioned how the ECC would enforce. Teuscher said he believes the stream is currently over-appropriated.

**St. Charles Creek Diversion** – OK. Out of action area. High value.

**St. Charles Creek Fish Passage** – Stenberg noted this design project is outside the action area and advised that a compelling case for the project would have to be made for PacifiCorp to approve. A discussion of problems with what type of structure might work to create a channel followed. Teuscher mentioned PacifiCorp's obligation to provide fish passage in regard to a COE permit requirement for dredging in the area. Stenberg said that obligation expired after the term of the permit, and said he would send this information to Teuscher. Van Every said it might not be PacifiCorp's obligation but it would be the right thing to do, in his personal opinion.

**Trout Creek AFO Relocation** – Stenberg will refine scope.

**Whiskey Creek** – Teuscher recommended that before proceeding further downstream of current projects underway on the stream, the ECC should evaluate whether fish habitat has actually been improved.

## **2011 Boater Flows**

Stenberg told ECC members that a decision on 2011 boater flows was needed as the ECC won't have Black Canyon Monitoring Report until spring of 2011, the decision-making year. Stenberg proposed continuing boater flows during 2011 as they have been over recent years. Teuscher said he supported continuing flows (16-6 hour flow-dependent events) during the 2011 decision-making year, but with an 0.5 ft ramp rate. Stenberg offered four scheduled whitewater boater flow dates at 0.5 ft. Davies said dates that appear to cause seasonal problems for fish (i.e. redbreast shiners) should be avoided.

Stenberg asked for consensus on continuing as present: 16-6 hour flow-dependent boater flows during the 2011 decision making year at an 0.5 foot per hour ramp rate. Consensus was reached.

### **Oneida Fish Passage Proposal**

ECC members discussed how to proceed with the Oneida fish passage proposal. The group considered whether to solicit bids for design work. Davies recommended that Colyer be involved in the process. Stenberg said he would seek recommendations. Capurso asked about approaching the media with information on the project. Stenberg said press releases must be approved by the ECC first. He noted there was a good description of the project in the draft annual report.

### **Conservation Action Planning Summary Update - Davies**

Davies said Bear River Partners on the CAP process will be meeting annually beginning in 2011. She said they have a place for data generated through the process at Utah State University (Jeff Horsburgh).

### **Monitoring of ECC Projects**

Stenberg said future funding for the technician who is monitoring ECC projects for PacifiCorp is in question due to budget cuts. Stenberg said he was giving the ECC a heads up in case a project proposal is developed to fund the position. The ECC expressed support for monitoring of ECC-funded projects. The PacifiCorp-provided Environmental Coordinator FTE was discussed and it was noted that this monitoring time could potentially be included in that allocation of time depending on workload of the EC.

### **Land Trust Updates**

A closed session was held following the regular meeting to hear updates on Land and Water Acquisition projects from Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust.

### **Next ECC Meeting – April 28 – Grace, ID**

Agenda Items will include:

- Vote on ECC recommendations from grant funding subcommittee.
- Continue water rights discussion
- Updated streambank stabilization project statement
- Fish passage design qualifications