

**Bear River ECC  
Final Meeting Notes  
January 15, 2014  
Pocatello, Idaho**

**ECC Members Present**

Mark Stenberg, PacifiCorp  
 Cary Myler, US Fish and Wildlife Service  
 Jim DeRito, Trout Unlimited  
 Lynn Van Every, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality  
 David Teuscher, Idaho Department of Fish and Game  
 Dave Pacioretty, Bureau of Land Management  
 Andrea Santarsiere, Greater Yellowstone Coalition

**Others Present**

Greg Mladenka, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality  
 Claudia Conder, PacifiCorp  
 Jerry DeBacker, Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust

**Participating by Phone**

Kevin Colburn, American Whitewater  
 Eve Davies, PacifiCorp

<b>Commitments Made at the January 15, 2014 Meeting</b>	
All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be advised of the 2014 grant project review schedule:                Short forms (proposals) due Feb. 7 to Stenberg, Hugentobler                Will review short forms and assign sponsors at Feb. 19 ECC meeting                Long forms (applications) due Feb 28 to Stenberg, Hugentobler                Ranking subcommittee meeting Mar. 12</li> <li>• Comments on Draft 2013 Annual Report due Feb. 14</li> </ul>
Stenberg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulate Cove reconnect plans to interested ECC members via email.</li> <li>• Provide a list of ECC projects on the Cub River (with cost) to Santarsiere.</li> <li>• Circulate project scoping report (Boyack) for email voting by the ECC.</li> <li>• Circulate SSLT's annual monitoring and maintenance funding request for email voting by the ECC.</li> </ul>
Teuscher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forward IDWR's request for comments on the Cub River hydro project to interested ECC members.</li> </ul>
Teuscher and Myler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Inform Stenberg of FERC filing on newly proposed Cub River hydro project.</a></li> </ul>
Action items in <a href="#">blue</a> have been carried over.	

**Decisions Made at This Meeting**

- Agreed by consensus to accept funding escalation adjustments proposed by Stenberg (see summary table, Attachment 1).
- Agreed by consensus to support the proposed 2014 whitewater boater flow dates: April 5 & 6; April 12 & 13; April 25, 26 & 27; and May 10 & 11, 2014.

## **Decisions Made via Email Since the Last ECC Meeting**

None.

## **Items Added to Agenda**

- Greater Yellowstone Coalition's new contact information - Santarsiere
- Update on new Cub River hydro proposal - Teuscher
- Potential new conservation property on the Bear River (added to land trust updates) - Teuscher
- Update on Bear River Narrows status as a Protected Area - Stenberg

## **Bear River Narrows Status**

Stenberg noted that ECC members had recently submitted comment letters to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council on the Bear River Narrows' protected area status. The group discussed PacifiCorp's informational letter to FERC that detailed the background of the Northwest Power Planning Act and the protected area status of the Oneida Canyon for wildlife. He said the Council's standard recommendation is no hydro development. FERC does not necessary have to rule according to Council's recommendation but should take it into consideration. Stenberg said PacifiCorp's letter asks FERC to dismiss the license application for the proposed Bear River Narrows dam.

## **2014 Whitewater Boater Flows**

Stenberg reviewed dates proposed for whitewater flows during 2014 with ECC members. The dates were developed in coordination with American Whitewater representative Charlie Vincent and include April 5 & 6; April 12 & 13; April 25, 26 & 27; and May 10 & 11, 2014. Stenberg asked Colburn (AW's national stewardship director, attending the meeting by phone) whether the dates were agreeable to American Whitewater. Colburn said yes. Stenberg checked for support with the ECC and consensus support was received.

## **Cub River Hydro Proposal**

Teuscher provided an update on this new proposed hydroelectric development to ECC members. He said IDFG was consulted earlier in the process regarding alternatives development. He said Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) has just circulated the proposal for comment. The proponent is proposing to take flows from the middle ditch for hydropower, which will dewater the Cub River. The Cub River is the site of several ECC habitat enhancement projects. Teuscher said the comment period is open now and he believes anyone can comment. Teuscher will forward the request for comments to interested ECC members by email. Teuscher said the canal company previously provided a letter to IDFG regarding management of the water in the middle ditch which states they will leave half the water in the river.

Santarsiere asked whether a description of ECC work in the area with cost was available. Myler brought up the issue of historic practices. It was noted that IDWR is required to act on issues of historic practices and that is a valid point to bring up in comment letters. Under this proposal, hydropower would be added as a beneficial use, in addition to the existing irrigation beneficial use.

## **Project Updates**

No update was available for the **Pearl Reconnect**, but Teuscher said he knows they are working on design. However, he said, there is still some question as to whether the landowner will ultimately agree to continue with the project. IDFG still plans to present the three design alternatives to the family. Myler noted that he can cost share on the project and could attend the meeting with the family.

Stenberg reported that there will be carryover on the **Screen Repair** fund. The **Screen Tender's** work went well. No update was available for **BCT Trapping**.

The **Dead Horse spring** project looks good, Stenberg said, plans for the project are complete. Both **Smith** projects are complete and **Keetch** is in process.

**Cove Reconnect** is not as far along as Dead Horse. Terrain at this site is more difficult and engineers are concerned with long term stability. There are questions about anchoring grade control structures. Stenberg said he may propose doing something simpler. Mladenka asked whether Stenberg had talked to the Corps of Engineers or stream alteration people. Stenberg said he was planning to do so when the plan was complete. Mladenka said it may be advantageous in this case to have a site visit in advance. He asked why engineers were so heavily involved on this project as compared to Kackley. Teuscher said the stream is high gradient, in complicated terrain, and the channel is longer. Stenberg will circulate plans to interested ECC members by email.

## **Habitat Enhancement Budget Review**

Stenberg reviewed the habitat enhancement fund balance via overhead. He said approximately \$465,000 will be available this year, so there is money available for larger projects. Teuscher said he expects to have some big projects.

Stenberg reviewed a summary of escalation adjustments to closed ECC accounts with proposed corrections via overhead (see Attachment 1). Teuscher asked about funding for broodstock ponds at the Grace Hatchery and if the adjusted funds could be used for that purpose. Stenberg said that was consistent with the conservation hatchery agreement. DeRito asked about funding from the irrigation diversion mapping project and if that could be used for a screen design inventory. Myler said he does not want an engineering firm to conduct the survey, as he feels it's a conflict of interest. DeRito said he would like to gather information from engineers about the types of screens and how the screens function (type of screen, how it works, what it cost, etc.). Myler said that information was valuable, but he doesn't think they should evaluate how well the structures are working. This could be a phase II of the project. ECC members or another firm could evaluate that, Myler said. Stenberg suggested working with WIS at Utah State University to post information from the inventory. Conder agreed. Teuscher noted that some screens are not working as they were designed to work. DeRito said it would be valuable to circulate this information back to the engineers as feedback. DeRito said he will bring this forward as a new habitat enhancement proposal in 2014.

ECC members agreed by consensus to accept the escalation adjustments as shown in the summary table provided by Stenberg (Attachment 1). Stenberg noted that the table is also in the draft 2013 Annual Report, and ECC members may comment on it there.

## **Conservation Hatchery**

Teuscher reviewed Bonneville cutthroat trout (BCT) stocking numbers. IDFG stocked a total of 19,544 BCT in 2013 and collected 32,414 eggs of which 27,874 fish are currently rearing for release this year. Davies said she noticed some fish were placed in Harris Spring. Teuscher said yes, IDFG will be watching to see how they do there.

Teuscher discussed IDFG concerns regarding predation on conservation hatchery fish released into the Bear. He showed a Google earth map of Gull Island on the Blackfoot Reservoir. He said IDFG retrieved 30 percent of the PIT tags from stocked fish at this location (spring-released fish). He estimated that 40 percent of all fish stocked in the mainstem Bear were lost to cormorants.

Teuscher said that means we can't afford to stock a lot of fish in the Bear in spring, and noted stocking efforts in the fall last year. Davies asked about the advantage of stocking in the fall. Teuscher said it gives the fish a chance to get smarter before spring when cormorants are around. Also, the stocked fish will be bigger going in and bigger still by spring. Davies asked whether there were predators that should be present on Gull Island but aren't. Conder asked whether the fingerlings can handle the cold. Teuscher said the food resources are not as abundant in fall and some fish will be lost to starvation, but losses should not be as significant as the spring predation losses.

## **Land Trust Updates**

<closed session>

## **Guest Speaker: Mark Davidson, Trout Unlimited's Idaho Water Project Director**

Davidson was introduced to the ECC by DeRito to discuss Trout Unlimited's recent projects to secure water rights in Idaho for instream benefit. Davidson started with TU last summer and is interested in working with the ECC on water projects. He noted that DeRito does restoration work, while he is more focused on water and flows (e.g., conserving water in areas where there are fisheries concerns such as the Upper Salmon River, with threatened and endangered fisheries). Davidson noted that there is not a clean way of incorporating water rights into conservation easements but they have had success with irrigation or water agreements that are side agreements to conservation easements. These water agreements are referenced as a requirement of the conservation easement but the terms are not incorporated into the conservation easement. He showed examples of what he does via Powerpoint-- switching from flood to pivot irrigation, areas covered by conservation easements and water management agreements, etc. Davidson also discussed the project ranking process used on the Salmon River and showed ranking sheets that were used.

### Attachment 1: Escalation Adjustment for Closed Funding Accounts

PacifiCorp Bear River Implementation Projects Escalation Adjustment for Closed Funding Accounts					
Account	BCT Studies	BLM	IDFG	Oneida Road	Correction to be Made
Genetic Sampling	\$604.54				Place in 2014 Habitat Enhancement Funding
Aerial Photography	\$4,227.05				Place in 2014 Habitat Enhancement Funding
Irrigation Diversion Mapping	\$355.23				Place in 2014 Habitat Enhancement Funding
Telemetry Study	\$3,812.76				Place in 2014 Habitat Enhancement Funding
Black Canyon Monitoring	\$4,149.34				Place in 2014 Habitat Enhancement Funding
Broodstock Development			\$6,554.02		Place in 2014 Conservation Hatchery Funding
Oneida Campground Upgrade		\$1,649.27			Will be paid in 2014 from O&M
Traffic Safety Plan				\$2,715.26	Will be paid in 2014 from O&M
Sub Totals	\$13,148.93	\$1,649.27	\$6,554.02	\$2,715.26	