

**Bear River ECC  
Final Meeting Notes  
August 20, 2014**

**ECC Members Present**

Lynn Van Every, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality  
 Jim DeRito, Trout Unlimited  
 Ryan Hillyard, Idaho Department of Fish and Game  
 Cary Myler, US Fish and Wildlife Service

**Others Participating**

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

**Participating by Phone**

Kevin Colburn, American Whitewater  
 Eve Davies, PacifiCorp

**Email Decisions since last meeting**

- Approved draft notes from the April ECC meeting.

**Decisions Made at this Meeting**

- See land trust updates.

<b>Commitments Made at the August 20, 2014 Meeting</b>	
All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be advised that boater flow meetings have been rescheduled to take place over two days in November, with exact dates to be decided via email coordination. [DATES CONFIRMED: TUESDAY &amp; WEDNESDAY, NOV. 4 &amp; 5]. October 15 meeting is cancelled, but please keep availability open for a possible conference call.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Consider revision or amendment of the Comprehensive BCT Recovery Plan to include new information from Mabey. Schedule meeting time as needed.</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Consider developing a demonstration installation of streambank stabilization solutions other than rock.</a></li> </ul>
Grant Fund subcommittee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Communicate to project proponents the ECC's priority for habitat enhancement projects on the tributaries rather than the mainstem Bear River (by next fall).</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Develop a water quality couplet for the habitat enhancement project ranking criteria.</a></li> </ul>
Stenberg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check in with project sponsors prior to ECC meetings.</li> <li>• Bring photos of Grace Cove to next ECC meeting.</li> <li>• Email 2014 whitewater boater numbers to the ECC.</li> <li>• Prepare fall communication to project proponents regarding sediment control projects.</li> <li>• Request Grace hourly temperature data from Baldwin for IDEQ.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Provide Teuscher with a brief written description of the planned drawdown at Soda. Also consider placing informational signs at boat ramps.</a></li> </ul>

Commitments Made at the August 20, 2014 Meeting	
DeRito	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring photos of Cottonwood to next ECC meeting.</li> </ul>
Hugentobler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forward screen tender monitoring list for ECC projects to Hillyard (monitoring photos needed).</li> <li>Request short forms for new land and water acquisition projects for file.</li> </ul>
Action items in blue have been carried over.	

## Current Grant Project Updates

- **Tingey, Nichols culvert** – Van Every reported there is still a little work left to be done on the project this year.
- **IDFG Fish Tracking** – Project is complete, but some funding remains in account, Stenberg said. He will close out the project.
- **Stauffer and Spring Creek Fencing** – Stenberg said he needs to contact the proponent, as the project has not yet been billed.
- **Dead Horse and Cove Spring** – Stenberg said he has received a letter from the Army Corps and the contractor is set to go on both projects in September.
- **BCT Trapping** – This project has been billed. DeRito said the final report is being completed.
- **Cottonwood Fish Screens** – DeRito reported that the screens are in and fencing should be completed. The ECC has been billed but DeRito said he still needs to bill Fish and Wildlife Service. He said the Treasureton screen is functional, though something was broken on that structure and the other screen is having trouble operating at lower flows. The screen fabricator should repair in the fall.
- Myler reported that the **Davis diversion** canal blew out in a few places and that he paid for repairs. It was not costly, he said, although it was a major blowout.
- **North Hoops** – Myler said this screen is being fabricated now, and the project will also include some fencing.
- **Broodstock Ponds** – Permitting is underway for this project. Site plans will be prepared for three ponds, but only two will be constructed.
- **Cub River Channel** – DeRito said this project remains on hold due to a proposed hydro project on the Cub River. He said there may soon be a settlement agreement that is expected to specify 12 cfs in the river. He said he is waiting until that is in place to proceed. A call with IDWR is expected in the next few weeks. The next issue will be the big boulder work put in place that is not providing fish passage at very high and very low flows. Stenberg asked if there was a plan for that project in place with the Corps. It would be interesting to compare permit plans with what is in place, Stenberg said. DeRito said he has not seen one, as the project was managed by his predecessor. He said he was considering calling in Biota to consult on what should be done for the Cub River Channel Restoration. Stenberg also recommended Cardno Entrix.
- **Harris Spring** – Hillyard reported final design will be completed this fall, with implementation expected in the spring.
- **Coop Creek** – Stenberg said he has the agreement on his desk.
- **Stauffer Culvert** – Hillyard said this project should be completed this fall.
- **Oneida Takeout** – The project was designed this year but not yet implemented. The area is reportedly getting heavy use.

- **Sweers** – Stenberg said he needs to follow up on this project. The project may now be different than originally proposed.

### **2014 Whitewater Boater Flows - Stenberg**

Stenberg said he did not have 2014 whitewater boater numbers with him at the meeting, but use was high during the first two weekends of whitewater flows, with numbers dwindling during subsequent flows. He estimated that users numbered in the 40s during the first flow, then over 100 during the whitewater festival. Stenberg will provide numbers to the ECC via email.

### **Black Canyon Extended Monitoring**

Hillyard reported that fisheries monitoring in the Black Canyon was ongoing. Mladenka asked if IDFG had surveyed for redds. Hillyard said yes, but it was extremely difficult to do so given conditions and no data were collected.

Colburn asked if upcoming all-day meetings to discuss whitewater boater flows and the results of extended monitoring in the Black Canyon could be rescheduled to two consecutive days, rather than holding one-day meetings during two consecutive months, to lessen the need for travel. ECC members agreed to hold the meetings during two days in November. November 18 and 19 or 19 and 20 were proposed, with exact dates to be decided via email.

Stenberg proposed a conference call to develop the agenda for boater flow talks to include extended monitoring results, instream flows and temperatures, etc. Mladenka asked about Grace average daily temperature data—he said he need hourly data instead. Stenberg will ask Baldwin.

### **Boating Tour on the Bear River**

Van Every said the ECC's recent boating tour of the Bear with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) was good. He said he would like to float the next reach down to see how it looks and suggested that the ECC do so as a next trip.

Hillyard said the rock structures in place seemed to be helping. Mladenka noted that NRCS has not tried much in regard to using vegetation [for bank stability] and that they report little success with vegetation plantings. Mladenka noted that Davies would be a good resource for that as Davies said they may not have tried what she considers the best species for that area, coyote willow. Mladenka also noted that their plantings were up on terraces, and likely weren't getting enough water. He believes NRCS is not focusing on the use of vegetation to the extent they could be. Mladenka said he talked with the NRCS representative and has an open mind about rock structures. He said the ECC may need to revise its guidance regarding rock. He said NRCS commented that they could use less rock in some places. Mladenka said he thinks rock is better than huge cutbacks and he understands why someone would want to protect their pivot path, but there could also be places where the river is allowed to move. Myler said the ECC needs to have further discussion on whether to focus on tributaries vs the Bear River in the future and decide the extent to which the ECC will work on NRCS/mainstem Bear projects. Van Every suggested specifying a certain percentage of annual funding be used for mainstem projects – say 10 to 15 percent. Davies said the ranking process was designed to take care of ECC priorities. Mladenka noted that use of rock is making many of these projects rank lower. Davies said her problem was not

with rock per se, but with projects that simply stabilize someone's land. That is, the bottom line is the purpose of the project.

Stenberg asked the ECC's opinion on toe rock vs barbs. In regard to barbs, Hillyard said it depends on spacing. Van Every said we need to look at the longer reach. Mladenka said there is some vertical improvement. He said rock is not going to provide habitat needed by fish. DeRito said he thinks barbs may provide areas to include vegetation, thus improving habitat. Davies said the NRCS does not seem opposed to the use of vegetation, but they have found it expensive and it has not been working for them. She suggested providing funding for them to incorporate vegetation in some of the projects. Hillyard mentioned North Fork nursery as a potential resource. Stenberg said he needs to firm up the possibility of designating amounts for NRCS. He suggested a fall communication with a thank you for the tour and mention of larger buffers for fences.

### **Twin Lakes' Bear River Narrows Project**

Stenberg said not a lot has been happening on this proposed project, but there has been a FERC memo regarding lack of consultation and coordination with many stakeholders.

Adjourned to closed session for Land Trust business.

### **Next ECC Meeting**

The ECC's October 15 meeting was cancelled in favor of a two-day meeting slot for boater flow discussions in November. November 18 & 19 or 19 & 20 were proposed, with final dates to be confirmed via email. ECC members were requested to keep availability open Oct. 15 for a possible conference call.