

**Bear River ECC
Final Meeting Notes
October 21, 2015
Pocatello, Idaho**

ECC Members Present

Mark Stenberg, PacifiCorp
Lynn Van Every, Idaho Dept. of Environmental Quality
Jim DeRito, Trout Unlimited
Corey Lyman, U.S. Forest Service
Kathy Rinaldi, Greater Yellowstone Coalition
David Teuscher, Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game
Blaine Newman, Bureau of Land Management

Others Present

Eve Davies, PacifiCorp
Steven Smith, Idaho Dept. of Environmental Quality
Babette Thorpe, Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust
Jenny Cornell, Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust
John Sigler, Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust
Tom Lucia, Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust

Commitments Made at the October 2015 Meeting	
All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a sub-group to explore and consider options for broodstock ponds. • Share photos for the 2015 Annual Report (email to Hugentobler) • Turn in monitoring forms for any ECC projects members are responsible for monitoring. • Consider revision or amendment of the Comprehensive BCT Recovery Plan to include new information from Mabey. Schedule meeting time as needed. Invite Mabey and add to the ECC's agenda.
Mladenka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the ECC's Streambank Stabilization Policy for possible updates (fall 2015).
Stenberg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in on Sweers habitat enhancement project. Provide update at next meeting. • Continue to work with Bushman on fencing project.
DeRito	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate presentation on Cub River Channel Restoration in early 2016. • Provide an update on the Davis Diversion as work this fall proceeds.
Hugentobler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare draft ECC calendar for 2016, route to the ECC for approval at Dec mtg. • Finalize edits to habitat enhancement project form. • Coordinate scheduling of November site visits.
Action items in blue have been carried over.	

Decisions Made Since Last Meeting

- Approved August and June meeting notes.

Decisions Made at This Meeting

- See Land Trust Updates

Stenberg reviewed the day's agenda. The following items were added to this portion of the agenda:

- Twin Lakes Draft EIS
- Kackley Springs project
- FERC - updated Oneida Land Management Plan

Hugentobler will prepare a draft 2016 ECC calendar for approval at the December meeting.

Project Updates

Bushman – A correction is needed to the ask for this project. Fencing was estimated for only one side of the stream but fencing is needed for both sides. There is currently about \$5,000 left in the budget.

Grace/Cove Spring Projects – Dead Horse Springs is done, Stenberg said. Engineers worked up liner plans for **Cove**, he said, but the contractor declined installation because he did not believe it would work. Teuscher noted there are different types of fabric that could be used to help the liner stay in place. Carpet liner in particular could be helpful, he said. Stenberg said he will be working on Cove again in the spring.

Bonneville Cutthroat Trout (BCT) Broodstock Pond – Stenberg said this project is on hold. It appears the Cove site will not be feasible. He also noted there are new owners at the Black Canyon hatchery and it may be possible to work with them. Stenberg suggested that interested ECC members form a sub-group to move forward on this project.

Cub River Channel Restoration – DeRito said a contractor is working on design for this project this winter. He said he has asked for a presentation to the ECC once options are known. This will likely be after the first of the year.

Sweers – No update was available. Stenberg will contact the proponent.

Screen Tender – Stenberg said 2015 funding for the screen tender has been disbursed.

Davis Diversion – DeRito said design for the upper diversion is in place and design for the other is out to the contractor. However, it appears that bridge work previously discussed in this area is not going forward for the next couple years. Work this fall will include the head gate, rock vein and plug. Costs

have gone up, he noted, and \$15,000 is now estimated for engineering, with additional for bridgework. He will provide more information to the ECC in the next couple of weeks.

Alleman Enclosure – Stenberg said this project is done and funding has been disbursed.

Spring Alternative – Stenberg said work on this project will proceed this winter. He would like all the work to be done at the same time when snow is off.

Whiskey Creek – Stenberg said this project is currently underway. Teuscher said the proponent had received a permit for the project from Idaho Department of Water Resources. He said he was hoping the ECC would see more on the design before the project went forward. Stenberg said it sounds like it might already be built. He said no funds have been disbursed as yet.

Kackley Renovation – Sagebrush Steppe will provide an update on this project later in the meeting.

Georgetown – Stenberg said he has not heard anything on this project.

SNP Markers – Teuscher said work on this project has started. Stenberg said no funding has been disbursed.

Account Balance Review

Stenberg reviewed ECC account balances.

Land and Water Project Fund

\$1,683,475.90 – 2015 opening balance

\$771,106.22 – 2015 currently, including estimated future billings

About \$390,000 will be added at the beginning of 2016, bringing balance to just over \$1,000,000.

Habitat Enhancement Project Fund

\$680,938.03 - 2015 opening balance

\$470,070.08 – current total balance

\$246,469.95 – outstanding obligations

About \$440.670 will be available for next year.

Edit to Project Application Form

An edit to the project application form was proposed at the August meeting to provide detail on overhead charges. Stenberg said he previously believed overhead was not being charged to ECC projects per ECC direction. It is being added since many of the agencies cannot handle projects without adding overhead to cost. ECC members reviewed the proposed edit. Additional edits were agreed upon. Hugentobler will edit the form to include [a total for] all sources of funding, and dividing the right box to include a percent for ECC funds per project.

Stenberg asked project sponsors to be aware of the time involved to set up project proponents as vendors. Thorpe asked whether Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust (SSLT) could also charge overhead on projects. She asked whether this was a change in procedures that SSLT could use—it sounds like other partners are. Stenberg noted that all the land trust's reimbursables are outlined in PacifiCorp's memorandum of agreement (MOA) with SSLT. Thorpe asked to speak with Stenberg about the MOA. Stenberg said he had previously discussed yearly versus per project billing with the land trust. He said previous preference was for yearly billing. However, Stenberg said, further discussion of reimbursement practices is possible. The ECC is in charge of managing the fund, he said, so it is up to this group. Thorpe noted that more information for SSLT labor for ECC projects is available, she will pull it together.

Twin Lakes Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) recently issued the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Twin Lakes' proposed Bear River Narrows hydroelectric project, including a staff recommendation that the license for the project be denied. It was noted that this decision was not yet final. Stenberg said he was pleased with the outcome of the DEIS. He noted that comments on the DEIS are due November 30, and encouraged ECC members to provide comments. He said PacifiCorp is planning to submit comments. Davies said previous comments may be included by reference to save time. Rinaldi asked how common it is for the agency to go against its staff's recommendation. Stenberg said he does not know. Van Every noted that there are a number of inaccuracies in the DEIS, and there will be a final, so it should be as accurate as possible. Stenberg estimated about four months to Final EIS, so it will be well into next year before a final FERC order is issued on the project. Public meetings are scheduled for next week, he said. Newman said BLM will be submitting written comments, but is not planning to attend the public meeting. Teuscher said IDFG prefers to submit comments in writing as well. Van Every said the same was true for IDEQ. Teuscher said a representative from the State Attorney General's office will attend for IDFG.

FERC - Updated Oneida Land Management Plan

Stenberg said this plan was recently updated because FERC requested new Exhibits A and G for the project. PacifiCorp submitted the new maps, which included changes to the FERC boundary, on June 25. When FERC reviewed the maps, they contacted Stenberg to let him know that a specific process, including consultation, must be followed in cases where a FERC boundary change is proposed. Stenberg told ECC members they will likely be seeing paperwork on the boundary change in the near future.

BCT Conservation Hatchery

Teuscher reported that the conservation hatchery program is moving along well in general, though there are still some concerns over the Clegg ponds. He recommended continuing to search for a new broodstock pond location, and said he supported Stenberg's suggestion to form a sub-group for that purpose. Davies asked how much acreage would be needed, under 5 acres? Teuscher said yes. He said he really liked the PacifiCorp location [awarded 2015 habitat enhancement funding but found not technically feasible]. Davies suggested the 9 acres north of Grace. Teuscher said Bear River water would not work due to summer temperatures, so a site with access to groundwater is needed. He said a

potential plan would be to build above ground, line (with bentonite), and berm. He said he would like to examine PacifiCorp possibilities because of the availability of groundwater, which he suspects will be hard to find elsewhere. There may be other possibilities elsewhere, he said, but he would prefer that the pond be close to IDFG's Grace Hatchery. Davies suggested speaking with an adjacent landowner as well.

BCT Broodstock Update

Teuscher said broodstock genetics are going well, diversity is not being lost. He said IDFG will be adding replacement broodstock soon (i.e., in the coming weeks). He said more than enough fingerlings were produced this year and survival was good, so there were extra releases this year. All have an adipose clip so they can be identified as hatchery fish if collected during future monitoring. IDFG also tried holding fish longer in hopes of decreasing bird predation, so fish were held over the summer and released in fall. Some of the fish had been in the hatchery for 1.5 years, he said, and IDFG saw some unexpected mortality due to supersaturation of gases. This has to do with how long the fish were exposed to the hatchery water source. IDFG is working to eliminate this chronic exposure so fish can be held without issues he said. There have been no disease issues with wild fish so far. IDFG tests all females and hold all crosses separately until results of testing come back. IDFG will be looking at wild fish production in Kackley and also Whiskey Creek populations— the idea is to eventually back away from stocking. Teuscher said initially IDFG did not want to mix fish from different management units but eventually this will happen if we stay with the single Clegg pond. Stenberg asked Teuscher for fish trap information from Kackley. Teuscher said IDFG is not seeing many naturally produced fish at the trap although they are getting good survival of hatchery released fish. Stenberg noted that the first fish were stocked at Kackley in 2011 and asked whether it was just taking a while for the fish to return. Davies said, so a good resident fish population resides at Kackley, but not so many leaving and returning? Teuscher noted that survival in the Bear River may not be that good. Strong cormorant populations could also be a factor, he said. He estimates that birds consume at least one out of every three fish. We may see better returns starting next year. Davies asked whether more/better refugia would help. Teuscher said cold water inputs are a big help.

Land Trust Updates

<Closed Session>

December ECC Meeting

Next ECC meeting takes place December 9. Agenda items include:

- Boater flow calendar
- ECC/grant fund review calendar
- Paris water swap
- Funding flyer
- Land and water project ranking white paper
- Land Trust business

Hugentobler asked ECC members to share photos for the annual report and reminded those with project monitoring responsibilities to turn in 2015 monitoring forms.