

**Bear River ECC
Final Meeting Notes
December 4, 2019
Pocatello, Idaho**

ECC Members Present		
	Name	Organization
x	Mark Stenberg	PacifiCorp
x	Lynn Van Every	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
x	Jim DeRito	Trout Unlimited
x	Corey Lyman	U.S. Forest Service
x	Cary Myler	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
x	Carson Watkins	Idaho Department of Fish and Game
	Allison Michalski	Greater Yellowstone Coalition
x	Ryan Beatty	Bureau of Land Management
	Charlie Vincent	American Whitewater
	Hunter Osborne	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
	Kirk Rich	Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
	Susan Rosebrough	National Park Service
	Kevin Lewis	Idaho Rivers United

Others Present		
	Name	Organization
	Eve Davies	PacifiCorp
x	Ryan Hillyard	Idaho Department of Fish and Game
x	Matt Lucia	Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust
x	Matt Bringhurst	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
x	Jeremy Jirak	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
x	Greg Mladenka	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
x	Steven Smith	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
x	Kelly Conde	Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust
x	Jennifer Cornell	Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust

Commitments Made at the December 2019 Meeting	
Stenberg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain cost estimate for Mink Creek water right analysis. • Amendment to conservation hatchery agreement regarding IDFG and broodstock ponds. • Add mid-year projects to the habitat enhancement project spreadsheet. • Update times on the whitewater boater flow calendar. • Send 2020 meeting invitations. • Distribute Paris concept paper to meeting attendees
Lucia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on water rights encumbered on SSLT's Mink Creek projects.
Watkins, Hillyard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on fish populations and distribution in Mink Creek. Summarize Twin Lakes data. Consider future sampling. • Document repairs to fish screens funded by the ECC in the annual conservation hatchery report (yearly--going forward). • Contact Chris Banks to discuss the possibility of a larger project with additional landowners on Steve's Creek and coordinate site visits. • Conduct redd counts at Kackley Springs next year.
Hugentobler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update ECC contact list

Lyman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update interested ECC members, as needed, on Bartschi/Stauffer Creek project.
Action items in blue have been carried over.	

Email Decisions Made Since the Last Meeting¹

- Approved August 2019 draft meeting notes.

Decisions Made at This Meeting²

- Approved the 2020 Whitewater Boater Flow Calendar, with proposed edits to Friday start and finish.
- Approved the ECC's 2020 calendar.

Additions to the Agenda

None. Myler introduced Matt Bringhurst, also of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He will be filling in when Myler departs.

Habitat Enhancement Project Updates – Project Sponsors

The **Mussler** and **Wheeler** projects are still open. The second payment for **Station Creek Beaver Dam Analogs** has been made and the project itself is complete, with monitoring to follow. Surveys for the **Mink Creek Highway 36 Crossing** project are complete. Lyman said additional coordination with the Transportation Department is needed. Ryan Colyer (Biota) will then review the project with the ECC. This highway crossing is surrounded by the Egley conservation easement and is a highly perched culvert with a cut-off meander above the crossing. Recommendations for a new crossing structure will be made to the Transportation Department. This is likely to be a 3- to 4-year process.

Hillyard said he recently distributed fish sampling data from the Cove Spring to interested ECC members. He said fish sampled were mostly hybrids. This was a 2019 grant project to pay for the genetic analysis.

Stenberg reported that work platforms at the Bonneville cutthroat trout broodstock ponds are now complete. Remaining work on the weirs will be completed in spring. The water right proof will follow next year. PacifiCorp also completed washout repairs to Kackley Springs from the January and February 2019 high flows.

Stenberg reported that field visits to Bear Creek and Steve's Creek scheduled for October 2019 were cancelled due to snow. Nick Bouwes and the Fellows (Bear Creek landowners) have been

¹ See Attachment 1 for record of voting

² See Land and Water Fund Updates for additional decisions.

discussing possible beaver work in this area. A consultant may also be brought in to review and make recommendations on possible upgrades to the current flood irrigation system. Myler said he would speak to the Fellows before leaving for his new position and leave the ECC to work with this landowner. Steve's Creek is on hold for winter and is now possibly a three-owner project. It could be the ECC's first project that connects parcels from multiple owners to the Bear River.

Review of ECC Funds - Stenberg

Stenberg reviewed fund balances with the ECC.

Habitat Enhancement Fund

Current Balance	~\$326,000
Outstanding Billings*	~\$84,000
Available Next Year	~\$479,000

** Also some mid-year projects*

Land and Water Fund

Current Balance	~\$1,076,000
Plus 2020 Funding	~\$420,000
Available Next Year	\$1,505,000
After 2020 Obligations**	~\$787,000

***See Land and Water Fund Updates for details*

Hillyard asked about the possibility of water rights purchases. It was agreed to discuss this in more detail later in the meeting.

2020 Whitewater Boater Flow Calendar

Stenberg reviewed the draft 2020 whitewater boater flow schedule with ECC members. He noted that the Friday time has been changed to noon to 6 p.m. The schedule will be updated to reflect this change. Stenberg said that while the three-day weekend gets a lot of use, the last flow of the year doesn't get much use at all. This final flow has other benefits, he said, but this may merit further discussion. The ECC agreed to discuss whitewater boater flows in January. Stenberg asked for consensus on the 2020 Whitewater Boater Flow Schedule.

Consensus Reached: Approved the 2020 Whitewater Boater Flow calendar, with adjustment in times as discussed.

2020 ECC Calendar

Stenberg reviewed the ECC's draft 2020 calendar and asked for consensus approval.

Consensus Reached: Approved the ECC's 2020 calendar.

Updates are needed to the ECC contact list, including updates to each agency or organization's authorized signatory. Hugentobler will contact ECC members directly for updates.

ECC Acculturation Training

Stenberg provided acculturation training to new and longer term ECC members and reviewed the ECC's purpose, ground rules, and decision-making process.

Remarks from Departing ECC Members

Cary Myler, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Myler said he has been an ECC member for 13 years, and in that time only once was there a no-consensus decision. He advised that the best way to get to know each other and build trust is by getting together and doing something real, like building a fence or planting trees. "Windshield time" is another valuable way to get to know one another, he said.

Myler said conservation easements are one of the ECC's most important accomplishments. He said the ECC is in a unique situation in the Bear River watershed. Teton Land Trust was able to buy land in their area at one time, he said, but now it's not affordable. There are still opportunities in the Bear River watershed to protect open spaces, he said. Bonneville cutthroat trout are the ECC's focus, but watersheds are important too. He advised looking at the watershed rather than just the river. It's important to protect the land while we still have the chance, he said.

Mladenka said while there have been contentious, spirited discussions during his time with the ECC, there is ultimately trust among ECC members. He said he appreciates the conservation easement process and noted that the ECC has learned something with each one. He stressed the importance of visiting the proposed properties and keeping in mind that the easements are in perpetuity. He said conservation easement terms are important and if the ECC can't get what it needs, don't go for it. Mladenka said he appreciated the opportunity to work with Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust.

Kackley Springs Plantings

High school students recently planted 4,000 willows and dogwoods at Kackley Springs, contributing 500 volunteer hours. Chris Banks helped organize this effort. Beatty noted that he would like to continue planting efforts in the spring with containerized plants and cuttings.

Notification

Stenberg reported an under-release of minimum flow at Oneida on November 29, 2019. He said this was reported to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission as required. Stenberg said the incident was a full plant trip, with all three units offline. He said this is very unusual and resulted in no flow aside from leakage for an hour and 14 minutes. A system current imbalance outside of the powerhouse was the cause.

Attachment 1: Record of Email Voting

**Bear River ECC - Record of Email Voting
Approval of August 2019 Meeting Notes
Voted Called by Hugentobler, September 25, 2019**

From: Miriam Hugentobler

Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2019 5:46 PM

To: Stenberg, Mark; Lynn Vanevery; 'Cary Myler'; Watkins, Carson; Allison Michalski; Beatty, Ryan; Eve Davies; Hillyard,Ryan; Matt Lucia; Kelly Conde; Greg Mladenka

Subject: Bear River ECC - Draft August Meeting Notes Approval Request

ECC Members and Others,

Attached are draft notes from our August ECC meeting. Mark urgently needs approval of these draft notes in order to process invoices for the Larsen easement. Please review and let me know if you have any edits to the notes by the end of this week. An email vote to approve the notes will then be called on Monday—I'll include a redline of any edits with the vote.

Thank you,

Miriam Hugentobler
Bear River ECC
(801) 652-8983

Bear River ECC - Record of Email Voting Approval of August 2019 Meeting Notes Vote Called by Hugentobler, September 25, 2019		
	Name	Organization
	Lyman	USFS
	DeRito	Trout Unlimited
x	Van Every	IDEQ
	Lewis	Idaho Rivers United
	Rich	Idaho Parks and Rec
x	Watkins	Idaho Fish and Game
x	Beatty	BLM
	Osborne	Sho-Ban Tribes
	Rosebrough	National Park Service
	Vincent	American Whitewater
x	Michalski	Greater Yellowstone
x	Stenberg	PacifiCorp
x	Myler	USFWS