

Draft Meeting Notes
LCR MSCP Steering Committee April 28, 2010

Attending

George Caan	Brenda Zaun	Tom Harvey
Andrew Hautzinger	Fred Worthley	Jerry Zimmerman
Bill Lamb	Sara Price	Perri Benemelis
Brenda Burman	Terri Sue Rossi	Doyle Wilson
Kirk Koch	Charles Paradzick	Ed Smith
Michel Remington	Vikki Dee Bradshaw	Joseph Vanderhorst
Holly Cheong	Jason Thiriot	Jeri Krueger
John Swett	Laura Vecerina	Terry Murphy
Theresa Olson	Jeremy Dandron	Sonja Kokos
Marianne Stemmer	Jeff Lantow	Ty Wolters
Danny Rakestraw	Judi Nielsen	Linda Carbone

Attending Via Conference Call

Chris Harris	Wade Noble	Tab Bommarito
Leslie Fitzpatrick	David Elms	Larry Purcell
Dana Sedig		

1. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Introductions

The meeting convened at 9:35 a.m. by Chairperson George Caan. George welcomed Brenda Burman from The Nature Conservancy and announced that this would be Holly Cheong's last meeting as she is leaving SNWA.

Review of Agenda

The agenda was reviewed and approved.

Public Comments

No public comments were offered.

Approve October 28, 2009 Meeting Notes

The October 28, 2009 Meeting Notes were approved.

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

George Caan announced that he was willing to serve an additional term as Chair and Perri Benemelis would serve as Vice Chair of the Steering Committee. (Moved by Jerry Zimmerman and seconded by Ed Smith. Hearing no opposition, the motion was approved.)

2. WORK PLANS AND BUDGET

FY2009 Accomplishments

John Swett provided the FY2009 Funding Summary information to the Steering Committee. He noted that the FY09 approved estimate was \$18,822,780.00 and the actual accomplishment was \$18,000,800.16. Reclamation will be receiving a FY09 funding credit of \$1,170,697.

Terry Murphy discussed the FY09 accomplishments of the LCR MSCP Restoration Group. Jerry Zimmerman reaffirmed the requirement for honey mesquite habitat in California. Terry indicated that with the signing of the water agreement, there will be more flexibility in finding sites for honey mesquite in California.

Theresa Olson gave a power point presentation on the monitoring and research for terrestrial riparian, and marsh habitats and associated covered species. She reviewed all the general bird surveys and studies that had been conducted and the results.

Ty Wolters presented an overview of the Fish Augmentation Plan. He reviewed the program goal and provided stocking summaries from 2005 through 2009. Jeff Lantow gave a power point presentation on the population and research status for Razorback Sucker, Bonytail, and Flannelmouth Sucker downstream of Grand Canyon. There was discussion on the strategy for future fish stocking given the low survivorship in Reaches 4 and 5.

A request was made to post the power point presentations on the web site (They can be found at www.lcrmscp.gov, under Steering Committee Information, April 28, 2010 meeting materials, meeting presentations).

John Swett discussed the FY10 program and financial status. All required non-Federal contributions have been received to date. Southern Nevada Water Authority is receiving an in-kind credit for a portion of their financial contribution. San Diego County Water Authority is using funding credits for their FY10 contributions.

The FY11 Work Plan and Budget written comments are due by May 10. The location of the Technical Work Group meeting scheduled for May 12 and 13 in Phoenix has been changed to the Hilton Garden Inn.

3. PROJECT UPDATES

Topock Marsh O&M Strategy

Andrew Hautzinger gave a PowerPoint presentation on the status of the Topock Marsh Water Infrastructure Improvement project. George Caan summarized Resolution 10-004 which requests that the Steering Committee concur with the proposed LCR MSCP additional project contribution to meet the operation and maintenance requirements of AMM2. This additional contribution will fully satisfy AMM2 and will relieve the LCR MSCP of any future obligations.

Resolution 10-004, was moved by Perri Benemelis, seconded by Doyle Wilson and adopted by consensus.

Conservation Area Development & Management Overview

John Swett discussed the habitat objectives by reach and state. He reviewed the process to secure sites for acquisition/leases and land use agreements. If land and water are being acquired, Steering Committee approval is needed. A government appraisal is completed and a land and water resolution is brought to the Steering Committee for action. If the program is not acquiring land and water, a land use agreement is used to secure the resources for the program. This is approved by the Steering Committee through the work plan process.

The modification and termination language used in land use agreements and leases was presented. A question was asked what the recourse is if someone wants out of a lease or a land use agreement. John stated it would go through a legal process.

John provided an update on the development of the habitat credit process. He indicated that a draft process has been prepared. Reclamation will meet with the Fish and Wildlife Service for their input, and then a peer review will be conducted with species experts. The process will be presented to the Technical Work Group to get Steering Committee input, and it will then be finalized and presented at the October Steering Committee meeting.

John Swett also provided an update on the Hunter's Hole project.

Strategy/Recommendation Beal Lake

John Swett provided background information on Beal Lake and requested concurrence from the Steering Committee to include the Beal Lake Riparian Restoration Project as part of the LCR MSCP pending the signing of a land use agreement with the Fish and Wildlife Service. It is anticipated that the Beal Lake Riparian Restoration Project will provide at least 107 acres of cottonwood-willow habitat for covered species currently found utilizing the site.

A question was asked if the 107 acres had gone through the habitat credit process. John indicated that the habitat credit process is still in draft, but that he felt there was enough information, especially with covered species breeding at the site, to make a recommendation to include the site in the program.

A motion was passed adopting Resolution 10-005 and stating that the LCR MSCP Steering Committee concurs with the recommendation to include the Beal Lake Restoration Project as part of the LCR MSCP pending the signing of a Land Use Agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (moved by Perri Benemelis, seconded by Doyle Wilson and adopted by consensus).

Strategy/Recommendation Yuma East Wetlands

John Swett reviewed Resolution 10-006 which was to include the Yuma East Wetlands as part of the LCR MSCP pending the signing of a Land Use Agreement with the Yuma Crossing National Heritage.

A question was asked what the estimated cost would be after 2013. John answered that during the first few years there would be additional costs due to adaptive management. After that it would just be the on-going operation and maintenance costs.

Jerry Zimmerman inquired if the total cost of this project is less than if another project in the area were pursued. John Swett stated because we would not be paying land and water acquisition costs and initial development was already completed that he felt this project would be more cost effective. Larry Purcell asked who would be signing the land use agreement. John stated that the Yuma Crossing National Heritage would be signing it. They would have sub-agreements with both the Quechan Tribe and the City of Yuma. Members of the Steering Committee stated that they would like to see the proposed land use agreement. George Caan observed that there was not general consensus on moving forward with this project and tabled the resolution until further work on the land use agreement is completed.

Planet Ranch

Laura Vecerina stated Planet Ranch is still being worked on, and a land and water resolution will be brought to the October Steering Committee meeting.

Status Ahakhav Tribal Preserve

John Swett stated the Colorado River Indian Tribe was unable to make a long term commitment to the project and the grant has expired. The work task has been closed.

4. PROCESS UPDATES

Due to meeting time constraints, the discussion on database development/web design was moved to the May Technical Work Group meeting.

5. STEERING COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

Laura Vecerina reviewed the upcoming Steering Committee Schedule.

6. GENERAL INFORMATION

John Swett reviewed the LCR MSCP organizational chart and LCR MSCP Office phone listing that was included in the Steering Committee packets.

Laura Vecerina stated an email was recently sent out asking everyone to update the voting list if there were any changes to be made.

7. SUMMARY AND ACTION ITEMS

George Caan provided a summary of the meeting. George Caan was elected as the Chair and Perri Benemelis was elected to serve as Vice Chair of the Committee. Resolutions 10-004 and 10-005 were approved, and Resolution 10-006 will be tabled until issues have been resolved.

8. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

N:\LCRMSCP\Steering Committee\April 28 2010\April 28 2010 Draft Meeting Notes.docx