

Meeting Minutes
Grand Valley Selenium Task Force (Technical/Steering)
US Bureau of Reclamation Offices, 2764 Compass Drive, Ste 106
May 19, 2005: 10am to 3pm

Attendees: Sonja R. Chavez de Baca (Coordinator), Rick Krueger (FWS), Mike Baker (BOR), Dave Kanzer (CRWCD), Eileen List (City of Grand Junction), Russ Walker (Mesa State College), and Robert Paison (Grand Junction Drainage).

Meeting started at 10:15am:

I. Overview of Draft Tributaries Report (Mike Baker, USBOR) - Very rough cost estimates are given in Table 6 based upon USBOR knowledge and experience related to other projects. The font was changed by request of the Task Force. This draft incorporates written comments from Dan Beley, Paul von Guerard, Eileen List (City of Grand Junction), and Dave Kanzer. Mike is considering draft in front of us as final draft. Need final comments by June 3rd.

We discussed City of Grand Junction's comments as part of general task force interests and activities. Many of the comments related to overall Task Force goals/directions. Mike responded to Eileen via email.

Comments:

- Put executive summary as first page; move trib info on page 1 under study purpose to "description of the area and Background".
- In Table 6 clarify that costs are for 12 of the tributaries for which we have info and data. There are likely other tributaries not meeting standards (For example Orchard Mesa). We don't know how many other drains there actually are. Use "selected tributaries" in the title of the doc.
- Clarify that these alternatives and costs were "designed" to meet the 4.6 ppb standard.
- Eliminate words "beyond local capabilities" – it's an opinion at this point. Stick to the facts.
- Did we have option of exploring dilution+collection+treatment? If we did a more targeted approach rather than applying across the board, would any of the costs go down? If someone is willing to spend 70 Mill to address xyz" we move on to the next steps and apply a more targeted approach.
- Coordinator needs to send out the report via email to see if anyone else (not at the meeting) wants to give comments.

Next Steps (Mike Baker): Does the TF want to put together something that says what we want to do with the findings and what actions we want to further? Yes – the TF needs to weigh in on what we want to do as a "next step".

1. Calculating a unit cost (\$/lbs) – would be good information to have as part of the Next Steps.
2. Develop a more targeted approach applying a combination of or isolated smaller scale treatment alternatives to reduce concentrations to benefit water quality and organisms even though we may never be able to reach 4.6 ppb standards.
3. Coordinator: The TF needs to draft a letter to BOR urging continued funding for planning and technical assistance (letter to Carol DeAngelis, Area Manager). Federal budgets are getting tighter every year and it's important for the BOR to understand how their role and assistance is to the Task Force. Need to copy congressional delegation.
4. Mike not sure about when he'll have final draft of the "Next Steps" done.
5. Dave: We should start to do more outreach – engage the public have discourse about this. Do a newspaper notice, etc. Put on the web.
6. Good topic for the Joint Task Force Meeting – what should be the next steps/strategies after seeing the tributaries report.
7. Decision point on TATS

A feasibility study would not come under Mike's TATS for this year.

Do we see anyway to pay for 70 Million dollars worth of work in part of Grand Valley? When we start to talk all of GV or all of GB or all of Western Colorado number is quickly inflated.

Should we bring EPA in to give us feedback on whether \$70M is feasible? (Good Questions for Dan).

Assume that we give up on meeting the 4.6 ppb standard in the tributaries, Rick (USFWS) what would the next steps be. Does FWS want us to focus on backwaters or 100 year floodplain? Rick thought that the FWS might want to focus on backwaters given that that was the decision/direction that NIWQP was heading before it was unfunded.

Eileen List: the TF needs to take a position on what our priorities are? Do we go forward trying to address tribs (pursue ambient standards) and in the meantime focus on 100 year floodplain remediation. The sequel study would address net benefits of different alternatives/options at a targeted smaller scale.

Formalize the findings of the report by saying "yes or no" the TF does not find it reasonable. Then run our decision up to others like EPA, FWS, CDOW, etc. Coordinator needs to draft this (1 page) and then put it on the July agenda. Say that we can't identify funding sources to do these types of projects and no clear idea of benefits so we consider these options as being "not feasible". Dan Beley will also explore furthering the definition of "economic hardship" "feasibility" etc. by talking to a few folks at the division and EPA. Dan will shoot to get back to the TF by the end of June. There are water quality issues here that are higher issues than tribs because we can do source control on the mainstem – this is something the different

TF entities can accomplish. TF can also say that we would support implementation of one of our alternatives where they benefit fish and water quality and we have funding to support.

EPA has to lead coming to FWS with Section 7 Consultation. EPA will bring forward reasonable alternatives. Depending on what those are FWS will concur or not concur. Rick feels that if tribs cannot be brought into compliance that the focus would be on improving or addressing critical habitat.

Task Force to Dan Beley: Has there ever been a TMDL that has gone forward into a Section 7 consultation? No

Dan Beley: Tributaries to the Uncompahgre – could this report be revised to address Gunnison tributaries in the same manner as we addressed GV. Mike Baker – Yes. Conditions are relatively similar. We can see how it might fit GB and yes we would have TATS (GB) funding to do. Put on Joint Task Force Agenda.

WHAT CAN BE DONE AS PART OF THE “NEXT STEPS”: (Mike) – We’ll talk more about in July. Here were some of the ideas presented:

- Backwater habitat improvement (NIWQP)
- screen food organisms
- move Se past backwater
- dilution to some degree (not meeting standard)
- improve habitat in tributaries
- Alternate (make) habitat – mitigation area
- Dam removal
- Treatment (i.e. bio-reactor)
- Make more fish (hatchery)

LUNCH BREAK

III. News regarding new proposed se criteria - FWS did literature review overview of approximately 50 pages which dispute the 7.9 fish tissue concentration. This should be available to the public at some point in the future.

IV. Coordinator’s Updates:

A. PAM letter – BOR issues notice that until PAM Study completed they will not be supporting the use as part of BOR sponsored projects.

B. Review of letters to:

- 1. Salton Sea** – Task Force reviewed and commented on the Salton Sea Letter (see file copy). Coordinator needs to follow up with CH2M Hill and get a copy of the final report (Coordinator Note: Final Upper Basin Salton Sea Source Control report has been shared w/Task Forces).
- 2. Congressional Staffers Letter** – removed from agenda. Review at a later date
- 3. NRCS Letter** – removed from agenda. Review at a later date.

C. Grant Updates

A. Salinity Control Proposals - Dave Kanzer/Mike Baker are “going on the road” to encourage proposals. Task Force to BOR: Can BOR provide TA with TATS money to other potential project proposals. BOR can’t go out on the line and offer TA to all folks. River District can support someone’s time to help foster an application(s). Follow up with an update on the status of the RFP at Joint TF Mtg.

B. GVSTF 319 Coordinator’s Grant - end September 2006.

C. Phytoremediation Remaining 319 Funds - No drop dead date to get this in. State has never had a request to reallocate remaining funds – asking permission to reallocate. They don’t lose the funding. But, the earlier we tie it up the better.

D. BMP 319 Project – the products from this grant including the education and outreach are very important to both Task Forces.

IV. Joint Task Force Meeting Agenda

A. USFWS Grow Out Pond Study/Effect Level Study – Barb Osmundson (FWS) accepted our invitation to present their study.

B. Tour/Site Visit

- Coordinator needs to follow up on invitation to GBSTF members to get an idea of how many could come to Grand Junction.

- Urban water study. Studying the effects of urbanization on water use and water quality (Paul von Guerard, Dan Champion, Jim Currier). Couple of sites we can go on as part of tour. Talk to Paul/Jim.

C. Additional Late Agenda Items:

1. Reclamation Science and Technology Program - call for proposals (BOR). July 29th deadline of this year. No match requirement. Proposal guidelines must be one of the following:

Improving water delivery reliability

Water infrastructure

Water Operation Decision Support

Water Supply Technologies

*There might be options for TF submitting an application under Mike Baker for a proposal related to the land use study. Mike will let us know if anything comes to mind. He’ll also send to Dave Kanzer/Paul von Guerard.

2. Other: Really important to have Lori Martin and Barb Horn at the Joint Meeting when we talk about GVSTF recommendations regarding “next steps” and our conclusions on tributaries report. Coordinator needs to follow up with them to insure that FWS and CDOW are represented at next Task Force meeting due to the important decision points we are coming to.