

Upper Basin Pallid Sturgeon Governing Board
July 29 and 30, 2014
Bismarck, ND

Present: Dane Shuman, Ryan Wilson, Rob Holm, Steve Krentz, Lou Hanebury, Pat Bratten, Tyler Haddix,

On Phone: Anne Tews, Lee Nelson, Bill Miller, Don Skaar, Kevin Kappenman, Kyle Winders Missouri Dept of Conservation

Tuesday July 29

Bill Miller went over the contents of the Instream Flow Needs data CD he has provided to the GB.

Chairman Wilson reviewed the e-mail from Lee Nelson regarding the Rotella contract. Lee is going to try to sole source the contract. The GB will provide a letter to MFWP going over the reasons why the sole source would be appropriate. If this route does not work, then MFWP will have to go through a limited solicitation. Western has set aside \$16,500 for this work. Lee would like the letter by next week if possible. Anne Tews will provide a draft.

There followed a discussion of the facilitator position. Hunter suggested a staff person would be more appropriate than a facilitator. The group needs a person that has the time to push along initiatives of the Workgroup and Board. There was some discussion of the knowledge and duties.

Knowledge and history of pallid sturgeon and the Workgroup

Ability to write reports

Edit website

Update website

Take care of meeting logistics

Compile Annual reports

Draft memos

Initiate media contacts

Represent upper basin workgroup in various forums (Middle Basin meetings, MRRIC, Intake)

Do outreach to other groups to spread the pallid sturgeon word

Lee Nelson read the original facilitator MOU. It does not provide much support for the more activist aspects of the job description the group has been discussing such as representing the Workgroup at meetings. The funding agencies would obviously have concerns. Perhaps could do this but mostly in providing facts and gathering information.

Don Skaar has wondered if there would be value in having the person follow the contracts that are awarded. Track these more closely. Work with the funding agencies and contractors to make sure the work is meeting the expectations of the GB.

MOU signers are: BOR, FWS, WAPA, FWP, ACOE. No one is required to contribute but \$10,000 is the recommended amount annually.

There followed some discussion about the selection process. Don wonders how the GB would feel about going back to the list of finalists for the original contract. The GB would like to make this as simple as possible.

Don will draft a position description and run it by the GB. After the GB review he will run it by the funding agencies. Once they ok the description he will go back to the original list. Some additional names were suggested including Mike Olson and Roger Collins.

Western Funding FY 2015

Yellowstone River Pallid Sturgeon – Matt Rugg	\$50,000
Juvenile and Broodstock PS Steriod - Molly Webbb	\$15,031
Carrying Capacity - Chris Guy	\$117,570
Radio Tags – Matt Rugg	\$22,501
Facilitator – Skaar	\$10,000
Upper Basin Wild PS Genetic Sampling – Matt Rugg	\$25,000
Total	240,102

Leaves \$59,898.

Discussion of need for Juvenile and Broodstock PS Steroid Analysis. Group is very supportive of this project. This budget is for both projects, the Gavins brood and wild fish.

Radio tag discussion. If there is a big research need perhaps not do the tags this year or do half as much. Anne currently has only 10 but she should have 20 more coming.

Facilitator. Because there is \$100,000 in this budget perhaps could skip this year.

MediaWorks. The GB may want to include some money this year so they can work with the new facilitator. Would need to talk to MediaWorks to see how much they think would be adequate.

New research ideas:

-Intake passage pre and post monitoring utilizing radio tags. Originally to be paid for by ACOE or BOR but now that funding is questionable.

There is a general feeling that the ACOE or BOR should be paying for this.

Keep this one on the table.

-Evaluation of larval drift distance in the Yellowstone River. Pat points out that things are going to keep progressing on the Yellowstone regardless of the results of this type of research. Tyler agrees with Pat. Pat also points out that this is not a big Western funding project, they could do this on their own. This could require a lot of genetic sampling because lots of shovelnose in the system. Keep this one on the list. Could do the field work and archive the samples for the genetics.

-Develop instream flow needs of pallid sturgeon throughout their range in upper basin. This would require about \$70K per site where no data exists. It would be about \$25-\$35K per site where you have little fieldwork. Would give the depth, velocity and substrate data needed to generate the flow needs. Bill thinks there is enough information for the habitat suitability for spawning migrations. Over time could collect additional info to do curves for actual spawning. To do 3 sites at once is about \$130,000 on the Colorado.

This information could be useful in further negotiations with the ACOE on flow releases from Ft Peck.

Everyone agrees this is important and should stay on the table.

-Larval drift study in Milk/Missouri. Evaluate earlier drift models. Tyler thinks this is really important and they want to do it but not sure they need funding from Western for this work. They would stock the fish probably near the mouth of the Milk. No need to consider this further this year.

-Massive broodstock netting effort in RPMA 1. Anne and Tyler can discuss this later. There is no need for additional funding for this if it occurs.

-Channel migration study on Missouri above and below Ft Peck similar to what has been done on Yellowstone. The emphasis would be below Ft Peck since Wild and Scenic designation provides protection for Missouri above Ft Peck. Keep on the list for now. Tyler will look at previous proposals for this work to get an idea of what this would cost. The Karen Boyd proposal from Ft Peck to the confluence was \$145,000. This would have to wait until the Carrying Capacity study is done or fund it over 2 years.

-Determine the causes of poor egg quality and mortality of larval fish from wild fish. Rob does not see this as a priority because we are stocking so few fish. He said this would be top priority for hatchery managers. After some discussion it is agreed to leave it on the list for now. Rob will talk to Molly and see if this type of work has been done before or how you would approach this work.

-Develop technology to collect larval fish, take to hatchery, raise them to age 1 and then stock. Would require a lot more wild larval fish. Also we have a lot more shovelnose and paddlefish larvae out there than we do pallid sturgeon larvae. Table this until we get more spawners in the river.

The group adjusted the numbers by taking out the facilitator, use \$12K from radios (spend \$10K on radios) and add in \$5K for MediaWorks. This gives a total of \$77,399 for this year. Question was asked of Bill what he could do for that amount of money. Bill would work up a cost estimate of new sites versus existing sites. Bill said he would provide this cost estimate.

Wednesday July 30

Look at 2012 price quote from Lotek. Based on this should be able to buy plenty of juvenile tags for the \$10,000 (47 tags at the 2012 price).

Bill Miller provided a cost estimate for new study sites-field work, new study sites-data analysis and report and existing study sites.

Dane brings up the subject of using some of the Western funding for more social/educational efforts. Someone suggests a pallid sturgeon lesson plan that Workgroup members could use in classrooms.

After more discussion the decision comes down to the instream flow proposal and the pre- and post- monitoring of passage at Intake. The pre- and post-monitoring would be for the fish assemblage. The bulk of this funding would be for radio tags for other species and to purchase more bay stations.

It was decided to ask Backes and the region to prepare a more detailed proposal for the pre- and post-monitoring. There is still some consternation that this work is not being paid for by BOR or ACOE. Rob raises the question about whether it is appropriate to use Western funding for species other than pallids. Lou seems to be OK with this.

They will ask Backes and company for a more formal proposal. Then the GB will consider the Intake monitoring and instream flow proposals. Also want to get from Bill Miller a cost estimate for the total number of study sites and the total overall budget. Bill is on the phone and asked about number sites. Existing sites: 2 sites upstream of Ft. Peck, 3 sites on Mo between Ft Peck and the confluence with Yellowstone, 3 sites on Yellowstone from Intake to confluence with MO. Bill Miller thinks we need 2 new sites above Intake. He could use some help from existing river crews to help reduce costs.

The group spent some time brainstorming media/education ideas. Ryan suggested having some agency and private media folk at the March meeting. When they cull fish from the broodstock would like to get them into aquariums around the country.

Yellowstone larval drift study. This would require a couple of hundred thousand fry which may present a challenge. There would need to be some planning involved in this study although the labor could come from existing personnel.

Lou would like to get the FY 2015 contract finalized by September.

There will need to be a conference call with Rotella when his contract is finalized to provide direction.

Ryan will call the MSU folks to move up the phone call to coordinate the fieldwork.