

Notes from URGWOM Steering Committee Meeting; May 8, 2003; 10:00 AM; Corps of Engineers Conference Room, Albuquerque

In Attendance:

Cyndie Abeyta, USFWS

Gail Stockton, Corps

Ellen Dietrich, SAIC/Corps

Jack Veenhuis, USGS

Conrad Keyes, Jr., Consultant to Corps

Tim J. Ward, UNM

Bill Leibfried, SWCA/ISC

Dave Wilkins, USGS/URGWOM Technical Team

William J. Miller, WJM Engineering,
Inc./Corps

- ❖ Dave Wilkins opened the meeting and reviewed progress in completing the Planning Model.
 - Brad Vickers worked with the Technical Team in Albuquerque for a week to set up the 40-year sequence for running the Planning Model and correct identified problems.
 - The rules for rafting releases were turned on for the first time, which showed up new problems that caused the model to stop running. The problem is intermittent and difficult to identify.
 - After some discussion, **it was decided that the operation of the rafting flows would be turned off in the Planning Model in order to screen the draft alternatives for URGWOPS.** If the problems with the rules are fixed later, they can be used to run the final alternatives for the EIS. Rafting can still be analyzed with model output.
- ❖ URGWOM Technical Team status and activities for the past month were summarized in a handout that is included at the end of these notes. Discussion and questions are summarized below.
 - The current version of the Water Operations Model will not calculate return flows based on a percentage of the diversions as was discussed in the March 13 meeting. This would throw off the current model calibration if it were done at this time without a lot more data. Once a few years of metered return flows are documented, the data can be used to update the model.
 - Rules that limit the amount of diversions by the City of Albuquerque based on flows have been added to the model. The City will review these diversion rules.
 - The new PCs running URGWOM are much faster than the Unix system. This enables the Technical Team to test model corrections and find errors more quickly.
 - **Question:** Have you heard anything from the developers of FLO-2D for URGWOPS?
 - **Answer:** The Technical Team provided 1998 data for a test run of FLO-2D. The model output from the test runs will be presented this afternoon at the URGWOPS Interdisciplinary NEPA Team meeting.
 - **Question:** When will the Steering Committee get to review the new web page examples from the new URGWOM runs?

- **Answer:** The URGWOM example will be reviewed by the Technical Team next week and will replace the current example on the URGWOM web site within a few weeks.
- ❖ Update on the middle Rio Grande valley shallow groundwater/surface water data collection project—Dave Wilkins
 - The agreement for use of the Rio Bravo site has been signed by the USFWS and USBR, with a signature expected soon from MRGCD. Permission for the other sites is still needed.
 - The USGS geoprobe operator resigned his job, so Dave and another operator will get trained to install and use the equipment.
 - Dale Rankin of the USGS will take over project management from Dave.
 - Not all the funding requested for this project was awarded, so some adjustments will have to be made.
- ❖ Conrad Keyes reported on the Paso del Norte Watershed Council's development of the coordinated database project for the Rio Grande.
 - The statement of work has been completed and was distributed at the meeting. There are four tasks for work to be done between April 16 and September 30, 2003. The tasks, most of which will be done by students, are as follows:
 - Survey and identify available water resources data sources.
 - Obtain copies of identified archival data.
 - Establish relationships with originating data agencies and organizations.
 - Attend meetings, including some URGWOM Steering Committee meetings, to report project progress and exchange information.
 - **Question:** Will you try to obtain data for the period of record used in URGWOM?
 - **Answer:** They have data from 1975 through 2002 in hard copy but will put them into electronic format. The database will have more years of recorded data than this period, however.
- ❖ Other information from the Paso del Norte Watershed Council:
 - The next meeting will be held on May 9 at the USIBWC (U.S. Section) building in El Paso, Texas. On the agenda will be a discussion of their proposal to EPA for a watershed initiative, which did not get funded.
 - The Council is working on a biological resources management/restoration plan in the Las Cruces area.
- ❖ **MMS:** Jack Veenhuis reported that code revisions have been completed and tested in other basins.
- ❖ **HDB:** Gail Stockton reported that the Corps is heading towards ensuring that their models can link with other models and databases, enabling them to select the best tool for the situation at hand. This would help overcome some of the problems with Corps use of HDB, which is a Bureau of Reclamation database.

❖ Other items:

- A new video is available from Gail, provided by Conrad. The title is “Harvesting the Skies for Texas” and was developed this year with USBR funding. It presents new techniques for weather modification in eastern New Mexico and West Texas.
- Conrad reported that there is a new position in the NMISC for a person to manage weather control projects under the Weather Control Act.
- Cyndie Abeyta reported that no word has yet been received on the status of funding requested for the Bosque Initiative, so they cannot allocate funds to projects.
- Cyndie also reported that the silvery minnows are starting to spawn and the USFWS is collecting eggs between San Acacia and San Marcial to move to the Biopark.
 - USFWS Fisheries Resources staff will distribute minnows later.
 - The Service hopes that more minnows will spawn successfully if there is another peak flow. Implementation of the Biological Opinion will keep the river wet until June 15, after which time minnow rescues are planned.
 - **Question:** Will the USFWS monitor for eggs in reaches other than San Acacia and San Marcial?
 - **Answer:** Yes, but they are concentrating on collecting in that reach.
- Tim Ward reported that UNM has constructed wetlands on a 10-acre site owned by the City of Albuquerque that is designated for research. The land is located about ½ mile north of Central on the west side of the Rio Grande.
 - The site has a drain, cottonwoods, saltcedar, and Russian olive. They are not allowed to cut vegetation along the riverbanks.
 - The ESA Collaborative Work Group funded a project to research groundwater/surface water interactions at this site.
- The June meeting of the URGWOM Steering Committee has been cancelled due to conflicts with professional meetings during that week. The next meeting will be held on July 10 at 10:00 a.m. in the Corps conference room.

URGWOM TECH TEAM REPORT FOR MAY 2003

- Debugging WaterOps and Planning models.
- Helping and overseeing model development for setup and rules for rafting releases between El Vado and Abiquiu (not trivial).
- Prepared tables (elevation-area-capacity, unregulated and regulated spillways, conduit, power, loss control parameters, etc.) for each reservoir so that they cover entire range of elevation from invert to the top of dam.
- Set initial accounting values in database for each reservoir for Dec. 31, 2002, conditions based on USBR 2002 Accounting and RG compact reports (adjusting for Planning model setup - includes credits).
- Added rule in Planning model to reduce maximum allocated storage for combined contracts in Abiquiu due to sediment deposition each year.
- Added rule to adjust Heron RG storage each year for recreation and evaporation losses (351 ac-ft - see Accounting report).

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- Added rules to adjust drain and canal flows on the fly (based on Nabil's memo), if not directly input as currently done. No decision yet on whether to go this direction (rules have no impact if continuing with direct input approach).
- Modified rules to smooth out RG releases from Heron at the end of the month:
- Initiated method in the Planning Model to divert 130 cfs from the river at Paseo del Norte beginning in 2006 to simulate City of Albuquerque diversion.
- Ran the 40 years of Planning Model data that resulted in various rule and data corrections.
- Making final runs of 2003 WaterOps Annual Operations Plan model.
- Ran WaterOps models for 1987 and 1996 for use in the URGWOM WEB page example. Making some adjustments to better match historic reservoir conditions.
- Setting up and testing Planning Model DMI's to work on the PCs.
- Three big and fast PCs are on the Team desks and are being used to run models. Run times are about 20 minutes per year instead of 30 minutes per year on the one PC that was available.
- Brad Vickers was here for 1 week. Rules were modified and tested.
- Brad Vickers is out of money. USBR will try to find enough to pay the complete bill and some additional funding for minimal future work.
- Have discussed needed runs for URGWOPS scenarios and what data URGWOM needs to furnish. Will need 14 runs including the baseline run.