

Notes from Upper Rio Grande Basin Water Operations Review Interdisciplinary NEPA Team Meeting and Technical Team Workshop; March 11, 2004; 1:00 PM; Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque

In Attendance:

Neal Ackerly, Dos Rios (SAIC)/Corps	Ernie Jahnke, Corps
John Branstetter, USFWS	Conrad Keyes, Jr., Consultant to Corps
Robert Browning, II, Corps	Bill Leibfried, SWCA/NMISC
Mike Buntjer, USFWS	Colleen Logan, Weston/Corps
Deb Callahan, USBR	Paula Makar, USBR
Marsha Carra, USBR	Bob Mussetter, MEI/NMISC
Art Coykendall, USBR	Claudia Oakes, SWCA/NMISC
Ellen Dietrich, SAIC/Corps	Steve Piper, USBR
Don Gallegos, Corps	Jesse Roach, Sandia National Labs
Susan Goodan, SAIC/Corps	Gail Stockton, Corps
Rhea Graham, NMISC	Valda Terauds, USBR
Janelle Harden, SWCA/NMISC	Nancy Umbreit, USBR
Mark Horner, Corps	Larry White, USBR
	Doug Wolf, Tetra Tech/Corps

- ❖ Gail Stockton chaired the meeting and requested that participants review the draft notes from the February meeting.
- ❖ Valda Terauds reviewed the status of the edited Chapter 3. It currently stands at 115 pages and must be reduced to 50 pages. The purpose of the technical team workshop planned for this meeting is to have the team members meet as a group to decide how to edit their sections to reduce the page count. The goals of the workshop were summarized on a handout, and included summarizing baseline conditions using descriptions that are rich in graphics with simple explanations intended for a non-technical audience.
 - Valda recommended that each team develop a list of 5 to 10 important points to be conveyed to the public. This may be used at the beginning of each resource section to summarize the baseline conditions.
 - The tech team members were also instructed to develop graphics, maps, and tables that can be used to efficiently present information for Chapters 3 and 4. Graphics and tables should be used to replace some of the narrative.
 - The teams were asked to consider how to summarize the impacts in Chapter 4. Valda distributed a sample summary graphic that consisted of 9 graphics on one page, including a radial diagram from the decision support system criteria, a map, and other charts, that could be used as a summary of effects for each alternative.
 - **All resources must use the five river sections shown on the map handout that groups the URGWOPS reaches into Northern, Rio Chama, Central, San Acacia, and Southern Sections.**
 - Technical teams should ensure that the main points describing the resources in Chapter 3 are those needed to discuss impacts in Chapter 4.

- The technical reports that will be appendices to the EIS will contain the detailed data to provide the full technical basis for the descriptions of the affected environment and effects analyses.
- Graphics already developed for the posters displayed at the previous public meetings may be useful for describing the affected environment. **All graphics and maps needed for Chapter 3 must be called out in the text and described.**
- **Chapters 1 and 2 will describe the river sections and operations; the introduction to Chapter 3 will describe the geomorphology to provide the setting for the resources. None of these items should be repeated in the resource sections of Chapter 3.**

➤ **Gail will post the revised Chapter 2 on Team Link so teams have access to the description of how the operations alternatives were screened.**

➤ At the end of the workshop, technical teams were asked to submit hard copy markups of what types of edits they plan to make. **By March 19, the technical teams must submit to the Project Managers the electronic edits and summaries of the graphics to be included.**

❖ Claudia Oakes gave a brief overview of what the technical teams should be preparing for Chapter 4, Impacts of Water Operations Alternatives.

➤ Technical teams should begin writing the key points of the impacts on their resources for Chapter 4 that will parallel the Chapter 3 sequence and sections. The table of contents with page counts is available on Team Link under the Filing Cabinet/EIS folder.

➤ Teams should create and describe graphics as they prepare their sections, and plan for how they will compare impacts across alternatives.

➤ **A preliminary draft of Chapter 4 sections is due to the Project Managers in electronic form by April 15.** This version may include some blanks and placeholder graphics.

➤ **The Executive Committee meeting to select the Preferred Alternative is scheduled for May 20 and the Preliminary Draft EIS will be distributed to cooperating agencies for internal review on June 1.**

❖ Janelle Hardin reviewed the steps necessary to document all references cited in the EIS and technical reports. She distributed a handout summarizing the main points and providing some examples of how to cite references. **The handout will be posted on Team Link by March 26.**

➤ Janelle stressed that references for all citations must be provided in full at the time the sections are submitted. That includes enough information so that the production staff can track which citations relate to what references and the team submitting them.

➤ **Each technical team is to number its citations internal to their sections in order and preceded by the following team codes:** AQ= Aquatic Systems; CR=Cultural Resources; GEO=River Geomorphology, Sedimentation, and Mechanics; HH=Hydrology and Hydraulics; RIP=Riparian and Wetland Ecosystems; SE=Land Use, Socioeconomics, Environmental Justice; OPS=URGWOM Integration/Water Operations.

➤ Because the technical reports form the basis for the information in the EIS, **references should not be cited in the EIS unless they are also used in the technical report.** The primary workload, therefore, is to fully document all citations in the technical reports.

➤ There was some discussion on what hard copy documentation must be provided for the Administrative Record as backup information for each reference. The final decision is that, **at a minimum, each citation should be accompanied by the Archive Form** (available on Team Link) **with the author, date, title, publication** (if part of a larger publication), **publisher** (for books),

physical location of the source material (where the document can be found), and **name, address, and technical team of the person who cited the publication.**

➤ **Copies of at least the title page and table of contents should also be provided.** If a document is short and there are no copyright issues, technical teams are asked to provide the entire document. If a specific table from a larger document was used, a copy of that can be provided. The purpose of providing copies and the Archive Form is to ensure that all references can be compiled for the technical reports and EIS, and that all references listed in the public document can be found easily upon request from the public.

➤ It was recommended that the correct acronym for Bureau of Reclamation is either BOR or Reclamation.

❖ Colleen Logan gave a brief refresher on how technical team members can access Team Link. If anyone needs access to a password for Team Link, contact Colleen at 837-6523 or on her mobile at 250-1799. Her e-mail address is colleen.logan@westonsolutions.com.

❖ Ellen Dietrich summarized the status of the Data Quality database that was developed based on the Dataset Quality forms completed by each technical team.

➤ Changes to the original dataset lists (reviewed at the last meeting) were necessary to standardize the entries for incorporation into a database and to make them comparable across teams and resources.

➤ The original lists and the lists of datasets as they currently exist in the database were sent out to technical team leaders for review in an Excel workbook. The instructions in the file ask the technical teams to **compare the current entries with their original submittal and update the information as needed. If an entire row should be deleted, the row should be highlighted in red.**

➤ **The new form with associated pick lists must be used for all new datasets acquired or developed for analysis of impacts.**

➤ Ellen offered to attend technical team meetings to discuss further upon request. She has already met with the Aquatic Systems Technical Team and scheduled a meeting with the Land Use Technical Team on March 12.

➤ **Technical teams are to review and edit the dataset worksheet and send back to Ellen by March 26. After that, she will post the edited versions on Team Link for access by all technical teams.**

❖ The technical teams were asked to summarize critical questions and concerns that have arisen as they are developing their effects analyses.

➤ Cultural Resources—Neal Ackerly

▪ No problems or questions to report.

➤ Hydrology and Hydraulics—Doug Wolf

▪ Doug is working on modeling Reaches 7 through 9 with FLO-2D.

▪ The Rio Grande FLO-2D data output files and summary files have been transferred to the Project Managers and GIS Technical Team. Technical team members who need a copy of the files should contact a member of the GIS Technical Team.

▪ Some technical teams need the reach averaged in-channel flow velocities that relate to the discharge. The best source of this information is to **select discharges to compare to the rating curves** from the Geomorphology Technical Team. **Bob Mussetter will post the rating curves on Team Link by March 12.**

- Riparian and Wetland Systems—Claudia Oakes
 - Claudia and Deb Callahan described how the team is manipulating the FLO-2D output for analysis by their team.
- Aquatic Systems—Bill Leibfried
 - The team is evaluating the areas of overbank flooding and needs the in-channel velocities.
- Land Use—Robert Browning
 - The team is meeting March 12 at 8:30 AM at the Corps to plan for their analyses.
- GIS Technical Team—Deb Callahan, Ellen Dietrich
 - The team has decided that, while the shapefiles generated from FLO-2D can provide an idea of where the inundation occurs, they overestimate the acreage. Deb and Ellen have put some of the output files into databases to make it easier to manipulate large amounts of data for each grid cell, year, and alternative.
 - One product under development is a map of the reaches organized into the river sections to be used for the narrative in the EIS.
 - The team is modifying the FLO-2D grid cells using the DTM files provided by the Corps. These terrain models will be used to clip the grid cells that extend outside the floodplain or the levees to be used for analysis and maps in the EIS.
- ❖ **The next meeting of the Interdisciplinary NEPA Team will be held on April 8 at 1:00 p.m. at the Corps of Engineers in Albuquerque.**