

**Notes from Upper Rio Grande Basin Water Operations Review
Interdisciplinary NEPA Team Meeting; July 10, 2003;
1:00 PM; Corps of Engineers Conference Room, Albuquerque**

In Attendance:

Roberta Ball, Corps	William J. Miller, WJM Engineering, Inc./Corps
Daniel Brown, II, WJM Engineering, Inc./Corps	Bob Mussetter, MEI/NMISC
Tim Darden, NMDA	Claudia Oakes, SWCA/NMISC
Ellen Dietrich, SAIC/Corps	Brian Ortiz, USFWS
Darrell Eidson, Corps	Robert Padilla, USBR
Jaci Gould, USBR	Jesse Roach, Sandia National Labs
Susan Goodan, SAIC/Corps	Garret Ross, USBR
Mark Horner, Corps	Leona Sam, USBR
Ernie Jahnke, Corps	Gail Stockton, Corps
Jon Kehmeier, SWCA/NMISC	Jack Veenhuis, USGS
Bill Leibfried, SWCA/ISC	Scott Waltemeyer, USGS
Dick Kreiner, Corps	Dave Wilkins, USGS/URGWOM Technical Team
Charles Lujan, San Juan Pueblo	Doug Wolf, Tetra Tech/Corps
Clay Mathers, Corps	

- ❖ Gail Stockton opened the meeting with self-introductions and started down the agenda items. Team members were asked to review the notes from the last meeting and submit any changes to Ellen Dietrich.
- ❖ Robert Padilla discussed the river realignment EIS of the USBR in place of Drew Baird, who was unable to attend. The EIS considered moving the Low Flow Conveyance Channel to the west side of the valley due to aggradation and high sediment loads. The Draft EIS has been published, but the Final EIS and Record of Decision have been delayed as a result of issues raised during consultation with the USFWS.
 - In the Draft EIS, operation of the LFCC was separated from the alignment of the channel, with consideration of operational alternatives to be addressed in the URGWOPS EIS. USFWS is recommending that the river realignment EIS be reanalyzed to consider operations of the LFCC.
 - USBR is trying to get past the concerns expressed by the USFWS to complete the EIS and move forward on the realignment construction so that the high sediment loads and flow problems can be alleviated soon. To that end, they recently conducted some experimental diversions below San Acacia.
 - Claudia Oakes reported that the Riparian and Wetlands Technical Team met with the ESA representative from the USFWS to discuss their concerns and confirmed that the USFWS does not feel that they can consult on the USBR EIS unless it includes operations of the LFCC.

- In the action alternatives a minimum bypass of 250 cfs will be allowed to remain in the river. The flow hydrographs for LFCC and the San Acacia Floodway can be used to compare different bypasses (50, 100, 200, 400, 500, and ? cfs).
 - USBR management is considering how to handle the problem and will soon determine how to proceed with the consultation and completion of the EIS.
 - ❖ Dave Wilkins and Marc Sidlow presented a slide show (with handouts) on the assumptions, set up, and preliminary runs of the Planning Model. Questions and information not covered in the handout is briefly summarized below.
 - The model is working. The NMISC (Nabil Shafike) is reviewing the results related to Rio Grande Compact Commission flows and USBR is reviewing the water accounting.
 - An example of the data exported from a 10-year run of the Planning Model is included in a handout. Daily data were furnished to Doug Wolf for inputs into FLO-2D for a test run.
 - **Question:** Why were 2003 diversions used in the baseline runs?
 - **Answer:** These data represented a full supply at the start so it was more suitable than that from 2002.
 - Deliveries from Heron were assumed to be on a different schedule than the outflows from Abiquiu, made in blocks (in the model) to meet different demands such as rafting.
 - **Question:** When Albuquerque starts using San Juan-Chama water, is this an opportunity for others to store water in Abiquiu?
 - **Answer:** The URGWOPS analyses will assume some native storage in Abiquiu, depending on the alternative. To actually do this would require a permit from the State Engineer and a contract with the City of Albuquerque. The analysis of alternatives will not say whose water would be stored in Abiquiu, but the effects would be determined.
 - **Question:** How is the Elephant Butte hydrograph developed?
 - **Answer:** By routing all upstream flows, with releases based on historic data.
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- **The URGWOM Technical Team needs to know what data are needed from the Planning Model by the technical teams.** Running the model for 40 years will generate approximately 1600 time series slots with 23 million values, excluding the water accounting data. Technical teams need to be selective on what data are requested and must consider how they will use it first.
 - It would help if the technical teams have access to a schematic of URGWOM so they can identify the nodes they are interested in. [*Since this meeting Gail sent out a copy of the URGWOM schematic in a PowerPoint file to all technical team leaders.*]
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- **The next step for each technical team is to set up a meeting with Don Gallegos (342-3382) so he can assist in determining what data are needed, in what format, and how it will be used.** Don will keep track of who gets what data for the administrative record.
 - Roberta Ball can assist the teams by providing the data in the format they request. She suggested that text files may be the easiest to use but other options exist.
 - Roberta will develop a sample dataset and send out to all technical teams. Technical teams can then review and refine their data requests.
 - There are some datasets that several technical teams would want to see. If more than one technical team requests the same data, Roberta is willing to analyze, aggregate if necessary, and provide to all technical teams so a uniform dataset will be used by all.

- **Question:** Can discharges be parsed at each node over 40 years?
 - **Answer:** Tools in URGWOM are available to do this, but first the URGWOM Technical Team needs to know the specific locations and threshold flow rates desired.
- **It is important for those generating and providing data to technical teams to follow up on how the datasets are used to ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of the analyses and conclusions.**

- ❖ A handout was distributed with a press release on the public meetings for the State Water Plan. It includes the schedule and locations for all meetings. Rhea Graham, NMISC URGWOPS Project Manager, is responsible for holding these meetings and for developing the State Water Plan. ID NEPA Team members are encouraged to attend.
- ❖ Doug Wolf delivered the Flo-2D post-processor, Hydrog.exe, and two sets of hard copy maps (79 – 11”x17” sheets) showing the middle Rio Grande (Cochiti Dam to Elephant Butte) Flo-2D grid with the "channel elements" highlighted to the Geomorphology Technical Team. This application computes average channel hydraulics for a given reach at a user specified discharge.



- ❖ **The next meeting of the URGWOPS ID NEPA Team will be held on August 14 at 1:00 p.m. in the Corps of Engineers conference room.**