

Aquatic Task Force 4/28/04 Meeting

Attending were Bob McDowell, Larry Gerard, George Jordon, Joe Platz, and Jeremy Zumberge, Steve Regele, Dave Zafft(phone)

-Bob went over tentative agenda:

report from sub work groups, prioritize survey sites, discuss costs and who will do monitoring, formulate plans for monitoring plan completion.

-the subgroups were: fish, macroinvertebrates, habitat, amphibians and site maps.

-Joe passed out "Index of Biological Integrity" study from Mont. SU. (Bramlett), and discussed feasibility of similar approach.

-Dave questioned the IBI method may not work in Wyoming, where streams are not as productive .

-Bob handed out fish sampling plan summary, and group discussed.

-Group discussed the "confluence" study.

-Joe talked with MSU about research proposals directly tied to CBM in WY/MT.

-Dave discussed the "Index centers of diversity" method for all species versus sensitive species.

- Steve suggested he would like to investigate artesian flow areas in MT near Birney for macroinvert.-may be applicable to what may occur in CBM discharge areas.

-Joe recommended 1. to adopt the fish sampling plan with the addition of WY Warm water Stream Assessment (WSA), 2. pursue development of a matrix common to both states (research project), 3.Pursue CBM effects research thru MSU.

-Joe stated that MSU will be doing a literature search of all applicable aquatic studies for 10K. (BLM funded).

-Dave Z. will ask WY Coop unit about the MT Bramlett Study, to see if it would be appropriate for WY.

-Joe handed out macroinvertebrate sampling protocol and discussed on-going contract with Utah State for analysis.

-Joe handed out terrestrial habitat protocol he and George worked on, discussion about time of year and frequency.

-Discussion about need for aerial photo and/or satellite imagery, Larry mentioned readily available upon request from BLM WY State office.

-Discussion about MT NRIS (Natural Resource Info. Service), for collecting and storing resource information.

-Dave recommended more info. on pool connectivity and depth on habitat form.

Recommend late season sampling.

-Measurement of aquatic vegetation important.

-WY G&F Powder river inventory will do 2 samples at every habitat site (Dave).

-Discussion about putting large woody /instream cover into the fish/macroinv. Study.

-Discussion about getting all inventory at each site, i.e. fish, macros, terrestrial habitat.

-Bob asked each subgroup to finalize survey protocol.

-ATG to get copies of after high flows?

- Discussion about macro. handout and protocol. Define season and frequency of sampling. Are paraphytons important information to get?
- Discussion about sampling intensity (1 site/day or get more info. at lesser sites).
- Discussion about amphibian sampling, are they important? Dave said yes as herp's. more likely to be impacted from CBM water, especially from retention pond construction.
- Miles city BLM doing a herp. study in 3 townships.
- Dave said Wy G&F will have a herp.observ. recording booklet completed this summer.
- There may be a lot of opportunity for grant work with herps. (Dave).
- Terrestrial herps. should be done by the wildlife task group. Recommendation was to suggest this to the IWG
- Discussion about definition of sites, (above, below, within), what are the boundaries?
- It was decided that WY and MT will break out to determine monitoring site priorities and report back to the ATG.
- Discussion about next meeting-need to finalize monitoring protocols and sites, put together monitoring plan similar to water task group with costs.
- Sub teams will put together narrative on objectives for inventory, and costs.
- Discussion about having herp. Study done thru University grad program, talk with Steve Corn at U.of M.
- MT BLM will pursue research on 1. effects of CBM on fish, 2. develop a fish matrix, 3. herptile study. (lab analysis and statistically valid analysis).
- It was decided that Bob will draft an outline of plan to each team by May 5. 2004, each team will then writeup the study outline and needs and send back to Bob and Joe to consolidate. There will be an appendix of recommended study sites and protocol.
- Selection of study sites prioritized by May 14.
- Lots of discussion about study reach length for representative sample and the possible need to break this out differently for large streams (Powder, Tongue) and small streams (2 meander wave lengths)
- Because of weather and lack of participation the field tour was canceled.