

AQUATIC TASK GROUP MEETING
FEBRUARY 1-2, 2005
BILLINGS, MONTANA

PRESENT:

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FEBRUARY 1, 2005

The meeting started at 10:00 a.m.

- Everyone was requested to sign in and introduce themselves.
- Build off Water Quality sites
 - Link together and follow history.
- Literature Review – MSU – Bob Bramlett
 - \$30,000.00 so far towards this.
 - \$14,000.00 initial phases of research
 - need more funding
 - like to meet and do field trip to visit sites in early March
 - proposal results to the group in April
 - maybe fund yearly instead of all at once
 - maybe another \$120,000.00 to complete project
 - report of literature review and research proposal by April
 - review is everything regarding CBM – all published literature

- Clearing house of literature of CBM
 - USGS trying to find funding to get all literature together
 - Through BEST program (BLM now funding \$25,000)
 - Ruckles House at UW to get all CBM literature
 -
- Montana Legislature might provide some funding with the CBM act.
- Matching funds from Wyoming.
- MFWP
 - No focus on issue and funding yet
 - State wildlife grant money used
 - On 3rd year of information gathering
 - 2003 data entered and compiled and available on NRIS
 - 2004 currently being entered and evaluated.
 - 4000 miles of unsurveyed streams
 - completed 73 sites in 2003 and over 100 in 2004
 - drought makes it difficult
 - spring/summer info gathered
 - water quality impacts of fish with CBM – EPA contract
 - toxicity study on fathead minnows
- Don Skaar did a PowerPoint presentation
- Location determined randomly
- 300 m stretch
- 30 m transects
- bank types
- block nets – top & bottom, pull downstream
- 20 fish measured
- historic use – livestock, etc.
- 404D list (hammered out)
- Fish, Wildlife, and Parks data can be obtained through NRIS
- www.nris.com
- BLM – Montana
 - Amphibian/Reptile study done & draft report prepared.
 - USGS – soils scientist
 - 2001/2002 report cross section and substraights
 - 2003 – Confluence report

- BLM 15 sites in the 2004 report
- Some sites are the same as 2003
- Confluence is writing the 2004 report on the field work
- MDEQ
 - Summary information (3 pages)
 - 2 pages USGS stations
 - 1 page overall summary of who doing what
 - work done in coordination with volunteer USGS and EPA contractors for TMDLs
- Tina has the map she presented available for e-mail if you are interested
- Modeling and sediment impacts
- MDNRC
 - Control area
 - Montana doesn't permit
 - Get baseline from Fidelity and others that are doing the drilling
- Forestry
 - Small sampling in Custer National Forest
 - Beaver loss of population on small streams
 - No wells on forestry land
- Wyoming – retention ponds?
- Wildlife group – amphibians
- Toxicity to amphibians
- Wyoming BLM
 - Permit CBM wells (3000)
 - Not been able to monitor, mostly permitting
 - Information from WGFD
 - Behind Montana in stream baseline information
 - Water quality monitoring task group working – get reports
 - BLM/DEQ approximately 20 CBM monitoring sites – see map on wall
- WDEQ
 - All work through water task group
 - Not a lot of bio work recently
- Keep habitat sites once data collected?
- Watershed base permitting – Pumpkin Creek preliminary
- Wyoming USGS
 - Water chemistry stations – data on website
 - Water quality work – ecology data also online
 - Finished 5 years of EMAP sampling in Wyoming last year
 - No NAWQA sampling sites left in Wyoming, still have one site in Montana

- Wyoming GFD
 - Study sites above and below the tributaries
 - Site above Berger Draw
 - Gather baseline
 - 2 mile long study of reaches
 - visit 6 times per year, May – October
 - continue for multiple years
 - scale back – seasonal
 - 100 sites from KC to MT line
 - amphibian monitoring
 - EPA grant for 2 more years
 - Is baseline from LY adequate
 - 34 sites in other 4 drainages, visited 1 time a year
 - worked 200 m reaches

- Ruckles House Institute at UW
 - Clearing house of data and research related to CBM issues
 - USGS BEST program to try to get funding for the group
 - Voluntary to put in data and links on their web page
 - Put on CBM workshop
 - Not much aquatic stuff currently – more industry
 - Group information go through USGS and it will get it on website

- Funding Proposals Review
 - BLM – WY
 - \$200,000
 - borderless request, MT & WY
 - must be gone by year-end or returned, can be obligated
 - October 2005 must have a product
 - Funded for monitoring plan
 - Field work
 - BLM - \$30,000 to MSU
 - \$16,000 literature review research
 - \$14,000 get tooled up for the review and get equipment
 - WY – USGS
 - Can be reduced by \$48,000 for lab work
 - \$304,000
 - year 1 – FY 05
 - \$202,000 Coop
 - \$102 USGS
 - \$198,000
 - year 2 – FY 06
 - \$75,000 USGS
 - \$123,000 Coop

discussion of using Confluence to write reports – cost \$25,000 for report on 20 tested sites

- University of Wyoming Coop
 - \$50,000 for FY 05 and FY 06 – total \$100,000
 - start this summer
 - fisheries and habitat

- some baseline
- Discussion on funding
 - What goals
 - What want
 - Bottom line
 - Hurry up and get started or slowdown
- Monitoring proposal (BLMO)
 - What do with baseline
 - Where go from there
 - What looking for, for output
 - All agencies different
 - Cause and effect
- MDEQ – CBM Reclamation Act
 - Up to \$245,000 (FY 05 - \$120,000 & FY 06 - \$120,000)
 - Is asked for and looks possible
 - When start – 7/1
 - Bill # ?
 - Depends on legislature action
- Discussion on including periphyton in monitoring and baseline
- Water quality group – check on what information they have
- Discussed going forward with the plan already established and if money allows add the other stuff

FEBRUARY 2, 2005

- Discussions on membership, who represents some agency
- Protocols for habitat
 - EPA's EMAP protocols
 - Is it necessary to measure habitat in each reach every year
 - Can we do every 3 or 5 years
 - No necessary to do every year unless no major changes or run-off event.
 - 3 or 5 years is okay, maybe every other year.
 - Need more riparian habitat information than EMAP provides
 - Monitor changes in riparian based on CBM development
 - Do we need longitudinal profiles (Harrelson) or pebble counts
- RBP reflected in some questions
 - Careful going into veg monitoring
 - Discussed photos taken for that
 - Checklist for veg – doesn't take long
- Discussion on using the protocols already established
- Habitat
 - Set up 2-4 permanent cross sections

- ATG or USGS EMAP protocol. Harrelson is more than what ATG Montana representatives feel is necessary
- Discussion on the differences in proposals – which are best – is our plan best?
- Need to not make decision today, because some things need more research.
- Joe, Lenny, George, Jeremy, and Dave will meet on habitat protocol and agree by the end of February.
- Fish habitat stuff done the same as habitat stuff – Brad, Dave, and Dave Peterson.
- Need better outline of methods/procedures
- Macro inverts – follow NAWQA protocols
- Bob, Dave, and Larry will put in some stuff on the amphibians, herb stuff in umbrella statement.
- \$200,000 available – WDEQ/USGS want \$202,000 and UW Coop wants \$50,000
- Went around the room to get input from all
 - Dave - USGS but wants other sites, maybe add Coop sites and scrap or pull sections from USGS to Coop
 - Brad – thinks we need to do more work first before picking anything, premature
 - George – just wants to meet plan, no feeling either way, premature
 - (with forestry) – can contribute data – neutral
 - Steve – premature, request money from BLM and flush out specifics and give Montana Side chance to work on a plan
 - Bob – concur with Steve
 - Lenny (?) Get same information no matter what protocol. USGS would lend more credence.
 - Aida – make money decision soon as it won't wait for you.
 - Jeremy – cut the \$200,000 down the middle, with WY and MT each getting half and WY will go with USGS
 - (with forestry) – make sure everything is on the same page and defensible in court
 - Rich – consistency is coordination
 - Dave Peterson – willing to work on protocols
 - Don – being consistent
 - Tina – coordinate on Montana side
 - John – Pass – agree with Tina
 - (BLM) – split money and let WY go. MT needs to get coordinated
 - Larry – agree with Jeremy, but no 50/50 split. Give MT money for priority sites
 - (?) – do some
 - Joe – biggest bang for buck – Confluence in Montana is cheaper, as long as MT gets money
 - Bob – agree with Larry, likes USGS proposal
- Montana to meet to come up with proposal