

Springflow Habitat Protection Work Group

Meeting 11 Minutes
November 19, 2020
9:00-11:00 a.m.

1. Confirm attendance

All Work Group members were present, except Adam Yablonski.

2. Meeting logistics

Jamie Childers provided an overview of virtual meeting logistics and meeting points of contact.

3. Public comment

No public comments.

4. Approve meeting minutes:

- **Meeting 9 (September 9, 2020)**

A motion was made by Melani Howard, seconded by Tom Arsuffi, to approve the meeting minutes from Meeting 9 (September 9, 2020) with the correction of a typographical error noted by Patrick Shriver. In the absence of objection, the minutes were approved by consensus.

- **Meeting 10 (September 23, 2020)**

A motion was made by Cindy Loeffler, seconded by Patrick Shriver, to approve the meeting minutes from Meeting 10 (September 23, 2020). In the absence of objection, the minutes were approved by consensus.

5. *Discussion and decision on Draft Part 2 Work Group Charge*

SHP Work Group Chair, Myron Hess, led the discussion on the Draft Part 2 Work Group charge by working through the comments received by the work group members.

Key changes agreed upon are as follows:

To avoid implications of shortcomings in permit compliance, discussion of the status of EAHC studies will note the ongoing nature of adaptive management, acknowledge that many factors affect the appropriate timing for completion of studies, and reflect that the Work Group recommendations simply prioritize certain studies.

Issue 1

What was Question 4-2 will be renumbered and moved to become a new Question 1-3, with appropriate renumbering of the remaining Issue 1 questions, including to reflect a reordering to move what was Question 1-4 to last. What is now Question 4-2 will be acknowledged as having relevance to Issue 1.

Issue 2

There was discussion about terminology, with reference to the potential for defining upthrown and downthrown block in Question 2-1. Concern was also noted about the potential to overburden the document through an attempt to add definitions of terms. In addition, the discussion recognized that much specificity will be added when requests for proposals are developed.

Question 2-2 will be rephrased to acknowledge that ongoing genetic studies may not provide relevant insights about low-flow impacts and that variations of those studies or new studies may be needed.

Question 2-3 will be deleted, with some alteration of Question 2-1 to cover the topic.

Issue 3

Reference to Comal system will be added to introductory language to acknowledge that Question 3-1 addresses aspects of both systems. Reference to San Marcos salamander will be added to Question 3-3 and reference to fountain darter added to Question 3-4.

Issue 4

Explanation will be added that the studies listed under Issue 4 did not fit under Issues 1-3. In addition, discussion will be added about timing of studies reflecting multiple considerations as part of an ongoing adaptive management process, with specific studies reflecting Work Group prioritization, in order to avoid a potential implication of a failure to meet permit requirements.

What is currently Question 4-2 will be moved under Issue 1 and renumbered. An acknowledgment of the relevance of what is currently Question 4-3, which will be renumbered as 4-2, will be added under Issue 1 to ensure it is considered as Requests for Proposals are developed pursuant to Issue 1.

Part 2 charge process

Members discussed the process for prioritization of studies and what happens with studies that are not addressed. The language of the charge will acknowledge the need for the Work Group to consider prioritizing studies, the need for schedule flexibility, and the potential for the Work Group to make recommendations regarding studies that are not completed as part of the Work Group process.

A role for the Science Committee in reviewing study proposals will be noted in Table 1.

6. *Discussion and decision on next steps for finalizing Part 2 Work Group Charge document for presentation to the Implementing Committee*

The Work Group approved a process through which Jamie Childers and Myron Hess will circulate a revised draft document to the Work Group members for review on an expedited basis. If no Work Group member indicates the need for revisions, the draft will become the final version and will be presented to the Implementing Committee (IC), as an informational item, at the IC's December 17, 2020, meeting and considered for approval at a subsequent IC meeting. If the only concerns raised by the Work Group are typographical-level changes, a revised draft will be promptly circulated to the Work Group for a final review.

If a Work Group member raises substantive concerns, the draft will not be presented to the IC until the Work Group has a chance to meet and address those concerns. If possible, a meeting will be held during the week of November 30th to allow the report to be finalized and presented at the December 17th IC meeting. If a meeting is required and it cannot be scheduled during the week of November 30th, presentation to the IC will be delayed until a subsequent IC meeting to allow the Work Group to finalize the document.

7. *Public comment*

Cindy Loeffler announced her retirement from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, effective December 31, 2020. The EAHCP program staff and stakeholders voiced gratitude for her participation and recognized her legacy of environmental stewardship over her long career.

8. *Future meetings*

A doodle poll will be sent to members to schedule a tentative Meeting 12, prior to the Implementing Committee meeting on December 17, 2020.