
Springflow Habitat Protection Work Group

Meeting 19 Minutes
Friday, August 13, 2021
9:00am-11:00am

1. **Confirm attendance**
All Work Group members, except for Ryan Kelso, were in attendance.
2. **Meeting logistics**
Jamie Childers provided an overview of virtual meeting logistics and meeting points of contact.
3. **Public comment**
There were no comments from the public.
4. **Approve Meeting Minutes**
 - July 21, 2021- Meeting 17
 - A motion was made by Tom Arsuffi and seconded by Colette Barron Bradsby, to approve the Meeting Minutes from the July 21, 2021, Springflow Habitat Protection Work Group. There was no discussion and no objections. In the absence of objection, the Meeting Minutes were approved by consensus.
 - July 29, 2021- Meeting 18
 - Because of the need for more time to review, the Springflow Habitat Protection Work Group will consider approval of the July 29, 2021, Meeting Minutes at the next meeting.
5. ***Review feedback on response to the Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan Implementing Committee and, as appropriate, take action on delivery of the response prior to the August 19, 2021, meeting.***
The discussion was led by Myron Hess, Work Group Chair.

Jamie Childers had previously consolidated Work Group comments on the draft response to the Implementing Committee into one document, which was used as the starting point for discussion. Comments were added in tracked changes.

The Work Group’s discussion began with a review of “Table 1. Work Group Ranking Summary” in the report. Column one includes the number of the question(s) and a parenthetical summary statement of what it addresses. Column two provides an estimate of relative cost. The following discussion follows the color coding of the initial draft of the table: Green, Orange, Blue, and Yellow.

Discussion of Green Category Questions

Patrick Shriver recommended to change “high priority” phrasing to avoid confusion with the earlier prioritization efforts of the Work Group. Myron suggested the option of changing the title of the first grouping (Green Category Questions) from “High Priority” to “First Priority for Study”. The group generally indicated agreement with that approach.

Myron noted that the combined questions 3-3 through 3-5 could increase the cost over the cost estimates for the individual questions. After discussion, there was agreement that an appropriate cost estimate for combined questions 3-3 to 3-5 would be low to medium.

The Work Group discussed the definition of “consensus” and determined to use the absence of objection as indicating consensus, consistent with the EARIP process and EAHCP guidance. For consistency with that practice, “full consensus” was changed to “consensus” throughout the table.

Discussion of Orange Category Questions

The Work Group decided to rearrange the table so that the First Priority for Monitoring Plans grouping (Orange Category) is presented immediately after the “First Priority for Study” grouping. The group agreed to change the title of the grouping to “First priority for developing monitoring plans for data collection during low-flow periods” to better reflect intent.

Myron requested the Work Group review the cost estimates for each question to assess if the estimates remain accurate for a monitoring approach because the estimates may have been developed assuming a directed study approach. There were no proposed revisions.

Discussion of Blue Category Questions

The Work Group changed the “Medium Priority” heading (Blue Category) to “Second Priority for Study” with an added explanation of “Ranked

highly but not consensus for first priority studies” to better coincide with the changed text to the other category headings.

Discussion of Yellow Category Questions

Colette commented that the phrase “Un-prioritized” gave the assumption that the questions under that category (Yellow Category) were not fully assessed when in fact the Work Group did consider those questions and determined they should be considered at a different point in time. There was agreement the heading for “un-prioritized” category should be changed to something like “Retained for future consideration and directed studies dependent on available state of knowledge and research necessity” to reflect the Work Group’s perspective.

Myron noted that he had added brief parentheticals, following each question number throughout the table, to summarize the focus of the question and requested members to review that text to identify any concerns.

Doris Cooksey suggested adding a description of what the word “partial” meant. The group agreed to add a footnote to the table explaining that it referred to some questions being recommended to be addressed in part through monitoring and in part through studies based on results of monitoring.

Kevin Mayes suggested reordering the questions within the groupings in numerical sequence since there was no prioritization being recommended within the groupings. The group agreed that no prioritization within the individual groups was being suggested and that presenting the questions in numerical sequence within the groupings would be appropriate, with a brief explanation added to the table.

Additionally, a Low to Medium budget estimate was suggested to fill in the cost column for Question 3-2.

Following the review of each colored-coded category within the table, Patrick raised a question about the use in the table of the term “tier.” The Work Group decided to remove the term “tier,” because its inclusion could create undue confusion with earlier draft organizational approaches.

Review of remainder of text

The Work Group next moved to discussion of the text of the response, other than Table 1, to assess for consistency with the changes to the Table and address other proposed revisions. The Work Group operated on consensus—i.e., absence of objection—throughout the editing discussion.

The Work Group agreed to delete a restatement of the text of specific questions. The full text of the 15 questions will be included as an Appendix. Brief summaries of the categories in Table 1 were suggested for inclusion. The Work Group agreed it would be appropriate to keep the overall text brief.

The Group also agreed to move the discussion of initial prioritization efforts and the evolution of the final proposed prioritization to the portion of the document following Table 1. That portion will include a single graphic depicting the “buckets” approach, with other graphics moved to appendices.

The Group also determined that it would be best for Myron to provide the IC, at its Aug. 19 meeting, with a general update and an overview of the prioritization categories rather than a draft of the full table.

In terms of process moving forward, the Work Group will schedule an additional meeting to be used, if needed, to agree on the final text of the response for presentation to the IC. Prior to any additional meeting, proposed revised text will be circulated to the Work Group for review and comment. If comments are received, one or more additional revisions will be circulated for further review and comment. If a final version is achieved in that manner, without objection from any Work Group member, an additional meeting may not be needed prior to presenting the response to the IC. However, in the absence of achieving consensus on the text through that process, an additional meeting will be convened.

6. Public comment

There were no comments from the public.

7. Future meetings

A poll will be distributed to Work Group members to determine the date for a potential future meeting.