

Kerr 216 Downstream Flow Based Recreation Task Group
Meeting Notes
January 23, 2004

Members Present

Cindy Tripp
Frank Snipes
Kent Nelson

Jim Mead
Jeff Horton
Jean Richter

Jim Thornton
Bob Munson

Jim Mead: Suggested Agenda

- (1) Need to review the task group Phase 1 Project Management plan and cost estimates. A revised PMP is due at the end of January.
- (2) Review collected data since last meeting
- (3) Monthly Update Report

Discussion on including “economic impact” in Phase 1 PMP

Jim Mead talked about the team leaders meeting and how economics issue was relayed to them. Economic evaluation is implicit in any 216, usually in phase 3. After proposed alternatives, there is USACE evaluation of economic impacts. Each team may / should include economic data as information is gathered during Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Much discussion on economic impacts of fishing / flows / camping trails. There are about 6 to 8 fishing guides operating on the lower Roanoke and about 2-dozen hunting guides. The amount of guiding services has been growing over the last 10 years. The Paddle Trail and ecotourism have also been expanding. Increased opportunity (outfitters and access) and improved information (public awareness and information for trip planning) can expand use greatly.

Jeff discussed the importance of examining flow effects on recreation on both upstream and downstream users in a systematic manner. The desirability of having comparable data from both recreational groups was identified. The question of how to convey/describe different flows to the public during surveys was discussed. “High, medium, or low” may suffice or, in some cases (hunt clubs), cfs data and topo maps may be useful. Dates of use could be cross-referenced to stream flow data.

Suggested changes to 6.A. introductory part:

- Add: Existing data will be reviewed and new data collected so that economic benefits of downstream water-related recreation can be evaluated.
- Changes: Swimming is not a good indicator in the lower river because few participate in it; add camping; group canoeing and motor boating together.
- Add sentence to introduction in 6.A. “one product of the study will be a model to evaluate recreation use under different flow regimes”.
- Need to add Roanoke River Partners and USFWS as subject matter specialists.

Review of Tasks

Study plan should include gathering existing data, end product being perhaps a bibliography of existing information.

- Kent Nelson has several NCWRC reports related to recreational use of the Roanoke River and coastal rivers in general. (Shumann economic study on Roanoke River, 1990 Angler Opinion Survey, Roanoke River creel surveys).
- Jean Richter will review Wildlife Refuge data (i.e. hunting permits) as a way to identify users/ develop contacts for gathering data.
- Permits for hunting and fishing guides in NC (Jean will check with NCWRC).
- Roanoke River Partners has good data on folks using / inquiring about paddling and have data source from local business persons. Local government good source.
- Livery operators should have data.
- State of NC has done some demographics on boating / paddler use every 5 years (State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan - SCORP).

Action Item: Kent - compile bibliography of information of recreational users on lower Roanoke River that NCWRC has available.

Action Item: Cindy & Jeff - list of outfitters and summary of data for platform and paddle trail users. Description of database.

Action Item: Jean - NC Wildlife Commission database of hunters who use lower Roanoke recreation areas, licenses issued for guides by state, how available and detailed is that for Roanoke River area.

Action Item: Jim Mead – examine the NC Division of Parks and Recreation SCORP to see if regional data exists for different types of use.

Action Item: Jeff - Pull together list of academic resource persons capable of developing and analyzing surveys.

Jim Mead relayed that any surveys performed in a USACE study have to be pre-approved by OMB. A library of surveys and questions is available and will be helpful if a survey is undertaken. The URL for the library of questionnaires is:
<http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/iwr/omb/ombhomea.HTM>

Water quality, significant impacts should be addressed as it effects economics of recreational industry. Other teams will address how water quality affects the ecosystem. We need to ask question(s) about how water quality problems affect the amount of recreational use.

Bob suggested that carrying capacity for each recreational activity could be determined and used to evaluate the effects of flow changes on recreation (i.e. how many hunters per acre, how many boaters / paddlers / fishers per river mile at certain flows). He also stated that per day values have been determined for different activities so changes in use could be translated into dollars. Quality of experiences could also be evaluated.

Jim Mead suggested a GIS / Delphi process as means to utilize tool and gather data for accessibility and utilization of land based recreation.

Summary of Tasks for PMP – Phase 1

Tasks 6.A.1 Review and summarize existing data related to downstream recreational uses.

Task 6A2 List potential contractors and write a Request For Proposals (RFP) for use-based analysis. This will lead into a two part Phase 2. The first part will be a review of approaches (surveys, carrying capacity, etc). The second part will be to actually to the study (preceded by another RFP). Economic data for use in Phase 3 will be included.

Task 6.A.3 Writing scope of work for geographic-based (roads, inundated areas) analysis. Possibly enhanced with a Delphi exercise.

Task 6.A.4 Develop a scope of work to produce a processing tool / model that merges the hydrology / flood model with a qualifier and quantifier of recreational use for fishing, hunting, camping and nature-based recreation.

Time needed and estimated costs

Task 6.A.1

Kent – 2 days

Jean – ½ day

Jim M. – ½ day

Tasks 6.A.2, 3, 4 (scopes of work) develop straw man RFP & Scopes of Work

Bob – straw man for Task 6.A.2 RFP – 2 days

Jim M. – straw man for Task 6.A.3 SOW – 2 days

Frank – straw man for Task 6.A.4 SOW, Jeff to help – 2 days

Consider Method/Price/Confidence level

Drafts for four tasks due February 20, 2004.

Next meeting March 3, 2004, 9:30 AM at Roanoke Rapids.

Revisions to the Kerr 216 PMP for Task 6 are attached to these minutes.

6. Downstream Flow Based Recreation

A. What impacts do releases from John H. Kerr reservoir have on motorized and non-motorized boating, fishing, camping, and hunting in the areas on and along the Roanoke River in North Carolina downstream of Roanoke Rapids? What impacts do releases have on nature-based recreation (including aesthetics, wildlife educational opportunities, nature photography and bird watching) in the river study area? Existing data will be reviewed, and new data collected, so that economic benefits of downstream river-related recreation can be evaluated. One product of the study will be a model to evaluate recreation use under different flow regimes.

TASKS 6.A.1-4 SUBJECT MATTER SPECIALISTS:

NC Division of Water Resources

NC Wildlife Resources Commission

The Nature Conservancy

US Army Corps of Engineers

VA Department of Conservation & Recreation

Roanoke River Partners

US Fish and Wildlife Service – National Wildlife Refuge

6.A.1 TASK Review and summarize existing data related to downstream recreational uses.

METHODS: Study team will:

1. compile a bibliography of information on recreational users of the lower Roanoke River that NCWRC has available;
2. develop a list of outfitters and describe the data available for platform and paddle trail users;
3. review and describe the NCWRC database of hunting permits for the lower Roanoke River, as well as the database of licenses issued for hunting and fishing guides;
4. examine the NC Division of Parks and Recreation State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) to see if regional data exists for different types of use.

TIME: 3 days (two NC, 1 federal)

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST: \$2,400

SPONSORS' IN-KIND WORK: \$1,600

6.A.2 TASK Develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) to review and screen various approaches for analyzing the effect of different flow regimes on recreational use.

METHODS: The analysis will focus on fishing, hunting, camping, and nature observation as the best indicators of the effect of flow management alternatives on downstream recreation. This task will lead into a two-part effort under Phase 2 of the Project. The first part will be in response to this RFP and will produce a review of the various approaches. The approaches reviewed will include surveys of users, interviews with experts (guides, outfitters, WRC and USFWS staff), and analysis of carrying capacity at different flows (e.g. area of hunting land available at different flow levels). The study team will review this work product during Phase 2 and recommend a study approach for approval by the Executive Committee. After approval, an RFP will then be developed for the second part of the Phase 2 work – performing the analysis using the approach selected during step 1 of Phase 2.

TIME: 2 days (2 VA)

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST: \$1,600

SPONSORS' IN-KIND WORK: \$1,600

6.A.3 TASK Develop a Scope of Work for analyzing the effect of different flow regimes on downstream recreation using an approach based on geographic information.

METHODS: The study team will prepare a Scope of Work that uses information on access roads and recreational areas (hunting, camping, boat access) in a GIS format. This geographic information will be examined in the context of what areas are flooded under different flow regimes. An enhanced scope of work will expand the analysis to include a GIS-enhanced Delphi exercise with a group of experts – guides, outfitters, NCWRC enforcement officers, and National Wildlife Refuge staff.

TIME: 2 days (2 NC)

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST: \$1,600

SPONSORS' IN-KIND WORK: \$1,600

6.A.4 TASK Develop a scope of work to produce a processing tool / model that merges the hydrology / flood model with a qualifier and quantifier of recreational use for fishing, hunting, camping and nature-based recreation.

METHODS: The study team will prepare a Scope of Work to produce this model / processing tool during Phase 2 of the Project. The objective is to allow consistent, relatively simple evaluation of recreational impacts in conjunction with different hydrology simulations. This tool should be applicable to the efforts of the Integration Task group.

TIME: 2 days (2 USACE)

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST: \$1,600

SPONSORS' IN-KIND WORK: \$0

One meeting of the study team will be needed to allow review and finalization of the RFP and Scopes of Work (one day, 2 federal and 3 state employees).

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST: \$4,000

SPONSORS' IN-KIND WORK: \$2,400

Item 6 Total Project Cost: \$11,200
SPONSORS' IN-KIND WORK: \$7,200