

# San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program

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# The San Juan Program was established in 1992

## Two Principal Goals:

- 1) The recovery of threatened and endangered fish species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA).
- 2) To allow water development and management activities to proceed in a manner consistent with state water and wildlife laws, Reclamation project authorizations, and interstate water compacts approved by Congress

# Purpose

- 1) The San Juan Recovery Program was identified as a reasonable and prudent alternative for the 1991 Animas-La Plata Project biological opinion, which created Colorado's Lake Nighthorse.
- 2) Signatories include State of Colorado, State of New Mexico, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, the Jicarilla Apache Nation, and the Navajo Nation.
- 3) Current Program Participant: State of Colorado - State of New Mexico - State of Utah - Jicarilla Apache Nation - Navajo Nation - Southern Ute Indian Tribe - Ute Mountain Ute Tribe - Bureau of Indian Affairs - Bureau of Land Management - Bureau of Reclamation - The Nature Conservancy - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Water Development Interests

# Fish Species



## Razorback Sucker

- Sharp-edged “razorback” hump
- Species dates back 3 to 5 million years



## Colorado Pikeminnow

- Largest minnow in North America
- Migrates up to 200 miles to spawn

# ESA Compliance:

- Actions taken by the programs are considered by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service when conducting ESA Section 7 consultations on water projects' impacts on the listed fish species and specifying reasonable and prudent alternatives and reasonable and prudent measures.
- Biennially the Service reviews and independently evaluates the programs to determine if the programs are continuing to provide ESA compliance for water projects.
- As of December 31, 2022, the programs have provided ESA compliance for approximately 2,500 federal, non-federal and tribal water projects in the Upper Colorado and San Juan River basins, including every Reclamation project upstream of Lake Powell.
- ESA compliance has been streamlined for the Service, federal agencies, and water project sponsors.
- The programs allow the United States to fulfill trust responsibilities to Native American tribes related to tribal water projects and settlement agreements in compliance with the Endangered Species Act.
- **No lawsuits have been filed regarding ESA compliance provided by the recovery programs' actions.**

# Current Status of Species/Post-2023:

- One of the two species have been brought back from the brink of extinction to be reclassified or proposed for reclassification from endangered to threatened (razorback sucker). One of the two species (Colorado pikeminnow) are listed as endangered but have been conserved and is benefiting from recovery program actions.
- **Post-2023 Planning:** Program agreements expire on September 30, 2023. Participants in the programs have developed cost sharing arrangements for the next 15 years that are the basis for proposed amendments to the recovery programs authorizing legislation (P.L. 106-392). The amendments will be introduced in Congress in 2023.

# Current Legislation

- **S. 2247–Upper Colorado and San Juan River Basins Endangered Fish Recovery Programs Reauthorization Act of 2023** introduced by Senator Hickenlooper and Senator Romney. Cosponsors– Senator Romney, Senator Lujan, Senator Heinrich and Senator Bennet.
- **H.R. 4596–Upper Colorado and San Juan River Basins Endangered Fish Recovery Programs Reauthorization Act of 2023**, the Recovery Program bill introduced by Representative Boebert. Cosponsors – Representative Duarte, Representative Hageman, Representative LaMalfa, Representative Gosar, Representative Buck, Representative Nehls, Representative Newhouse.

Questions?