



PRCC Habitat Subcommittee

Thursday, June 8 - 1:30 to 5 p.m.
Chelan PUD, Wenatchee

PRCC Habitat SC Members

Dale Bambrick, NOAA Fisheries

Bob Rose, Yakama Nation (YN)

Chris Fisher, Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT)

Chris Parsons Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)

David Morgan, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Ben Lenz, Grant PUD

Carl Merkle, Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR)

Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc., facilitator

MEETING AGENDA

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Approval/Finalize May 24, 2006 Meeting Minutes
- III. Status/Review of Habitat Funds
- IV. Draft Hancock Springs Restoration Plan - (Bob Rose has asked for John Jorgensen to call in at 2:00 pm to our meeting to help review this project; 15 minutes of time allocated for this call)
- V. Discussion of LIDAR Project
- VI. Discussion of Skookumchuck Creek Project
- VII. Discussion of Entiat USGS Gaging Funds
- VIII. Discussion of Committee Members' Future Projects
- IX. Record Keeping of Funded Projects (i.e. Fulton Diversion Project)
- X. Next Meeting

Attendees: Lee Carlson, Yakama Nation; David Morgan, USFWS; Chris Parsons, WDFW; Chris Fisher, CCT; Dale Bambrick, NOAA Fisheries; Ben Lenz, Grant PUD; Shannon Lowry, Grant PUD; Denny Rohr, facilitator.

FINAL MEETING MINUTES

Action:

- Grant PUD will provide a summary sheet of funded projects for subcommittee members.
- WDFW will contact WDOE to request information on funding of Entiat USGS gaging.

Distributed Items: NONE

Decision Summary:

- Subcommittee members agreed to table a decision on the Skookumchuck land purchase. Further alternative funding information will be provided at a later date.

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Approval/Finalize May 24, 2006 Meeting Minutes – sent June 7, 2006, finalization tabled until July meeting.

III. Status/Review of Habitat Funds – Grant PUD will provide current amounts of habitat funds to subcommittee members at each meeting

IV. **Draft Hancock Springs Restoration Plan** – NOAA noted that this is not a time-sensitive project, stating that such projects are more suited to the HCP funding process. The HCP is considering a similar proposal. **(John Jorgensen calls in at 2 pm to review the project)** - Jorgensen confirms that the project has been submitted to the HCP. Morgan questioned why some details are different between the proposal submitted to the HCP and the one submitted to the PRCC. Jorgensen noted the original proposal was written in 2005. The proposal in front of the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee is an update based on work remaining on the project. The project involves river mile 58 on the Methow River at the end of a permanent spring Chinook spawning area. Weeman Bridge is ½ to ¾ river miles above Hancock Springs. De-watering occurs in mid-September above the bridge, allowing limited rearing habitat in an area that has a high density of listed species. The area, however, has good potential for off-channel rearing. At the end of 2004, Johnson worked with USFWS and BOR on funding of a restoration plan. The land is privately owned by Brian Ellison. The proposal involves enhancing spawning and rearing potential of the springs for anadromous fish by improving access to one mile of high-quality spawning and rearing habitat, controlling livestock grazing impacts, removing brook trout, restoring riparian vegetation buffers, increasing hydraulic complexity, decreasing sedimentation of substrates, and creating habitat for juvenile rearing. Most permits have been obtained for the work. All initial monitoring and in-stream monitoring has been mostly completed and the point of diversion has been changed. Further funding is needed to finish in-stream work and finalize monitoring. Morgan asked whether BOR is looking at the mainstem near the springs. Jorgensen confirmed that while work in the area is ongoing, there is no work occurring at the mouth near Hancock Springs. Jorgensen noted there would be a benefit to using the site for acclimation. Morgan questioned whether beaver dams and canary grass impeding adult passage would need to be removed. Jorgensen stated that only brook trout are observed above the beaver dams, so removal would not be necessary, though alteration of both the dams and grass might be. Upcoming activities include working on installing deer fencing and repair of cattle fences. Only about six months of funding remains. Johnson noted that all work is done by hand. Once the site is re-banked and cattle are kept out, there may still be sediment traps near beaver dams. Fifty v-structures have been installed. Jorgensen also noted that the landowner is extremely cooperative. The owner has signed a 10-year access agreement with Yakama Nation. Jorgensen invited subcommittee members to see the project.

Subcommittee members agreed the project is not time-sensitive and have previously agreed to only consider time-sensitive projects at this point. WDFW noted that it is appropriately being brought through the HCP selection process.

V. **Discussion of LIDAR Project** – Further information about the benefit of the LIDAR project is needed before a vote from subcommittee members can be taken. Fisher noted there is already fFLIR and LIDAR data available for the Okanogan River basin. The flight will occur in October, but funding decisions must be made soon. Lenz noted that Grant PUD needs a scope of work prior to determining administration of funds for the project. Fisher requested further clarification on the project from the Yakama Nation. Clarification needs to be made as to where collected data will go, who will analyze it, who the potential funding partners are, and what funds they will contribute to the project. Subcommittee members requested a conference call. NOAA Fisheries is fully supportive of collecting the data, but Bambrick indicated concerns about the term of the commitment to funding. Parsons noted the subcommittee has specific requirements when it comes to data analysis.

VI. **Discussion of Skookumchuck Creek Project** – While Rose has indicated support of the acquisition, Fisher noted that Skookumchuck would not be a significant production area for steelhead. FERC has determined it is not a mitigation site for wildlife or fisheries following genetic work on juvenile fishes

conducted by Grant PUD in the late 1990s. The samples collected indicated the stock was red-band rainbows or unknown stock. NOAA noted that Skookumchuck is a small stream which will not produce many fish due to damage from grazing. Fisher stated that it is a small system and the price tag is too steep to justify any mitigation benefit. If full funding does not occur, any benefit received would likely not be of any value because it would not be a major contributor to mitigation. While CCT is supportive of the project, Fisher doesn't believe this is the correct funding source for it. Bambrick noted the purchase would hasten recovery of the watershed. If all of the land is purchased it would comprise 16,900 acres. The proposed purchase is for 1,920 acres. Parsons questioned whether less money could be contributed and private funds raised for the remainder. A decision about the purchase needs to be made by the end of August. Grant PUD is concerned with the productivity issue surrounding the purchase. Data on whether there are steelhead is inconclusive. Fisher noted there were no redds in each of the last two years. Bambrick has requested that the other parties reduce the amount of funds being requested. Vote on the funding is tabled.

- VII. Discussion of Entiat USGS Gaging Funds** – Parsons noted that proposed funding from DOE includes \$1.3 million, adding ten new gages. The Yakama Nation is proposing a two- to three-year cost-share on continued funding of gage monitoring. Morgan noted that the USGS has estimated three gages would cost approximately \$30,000 to \$35,000, annually. Because funding is not necessary until next year, Bambrick requested discussion be tabled until a later meeting. Parsons requested further information about the cost-share details. Parsons will contact WDOE to request information on funding.
- VIII. Discussion of Committee Members' Future Projects** – WDFW is considering presenting a proposal involving a pond near Cashmere located on WSDOT property. The proposal would involve connecting the pond to a historical side channel. A proposal could possibly come in approximately two months.
- IX. Record Keeping of Funded Projects (i.e. Fulton Diversion Project)** – Grant PUD will provide a summary sheet of funded projects.
- X. Fulton Diversion Project** – Grant PUD will send an agreement statement to USFWS concerning the project and is still requesting feedback on the agreement statement for use when drafting future agreements.
- XI. Next Meeting** – Tentative date and time is Wednesday, July 19, 1:30-5 p.m. (contingent on moving of HCP meeting)