



PRCC Habitat Subcommittee Meeting

Friday, February 10, 2006

9:15 am – 12:00 noon

Douglas PUD Auditorium

East Wenatchee, WA

PRCC Habitat Subcommittee Members:

Chris Fisher, CCT

Bob Rose, YN

Carl Merkle, CTUIR

Dale Bambrick, NMFS

David Morgan, USFWS

Dennis Beich, Chris Parsons, WDFW

Ben Lenz, Grant PUD

Denny Rohr, Facilitator

FINAL MEETING MINUTES

MEETING AGENDA

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Meeting Minutes of January 13, 2006
- III. Joint Meeting of HCP Tributary Committee and PRCC Habitat SubCommittee
- IV. PR Settlement Agreement Discussions
 - A. Update/Status
 - B. Joint Explanatory Statement
- V. Discussion/Status of Habitat Funds
- VI. Funding and Project Selection Process
 - A. Review of Jan 13th Meeting Discussion
 - B. Review/Discussion of Draft Project Selection Process
(See D. Bambrick draft document, dated Feb 3, 2006)
 - C. Summary/Next Steps
- VII. Committee Administrative Review
 - A. "Draft PRCC Habitat Subcomm Operating Procedures"
 - B. "Draft PRCC Habitat Subcommittee Policies and Procedures for Funding Projects"
 - C. "Draft PRCC Habitat Plan"
- VIII. Next Meeting
 - A. Date, Time, Location

Meeting attendees: Bob Rose, YN; Lee Carlson, YN; Chris Parsons, WDFW; David Morgan, USFWS; Chris Fisher, CCT; Dale Bambrick, NMFS; Ben Lenz, Grant PUD; Denny Rohr, facilitator; Shannon Lowry, Grant PUD

Distributed items:

Action items:

- Grant PUD will e-mail Fish Settlement Agreement and Joint Explanatory Statement to subcommittee with note to focus on Section 14.

- YN will e-mail implementation spreadsheet for the subcommittee's review.
- CCT will draft an informal worksheet for proposed project and e-mail for subcommittee's review.
- Grant PUD will provide USFWS and CCT with a copy of its genetic sampling report concerning fish in the Skookumchuck Creek.

Welcome and Introductions: Rohr welcomed meeting attendees.

Meeting Minutes of January 13, 2006: Under review

Joint Meeting of HCP Tributary Committee and PRCC Habitat Subcommittee:

Rohr will discuss this with Bob Bugert. The committee members felt a joint meeting at this time was not needed.

PR Settlement Agreement Discussions

A. Update/Status: The Salmon Settlement Agreement was filed with FERC on Friday, Feb. 10.

B. Joint Explanatory Statement: Filed with the Settlement Agreement on Feb. 10. Copies of both the Agreement and accompanying Explanatory Statement will be e-mailed to all PRCC and PRCC subcommittee members. YN encouraged all members to review.

Discussion/Status of Habitat Funds: An approximate total of \$2,624,000 (*note: this amount was adjusted following the meeting to reflect actual available dollars*) is available immediately, which includes two annual Habitat funds (BiOp and Settlement Agreement), and the NNI Fund.

Funding and Project Selection Process:

A. Review of Jan 13th Meeting Discussion: Rohr reviewed the discussion that took place at the previous meeting on January 13th (see meeting minutes for details).

B. Review/Discussion of Draft Project Selection Process (see D. Bambrick draft document, dated Feb 3, 2006): YN requested clarification of the proposal. The proposal would be to use the HCP process, with the PRCC Subcommittee able to focus on perhaps longer-term and larger-scale projects likely to come from the HCP solicitation process. YN suggested exploring the idea of combining HCP and PRCC Habitat funds in some way. Rohr pointed out that the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee has flexibility on how the funds are used. USFWS commented that language in the proposal indicates there is more than adequate funds to cover all priority projects, and questioned whether it should be worded that way. NOAA clarified that the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee does not anticipate spending all of the funds on projects selected through the HCP solicitation process, though excess projects through the HCP could be focused upon. Rohr suggested refining language in the proposal at a later date and encouraged the group to stay focused on how to use the money. WDFW suggested a one-day retreat where agency representatives and their Habitat Subcommittee alternates intensely focus on targeted geographic areas for habitat restoration projects. YN suggested reviewing the BPA solicitation process and how it fits into NOAA Fisheries' Salmon Recovery Plan

and Biological Opinion. USFWS suggested the initial retreat only be between subcommittee representatives. CCT stated that NOAA's proposal provides a significant opportunity because of its flexibility in terms of timelines, and that funds can be used as desirable projects present themselves. CCT would like to see a project proposal form available soon. NOAA disagreed with such a formal approach. CCT clarified that the standardized form would only be for those who approach the subcommittee. The form would include the basic information the subcommittee would need to make an informed decision about the project. In effect, the form would be the proposal brought to the group. WDFW would like to see decisions made about how to spend the money, prior to any sort of solicitation process.

YN proposed an internal spreadsheet for the subcommittee to use called a "Tributary Fund Schedule," stating this proposal would allow the public to understand the focus of the subcommittee. The spreadsheet calculates all available habitat funds from Grant, Chelan and Douglas PUDs and outlines a spending schedule through 2013, with carryover funds added to annual contributions. YN will send the implementation schedule to subcommittee members. NOAA expressed concern that such a schedule limits the subcommittee's project selection flexibility and that it is premature to plug in project types to the schedule. YN stated the schedule will simply help organize the kinds of projects the group hopes to fund. WDFW agreed the proposal is an organized way to pinpoint desirable projects and directed funding. WDFW reiterated the need to keep projects in line with the Salmon Recovery Funding Board and the RPAs of the Federal Biological Opinion. NOAA indicated the proposed "Tributary Fund Schedule" is not useful for prioritizing project selection, only a helpful accounting tool. NOAA reiterated that the group needs to maintain as much flexibility as possibility. YN indicated flexibility can be built-in to such an implementation plan. NOAA stated they would rather keep the entire \$2.624 million flexible. USFWS requested that the HCP portion of Habitat funds be left out of the conversation as to how to spend PRCC funds.

C. **Summary/Next Steps:** USFWS proposed that the subcommittee's next meeting be held as a retreat to begin pinpointing projects. WDFW suggested the meeting focus on what projects have already been selected and funded through the HCP and BPA, and also look at the Salmon Recovery Funding Board implementation strategy for background information. Discussion on those issues could lead to how funds could be better spent. NOAA proposed taking a slower approach to spending the funds, with the flexibility of funding projects that need quick action, including land acquisition, as they arise. (CCT and USFWS requested further information on NOAA Fisheries' suggestion that the subcommittee consider Skookumchuck Creek land acquisition). While USFWS agreed with the flexibility factor, the agency would like to have each subcommittee representative bring one or two preferred projects to the table for discussion. Grant PUD agrees with such a brainstorm approach. The subcommittee agreed that discussion of the process will also occur. Grant PUD Natural Resources Director Steve Brown will provide information on the Settlement Agreement with the subcommittee, in addition to funding administration, at the next PRCC Habitat Subcommittee meeting.

Discussion occurred concerning how to handle proposals that may arise. NOAA would like to see an informal, unstructured process, concerning gathered information and

selection. YN, CCT, USFWS and Grant PUD agreed. CCT will draft an informal project proposal form and send to committee prior to the next meeting. Each subcommittee member will bring one or two preferred projects/ideas to the next meeting for discussion on how to handle proposals. Rohr suggested the discussion focus upon the draft project proposal form (especially if it is involved), the subcommittee members' one or two preferred projects, and walking through exactly how the subcommittee would address proposals and other questions that may surface. Rohr suggested this be a focused discussion to identify and work through any issues that may arise in the process of project selection.

Committee Administrative Review:

- “Draft PRCC Habitat Subcomm Operating Procedures”
- “Draft PRCC Habitat Subcommittee Policies and Procedures for Funding Projects”
- “Draft PRCC Habitat Plan”

Next Meeting: March 9, 1 to 5 p.m., Chelan PUD auditorium.