



PRCC/PRCC Hatchery Combined Meeting

Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2006 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Grant PUD SeaTac Office

PRCC Members

Scott Carlon/Bryan Nordlund, NOAA Fisheries
Carmen Andonaegui, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)
Steve Parker/Bob Rose, Yakama Nation (YN)
Jerry Marco, Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT)
Carl Merkle, Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR)
Brian Cates, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Tom Dresser, Grant PUD
Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc., facilitator

PRCC Hatchery Members

Kris Petersen/Mike Delarm, NOAA Fisheries
Kirk Truscott, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)
Tom Scribner, Yakama Nation (YN)
Jerry Marco, Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT)
Carl Merkle, Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR)
Dave Carie, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Russell Langshaw/Chris Carlson, Grant PUD
Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc., facilitator

PRCC Meeting Agenda

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Approval/Finalize Meeting Minutes
 - A. Nov. 29, 2005
- III. Meeting Management
 - A. Draft Meeting Protocols
- IV. UPDATES
 - A. 2006 Juvenile Steelhead 3-D Acoustic Tag Survival Study
 - B. Wanapum Dam Future Unit Bypass
 - C. Wanapum Advanced Turbine Operations
 - D. Priest Rapids Turbine Operations
 - E. Priest Rapids Top-Spill Bulkhead
 - F. Avian Control
 - G. Video Counting
 - H. OLAFT
 - I. Northern Pikeminnow Removal
- V. Next meeting: Feb. 22, 2006, SeaTac, 9 a.m.

PRCC Hatchery Meeting Agenda

- VI. Approval/Finalize Meeting Minutes
 - B. Dec. 15, 2005
 - C. Jan. 22, 2006 conference call
- VII. Meeting Management
 - A. Draft Meeting Protocols
- VIII. Background Review of PR BiOp
- IX. Discussion of Nason Creek
 - A. Schedules

- B. Weir, acclimation, rearing facility
- C. Current status
- X. Discussion of White River
 - A. Schedules
 - B. Spawning, rearing, acclimation
 - C. Current status
- XI. PR Hatchery Schedule
- XII. Discussion of Strategy/Decisions
- XIII. Public Relations Strategy
- XIV. Next Meeting: Feb. 16, 2006, SeaTac, 10 a.m.

FINAL MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: Jerry Marco, CCT; Chris Carlson, Grant PUD; Russell Langshaw, Grant PUD; Brian Cates, USFWS; Chuck Peven, Chelan PUD; Scott Carlon, NOAA Fisheries; Curt Dotson, Grant PUD; Carmen Andoneagui, WDFW; Tom Dresser, Grant PUD; Shannon Lowry, Grant PUD; Denny Rohr, facilitator; Tom Scribner, YN; Kirk Truscott, WDFW; Keith Keown, WDFW.

Action Items:

- Grant PUD will request further clarification of calculations from John Skalski concerning survival estimates greater than 100 percent in the 2005 Yearling Chinook PIT-Tag Evaluation Report.
- YN and WDFW requested a written update on status of reports/minutes (attach update to minutes).
- Grant PUD will send electronic copy of 2006 Avian study plan to PRCC members (will also be posted to Gateway).
- Grant PUD will provide Video Counting System draft report to PRCC members electronically to begin a 30-day comment period.
- Grant PUD will provide an agenda prior to the Feb. 9 conference call.
- Grant PUD will provide electronic copies of the White River project schedule to the subcommittee on the Gateway.
- Delarm, Rohr, Scribner, Langshaw and Truscott will meet prior to the Feb. 16 meeting to outline a list of alternatives to initial direction of the captive brood program and key public relations messages.

Distributed Items:

- Evaluation of the Efficacy of Avian Predation Control Measures at Priest Rapids and Wanapum Dams 2006.
- WR Chinook acclimation plan for 1,650 BY2004 F2s.
- WR fish requirement project schedule
- Nason Creek facilities project schedule
- WR PR strategy outline
- Public outreach brochure

Welcome and Introductions – Rohr called the meeting to order.

Finalization of Minutes –Nov. 29, 2005 – finalized.

Meeting Management: Draft Meeting Protocols – work in progress.

Updates

- **Previous action items:** Per NOAA Fisheries' request, Grant PUD contacted Normandeau and Assoc., for clarification of its reference to 20% descaling of fish in balloon-tag studies. Normandeau staff indicated that 20% is the industry standard.
- In the 2005 Yearling Chinook PIT-Tag Evaluation Report, NOAA Fisheries requested clarification involving the listing of a survival estimate of 116%. Skalski indicated that for the individual sample sets, it is appropriate to use the 16% above 100% in your analysis, otherwise it would bias low the overall survival estimate. YN took exception to Skalski's use of 116% as a statistical

sample number in the report. Grant PUD agreed to obtain further information concerning the sample in question.

- A. **Survival Studies** – Work in progress
- B. **WFUFB** – Work is ongoing. Concrete is being poured – a 3,000-yard pour will occur Jan. 30-Feb. 3. General Construction replaced the project manager, which should put the project back on schedule for completion by Aug. 1, 2006. Turbidity is also being monitored as part of DOE water quality requirements. There have been no variances or exceedences to date. Grant PUD is planning a PRCC meeting in May to be held at Wanapum Dam, to update members on current BiOp-related Project activities.
- C. **Wanapum Advanced Turbine** – Unit No. 4 has been removed in preparation for installation of an Advanced Turbine. Replacement is on schedule.
- D. **Priest Rapids Turbine Operations** – Fish mode document handed out at the last meeting received no comment.
- E. **Priest Rapids Top-Spill Bulkhead** – Work is on schedule.
- F. **Avian Control** – 2005 Avian Predation received no comment and was finalized. The Committee was asked to review 2006 Study Plan and comment by the next meeting on Feb. 22. The plan outlines Grant PUD's proposal for avian control in 2006. Grant PUD's focus is on gulls, which have been determined to be the primary predator in the Project area.
- G. **Video Counting** – Grant is making positive progress on the new video-count system. Fish counting went real-time at Priest Rapids Dam on Aug. 8, 2005. A draft report will be distributed to committee within the next week.
- H. **OLAFT** – Grant PUD's original goal was to have 90-percent drawings by end of January, with bids going out in mid-February. The design team has incorporated design alterations requested by WDFW. The project is on schedule.
- I. **Northern Pikeminnow Removal** – Fish have been tagged and staff will begin the mark-recapture process in the spring.

Next meeting: Feb. 22, 2006, 9 a.m., SeaTac

Approval/Finalize PRCC Hatchery Meeting Minutes – December 15, 2005; January 11, 2006 – not yet distributed to members.

Draft Meeting Protocols – work in progress.

Background review of BiOp – The joint meeting was driven by the need for the PRCC to be updated on Grant PUD's current hatchery-related activities, for which critical decisions by the committee are required.

Discussion of White River

Schedules – The distributed project schedule outlines deadlines for Grant PUD's current fish requirements. Grant PUD is on schedule for early rearing for 80,000 fish at AquaSeed through tank modifications which can be completed in March. Grant PUD also proposes to release for acclimation 1,650 yearling BY04 F2 White River spring-run Chinook at a log jam near river mile 6.5 on the White River. Grant PUD needs a decision from the subcommittee to release the fish at the log jam. Grant PUD is working with Chelan PUD on location of a power source at the Napeeque Campground as a possible acclimation tank smolt release site. YN indicated support of the direct-stream plant approach, only because the number of fish with this release is relatively small. NOAA Fisheries indicated there is no need to focus on a more formal acclimation process for the small number of fish this year. YN indicated pre-spring may be too early for a direct-stream plant. Grant PUD plans to temper the fish slowly to take them from 60-degree to 30-degree water. WDFW suggested tempering at not more than three degrees per hour. Chelan PUD suggested testing alternative release methods to determine the most effective survival conditions. The fish have not been tagged, per prior subcommittee consensus. Marking fish in their present 60-degree water was determined to be unacceptable. YN suggested exploring the possibility of release to an off-channel pond (located on private property accessed by a U.S. Forest Service (USFS) road that would likely need plowing, located 500 feet from the pond), if conditions at the time of release make it possible. Grant PUD stated staffing issues require an immediate decision concerning the most acceptable approach. The subcommittee agreed to move forward with the direct-stream plant at the log jam as an acceptable alternative, but if conditions are amenable, changing to the pond acclimation site. CCT and WDFW expressed concern about timing of the release as it relates to maximum survival. WDFW requested either release alternative to occur by March 21, with further information concerning alternatives at the Feb. 16 meeting. NOAA Fisheries agreed with WDFW that, though the number of fish is small, the earlier release is optimal. USFWS concurred. YN offered equipment and staffing to help with the project.

Rearing capacity for 100,000 BY05 F2s at AquaSeed - Grant PUD is moving forward with its tank-modification plan for the extra space needed by mid-July.

Need for incubation for 165,000 at AquaSeed - current plans are to modify existing facility to increase the capacity for incubation.

Incubation for excess F2s - Grant will not expand the facility or chiller capacity at AquaSeed to eye-out excess eggs (200,000 to 400,000 BY06 F2s). If space cannot be found, the eggs will be put directly into boxes and be eyed-out at an alternative location. Currently, AquaSeed has space for 100,000 eggs. Grant PUD needs the off-site incubation facilities by September, which will require a decision by the subcommittee. Options for alternative locations are extremely limited. Grant PUD also needs a decision as to what to do with high ELISA eggs. WDFW pointed out the obvious link between reducing White River program and the requirements for Nason Creek (Grant's requirement for a combined 600,000 spring-run Chinook under the BiOp). Langshaw suggested a subcommittee conference call to discuss White River issues, following internal discussions with members' respective agencies. The conference call is scheduled for Feb. 9, 9 a.m. NOAA Fisheries requested an agenda of issues prior to the call.

Egg boxes - Grant PUD will be looking for remote USFS location without easy public access.

Acclimation for 80,000 BY05 F2s - Pursuing interlocal and access agreements concerning net pens in Lake Wenatchee. Staff will be working with landowners for the possible use of off-channel sites.

Acclimation for 165,000 BY06 F2s - Because there is currently no location (for a proposed new facility), a projected date of 2009 has been set, which will not allow for accommodation of the BY06 F2s. CCT requested working sediment ponds into the schedule. WDFW requested an electronic copy of the White River project schedule. YN indicated their willingness to assist in accelerating USFS permitting issues. Grant PUD applied for a USFS Special Use Permit for a potential rearing and acclimation site on Oct. 1, 2005.

Rearing for 40,000 F2s at alternative site - Have support from WDFW for use of Hurd Creek, pending co-manager issue resolutions. Also continuing to work on acquiring the Christmas Creek hatchery. The combination of both facilities would allow for accommodation of the required fish.

Alternative captive brood site is Grant PUD's goal. Will keep subcommittee apprised of any efforts in this direction.

White River PR strategy – Because of the interest generated by Grant PUD's activities in the White River area, the District has developed a public-relations strategy involving distribution of factual information to interested parties. The strategy involves distributing information through public meetings, brochures, media interviews, etc. YN stated they had met with NOAA Fisheries concerning the viability of the WR program. YN's initial position was that it did not endorse the captive brood program. The agency's concern is that if public opposition continues, the subcommittee then needs to explore what options there are. Prior to discussion concerning PR strategy, YN wants to discuss viability of the program. Grant PUD stated that while it is moving forward with its obligation under the BiOp, it shares YN's concerns. WDFW stated that the spring-run Chinook population in the White River is no better off now than it was 10 years ago, adding that, biologically, there is no justification for abandoning the captive brood program and that artificial propagation efforts are necessary to recover the population. WDFW also stated that the subcommittee needs to acknowledge that public opposition is going to occur and that it should move forward despite that opposition. NOAA Fisheries stated the agency is internally looking at the White River captive brood program as outlined in the BiOp. Since the BiOp was issued in May 2004, information collected since then and included in the draft recovery plan, in addition to data from recovery teams needs to be assessed in the agency's internal discussion concerning mitigation programs in the White River Basin. The agency plans to meet in early February to discuss the issues. Decisions and alternatives identified during that discussion will be shared with the PRCC Hatchery subcommittee. Chelan PUD suggests exploring the alternative of habitat as an alternative to building hatchery facilities. WDFW proposes that the three PUDs, fisheries managers and Tribes meet quarterly to discuss these and other issues. WDFW suggests a broader PR approach to people who are interested in the recovering the population. YN presented a "constructed habitat" proposal being used in the Methow coho program, involving enhanced habitat that also serves as an acclimation site. WDFW proposes a "state-of-the-art" acclimation facility that would be engineered with a naturalized design, adding they would like to discuss alternatives within the JFP arena. Grant and Chelan PUDs are meeting with representatives from the Northwest Audubon Society and the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust on Jan. 26 to provide information concerning the PUDs' activities in the White River. YN requested that the two reps be asked if there is any acceptable footprint for a White River facility. WDFW reasserted its stance that without supplementation, the White River spring-run Chinook will not be recovered. WDFW supports continuing supplementation in general in the Wenatchee Basin and captive brood specifically in the White River. Grant PUD is requesting specific direction from the PRCC subcommittee on which direction the program is going. WDFW suggested waiting on meeting with the public until further discussion occurs between the JFP and regulatory agencies on the direction of the program and suggested quarterly meetings for those discussions. WDFW stated that the lower, more populated area of the river are most likely off the board in terms of acquisition, but that acquisition of property at the 2.5 river mile and above is still a possibility. Rohr suggested further discussion at the next PRCC Hatchery meeting on Feb. 16. YN suggested compiling a list of options and providing factual information to interested parties. Rohr, Delarm, Scribner, Langshaw and Truscott will meet prior to the Feb. 16 meeting to outline a list of alternatives and key PR information.

Discussion of Nason Creek – A project schedule was developed by LGL with a timeline through the duration of the BiOp (2011). Grant PUD has a weir site identified and a 30-percent design is near completion. Discussion with the WSDOT will occur soon concerning access to the weir site. Grant PUD applied for a USFS Special Use Permit for this site on Oct. 1, 2005. YN indicated their willingness to help with the permitting process. Grant PUD clarified that even if the weir planning process is complete, the utility will not move forward with building the weir or moving fish until acclimation and rearing facilities are in place and the HGMP is complete.

Hatchery/rearing/acclimation facility – the Watson property has been acquired and Grant PUD will move forward with incubation facilities, followed by rearing and acclimation. The property was purchased without knowing what water is available following a risk decision by the Commission. Staff is currently working on water rights permitting. Grant is requesting approval from the subcommittee for moving a portion of the White River program there until a permanent White River facility is developed. YN expressed concern about conflicting priorities between the White River and Nason Creek spring-run Chinook programs if they were at the same facility, but it could not fully accommodate both programs. Grant PUD is also working on acquiring land for an acclimation facility.

PR Hatchery Schedule – Grant PUD has concerns with the PRCC subcommittee's ability to handle the workload of the Fish Settlement Agreement recently signed by NOAA Fisheries, CCT, USFWS and WDFW. By the next meeting, Grant PUD should have detailed info on the PR Hatchery upgrade.

CCT requested a combined meeting again with PRCC and PRCC Hatchery subcommittee.

Next meeting – Feb. 9 conference call 9 a.m., Feb. 16 meeting at SeaTac.