



FINAL MEETING MINUTES
PRCC Habitat Subcommittee
Tuesday, July 17, 2007
9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Douglas PUD Auditorium

PRCC Habitat Subcommittee Members

Chris Fisher, CCT	Bob Rose, YN
Carl Merkle, CTUIR	Dale Bambrick, NMFS
David Morgan, USFWS	Chris Parsons, WDFW
Ben Lenz, GPUD	Denny Rohr, Facilitator

Attendees:

Julie Yount, GCPUD
Ben Lenz, GCPUD
Chris Parsons, WDFW
Chris Fisher, CCT

Denny Rohr, Facilitator
Bob Rose, Yakama Nation
Dale Bambrick, NMFS
Casey Baldwin, WDFW

Action Items:

- Fisher will contact ONA to present additional information on the Okanagan River reconnection project at the next HSC meeting in August.
- Fisher will follow up on providing Grant PUD an invoice on the Omak Creek project so payment can be provided.
- Lenz indicated that Parsons should pursue the land ownership and management of the Godwin parcel by WDFW.
- Lenz will follow up with the Grant PUD auditor and attorney to finalize the USGS agreement for joint funding for LiDAR evaluation by Joseph Jones.
- Committee members were asked to discuss with their individual organizations who their management believes should make final funding decisions from the NNI Fund (PRCC or Habitat SC).

Distributed Items:

- Habitat Funds Account Balance Report – Rohr.
- Project Specification sheet provided by Chris Fisher on the Okanagan River reconnection to its former floodplain, restoring meanders and returning part of the channelized river back into a natural meandering path.

Decision Summary:

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July 17, 2007
FINAL mtg. minutes

- Grant PUD will have WDFW pursue ownership and management of the Godwin parcel. The Habitat Committee did not support a land swap with USFS for the desired weir site.
- The Committee voted not to pursue purchase of the Napeequa 2.5 acre site through the Chelan Douglas Land Trust.

I. Welcome and Introductions (Denny)

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes (Denny)

- A. May 15, 2007; Parsons pg. 3 fund discussion section – need clarification. Will remove question to Denny. Approved with that change.
- B. June 5, 2007 Conference Call – Approved.
- C. Affirmation of David Morgan approving additional funding of LiDar data analysis (see Decision Summary of June 5, 2007 meeting minutes).
- D. June 19, 2007 Conference Call – Approved.

III. Report of Current Habitat Funds – SSA / BiOp

Rohr reviewed the June 30th Report of fund balances.

IV. Discussion of ONA Projects and Funding Requests

Rohr distributed a Project Specification sheet provided by Chris Fisher on the Okanagan River reconnection to its former floodplain, restoring meanders and returning part of the channelized river back into a natural meandering path.

The proposal asks for a cost-share between the NNI and the HCP tributary fund. Rose indicated his opinion that it would be much more efficient to take the funding from only one source.

Parsons stated that if she were to chose one large project as a priority, she found more habitat benefit to the McIntyre Dam removal above this reconnection project. Lenz questioned the timing of that project. A cost-benefit analysis should be complete by mid-August, with a proposal finalized in approximately September. Lenz indicated that this is a good example of an opportunity to earmark funds with consideration of the timing of annual funding, to present to the PRCC.

Bambrick would like to see a more complete presentation on the Okanagan River project. Questioned who is getting the administration fee. Fisher thought it would be ONA, but would check that out. Bambrick questioned why only 500 meters would be completed at a time, rather than the full kilometer. Fisher indicated the Water Management Group is limiting to half of the project at one time, with the remaining 500 meters after evaluating the effect (proof of concept approach). Lenz and Bambrick stated concerns with this approach, and believe it would be more cost effective to complete it all at once. Bambrick would like to see ONA come back with additional cost share options, and Rose indicated a more complete presentation would be helpful to share our concerns and share dialogue on the options. Fisher will ask that they attend the next HSC meeting (set for Monday, August 13, 1:00 pm, Wenatchee)

V. Omak Creek Culvert Replacement

Fisher reported the Colville Tribe put together a memo to the construction firm on their claim for additional funding and lawsuit against tribe. The contractor is

now indicating they are not pursuing the suit. Yount requested an invoice from CCT for the expenditures on the project so that payment can be released. Fisher will follow up.

VI. Hardesty Property

Morgan (not in attendance) has information on this project, so an update will be made at the next meeting. Bambrick indicated he had heard they were not interested in selling, but then changed their minds yet again.

VII. Godwin Property

Lenz indicated the Grant PUD lands staff has proceeded forward and the property on Nason Creek has been purchased. Lenz indicated that Grant PUD was not necessarily interested in managing the property. Lenz stated that there is a ¼-acre parcel located just above the Godwin parcel which Grant PUD has been looking at for a potential weir site. Discussion has been made regarding the potential to trade parcels with USFS to give them the 62-acre Godwin parcel to manage for habitat value, in exchange for the potential weir site. Discussion was held regarding what restrictions could be made on USFS for the property management and guarantee of long-term security. Parsons indicated the WDFW was the other option for the habitat management and that WDFW would be receptive to restrictions on the future management of the property.

Fisher questioned if the 62-acre Godwin parcel could be a potential weir site. Lenz stated no, it would not be a possibility. Bambrick stated that WDFW would be the preferred manager. Lenz stated that the USFS has high interest in obtaining White River parcels. He questioned if the committee would agree to obtaining a White River site for potential swap. Bambrick stressed that the USFS management programs can be questionable and would continue to have concerns.

Lenz indicated that Parsons should pursue the land management of Godwin. Parsons brought up the option of broodstock collection at Tumwater, rather than having a weir site.

VIII. Kahler Glen Property

Lenz indicated Kahler Glen has not responded to the \$75,000 offer approved by the HSC. With the purchase of the adjacent Godwin parcel, the Kahler Glen property is now landlocked. They have not yet made a counter-offer.

IX. Monitor Irrigation Diversion Improvements, Jones-Shotwell Project

Lenz reported Cascadia Conservation District has signed the Funding Agreement, so work will proceed in the fall.

X. NNI Fund Discussion

Rohr indicates he continues to work to complete a policy on the NNI Fund management. Rohr indicates the NNI Fund, in his opinion, is open to anyone wishing to fund a fish project to aid in mitigation. The PRCC would like to assert that they will be the keepers of the NNI account. Bambrick argues that the Habitat Committee should be the decision-making body. The PRCC believes that the Habitat Fund and the Habitat Supplemental Fund would be under the Habitat Committee, but that any one of the committees could use the NNI monies. Parsons explains that the NNI is set

up for early actions, will not always be in place, and that evaluation of survival/returns will have a direct effect on the amount in the fund by year 2011. Bambrick stated the purpose must be clear that the NNI Fund is not intended to fund strictly hatchery projects, but other survival improvement efforts. Parsons stated that finalizing the Habitat Plan will help to clarify the structure and decision-making processes. Rose states that the PRCC has a strong opinion on decision-making, and clarification is needed on whether the PRCC is an umbrella committee which has oversight over the subcommittees. NMFS holds the opinion that the Habitat Committee will be the decision-making body with regard to the fund spending, with the PRCC as oversight.

Rose stated that the PRCC would likely have very few projects proposed under NNI. Bambrick would like representatives of the Habitat SC to take the proposal back to their organization that the NNI Fund will be under the control of the Habitat Subcommittee (preferred option) or it will not, and if not, should be removed from the HSC agenda and reports as it is not for this body to consider. Parsons stated that at a minimum, the HSC should be given the opportunity to review project proposals so that they are kept aware of any commitments. Communication would be key. Parsons believes that the money should not just be left to sit. Bambrick states that he believes there is nothing wrong with letting the money sit until a worthy project is identified.

Rohr indicated the PRCC is looking at utilizing some NNI funds for a predation study. If the PRCC takes this forward, would Bambrick then like to see it approved by the HSC? Bambrick indicated yes, that would be the preferred option, rather than pretending the HSC has the authority, then having the PRCC make a different decision. Parsons stated there is a dispute resolution process. Rose indicated that perhaps it would be best decided based on the type of project, i.e. within the reservoir, or not.

Bambrick asked the question, does the committee believe that the HSC is equipped to make the decisions on all of the accounts? Rose indicated strictly interpreting the Settlement Agreement, he is not clear. Without regard to the language in the agreement, he does believe the committee is capable of making decisions. Parson stated that she believes the HSC is capable, and Andonaegui has indicated she is on the fence with this determination. Fisher indicated there has been some concern voiced within his organization as to "reigning in" the HSC, needing more oversight, but that he does believe it is simply because of the amount of money available (\$2.4 million).

Lenz indicates he would suggest working on the Habitat Plan and including information on all the proposed projects. Parsons discussed the predation study proposed by WDFW with relation to survivals intended by the NNI. She applauds having other options and looking at other strategic projects. Fisher indicated a concern that many projects to be proposed to the HSC in particular will be on a very large scale. It simply takes time to put such large projects together, in a manner that everyone will agree to.

Rohr indicates he has discussed this issue with several individuals, understanding that a decision should be made – who will make the ultimate decisions. He again stressed that it would be beneficial to have each member go back to their organization and discuss this subject with their PRCC member to assist in

making this determination. Lenz indicated that Tom Dresser would prefer having the PRCC make the NNI decisions.

Parsons stressed again the need to finalize the annual plans to outline what is intended to be spent annually, under what fund.

XI. Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation Presentation, Jenny Molesworth, USFS

Discussion was tabled at this time. Rohr spoke with Molesworth earlier today, who indicated she is unfamiliar with a project with relation to the Habitat Committee. Bambrick stated he was aware she was making a presentation to the HCP in August.

Parsons questioned if she was going to speak on the Hardesty property as well as the Heath property. Bambrick indicated the impression she was going to work with Morgan on these issues, but she was unable to offer any information when Rohr spoke with her earlier today.

XII. LiDAR

Rose indicated there have been some issues in putting together a Funding Agreement as opposed to the USGS required Cost-Share Contract. Because the USGS is at the end of their fiscal year, there is a time crunch to get this finalized in the near future in order to obtain the USGS cost-share portion for 2007.

Lenz indicated the Grant PUD Funding Agreement has been finalized internally and is ready to send to USGS, but concern that this will not meet USGS's needs for providing their share of the funding. Jones has indicated USGS can certainly sign the HSC agreement, but it does not guarantee the USGS funding. Rose indicates it would be prudent to have them run the Grant PUD funding agreement through the USGS process to see if the issues can be ironed out prior to the late August deadline to still get 2007 dollars currently available.

Rohr asked what topics should be outlined with Jones today. Rose stated he would like to briefly cover the USGS internal process to finalize the contract, followed by a presentation on LiDAR evaluation and study done previously by Jones and his colleagues.

Following a lunch break, Joseph Jones, USGS gave a presentation on work performed on the Dosewallips River.

Jones indicated data was evaluated using multiple lines of evidence to identify potential habitat, avulsed, migrated and overflow channels. In general, the remote sensing work performed had a much more successful rate of identifying abandoned channels than actual field observation. Jones also provided some very brief elevation analysis on the Nason Creek LiDAR. Discussion was held on the basic information LiDAR provides, how it can be analyzed and where it can be useful. LiDAR essentially acts as a laser range-finder using 100,000 points per second (in this instance) to create a surface expression of landscape features. Elevation data can then be evaluated to identify avulsed, migrated and overflow channels, as well as glides, pools and riffles.

Parsons questioned how the data the committee possesses can best be utilized. Baldwin indicated with respect to Nason Creek, identification of side channels and which would be most feasible for reconnection to best utilize the water volume would be one element. Baldwin questioned if the data is able to identify how

natural flows would have gone. Bambrick stated the point is not to necessarily to mimic natural flow, but rather focus on locations which can remain watered throughout the winter, without compromising overall flows. Rose suggested using the data to identify specific reaches on which to focus.

Jones indicated there is a gentleman giving a presentation to USFS next week who has developed software to filter out riparian volume using the raw returns, points filtered out when establishing surface elevations. This information is still being developed and has great potential.

Discussion held on the availability of the funds for 2007. Jones indicated he has until late in the week to firm up the commitment for 2007 funds. Lenz will again contact the Grant PUD auditor and attorney to resolve their concerns over the agreement language. Lenz suggested it may be of assistance to finalize the scope of work for the project in order to provide more specific terms. Bambrick suggested finalizing the work on the Wenatchee River first. The Bureau of Reclamation is currently focusing on Nason Creek, so this would be an area where we would want to focus effort on complementing the work they are doing, rather than duplicating efforts. Jones stated he has the ability to complete work on approximately 100 river miles for \$60,000. Focus could be on Icicle Creek in the lower Wenatchee Basin. Peshastin would also be a beneficial site. Fisher questioned the benefit if property owners would limit the potential for projects on the Peshastin. Bambrick pointed out there may be a benefit to bring information back to DOT. The final area to evaluate at this time would be the Wenatchee below Tumwater Canyon. Jones indicated these three reaches would be adequate for this year's evaluation, to be complete by October, provided he can get started in the very near future.

XIII. Additional Project

Lenz reported that Peter Hill, Trust for Public Land, has brought forward a proposal for \$250,000 for 2.5 acres for habitat project on the Napeequa, just adjacent to some recreational properties. Lenz questioned if the Tributary Committee has already provided funds for this area to the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust and what were they used to purchase specifically. There is the potential to create a border between the recreation area and the USFS lands on the other side of the parcel.

Fisher stated the cost was not worth the habitat benefits, due to the current high impacts. Parsons also voted not to proceed. Lenz will contact Peter Hill and indicated the HSC will not pursue this project.

XIV. Discussion of Next Meeting (Denny)

Next meeting set for Monday, August 13, in Wenatchee at 1:00 PM.