



Final Meeting Minutes

Priest Rapids Hatchery Subcommittee

Thursday, March 22, 2007

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Wells Engineering Conference Room

Douglas PUD

PR Hatchery Subcommittee Members

Kris Petersen, NMFS

Tom Scribner, Keely Murdoch, YN

Dave Carie, USFWS

Carl Merkle, CTUIR

Jerry Marco, CCT

Kirk Truscott, WDFW

Russell Langshaw, GPUD

Denny Rohr, Facilitator

ATTENDEES:

Kris Petersen, NMFS*

Dave Carie, USFWS*

Kirk Truscott, WDFW*

Russell Langshaw, Grant PUD*

Keely Murdoch, YN*

Chris Carlson, Grant PUD

Ben Lenz, Grant PUD

Charity Davidson, Grant PUD

Tom Scribner, YN* (by phone)

Greg Ferguson, Sea Springs

Denny Rohr, Facilitator

Shannon Lowry, Grant PUD

DECISION SUMMARY:

DISTRIBUTED ITEMS:

- White River spring Chinook program implementation schedule
- Nason Creek spring Chinook program implementation schedule
- User instructions for Grant PUD FTP site
- Proposed alternative to reference streams for evaluating supplementation programs II: Manipulating spawner composition based on origin
- White River/Nason Creek May 17, 2007 public meeting draft invitation letter
- BY06 Skaha Lake Sockeye Reintroduction Program Status Report

ACTION ITEMS:

- Petersen will provide comment on Feb. 23, 2007 meeting minutes. Minutes approved pending those comments.
- Rohr will send a copy of the revised coho language to Greg Ferguson
- Lowry will send a re-drafted newsletter to the subcommittee by Friday, March 23.
- Lowry will send White River/Nason Creek May 17, 2007 public meeting draft invite letter to subcommittee members, with requested revisions.
- Members will review and provide comment on Grant PUD's proposed M&E alternative objective.
- Petersen will notify members when Section 10 Permit and related Biological Opinion are issued.

- Langshaw will discuss installing the White River rotary screw trap prior to permitting with internal Grant PUD staff and notify the Yakama Nation of the decision.
- Langshaw will provide members with information concerning possible over-winter acclimation for summer Chinook at Dryden (Wenatchee) and Carlton (Methow) ponds, in addition to concerns with the potential Entiat program (by COB on Friday, March 30). Rohr will schedule a conference call for Thursday, April 5 at 2 p.m.
- Grant PUD staff will provide for subcommittee consideration a list of all current and anticipated rearing densities at Priest Rapids Hatchery.
- Petersen will notify members if the White River and Nason Creek spring Chinook programs are included in an Environmental Impact Statement being drafted for Columbia Basin hatcheries.
- Langshaw will discuss installing the White River rotary screw trap prior to issuance of the Section 10 permit with internal Grant PUD staff and notify the Yakama Nation of Grant PUD's decision.

MEETING MINUTES

- I) **Welcome and Introductions** – Rohr welcomed attendees.
- II) **Agenda Review** – Rohr reviewed agenda items with attendees.
- III) **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - A) February 23, 2007 – Approved pending approval from Kris Petersen.
- IV) **Action Items Review** – Rohr walked attendees through action items from the Feb. 23 meeting.
- V) **Scheduling and Planning Review**
 - A) White River HGMP Development – Lowry presented a draft schedule for White River spring Chinook program implementation. The schedule is designed to provide detailed coordination schedules for all of the PRCC programs under the Biological Opinion and Salmon and Steelhead Settlement Agreement. Petersen stressed the importance of input from Greg Ferguson, the contractor tasked with developing HGMPs for Grant PUD, also noting that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for all hatchery programs in the Columbia River is under development. Petersen will notify members if the White River and Nason Creek programs are included in that EIS. Ferguson noted that ESA documents urge submission of NEPA documents and that further discussion should occur concerning the possibility of NEPA on the White River and Nason Creek programs.

Truscott questioned whether USFWS' Biological Opinion for bull trout would cover activities under the White River HGMP. Langshaw noted that consultation would likely need to be reinitiated as facility development begins. Truscott requested clarification from the USFWS on what to expect. Attendees discussed the current status of the White River M&E plan. Langshaw stated that Grant PUD is working with the Hatchery Evaluation Technical Team (HETT) on pursuing the objectives involved in the Chelan and Douglas HCP plans, while simultaneously working on an alternative reference condition. Truscott noted the last draft of the HGMP included the M&E objectives. Petersen stated the PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee is supportive of the objectives as written in the latest draft, noting the HETT is currently discussing disease monitoring as it relates to the M&E plan. Petersen also stated that regardless of any ongoing M&E issues, it is vital that data be collected. Langshaw provided reassurance that Grant supports collecting of that data, but noted that much of the framework for the plan was

developed by WDFW and Chelan PUD. Grant PUD is only questioning those M&E objectives related to productivity (objectives 1 and 7). Petersen stated that the HETT is not in agreement with the M&E program in its entirety. Langshaw recommends holding off a policy decision on the M&E section of the HGMP until the HETT further evaluates the feasibility of reference streams (end of April). Langshaw anticipates the issues will be resolved and that a complete and final M&E plan will be provided to Ferguson for insertion into the White River and Nason Creek HGMPs. Truscott noted that while the majority of the objectives are already solidified and agreed upon among the HETT, the PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee will make the final determination.

Members also discussed what level of facility designs should be included in the final HGMP. Petersen noted that the public in the White River has significant concerns with what the facilities will look like and requested that conceptual designs be issued to the public with a request for assistance on refining the designs and/or locating appropriate sites for the facilities. Petersen urged Ferguson to help facilitate the issues with the public. Scribner noted that providing preliminary designs to the public begins the dialogue which may result in alternative designs and reiterated the need to know what the public considers acceptable. Petersen agreed, noting that the "purpose and need" portion of the White River HGMP is critical. Petersen also noted NMFS' support for making the document public friendly, as long as all of the necessary information is included, including water quality, water quantity, space requirements, duration of acclimation and acclimation design concepts. Langshaw stated that when Grant PUD's contract with Ferguson is approved (an estimated two to three weeks) he will begin working with Grant PUD engineers on designs for acclimation ponds appropriate for locations in and out of a floodplain. These designs will be presented to the public. Ferguson asked if specific sites are required to be included in a final HGMP and how an identified release sight will impact where the adults return. That specific issue also needs to be discussed with the public, stated Petersen, noting that the "purpose and need" section of the HGMP needs to be clear on the optimal locations for facilities. Available property is extremely limited in the White River basin, stated Langshaw. Attendees also discussed the intent of a HGMP, with Petersen stating that the HGMP format should be appropriate for a Section 10 application. Members further discussed scenarios which would possibly result in a categorical exclusion from NEPA. Petersen stated that there will be some NEPA analysis necessary.

Attendees also discussed the need to apply for water rights as soon as possible. Murdoch suggested doing a cost-estimate to expedite water rights. Langshaw noted that Grant PUD had researched the possibility and discovered that all water rights would have to be purchased from the town of Plain up through the White River basin.

Attendees also discussed document flow for HGMP drafts. Ferguson will be the "lead" and the distributor of all drafts.

- B) Nason Creek HGMP Development – Lowry will send revised draft copies of the WR and NC schedules to members by Wednesday, March 28 with a request for comment.
- C) Public Workshops – a draft invite letter for a planned May 17 meeting is under review by the subcommittee. Kris Petersen will request NMFS internal review of the letter and provide comment by March 30. Members discussed the intention of the meetings.

- D) WR/NC Newsletter – The newsletter is designed to notify residents that fish were moved to the net pens in Lake Wenatchee during the week of March 26-March 30. A revised draft will be sent to subcommittee members on Friday, March 23.

VI) Reference Condition Proposal from Grant PUD – Langshaw presented a revised proposal for an alternative to using reference streams for evaluating supplementation programs. The alternative proposal involves manipulating spawner composition based on origin. The treatment scheme in the alternative includes conducting an experiment on a four-year cycle, with years 1 and 2 conducted as the reference condition, involving no marked fish being allowed to spawn and determining the pedigree of unmarked fish. Years 3 and 4 would involve using a treatment allowing hatchery fish to spawn and multiple treatment levels for gradient analysis. Langshaw noted the M&E objectives are essentially identical to those in Chelan and Douglas PUDs' M&E plan. Langshaw explained that during treatment years, hatchery origin spawners would be allowed to reach the spawning grounds and spawn naturally in predetermined percentages with natural origin spawners. Members discussed the alternative proposal. Langshaw stated the approach is designed to demonstrate success rather than failure and eliminates many confounding factors, in addition to other benefits. He requested members review and comment on the technical aspect of the proposal, suggesting policy decisions be made at a later time. Rohr requested comment by the April 19 meeting and welcomed questions from members in the interim.

VII) White River

- A) Marking Update/Discussion – BY06 fish are on station. Fish which were too small were segregated and will be marked at a later time.
- B) Status of Sec 10 Permit – The NEPA analysis document (Environmental Assessment) is awaiting final signature at the regional level. When the EA is signed it will be transmitted to Washington, DC for signature. Petersen will notify subcommittee members when that occurs. Following signature of the EA, the Section 10 Permit and related Biological Opinion can be signed at the regional level. Petersen estimated that both would be issued within three weeks, noting comments were received on the draft permit and EA. Petersen recommended installing the rotary screw trap as river conditions allow, but stated that no trapping should occur until the Section 10 Permit is issued. Langshaw stated he would discuss installing the trap prior to permitting with internal Grant PUD staff and notify the Yakama Nation of Grant PUD's decision.
- C) Net Pens Update – Langshaw noted the lake is no longer frozen and fish will likely be transferred to the net pens by WDFW crews next week.
- D) Bull Trout BiOp Update – The USFWS Biological Opinion on the effects of the Priest Rapids Project relicensing on Bull Trout was issued on Thursday, March 14.
- E) 2007 Release Program – Grant PUD staff will conduct snorkel surveys soon. The original intent of the snorkel survey was to gather a population estimate, but was revised to a presence/absence survey because of emergence issues.
- F) Site evaluation – Grant PUD is reviewing three additional parcels on the White River. About half of a 67-acre parcel located a mile upriver from the Sears Creek Bridge is out of the floodplain. LiDAR data will be reviewed soon, possibly followed by an appraisal. Another 5-acre piece appears to only have about ½ acre of buildable property, so will likely not work, noted Langshaw. Another 20-acre sight is adjacent to the McComas Short Plat, but appears to be largely wetlands. LiDAR data will also be reviewed for this parcel. Truscott suggested pursuing possible land swaps with the U.S. Forest

Service. Langshaw noted that while such lands swaps are complicated because activities must be consistent with the Forest Plan and also be consistent with other land swaps, Grant PUD is exploring the possibility.

VIII) Nason Creek

- A) Property review/update – Lenz updated members on properties for proposed facilities in the Nason Creek basin. Water evaluation continues at the Cascade Gardens and Squadroni properties. Additional site opportunities are also being pursued.

IX) Priest Rapids Hatchery

- A) Update/Review of incubation/office complex facility design – Carlson presented an update on the Priest Rapids Hatchery expansion and renovation project. A new adult holding area would allow the fish to bypass the existing trap (which required truck transport). An existing shop and feed area will be converted to a sturgeon facility. New shop and feed areas will be built into the new facility. The incubation building is attached to the renovated administration space by a covered walkway. Carlson noted that bunk rooms will be kept in the office space until permanent housing can be addressed. The incubation building design now includes a disinfection room, although WDFW's fish health staff has indicated in writing that the room is not necessary. Carlson also presented plans for raceways. Screens within the raceways allow for changing the capacity of each space. Truscott noted the difficulty with keeping the screens clean. Truscott questioned whether the number of raceways allows the space needed for marking, and also noted WDFW's primary concern that the hatchery has sufficient water to maintain the current densities for mitigation fish. Truscott requested that all current and anticipated rearing densities be made available for subcommittee consideration.

X) Summer Chinook Program – Percentage Tributary Split

- A) Grant PUD comments and further committee discussion – Grant PUD is internally discussing the JFP's recommendation of the splits for the summer Chinook program (Wenatchee 30%, Okanogan 30%, Methow 30%, and Entiat 10%). Grant PUD noted its concern about an Entiat program when the Entiat River is being looked at as a reference stream. Carie noted the USFWS Hatchery Review Team's determination that the Entiat Hatchery would not be able to handle such a program, but that potential use of the Entiat Hatchery for acclimation could be presented to the regional USFWS office. Grant PUD is also concerned about the likelihood of a summer Chinook fishery in the Entiat. Petersen noted that a summer Chinook fishery in the Entiat is a fish management issue, and not one on which Grant PUD can weigh in. Langshaw noted Grant PUD's request that such issues be considered by the JFP. Truscott noted that mitigation is in part to compensate for lost fishing opportunities. Langshaw stated that M&E on the Entiat is also a concern. Langshaw clarified that Grant PUD is not willing to fund a new facility that does not contribute to fisheries in the Entiat and is additionally concerned about non-target interaction with spring Chinook. Truscott noted that further discussion would occur among JFP members. Langshaw also noted that while Grant PUD is moving forward with the 30-30-30-plus percentage split between the Okanogan, Wenatchee and Methow programs, the District also has concerns about over-building facilities for those three programs in the event Chelan PUD's mitigation requirements are reduced in 2013. Grant PUD will continue internal discussion. Scribner requested Langshaw explore whether Dryden (Wenatchee) and Carlton

(Methow) could be made suitable for over-winter facilities. Rohr will schedule a conference call for Thursday, April 5 at 2 p.m. for additional discussion. Langshaw will provide a list of Grant PUD's concerns over a potential program in the Entiat to subcommittee members by COB Friday, March 30.

XI) Sockeye

- A) Skaha Lake Plan – Carlson provided an update on the status of the BY06 Skaha Lake sockeye. A total of 1.6 million eggs were taken from 656 females and 690 males from September through November 2006. Approximately 90 percent of the spawned fish were held overnight in streamside net pens, with eggs and sperm transported to the Shuswap Falls Hatchery and incubated. Eggs were hatched Jan. 18-Feb. 5. By early March 2007, 1.510 million alevin were being held in incubators. Survival from green egg to alevin is 99.3% survival. All alevin were thermally marked in February. Calcein marking of the fry is expected to occur the week of April 30, with the fish released the week of May 15. An upcoming celebration will recognize the Okanagan Nation Alliance's long-term contracts with Chelan and Grant PUDs. All subcommittee members are invited to attend. Carlson also noted that the BY04 final report was sent to subcommittee members on March 8. It is also available on Grant PUD's FTP site. Truscott asked if the current program meets the mitigation requirements for both Chelan and Grant PUD. Langshaw noted no calculations or discussion has yet occurred.

- XII) Update on USFWS Hatchery Review Process** – Carie stated that the Leavenworth report is not yet complete because the Hatchery Review Team (HRT) has been assigned to other priority tasks. USFWS was approached by Grant PUD with a request for capacity to take on entire White River program. The HRT looked at all USFWS facilities and sent a recommendation to the regional office, determining that by using both the Little White Salmon facility and the Entiat facility (for the F2 portion of the program), there would be sufficient space to handle the entire program. Carie noted that further USFWS internal and JFP discussions will occur. Murdoch noted YN's concerns with putting White River spring Chinook at the Entiat Hatchery, due to straying concerns. Carie noted he has been highly removed from the issue due to his role as a member of the PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee. Langshaw noted that the USFWS has indicated it wants an indication of support from the co-managers and the PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee before a final decision is made. Carie noted that by the April 5 conference call, a letter from USFWS concerning the request for consideration would be sent to co-managers. Scribner clarified that Grant's request was not specific to use of the Entiat facility.

- XIII) Update of Grant FTP Site and PRCC Activities** – Grant PUD's FTP site for discussion documents, agendas, meeting minutes, etc. is up and running. All members have been given access and user instruction.

- XIV) Update of Spring Facilities Tour - 3 Committees Joint Meeting** – no discussion.

- XV) Next Meeting:** April 19, 2007, Grant PUD SeaTac office, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm