



**FINAL Meeting Minutes**  
**White River & Nason Creek**  
**WORKING GROUP MEETING**  
**Priest Rapids Hatchery Subcommittee**

Thursday, July 19, 2007  
Howard Johnson Inn,  
Leavenworth

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:**

Kirk Truscott, WDFW

Dave Carie, USFWS

Keely Murdoch, YN

Curt Dotson, GCPUD

Russell Langshaw, GCPUD

Greg Ferguson, Consultant

Denny Rohr, Facilitator

John Soest, NCW Audubon

Tom Clark, Advocate

Dick Rieman, Wild Fish Conservancy

## **AGENDA**

### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Rohr had attendees introduce themselves around the room, and introduced Kris Petersen and Rob Jones of NMFS who participated via conference call.

### **II. Agenda Review**

Rohr briefly reviewed today's agenda.

### **III. White River and Nason Creek Activities**

#### **A. White River Update:**

Langshaw indicated that based on the last Working Group meeting input, some modifications were made to draft site plans to the McComas site. A revised drawing was presented and the details discussed. The revised drawing incorporates a low fence (4 ft) surrounded by a hedge row for aesthetics. Another concern had been the pad for the intake structure. Two options were reviewed, one with a submersible pump, maintaining the current bank formation. The other would be a vertical turbine option, which would require a motor that is not submersible and must be built above the flood plain. The submersible option is the preferred at this time.

Clark questioned the problem of sand accumulation at the intake location. Ferguson stated sand traps would be incorporated into the pipeline. Clark indicated an option could be incorporating a settling pond prior to the intake.

Soest asked how the bank profile would be maintained. Ferguson stated there is currently a good deal of riprap in the current location, and additional or relocated riprap would likely be a key component.

Discussion was held regarding the intake screen and the intent to utilize periodic air "blasts" to keep debris buildup from accumulating on the screen. Langshaw explained this would be less of a blast, more of a puff of air to float debris into the current to be carried downstream. Dotson questioned the size of screen, and Ferguson stated the criteria would need to be looked at, but the screen mesh is likely about 1mm.

Soest expressed continued concern regarding flooding of the site. Murdoch would suspect there would be some benefit to the revegetation and habitat improvements. Dotson stated there are options for modeling in order to evaluate effects of design options. Langshaw stated the prior owner had not appeared to plan out the riprap placement. Ferguson also stressed that a good deal of the erosion of the current site is due to lack of vegetation caused by the pasturing of livestock at the location. The livestock themselves contributed to increased erosion. Revegetation will be an early implementation key.

Langshaw stated there are current plans to remove the old corral, apple crates and other decrepit structures currently on the site. Grant PUD staff are working through the site evaluation requirements to complete this task.

Soest questioned how the water return would be structured, or if it could be biofiltered through the wetlands. Reiman asked about the discharge water and what considerations would be considered to limit chemical impacts and pollution to the river. Langshaw stated the fish numbers within this program are far fewer (150,000) than that of the Leavenworth Hatchery, and well below the current permit exemption levels. The time frame for the fish being in the facility will also be late fall through the winter and into early spring. The growth rates of smolts throughout the winter is quite slow, so feed rates will be low. Low phosphorous foods will likely be utilized. Reiman stated the 150,000 fish numbers would create very little concern, and wetlands discharge would likely take care of all phosphorus concerns.

Soest stated there was a recent article concerning high pollutant levels in the Wenatchee River fish stocks, causing great debate at the Wenatchee Watershed group.

Dotson stressed that Grant PUD and the agencies involved in this project have been very involved in researching current techniques and new technologies.

Soest expressed a positive step is revegetation and riparian planting and the group is welcome to continue that work in other areas of the White River. Truscott stressed that the PRCC Habitat committee is looking for such projects. Langshaw further indicated more coordination with the Habitat committee will be discussed to incorporate habitat focuses within the hatchery programs.

Reiman asked if the McComas location was intended for imprinting these fish. Langshaw indicated the fish would be moved to the site as pre-smolts and be released in the spring as 18-month-old fish that were overwintered at this location or potentially at an acclimation site further upstream.

Reiman asked where the broodstock would be collected for this program. Truscott stated there is not currently technology to determine origin of the fish collected at Tumwater with sufficient certainty. At this time, collection would have to occur within the White River to ensure origin.

Langshaw indicated the committee is inviting Brian Kennedy to address the committee to discuss techniques in determining origins using scale or otolith testing.

Langshaw presented information on some potential upstream acclimation sites. One site was RM 10.5, which would require a net enclosure and a long hose-fish delivery line (approximately 500 feet) because of restrictions preventing close access by truck to the river. Dotson indicates there may be the option of helicopter transport as well.

Langshaw indicated there are three other options being looked at. One is on Tall Timbers where a side channel would produce a pond during high flows in the spring; one site which has a pond which would require reconnection to a side channel; and one other which would require creation of a pond, requiring additional permitting issues be addressed.

#### **B. Nason Creek Update**

Langshaw reported a site is being evaluated for ground water approximately 1 mile upstream from the Cascade Gardens site. This could potentially accommodate a larger facility for adult holding and rearing, potentially a hatchery site. Soest asked about the recreation effects (kayaking particularly). Langshaw stated there would be little impact at this location.

Discussion was held on the potential for use of recirculation as a water option. Langshaw stated Grant PUD is looking into this option, but it is not the preferred option due to disease concerns, reconditioning of the water, etc. This option is used primarily in fish farm operations for food fish, but because this program is on listed species, particular attention is paid to every potential ill effect to the fish. Langshaw also indicated the plans are for a non-consumptive operation. Reiman clarified then that Nason Creek program differed considerably from the White River program. Langshaw indicated there is the potential for it to be more of a production facility, but Ferguson stated there remains the option to have this location serve simply as an overwinter site like the McComas parcel on the White River.

#### **IV. White River and Nason Creek HGMPs Review**

Rohr asked the group if they were able to review the HGMP documents and if any of the Working Group had questions they wanted to discuss today. Clark indicated he wanted to speak on the surplus fish issue. How they will be treated, released or destroyed. Clark indicated in the HGMP there were several options listed. Truscott indicated that there is not an expectation with the size of the program

that a surplus would result. Broodstock collection would be monitored closely to have a reasonable return in balance with natural returns. A balance will be necessary to limit impact to the wild returns. Truscott conceded that a harvest could potentially be a solution to limit hatchery excesses to limit wild impact.

Clark stated there would always be an effort to overestimate in order to create a viable returning population in order to get a viable fishery. Truscott indicated this program would be only one component in the recovery of this upper basin stock, and many other components would have to come together to create such a strong return to create true recovery and harvest.

Clark stated a concern that he does not see full recovery without long-term maintenance of this program. Dotson stated there are several programs being implemented at the hydro projects for fish survival, predation limitation, bypass projects, and many other measures to aid in the passage of these and other species through the projects. Dotson indicated there is no question that there are impacts to fish, so many programs are being implemented concurrently to mitigate the impacts.

Clark stated that he appreciated Grant PUD's willingness to admit an impact to fish results from dam operations. He also stated that the public could become better aware that consumers have role in the impacts, not simply the utilities. Information on habitat restoration, revegetation, erosion issues, power consumption could be more available to outline the big picture to the public.

## **V. Discussion of August 15<sup>th</sup> Public Meeting**

Rohr reviewed the general purpose of the upcoming meeting with relation to public involvement on the HGMPs, facilities planning, updates to concepts, and to gain feedback. Rohr also indicates the Working Group will be recognized and the public will be informed of the meetings and input provided to date.

Soest stated that it would be beneficial to simply outline the HGMP requirements, what is the purpose, what will be done with it, and what is the opportunity for the public to learn more about it. He stressed the importance of not focusing on agency terms, but how will the public best be informed on the process – 1) What does it mean to them personally? 2) What can they do about it? Clark stated agreement with this approach, indicating it would perhaps help them see the benefits of these programs to the community.

Ferguson stated the committee wrestled with this concept, with conflicting requirements in completion of the document, satisfying agency requirements with a very technical document, but also making it readable by the general public.

## **VI. Next Meeting: August 16, 2007, 2:00-4:00 pm, location to be determined (likely the Howard Johnson Inn, Leavenworth)**