



FINAL Conference Call Minutes
Priest Rapids Hatchery Subcommittee
 Thursday, Oct. 4, 2007

PRCC Committee Members

Kris Petersen, NMFS	David Carie, USFWS
Jerry Marco, CCT	Russell Langshaw, GCPUD
Tom Scribner, Keely Murdoch, YN	Carl Merkle, CTUIR
Kirk Truscott, WDFW	Denny Rohr, Facilitator

Participants (*denotes PRCC HSC member)

*Kirk Truscott, WDFW	Curt Dotson, Grant PUD
*Russell Langshaw, Grant PUD	Greg Ferguson, Sea Springs Inc.
*David Carie, USFWS	Chuck Peven, Chelan PUD
*Kris Petersen, NMFS	Denny Rohr, facilitator
*Tom Scribner, YN	Shannon Lowry, Grant PUD

Action Items:

- **Langshaw will distribute a revised marking proposal for White River spring Chinook being transferred to the RM 10.5 site for acclimation.**
- **A site visit to the RM 10.5 upriver acclimation location will be scheduled.**
- **Michelle McClure and an HSRG representative will be invited to the November 15 HSC meeting.**
- **Questions to be addressed at the Nov. 6 HGMP discussion meeting at SeaTac will be outlined at the regular HSC meeting on Oct. 18.**

I. Agenda Review – Rohr reviewed agenda items. Discussion of the HGMP process and a supplementation and viability memo from the Inter Columbia Technical Review Team (ICTRT) were added to the agenda.

II. Proposed Alternative to Reference Streams - The group discussed a revised proposed monitoring and evaluation method involving manipulating spawner composition based on origin. The method was proposed by Langshaw as an alternative to comparing supplemented systems with spatial references. Petersen expressed her concerns that the White River is not closed system and that it isn't possible to isolate one age class for one brood to allow such an evaluation. One of the risks of hatcheries is that hatchery fish come back as a strong presence at age 4, making it unwise to remove the other age classes to isolate fish in that age class, stated Petersen. Truscott agreed with Petersen's concerns, stating that at both a technical and policy level, the proposal will not work as an evaluation method. Because all M&E objectives are included in the HGMP, Truscott noted the importance of NOAA Fisheries' agreement with the methods included in the plan. Members agreed to take the proposal off the table for discussion. Langshaw noted that the draft White River and Nason Creek HGMPs incorporate language which includes both the potential use of reference streams and alternative conditions, based on feasibility. The HETT is currently trying to determine appropriate reference streams for upper Columbia hatchery programs including the White River. The Entiat and two Idaho streams have been identified as meeting the minimum criteria based on correlations of adult productivity. No reference streams have yet been identified to measure the impacts of supplementation on juveniles, stated Peven, noting if a reference stream cannot be identified for the White River, an alternative method will need to be developed by the PRCC HSC.

III. USFS Proposal for Acclimation at RM 10.5 – Members discussed concerns with the rearing environment at the proposed acclimation site and its potential to put the fish at risk. Truscott questioned the large number of fish proposed for acclimation at the site (30,000) and also expressed concern over potential water flow, predator and debris issues. The proposal is for three groups to be marked (10,000 each) with coded-wire tags, with 5,000 of the first group PIT-tagged too, stated Langshaw. Based on capacity of the location, only the appropriate number of groups would be transferred to the site, stated Langshaw, suggesting monitoring of Dissolved Oxygen (DO) levels to address flow issues. Members also discussed the distance (500-700 feet) fish must travel through a pipe to get to the site. A second tank would be used to “flush” the fish through the pipe or hose, stated Langshaw. Truscott suggested that once the number of fish is determined by the HSC, he and Langshaw work on addressing fish culture and logistical issues. Scribner noted the Yakama Nation was also interested in the fish culture issues. Petersen stated that worst-case scenario is that the fish would be released from the site early. Upon transfer, the fish would be approximately 20 fish per pound in size, stated Langshaw, noting that from a spawner distribution evaluation standpoint, the more fish the better. If the number of fish is reduced, Langshaw recommended using only moderate ELISA level fish. Truscott noted he is more comfortable with using 10,000 fish. Members discussed monitoring protocols for PIT-tagged fish. The proposal is for all the fish to be fitted with CWTs, with a subset PIT-tagged to look at migration timing and smolt-to-smolt survival. Truscott suggested looking at whether the number of PIT-tagged fish needs to be increased in order to evaluate adult returns. Langshaw stated he would consider the recommendation in relation to the importance of the SAR value, suggesting evaluating distribution by PIT-tagging fish as adults when they come back through Tumwater and then collecting CWT data for PIT-tagged fish during carcass surveys. Scribner suggested starting with 10,000 fish at the proposed acclimation site and monitoring DO and flow conditions. If conditions are right, a decision could be made to transfer additional fish. Carie agreed with the approach, noting 10,000 is probably too small a number for evaluation purposes. Truscott and Petersen agreed to Scribner’s proposal. Langshaw noted that crews would be on site during the day and that the block net could be installed a week prior to fish transfer to address debris issues in advance. Peven suggested using a hardware cloth and sandbags to handle debris. Langshaw stated that a site visit is warranted to begin planning prior to the bid process for fish transport and culture services. Langshaw agreed with Scribner’s recommended approach but requested a determination on how many fish should be marked, suggesting marking of 20,000 fish. Truscott requested an amended marking proposal to accommodate a variable number of fish at the location. Langshaw will distribute the revised marking proposal. The group agreed to acclimate 10,000 fish at RM 10.5, followed by monitoring and, if conditions warrant, transferring additional fish. A site visit will be scheduled.

IV. HGMP development/questions – Because the White River/Nason Creek HGMP submission deadline is November 15, Ferguson requested HSC input on several near-term decisions which need to be made about the program, including guidelines for adult management. Rohr suggested scheduling a special meeting to discuss the issues. Scribner questioned the consequence on the overall program schedule requirement if the HGMP is delayed. The current Section 10 covers White River spring Chinook activities through 2010, stated Ferguson, questioning whether the permit could be extended if a delay occurs. While it’s too early to talk about a Section 10 extension, a delay of a month or two would not have an effect on the overall schedule, stated Petersen, noting a longer delay of six to eight months would have an effect. Petersen suggested meeting in early November to discuss the HGMPs. A decision on whether to delay submission of the HGMP will be made at that time. Members agreed to meet at Grant PUD’s SeaTac offices on Nov. 6 at 9 a.m. Members discussed whether information from NOAA Fisheries Scientist Michelle McClure and a member of the HSRG would be useful for the Nov. 6 discussion. Truscott noted that the NOAA Science Center will assist in review of the spring Chinook HGMP, so their input in advance would be useful. Following input by Kris Petersen and further discussion on scheduling, members agreed that McClure and an HSRG representative will be invited to the November 15 HSC meeting. Questions to be addressed on Nov. 6 will be outlined at the regular HSC meeting on Oct. 18.