



FINAL CONFERENCE CALL MINUTES

Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee

Wednesday, July 25, 2007

2:00 am – 4:00 pm

PRCC Committee Members

Scott Carlon/Bryan Nordlund, NMFS	Jim Craig, USFWS
Jerry Marco, CCT	Tom Dresser, GCPUD
Steve Parker/Bob Rose, YN	Carl Merkle, CTUIR
Carmen Andonaegui, WDFW	Denny Rohr, Facilitator

Call Participants:

Curt Dotson, Grant PUD
Ben Lenz, Grant PUD
Julie Yount, Grant PUD
Denny Rohr, Facilitator

Bryan Nordlund, NMFS
Carmen Andonaegui, WDFW
Scott Carlon, NMFS
Jerry Marco, CCT

Action Items:

- Dotson will give an update to the group within the next two weeks as to what major design issues have been identified causing delays in processing in the OLAFT, and the proposed solutions. He asks that Nordlund send a list of specific questions and concerns he should look into after speaking with Patrick.
- Dotson will look into the variances in adult counts between Wanapum and Priest Rapids and have a report at the next meeting.
- Rohr will revise the NNI Process draft document to clarify this committee's determination that spending from the NNI Fund will be approved by the PRCC, and spending from the Habitat Funds will be approved by the Habitat Subcommittee. Coordination between the two committees regarding proposed projects and account balances will be delineated, and Rohr will research including language in PRCC Operating Protocols, Section 5.7 Authorities, to include approval of NNI Fund spending.
- Carlon and Andonaegui will discuss the NNI/Habitat Fund responsibility with their Habitat SC representatives to clarify the language and the intent of the Settlement Agreement.
- Dotson will revise the draft RFP for predation study to clarify language that Grant PUD is requesting qualifications **and** proposals as outlined in Appendix D.
- Dotson requested responses and comments back on the draft RFP by the 15th of August so that a new draft can be finalized by the working group members by August 22 for resubmission to the PRCC members for approval at the August 29 meeting. Andonaegui agreed comments and edits could be sent to her and she will coordinate with the working group.

Distributed Items:

- Draft NNI Process sent via email today from Rohr.

- Draft RFP for Predation Study sent via email today from Andonaegui.
- Current photograph of WFUFB sent via email today from Dotson.

I. Approval/Finalize Meeting Minutes

- A. May 23, 2007-not yet distributed.
- B. June 27, 2007-not yet distributed – Rohr reported action items have been addressed and are in process.

III. Action Item Review:

- Predation study RFP development in process, working group meeting held to iron out details.
- Report on NNI and Habitat funding is being developed and will be presented next meeting.
- Rohr is working on additional coordination with subcommittees.
- Dotson responded to Nordlund's on concerns on the PR Off-Ladder Trap.

II. Summer Spill 2007

Dotson reported Summer Spill is proceeding as planned with few changes. There were some TDG exceedences (July 12-14), which correlates to hot weather during increased flows.

III. Wanapum Future Unit Bypass Update

Dotson sent a photograph to the group earlier today with the bypass dewatered. The contractor is proceeding with filling some cracks and pouring concrete for the incline gates and mechanism. Dotson stated it is looking good to complete in time for operation next year. Nordlund asked about the status of the ogee. Dotson indicated they are in the process of pouring the ogee, which is going in in layers and should be nearly complete.

IV. Update on 2007 PR Top Spill Behavior Study

Numbers have been reviewed and Dotson met with Skalski and HTI to determine how the report should be compiled. There may be a rough draft by the end of August, maybe September. Rohr asked if there could be a presentation at the September meeting with a 30 day comment period. Dotson said this was certainly a possibility.

V. PR OLAF Status

Dotson reported that he answered Nordlund's questions on the depression in the denile and the picketed leads, and he copied his responses to the group. At that time the operations of the trap had not yet begun. WDFW has now begun trapping on Tuesdays and Thursdays. There have been some small component tweaks. There is a mesh or netting over the denile which has been covered over more fully to stop larger fish from jumping out.

Adjustment of flows have not fixed the depression in the false weir, which has resulted in some smaller fish hanging out in this depression for extended periods. Flow distribution baffles are being put into place. Two work orders were put out earlier in the week to correct these issues. Dotson will have a better update at the next meeting.

Andonaegui stated a concern that WDFW stated during high volumes of fish passage, there may be too long a holding period before fish are processed through. Jacobs has been engaged in evaluation and modifications are being considered. Dotson stated one of the chutes

may be changed, options are being considered for a temporary fix for this year and/or a permanent fix for next year.

Andonaegui stated that the processing taking too long is resulting in a lower percent of sampling – preference would be 10% of the run sampled, and may only be getting 7% or less. WDFW staff may need to complete sampling on more days to increase the numbers. WDFW staff are scrambling to come up with a solution, but she noted no one saw this as a potential issue during the design phases.

Dotson asked if additional staff would help process faster. Andonaegui stated no, delays are due to facility design, not staff processing. They are looking at an additional day of sampling to make up the gap, but budgeting may be an issue.

Nordlund asked if the processing table was the issue, or if three people to work the trap would fix it. Andonaegui stated it was due to not being able to process the fish through fast enough. Nordlund will speak with Patrick _____ to determine what the issues may be as far as design flaws.

Dotson will give an update to the group within the next two weeks as to what the design issues may be and fixes proposed. He asks that Nordlund send a list of questions and concerns he should look into after speaking with Patrick.

VI. Video Fish Counting Report

Dotson stated there is new hardware in place. The cameras have been upgraded to a security style camera. Lauver has reported this is working better, images are clearer, and things have been running smoothly. Majority of fish at this time are Chinook and sockeye, though there have been some steelhead. Two new counters have been hired and Lauver is still performing training. Dotson does not have an update at this time on the algae control device. Nicholls has reported there has not been reduced passage through this particular window so fish behavior does not seem to be affected.

Marco stated there seems to be a substantial difference in adult counts between Wanapum and Priest Rapids. Dotson indicated he will look into it. Discussed if the differences may be due to jack vs. adult counts, but this would not account for the full difference. It appears that numbers are considerably higher at Priest Rapids.

VII. Northern Pikeminnow and Avian Predation Programs Report

The number of birds are dropping but hazing continues. Still working on data collection and stomach evaluations. Lethally removed birds from Priest have been evaluated (318 bird stomach contents evaluated), 398 fish found.

From Wanapum, 253 stomachs have thus far been evaluated finding 15 lamprey, 150 CWT, no acoustic tags. This is good enough for stats

Andonaegui asked if Grant PUD staff have looked into the real-time study, funded by BPA being completed by the USDA staff. Dotson did not have information at this time.

NPM removal – to date almost 11,000 have been removed. Over 600 per week still being caught. CPUE data was not available at this time

Full reports on both programs will be finalized later in the year for the committee.

VIII. NNI Fund Discussion

Rohr referred committee members to the Draft NNI Process document he provided earlier today. He explained the Habitat SC has established an administrative process. He outlined the delineation being drawn between habitat projects and non-habitat projects. The draft suggests having all projects follow the procedures established by the Habitat SC. The Draft NNI Process

states the Habitat SC would be the group considering the funding of all projects to be paid from the Habitat Funds and/or the NNI fund, with recommendations by the PRCC on non-habitat projects.

Marco indicated this appears to be moving in the right direction, but has a concern that the Habitat SC would be making decisions on non-habitat projects. He is not comfortable with the subcommittee making these decisions and setting priorities. He stated appreciation for the caveat to have coordination between the PRCC and the Habitat SC to monitor spending.

Nordlund agreed with this assessment. Marco suggested habitat project approval should stay with Habitat SC. Andonaegui suggested having the proposals that are to be paid via NNI funds that are not habitat projects go through the PRCC for determination. Carlon indicated he agreed with Marco, that the control of NNI fund should rest with the PRCC. He suggested monthly or quarterly meetings to coordinate a list of proposed projects. During these coordination meetings it would be a good idea to review balances available and help determine priorities.

Nordlund stated that the purpose of the NNI fund is essentially intended for passage concerns and survival, and there is a concern that sinking all of those monies into habitat would not necessarily create the balance intended by the Settlement Agreement. It may certainly result in increased survivals as habitat is developed, but there are other avenues which should be pursued for passage through the pools. He stated the assumption should be made by the Habitat SC that there are not NNI funds available, and that they would need to approach the PRCC for any NNI funds that may be needed by the Habitat SC. Carlon agreed with this assessment.

Rohr summarized that Nordlund and Carlon suggested that all spending from the NNI fund should be under the jurisdiction of the PRCC, and that the Habitat SC should not count on this money being available, but the Habitat SC could request it if there are not survival projects the PRCC have in development to use the funds at a particular time.

Rohr further summarized the PRCC then does not wish to give up their decision-making authority, and the NNI should be under the control of the PRCC. Dotson stated he is in agreement and that the process should delineate not whether it is a habitat project or non-habitat project, but rather which fund it is to be paid from - NNI or Habitat Funds. Dotson agreed with the first paragraph of the draft process, agreeing that the process to obtain the funding via proposals is appropriate, and the process through the Grant PUD accounting system will continue as established.

Marco stated he agreed as well, that his interpretation of the agreement is that the decision-making process should be under the PRCC, but the tracking process to coordinate between the two committees is a good idea.

Andonaegui stated that projects proposed from the NNI fund should go through the PRCC, but if it is a habitat project, it should then go through the Habitat SC for consideration and recommendation. She commented there appears to be some disagreement as to the language of the Settlement Agreement, and there should perhaps be better communication within each agency to iron this out. Carlon stated he is willing to clarify this issue with the NMFS Habitat SC representative (Bambrick). Andonaegui will do so as well to the WDFW representative (Parsons).

Nordlund indicated that the language in 15.3 is fairly clear that Grant PUD will develop an annual plan in coordination with the PRCC and approval of the parties. Dotson agreed that the language does state that consultation will be with the PRCC (not its subcommittee).

Nordlund stated that it would likely be the Habitat SC who will bring habitat projects forward if they do not have enough funds left in the Habitat accounts. Carlon indicated it was very likely that NNI funds would be available, as he does not see the survival projects taking all the funds each year.

The responsibility of monitoring the accounts was discussed. Rohr will revise the NNI Process draft document to clarify. Andonaegui stated that it should be very clear how this process should work as part of the PRCC operating procedures, rather than debating this issue each month. Dotson stated there should be a Hatchery SC report, a Habitat SC report, and also a monthly financial report. Andonaegui suggested it should be rewritten to become part of the operating protocols for the PRCC, Section 5.7 on authorities of the PRCC.

Nordlund wished to emphasize project survival was a key element to the Settlement Agreement. He would like to see the projects delineated as habitat projects or **project survival** projects (rather than “non-habitat”). He further wanted to clarify that the PRCC has the expertise on projects on the mainstem, when the Habitat SC has the expertise on tributary work.

IX. WDFW Proposed Predation Study

A working group meeting on July 9th was attended by Dotson, Dresser, Lewis, Andonaegui and Bob Rose.

Intent of the work would be to build off the previous work done by Grant PUD during their relicensing evaluations, as well as the work in 1993 by Poe et al. Andonaegui stated the group is looking to summarize information for relative abundances on four key predator species and consumption rates and then determine absolute abundance estimates. She would like to have the committee members review the draft RFP and make a decision by the August meeting. Carlon stated that staff (Beth ?) at the Fish Science Center may be interested in assisting with finalizing this RFP, or may be interested in responding to the RFP. Andonaegui stated Teresa Liedtke at USGS has been of some assistance thus far. Carlon stated it would be beneficial to have the experts in the field offer assistance to formulate the appropriate questions.

Concern was addressed that utilizing these experts for formulation of the RFP may cause a conflict of interest if they then respond to the RFP. A private company could potentially claim unfair bid practices due to having background information prior to the bid deadlines. Dotson stated this could be potentially resolved by having the RFP slightly less defined, but allow the responses to the RFP help delineate the questions and eliminate the potential for conflicts of interest. Andonaegui stated the RFP is fairly solid at this time. Carlon stated agreement. Marco suggested that then perhaps an RFQ may be a better process to determine the most qualified candidate. The request at this time does need to be very clear to state Grant PUD is requesting not only **qualifications, but also proposals** as outlined in Appendix D. Dotson can make this change and resubmit it to Andonaegui. He requested responses and comments back on this draft by the 15th of August so that a new draft can be finalized by the working group members by August 22 for resubmission to the PRCC members for approval at the August 29 meeting. Andonaegui agreed comments and edits could be sent to her and she will coordinate with the working group.

X. PRCC Hatchery SC Report

Langshaw is not available today. Rohr stated the during the last Hatchery SC meeting, White River and Nason Creek HGMP drafts were discussed in great detail. The drafts are out for preliminary public comments. A public meeting has been set for August 15. The Working Group

met from 2:00-4:00, but only three outside individuals were in attendance. Marco indicated that Grant PUD compliance staff provided good information to the group on SEPA and NEPA processes. NMFS is looking at a request to waive the HGMP requirements for the sockeye program, utilizing instead the Sockeye Management Plan.

SOA 2007-4 was discussed in detail regarding the Priest Rapids Hatchery HGMP and M&E timeline. Agreement was not reached as to whether the time extension was intended for the HGMP **and** the M&E plan.

XI. PRCC Habitat SC Report

Lenz summarized last week's meeting. The Habitat Funds report was reviewed: \$1.8 million in the Habitat Supplemental Fund, \$2.4 million in the NNI Fund, and approximately \$400,000 in the Habitat Fund at the end of June. There are several projects pending including the \$470k Godwin property purchase and another property (Hardesty) in the Twisp River Basin being considered.

XII. Update on Hanford Reach

An update meeting via conference call is scheduled for August 1 to discuss the proposed 2007 spawning experiment. The 2007 plan calls for a double peak flow period, with redd counts to monitor the effects. The next regular Hanford Reach Working Group meeting is scheduled for the 13th of August.

XIII. Review of Grant PUD FTP Site and Operations

Yount indicated Grant PUD still has a 30-day limitation for document storage on the FTP site. The intent is to upload drafts to the FTP, but have final documents posted to the Grant PUD website, which is currently under redesign. It is slated to be operational in August, but may be delayed a bit longer.

Yount inquired about the group's ability to receive large files via email. Nordlund reported some size limitations to email, at approximately 5 MB.

Andonaegui stated that it is helpful to have access to files without having to download to her pc.

XIV. Next Meeting: August 29, 2007, 9 – 3:00, Grant PUD SeaTac

Rohr asked if a conference call format is acceptable to the committee at times, or if face to face is preferred. Andonaegui stated face to face is preferred. If PowerPoint presentations were involved, clearly it would be a face to face requirement.