



FINAL MINUTES

Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee

CONFERENCE CALL

Friday, March 9, 2007 - 9:00 a.m.

PRCC Committee Members

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

Participants: (*denotes committee member or alternate)

*Carmen Andonaegui, WDFW	*Tom Dresser, Grant PUD
*Jerry Marco, CCT	*Curt Dotson, Grant PUD
*Brian Cates, USFWS	Denny Rohr, facilitator
*Bryan Nordlund, NOAA Fisheries	*Scott Carlon, NOAA Fisheries
*Bob Rose, YN	Shannon Lowry, Grant PUD

DECISION SUMMARY:

- The PRCC approved SOA 2007-12 (Performance Standards Evaluations for Juvenile Steelhead SOA in 2007).
- The PRCC affirmed the February 28th approval of SOA 2007-14 (Northern Pikeminnow Study Plan)

ACTION ITEMS:

- Grant PUD will provide a 2007 study plan for the fish source evaluation to PRCC members by March 16. Further discussion and a request for formal approval of the study will occur on March 28.
- Information concerning potential affects of ultrasonic cleaning technology for Video Fish Count windows will be provided to the PRCC. An SOA approving the technology will be submitted and action will be requested at the March 28 meeting.

I. Agenda Review -

II. Steelhead Survival Study

A. **DECISION:** SOA 2007-12 (regarding consideration of a delay of year one of 2007-09 Steelhead Survival Study, and consideration of proposal to do an evaluation/study in 2007 of the source of the test fish to be used for the Steelhead Survival Study) – Dotson provided background on a proposal submitted to the PRCC on Feb. 28. The proposal delays year one of the required three-year steelhead survival study, and replaces it

with a head-to-head comparison study of steelhead released from Rock Island Dam. The study would evaluate both the fish handling and fish source issues encountered during the 2006 steelhead survival study. Chelan PUD has indicated to Grant PUD that while it can supply the fish for the evaluation, it would not be able to provide the number which would be required for the year-one survival study. Dotson stated that Grant PUD may pursue a long-term interlocal agreement with Chelan to provide study fish over the next decade or so. Members also discussed possible outcomes of the evaluation. Carlon suggested test fish be collected, handled and released from Rock Island, an approach similar to that of the Army Corps of Engineers. Rose suggested separating a group of tagged fish and holding them as a comparison, which would directly test fish source and handling. Following discussion, Carlon noted his approval of the fish source evaluation in 2007. Cates also indicated his approval of the approach outlined in the SOA and that using another approach adds a bias. Marco also noted his approval of the head-to-head comparison, but questioned what the next steps are if no difference is indicated by the study. If the comparison shows there is only a difference in source, not handling, Grant would likely work with Chelan PUD on developing fish collection and holding facilities, stated Dotson. If handling is the issue, Grant PUD would potentially work with Chelan PUD to provide handling services. Modification of the Wanapum gatewell dipping facility would also be discussed. Andonaegui and Rose indicated their support of the 2007 fish evaluation study. Nordlund noted his belief that the gatewell dipped fish at Wanapum were likely exposed to higher levels of TDG, which may have been an anomaly during last year's study. Carlon stated that, collectively, PRCC members are concerned that an evaluation which could possibly end up with no definitive results would unnecessarily delay year one of the three-year survival study. Dotson noted Grant PUD's internal discussions involve possible coordination with Chelan PUD's survival studies. Dotson is currently outlining a 10-year schedule to examine how Chelan PUD and Grant PUD's survival and behavior studies could be coordinated. Rohr suggested continuing the discussion of such coordination at the March 28 meeting. Dotson will provide written discussion material at the next meeting. The 2007-12 Performance Standards Evaluations for Juvenile Steelhead Statement of Agreement was approved by PRCC members. Andonaegui requested a written study plan for the fish source evaluation. Dotson will provide a 2007 study plan for the fish source evaluation to PRCC members by March 16.

III. Northern Pikeminnow Program

- A. **Affirmation:** SOA 2007-14, NPM 2007 Study Plan (clarification discussion)
Dresser clarified that 2007 will be a removal program comparable to 2005. The February 28th approval of SOA 2007-14 was affirmed.

Discussion: Wanapum Future Unit Bypass, including Slotted Entrance (SE) – 3 will be opened after the coffer dam is removed in mid-March or when the upstream fish migration begins (whichever occurs first). The cofferdam cell will not be removed on March 12 as previously thought, stated Dresser, noting that construction is still occurring out of water and will continue as such

for the next two to three weeks. Grant PUD has proposed capping an abatement pond which is currently holding sediment and debris (this approach has been approved by WDOE and WDFW) and is also submitting applications to extend permits for in-water work. When fish begin to arrive from McNary Dam, Grant PUD will advise the PRCC.

(Marco leaves the call)

- IV. **Discussion:** Ultrasound to Control Algae Growth (Additional information and a brief discussion will take place; recall a technical white paper was distributed on Feb 28th for your review; an SOA will be forthcoming with committee consideration at March 28th meeting). Dresser will provide further information when the conference call concludes. Grant PUD biologists are researching how the ultrasonic cleaning technology may affect sound detected by individual fish species. Dresser will provide the information gathered to date and follow-up with an SOA indicating approval of using the technology. Action will be requested at the March 28 meeting.
- V. **Discussion:** Priest Rapids Gull Wire Installation Feasibility – Dotson provided an update concerning installation of gull wires at Priest Rapids Dam. Gull wires over the Priest Rapids tailrace were removed several years ago when gate maintenance made removal necessary, stated Dotson. A decision was made at that time to possibly replace the wires when the fish bypass was constructed. Dotson noted that in 2007, additional bird control efforts will be conducted by boat for five-to-seven days per week near the Priest Rapids and Wanapum spillways. Carlon stated, and there was general agreement, that leaving the gull wires down to avoid conflict with ongoing gate maintenance until the work was completed was acceptable. Carlon also stated there is no use in putting the wires up until the Wanapum Future Unit Fish Bypass is completed, noting that upon completed of the WFUFB, NMFS would expect the gull wires at Priest Rapids Dam to be installed.
- VI. Priest Rapids Hatchery Fall Chinook HGMP's M&E Plan Development Time Extension SOA – Formerly approved by PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee on Feb. 23, 2007. The SOA has been distributed and final approval will be requested on March 28.
- VII. NNI – The Committee discussed possible uses of the NNI fund, including studies of predatory fish effects on survival of covered species. Rohr noted that discussion will occur on a PRCC Habitat conference call on March 14. Additionally a working group meeting between representatives from all three committees is being arranged. Andonaegui requested that decisions be made at the PRCC level.
- VIII. Next Meeting - Wednesday, March 28, 2007, 9:00 am, Grant SeaTac Office

(call ends at 10:34 a.m.)