



## FINAL MEETING MINUTES

### Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee

Tuesday, September 25, 2007

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Radisson Hotel

SeaTac

#### PRCC Committee Members

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

#### ATTENDEES:

*Jerry Marco, CCT (by phone)	*Jim Craig, USFWS
*Carmen Andonaegui, WDFW	Curt Dotson, Grant PUD
*Scott Carlon, NMFS	Shannon Lowry, Grant PUD
*Tom Dresser, Grant PUD	Denny Rohr, Facilitator

#### Action Items:

- Carlon will follow-up on a report that efforts by NOAA Fisheries are taking place to increase the tern population in the Goose Island/Potholes area.
- Dotson will distribute to the predator study subcommittee a matrix which will assist in rating potential contractors.
- A PRCC Habitat Funds spending update will be distributed by Rohr as soon as it's available.

#### Decision summary:

- Approved - August 29, 2007 meeting minutes
- Approved - NNI Funding Protocols
- Approved – SOA 2007-16 (Grant PUD coho obligation)

- I. Welcome and Introductions – Rohr welcomed committee members
- II. Review of Meeting Agenda – Discussion of Priest Rapids Hatchery M&E timeline extension SOA was added to the agenda.
- III. Approval/Finalize Meeting Minutes
  - A. August 29, 2007 – Approved.
- IV. Review of August 29 Action Items – Carlon stated he has not been successful in reaching Tom Good of the NOAA Science Center concerning tern

management on Goose Island (Potholes). Carlon will follow up with information at the next meeting.

- V. **ACTION: SOA 2007-16, PRCC and PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee SOA on Grant PUD's Coho Obligation** – Discussion concerning the coho obligation statement of agreement was deferred to the PRCC by the PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee. Carlon proposed that the reference to “95% dam passage survival,” be removed from Section 3 of the SOA, stating NMFS’ opinion that the figure is an artifact of early discussions during formation of the Mid Columbia HCP. The real standard for measurement to NMFS is the 93% project (one dam and its reservoir) survival, stated Carlon, noting it is likely the 95% figure will not be included in the new Biological Opinion. Dresser questioned how removing the figure would be perceived by other agencies and tribes. Andonaegui questioned what the figures are for Chelan and Douglas PUDs and what may be lost if there is a shift to 93% total project passage, rather than both the 93% project and 95% dam passage standard. Carlon reiterated that total project survival is the bottom line for NMFS. Andonaegui noted the relevance of a 95% dam survival standard for new facilities or operational changes. After hearing the group’s concerns about removing the 95%, and hearing confirmation that the 93% Project standard is not usurped by the 95%, Carlon agreed to leaving 95% passage as a facility standard and suggested changing the language in the SOA to reflect that distinction. Carlon also noted that the footnote (1) involving “compelling” evidence also required clarification concerning project survival. Marco noted that it is a departure from performance standards for other Covered Species and his concern that the standard for each species be consistent. Members agreed that the language in the footnote and Section 4 is appropriate as stated in the current SOA. A minor revision in Section 8 was also made. The SOA will be re-sent to the PRCC HSC for approval. Marco, Dresser and Andonaegui noted approval for their respective agencies and organizations.
- VI. PRH Fall Chinook M&E Extension Timeline (SOA-HR05) – Andonaegui noted the Hanford Reach Working Group’s request that the SOA be taken to the PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee. Discussion occurred at the PRCC HSC Sept. 20 meeting concerning whether or not the SOA is necessary. Further discussion will be referred back to the PRCC HSC.
- VII. Update/Discussion of Requested Policy Meeting – Rohr noted his discussions with Bob Bugert of the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust concerning a request for a policy level meeting concerning the PRCC HSC’s White River spring Chinook program. Bugert and others are developing a formal request for a policy level meeting to NMFS and WDFW. Andonaegui noted that WDFW is engaging in internal discussions concerning the agency’s stance on the program. WDFW is reassessing its goals related to the White River spring Chinook program, stated Andonaegui, noting that WDFW is not opposed to a policy meeting. Internal discussions need to be completed on how to move

forward with Wenatchee Basin supplementation, taking into account the successes and failures of the program and the public, stated Andonaegui. She suggested PRCC members contact Heather Bartlett of WDFW concerning those discussions. The group discussed the integral flexibility which is already included in the current Biological Opinion for the Priest Rapids Project, which allows for adjustments to be made to the program. Dresser acknowledged current JFP discussion concerning upper Wenatchee spring Chinook and requested that any decision made within that forum be shared with Grant PUD.

- VIII. Blackbird Pond Discussion (Continued) – Andonaegui noted that PRCC objections to NNI-funding of the Blackbird Pond project were conveyed to Trout Unlimited. Because the proposal involves steelhead supplementation, PRCC members objected to Grant PUD NNI funding of the project because the District does not have a steelhead obligation in the Wenatchee Basin. Andonaegui stated she had not received any further information from Trout Unlimited concerning the project, noting the original request was sent to the HCP Tributary Committee. That group determined the project was not habitat in nature and therefore not appropriate for HCP Tributary Committee funding. Andonaegui noted that the informal proposal for PRCC NNI funding of the Blackbird Pond project is being withdrawn, but noted that Trout Unlimited may approach Grant PUD in the future for direct funding. Marco noted that based on local interest in the Leavenworth-based project, hatchery supplementation seems to be of some interest to residents. In supporting withdrawal of the project for NNI funding consideration, Marco noted that fishing in a pond that at some point holds a listed species may likely be a point of concern to NMFS.
- IX. WDFW Proposed Predation Study  
A. Status of RFP – The predation study Request for Proposal (RFP) has been distributed and a good response has been received to date, stated Dotson. Companies indicating interest include USGS, University of Idaho, LGL, Normandeau and Battelle Labs. Proposals must be received by 1430 hr. on Monday, Oct. 15. Dotson also noted the potential of working with a composite team on the study, which would combine the expertise of several interested companies. Once the bids close, the PRCC subcommittee working on the project (Yakama Nation, USFWS, WDFW and Grant PUD) will review the proposals in advance before convening to make a final selection. Dotson will send a matrix designed to assist in rating the bidders prior to selection.
- X. Wanapum Future Unit Bypass Update – Construction remains on schedule with completion slated for January 2008. The wing walls and downstream side work is nearly finished, stated Dotson, noting the facility should be ready for the 2008 outmigration. Dresser noted that debris relocation is also moving forward, and that Grant PUD is waiting on a permit from the Corps. NMFS will follow-up on the permit status.

*(Jim Craig enters meeting at 10:40 a.m.)*

- XI. Update on 2007 PR Top Spill Behavior Study – A study draft should be completed and distributed by the end of October, stated Dotson.
  - A. PR Design Team – The team (including representatives from the University of Iowa (IIHR), Oakwood Consulting, Grant PUD and Jacobs Civil) is prepared to review the behavioral results from 2007 Priest Rapids study, in addition to studies conducted at McNary Dam. Fish modeling work is also being developed and will be reviewed by the design team. The team is traveling to the University of Iowa this week, noted Dotson. Information from MOA spill in 2001, 2002, 2003 and spill through full open gates 17 and 22 is being modeled thru the Numerical Surrogate Fish Model to possible use as an indicator tool, if the top-spill were to be moved. Dotson will keep PRCC members updated with information concerning modeling results. Dotson also mentioned that an informational trip (for Grant upper management and PRCC members) to Iowa is being looked at.
  
- XII. PR OLAFT
  - A. Update and Discussion of Design Issues – Fish are being trapped on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Minor modifications are ongoing to adjust the trap as necessary. WDFW staff indicates the trap and its attraction process (out of ladder at picket weir up to denil) is very efficient. Dotson also addressed an earlier question concerning electro-anesthetic technology, noting the issue was addressed with Smith Root (vendor) at the recent American Fisheries Society convention in San Francisco. The information will be shared with the PRCC at a later date.
  
- XIII. Video Fish Counting Report
  - A. Discussion of Adult Count Variances between PR and WAN – Discrepancies from counts at Wanapum and Rock Island dams indicate there may be a multiple-counting occurring at the Wanapum ladder due to in-ladder fall backs. Fish counting staffing has been adjusted to solve the problem. Because staff has been directed to post the information quickly, quality control is also being looked at, stated Dotson. An earlier request that hydroacoustic technology be used as a back-up is still being investigated and discussed with HTI.
  
- XIV. Northern Pikeminnow and Avian Predation Programs Report – Reports are being developed, with drafts likely distributed in November. Dresser stated that all of the avian PIT- and radio-tags have been read and the draft report is underway. Avian predation issues encountered during the 2007 survival study are still being investigated, stated Dotson, who confirmed that adjustments will be made to avian predation efforts based on the information from recovered tags. Crews are still collecting Northern pikeminnow, stated Dresser.

- XV. NNI Fund Protocols Affirmation – Approved.**
- XVI. PRCC Hatchery SC Report – Draft Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans for summer and fall Chinook should be distributed in the next few months, stated Dotson, noting there will be gaps in the information which will generate discussion among the PRCC HSC. Nason Creek properties are currently being evaluated for water availability. Russell Langshaw of Grant PUD attended a tour of the White River on Sept. 22 to clarify goals for and answer questions concerning the White River spring Chinook program, stated Dresser, noting there appears to be continued misperceptions about the program, which at the current conceptual level only includes acclimation ponds and does not include a full hatchery facility or an exclusion weir.  
*(Langshaw joins call at 11:15 a.m.)*

Langshaw noted that there continues to be questions about the White River program from the public, despite informational meetings which have been held since June 2006. Information from the NOAA Science Center on fish growth rates and size was presented to the PRCC HSC on Sept. 20. Studies have been conducted which indicate the effects of growth on how males mature as par, minijacks or jacks, stated Langshaw. In experiments, 35-80% of the fish matured as minijacks, which has a profound effect on returning males and calculation of SARs, noted Langshaw. The Science Center is interested in working with Grant PUD concerning data sets from the upper Wenatchee Basin.

The Douglas/Grant Hatchery Sharing Agreement was modified to reflect BY2008 rather than BY2007. Questions concerning the steelhead request are being discussed internally by NMFS staff. Dresser noted Grant PUD's concern that any information generated by the Federal BiOp remand puts Grant PUD's requirements under its Biological Opinion at the Priest Rapids Project at risk. Marco noted that NMFS also appeared to be concerned with the long-term program, but that any changes would not affect decisions concerning this year's hatchery sharing agreement between Grant and Douglas PUDs.

- XVII. PRCC Habitat SC Report – No meeting has been held recently. An updated habitat spending spreadsheet will be distributed as soon as it is available, stated Rohr.
- XVIII. Update on Hanford Reach – Grant PUD is moving forward with the 2007 peaking experiment. The Hanford Reach Working Group (HRWG) is debating how best to measure the results of the study. A letter from NOAA Fisheries and WDFW outlining concerns about the experiment, was received by Grant PUD. Langshaw also noted that comments have been received on the draft M&E plan for fall Chinook under the Priest Rapids Project Salmon and

Steelhead Settlement Agreement, stated Langshaw. The draft will be sent to the PRCC HSC and PRCC for comment and discussion. Dresser stated the Yakama Nation has captured 100 mm wild Chinook milting males. Langshaw noted that the Science Center considers these fish to be maturing par.

XIX. Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 24, 2007, 9 – 3:00, Grant PUD SeaTac

*(meeting adjourns at 11:35 a.m.)*