



## MEETING

### Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee

Wednesday, October 22, 2008

9:00 – 3:00

Grant PUD SeaTac Office

#### PRCC Members

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Scott Carlon/Bryan Nordlund, NMFS  
Jerry Marco, CCT  
Bob Rose, YN  
Bill Tweit, WDFW

Jim Craig, USFWS  
Tom Dresser, GCPUD  
Carl Merkle, CTUIR

#### Attendees: (\*Denotes PRCC member)

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Scott Carlon, NMFS\*  
Jim Craig, USFWS\*  
Jerry Marco, CCT\*(by phone)  
Tom Dresser, GCPUD\*  
Dana Jeske, GCPUD  
Alyssa Buck, GCPUD  
Russ Langshaw, GCPUD  
Denny Rohr, Facilitator

Bryan Nordlund, NMFS\*  
Bob Rose, YN\*  
Bill Tweit, WDFW\*  
Curt Dotson, GCPUD  
George Thompson, GCPUD  
Todd Pearsons, GCPUD  
Debbie Williams, GCPUD

#### Action Items:

1. Rohr will research what is being done regarding standardization of jack counts.
2. Dotson will send the 2008 Survival Study Plan draft to the PRCC on November 15, 2008 (if received from HTI prior to Nov. 15) for a 30 day review period.
3. Rohr will coordinate a joint meeting between the PRCC and PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee to resolve ongoing issues. Grant PUD will develop the agenda for the meeting.
4. The PRCC will hold a conference call with USGS and WDFW on Tuesday, November 4, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. to discuss the Predation Study task authorizations and the path forward. Rohr will invite the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee to participate on the conference call. Dotson will distribute the original RFP and the USGS/WDFW proposal prior to the conference call.
5. Tweit will determine why Katrina Simmons (WDFW) has requested 200 public documents from Grant PUD.
6. Dresser will redraft NNI SOA language and distribute the draft via email to the PRCC. PRCC members will vote on the NNI SOA by October 31, 2008.
7. Rose will send Dotson information on a small radio tag that could possibly be used for a sub-yearling survival study.

## Decisions:

- The 2007 3-D Priest Rapids Top-Spill Chinook Behavior Study Report (HTI) was approved by the PRCC.
- The 2007 Fish Source Evaluation (Skalski) was approved by the PRCC.
- The Analysis of Acoustic-Tagged Yearling Chinook, Steelhead and Sockeye Salmon through the Priest Rapids Project in 2007 was approved by the PRCC.

## Final Meeting Minutes

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Rohr welcomed attendees.
- II. **Agenda Review** – The following items were added to the agenda: Policy Group Formation, and Habitat Plan per FERC and the Salmon and Steelhead Settlement Agreement requirements. Nordlund questioned if any resolution has been reached regarding standardization of jack counts. Tweit stated US vs. Oregon Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) have been working on jack count issues. Robin Ehlke (WDFW) can also be contacted regarding jack count issues. **Rohr will research what is being done regarding standardization of jack counts.** Nordlund questioned if the committee will have a 2008 Survival Study Status Report prior to the Fish Bypass Design Team presentation on December 03, 2008. Dotson stated a draft should be ready for the December PRCC meeting, but that Skalski is still working on data. Members discussed the draft vs. final review process, timelines for committee approval, Grant PUD's timeline with FERC, and implementation of studies for 2009. **Dotson will send the 2008 Survival Study Plan draft to the PRCC on November 15, 2008 for a 30 day review period, if Grant receives the draft report by Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>.** . Dotson explained that since this is the first year for Grant PUD to submit study plans to FERC since receipt of the new license, and it's unknown how long it will take to approve those plans, it's important that they be submitted with consensus of the PRCC as soon as they are approved. Dotson questioned how the committee would respond if FERC doesn't approve of survival studies in time to do a 2009 study.
- III. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
  - September 24, 2008 – Members will provide comments via e-mail. Approval will be asked for at the next meeting.
- IV. **Action Items Review** – Action items were reviewed.

- V. **Design Team Presentation – PR Fish Bypass** – The Priest Rapids design presentation will take place at the December 3<sup>rd</sup>. PRCC meeting. The presentation should take approximately two hours.
- VI. **Priest Rapids Top-Spill**
- A. **Action Item: 2007 3-D Priest Rapids Top-Spill Chinook Behavior Study Report (HTI)** – approval requested – **The 2007 3-D Priest Rapids Top-Spill Chinook Behavior Study Report (HTI) was approved by the PRCC, with the inclusion of the GPUD responses to WDFW and NMFS comments.**
- VII. **Action Item: 2007 Fish Source Evaluation (Skalski)** – **The 2007 Fish Source Evaluation (Skalski) was approved by the PRCC, with the inclusion of the GPUD responses to WDFW and NMFS comments.**
- VIII. **Action Item: Analysis of Acoustic-Tagged Yearling Chinook, Steelhead and Sockeye Salmon through the Priest Rapids Project in 2007** – **The Analysis of Acoustic-Tagged Yearling Chinook Steelhead and Sockeye Salmon through the Priest Rapids Project in 2007 was approved by the PRCC, with the inclusion of the GPUD responses to WDFW and NMFS comments.**
- IX. **Policy Group** – PRCC members discussed formation of a policy group to resolve policy oriented issues relating to the PRCC and PRCC subcommittees. Dresser stated that Grant PUD is concerned that the PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee (HSC) is struggling to make scientific technical decisions because of agency policy concerns. Pearsons explained that on August 26, 2008 he distributed Quantitative Objectives for Grant PUD Funded Hatchery Programs and a list of seven questions that needed to be answered by the Joint Fisheries Party (JFP) in order to develop Grant PUD HGMPs. He noted according to the document, that in order to meet NMFS and FERC timelines, Grant PUD must receive quantitative objectives from the JFP by October 01, 2008 so that HGMPs and monitoring and evaluation plans could be completed. Grant PUD received no written comments to either document. PRCC HSC members agreed to provide comments to Grant PUD by November 07, 2008. Dresser explained that four years after conception of the HSC, the committee continues to struggle on integrated vs. segregated programs, summer Chinook mitigation, how to manage programs now and into the future, and quantitative objectives. The HSC felt that Grant PUD over stepped their role by drafting a document titled “Artificial Propagation Needs for Conservation of Upper Columbia Summer Chinook Salmon”. Dresser stated that if you go back in the meeting minutes, the committee’s should be embarrassed that they’ve not made decisions on how to run programs, because the same issues have been dealt with for the last 10 years. Carlon stated that NOAA Fisheries relies on its staff with expertise in artificial propagation in order for it to make decisions

regarding HSC issues raised with the PRCC. Tweit agreed that formation of a policy group is a good idea. Dresser stated everyone needs to take a risk in order to move a program forward. Grant PUD shouldn't be penalized for scientific disagreements, and not meeting mitigation needs if the HSC can't come to consensus on how the program should be designed, stated Tweit. Role and authority issues are also part of the HSC problem, stated Tweit. Dresser suggests the PRCC and HSC meet to discuss outstanding issues because the timelines involved to utilize dispute resolution will push HGMPs past Grant PUD's deadline. Rohr stated that development of a policy group is currently being formed, and that a meeting will take place in the near future. Nordlund and Carlon stated that it would be difficult for them to give direction to another NOAA division, but internal discussion can take place so that they are all on the same page. Pearsons stated it is the foundation of any program to know the direction the program is headed. HGMP development must be submitted to FERC by April 17, 2008. If HGMPs aren't complete, a document will need to be developed explaining to FERC why the PRCC and PRCC HSC weren't able to finalize what they were tasked with, stated Dresser. **Rohr will coordinate a joint meeting between the PRCC and PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee to resolve ongoing issues. Grant PUD will develop the agenda for the meeting.**

- X. **Predation Study Update** – USGS and WDFW contracts have been approved and signed. **The PRCC will hold a conference call with USGS and WDFW on Tuesday, November 4, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. to discuss task authorizations and the path forward. Rohr will invite the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee to participate on the conference call. Dotson will distribute the original RFP and the USGS/WDFW proposal prior to the conference call.** Dresser questioned Tweit why Katrina Simmons (WDFW) has recently requested two hundred public documents from Grant PUD. **Tweit will determine why Katrina Simmons (WDFW) has requested 200 public documents from Grant PUD.**
- XI. **NNI SOA** – Members discussed language revisions they would like to see in the draft NNI SOA provided by Grant PUD. **Dresser will redraft NNI SOA language and distribute the draft via email to the PRCC.** Dresser would like to finalize the NNI SOA by Friday, October 24, 2008. **PRCC members will vote on the NNI SOA by October 31, 2008.**
- XII. **PRCC Hatchery SC Report** – The BY07 pilot transfer from Aquaseed to Little White Salmon NFH has had no mortalities to date. The remaining BY07's will be transferred with the BY06 pilot transfer. The HSC is working to complete the Skaha Lake Sockeye SOA. PRCC approval will be sought after HSC approval. The HSC continues to struggle with HGMP Quantitative Objectives, science vs. policy, roles

and responsibilities of members, summer Chinook programs integrated vs. segregated programs, and HGMP deadlines. The fact that WDFW and the Yakama Nation have not completed or distributed the Wenatchee Basin Management Plan white paper remains a stumbling block to development of the spring Chinook HGMP. Jeff Korth (WDFW) explained to the HSC that the white paper should be released to the JFP in November 2008. Pearsons noted Grant PUD's respect of the political sensitivity of the paper, but has previously requested just the technical aspects of the document to help Grant PUD in HGMP development. The technical information has not been provided to Grant PUD. The Priest Rapids Hatchery M & E subcommittee met on September 29, 2008. They feel they have the direction needed to complete the M & E and HGMP and hope to have the draft out for review soon, stated Pearsons.

- XIII. **PRCC Habitat SC Report** – The PRCC Habitat Subcommittee did not approve the Lower Bonaparte Creek Livestock exclusion project proposal. The Dryden Dam WDOT (right bank) site received a low ranking by RCO and it appears the site may not be funded by that program. Rose stated that monies from the Yakama Nation MOA could possibly be used to purchase the Dryden Dam WDOT property.
- XIV. **PRCC Habitat Plan** – Dresser explained that based on requirements of the Salmon and Steelhead Settlement Agreement (SSA) and FERC, Grant PUD's Habitat Plan needs to be revised to meet FERC's intent. The new plan needs to define appropriate use of the NNI Fund and outline performance standards of the fund, as well as operating protocols and guidelines for the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee. Grant PUD will present the first draft to the PRCC. The final plan must be submitted to FERC by April 17, 2009. Nordlund approved of the idea. Rose clarified that the SSA requires the Habitat Plan be developed by the PRCC, not the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee. Rose suggested that the PRCC draft the plan, but let the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee fill in the details of the plan.
- XV. **Sub-Yearling, Conducting a Survival Study** – Dotson explained that because of the lack of tagging technology and the life history of sub-yearlings, the HCP has deferred sub-yearling survival studies until technologies are developed that can give a more accurate survival estimate from any sub-yearling survival study conducted, and questioned if Grant is going to be required to conduct a sub-yearling survival study in 2009, considering that no new tagging technologies have been developed that address the obstacles presented to the HCP committee regarding sub-yearling survival studies. Nordlund stated Chelan PUD has found ways to conduct sockeye studies, but haven't figured out sub-yearling survival tests yet. Dotson questioned if Grant PUD should provide information to the PRCC showing that technology limitations would make it difficult to conduct sub-yearling studies.

Nordlund stated the JFP needs to discuss this matter because he isn't aware that there is new technology that will allow a study to be performed for any of the main stem projects. Dotson questioned what the committee needs to defer sub-yearling survival studies based on limitations to gather survival data. Nordlund stated the HCP is set up differently because the HCP document says "can you conduct survival studies", whereas Grant PUD's Salmon and Steelhead Settlement Agreement (SSA) states "you shall conduct survival studies". The HCP states that if a survival study can't be conducted for a certain species, then dam passage survival must be either measured or calculated from one side of the concrete to another until technology progresses such that project survival passage from tailrace to tailrace can be measured. Dotson explained that Grant PUD released 292 sub-yearlings in the Priest Rapids tailrace (control group) with a 99% survival rate to Vernita Bridge. Of the 652 fish (treatment group) released in the Wanapum Dam tailrace, 52% arrived in Priest Rapids Dam forebay. This Priest Rapids reservoir survival rate raises questions regarding predation, over-wintering, lack of technology (acoustic-tag battery life) to account for a travel time of more than 15 days through the reservoir, stated Dotson. This study utilized the same technology as used in other studies, but strongly indicates that life history will be the challenge, explained Dotson, questioning how you account for 99% survival vs. 52% survival. Nordlund noted that that the HCP CC has not yet used dam passage estimates in lieu of survival studies, but the same basic question regarding sub-yearling survival measurement exists at those projects. Nordlund suggested that sub-yearling studies initially look at dam passage survival, if you can't directly estimate project survival. Dotson questioned, if technology isn't there for the HCP to conduct sub-yearling survival studies, how can you expect Grant PUD to conduct them? Dotson stated that if a 2009 sub-yearling survival study needs to be conducted; equipment orders will need to be placed soon. PIT-tag data showed coho do over-winter in Cle Elum Lake. When the Cle Elum passage system started the following spring, coho were seen moving through the system. Nordlund explained that if a PIT-tag detection system were installed at the Priest Rapids top spill, it could potentially be used to determine when sub-yearlings passed through the top spill. Route passage proportion can be determined by acoustic tags, and when coupled with PIT tag top spill data extrapolated for the project, it could provide a good indication of reservoir survival. PIT-tag detection would count fish at the top spill as surviving after over-wintering; Adding this component to acoustic tag dam passage survival and reservoir survival could give you project survival, stated Nordlund. It's currently not clear how sub-yearling survival will be conducted, but each piece of the puzzle will eventually provide the over all picture. Dotson reminded the PRCC of the update he gave to the PRCC last month upon the topic of "wiring" the PR top-

spill for PIT tag detection and the great limitations/challenges that BioMark (PIT consultants) said would have to be addressed for any kind of success. Dotson stated he doesn't know how to put a survival study together for 2009 and that the PRCC needs to think about these issues before making a decision in the future. Dotson explained that he has ordered Sockeye and Steelhead tags, but there isn't a sub-yearling tag to order. Dotson noted it takes 2 to 3 days for steelhead to move through the Priest Rapids reservoir, but questioned if there is a correction factor for fish that over-winter. PRCC members will discuss sub-yearling issues further at the December 03, 2008 meeting. Rose told members about a radio tag the size of a short grain of rice that is used in the medical field. The one limiting factor is cost, approximately \$1,000. **Rose will send Dotson information on a small radio tag that could possibly be used for a sub-yearling survival study.** Nordlund will discuss this issue internally. Nordlund told of a new acoustic tag that allows the battery to be switched on and off.

- XVI. **Fall Chinook Work Group** – A draft study plan detailing impacts to fall Chinook in the Hanford Reach was sent out for a 60 day comment period on October 17, 2008. The next FCWG meeting is on October 23, 2008 at Grant PUD's SeaTac office. Proposals were submitted by CRITFC, ADFG, and USFWS. Comments to Grant PUD's study plan were received from CRITFC and USFWS.
- XVII. **Priest Rapids Fish Forum** – The next PRFF meeting is scheduled for November 05, 2008 in Ephrata, WA. Facilitation contracts will be completed soon with BioAnalysts. The Pacific Lamprey, Bull Trout, and White Sturgeon Management Plans have been sent to the committee for review. Comments have been received and are being placed in a comment table to be attached to each of the study plans. The Native Resident Fish Monitoring Plan is out for 60 day review. The final Bull Trout Management Plan is ready for submission to WDOE. Dresser stated he believes that Grant PUD will meet the target dates for all of the plans. Grant PUD intends to wait for WDOE's approval prior to submitting the plans to FERC.
- XVIII. **River Operations Workshop Presentation** – Joe Taylor, Mid-Columbia Coordinator, explained how the Mid-Columbia Hourly Coordination happens and why. Members discussed the need to coordinate between the HCP and PRCC to achieve success of biological objectives as well as power needs. PRCC members agreed coordination could be accomplished by scheduling yearly joint meetings with the HCP. An hourly coordinator should be in attendance to discuss and explain any questions.
- XIX. **Next Meeting:** Wednesday, December 03, 2008, 9:00 – 3:00 at Grant PUD SeaTac office.