



Meeting Minutes

Priest Rapids Fish Forum

Wednesday, July 02, 2008

9:00 – 11:00

Grant PUD Natural Resources
Conference Room A

Technical Members

Stephen Lewis, USFWS
Marcie Mangold, WDOE
Tom Dresser, GCPUD
Ben Lenz, GCPUD

Bill Tweit, WDFW
Bob Dach, BIA
Mike Clement, GCPUD

ATTENDEES:

John Easterbrooks, WDFW (by phone)
Patrick Verhey, WDFW
Mike Clement, GCPUD
Tom Dresser, GCPUD

Marcie Mangold, WDOE (by phone)
Stephen Lewis, USFWS
Ben Lenz, GCPUD
Debbie Williams, GCPUD

Action Items:

- **Management Plan comments are due to Grant PUD by July 25, 2008.**
- **Dresser will provide draft meeting protocols prior to the next meeting on August 06, 2008.**
- **Grant PUD will review adaptive management verbiage in the Lamprey Management Plan.**
- **Grant PUD will speak with staff, legal counsel, and auditor to determine what can be done legally regarding purchase of materials prior to Native Resident Fish Management Plan implementation.**
- **Grant PUD will draft a Native Resident Fish Management Plan. It will be sent to PRFF members via e-mail 10 days prior to the next meeting.**

Meeting Minutes

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Attendees introduced themselves around the table and on the conference line.
- II. **Agenda Review** – No additions were made to the agenda.
- III. **FERC Order – 401 Certification requirements** – The 401 Certification was incorporated into the 44 year license received by Grant PUD on April 17, 2008. Draft management plans for bull trout, Pacific lamprey, and white sturgeon were distributed to agencies and tribes on 6/23/08, with a 30 day review and comment period.
Management Plan comments are due to Grant PUD by July 25, 2008. FERC requires finalized management plans by 4/17/09. Dresser asked that a letter stating support be sent to Grant PUD upon management plan approval by agencies and tribes. Grant PUD would like to avoid asking FERC for time extensions, but if needed to reach management plan consensus, will do so. Once Washington Department of Ecology (WDOE) approves of the management plans, they will be sent to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for approval. Dresser explained that FERC was unable to commit to an approval timeline after receipt of the study plans, but noted that review, approval, and posting to the docket takes a considerable amount of time. Implementation can not be started until FERC approves all study plans. Dresser stated that if study plans are approved early, Grant PUD would agree to early implementation. As each plan is approved, it will be sent to FERC individually, they will not wait to go as a package deal. Each plan will then be reviewed independently by FERC. Top priority can be assigned to critical plans if requested. T.J. Lavoy is the FERC representative for the Priest Rapids Project. Lewis questioned who has the final say if there is a disagreement. Grant PUD would not like to get in the middle of disagreements between the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and WDOE, stated Dresser, and that flexibility will be critical to working together. If agreement can't be reached on the management plans by the interested parties, FERC would need to amend the Biological Opinion, 401 Certification, and the Priest Rapids Project License, stated Dresser.
 - A **Protocols – Dresser will provide draft meeting protocols prior to the next meeting on August 06, 2008.** The Wanapum Indians are interested stakeholders and will participate in this forum. Grant PUD is required to provide administrative support.
 - B **PRFF Website** – Williams provided details on Grant PUD's website, and the PRFF committee link.
 - C **Facilitation** – Grant PUD is in the process of hiring a facilitator. Members agreed that the PRFF facilitator have a strong

technical background of all fish species. Dresser asked that Grant PUD be given some flexibility to hire a facilitator due to fee structure, and that the contract include a six month opt out clause if the facilitator is not performing to committee standards. A six month performance evaluation will be conducted by the committee.

D Management Plans –

- **Pacific Lamprey** – Dresser explained that Grant PUD has a separate Settlement Agreement with the Yakama Nation (YN) to develop a Pacific lamprey management plan. The YN have reviewed and approved of the Grant PUD proposal. Members discussed the proposed lamprey management plan objectives, tasks, and time frames. Dresser asked that committee members provide any new regional data or research that can be used to update the plan. Lewis questioned if passage modeling would be conducted. Dresser responded that measures to identify potential passage impediments are included in the 401 Certifications requirements. Dresser also stated that modifications have been made to the ladder prior (e.g. video fish count stations) and additional adult passage studies are planned to determine if ladder modifications (diffuser gratings) improve adult passage. Dresser reported that to date, no changes have been made to the diffuser grating. Dresser also reported that based on comments from the YN; Table 3 was included into the study plan, and summarizes requirements into a 10 yr. schedule. Lewis expressed concern that Wanapum lamprey counts are considerably lower than those at Priest Rapids Dam. He questioned if they are not making it up the Wanapum ladder, or if operations, water conditions, or predation could be the issue. He suggests that adaptive management be used to determine what is happening. Dresser responded that Grant PUD was aware of the differences in lamprey counts at Wanapum and Priest Rapids Dams and that it is the result of relocation of the count stations at Wanapum Dam (pilot study), which had been supported and approved by the PRCC, because of concerns raised by the PRCC regarding salmonid counts between Priest Rapids and Wanapum Dams. Lewis suggests establishing a baseline for passage criteria at the project and to reduce disputes in the future, this language should be identified in the management plan. Grant PUD stated that it could not commit to a passage criteria or a sliding scale for passage criteria. Lewis questioned, if there is a project

related impact within a 10 yr timeframe, would it be identified as project related, ocean conditions, or what. Dresser responded that the 401 Certification has requirements for adaptive management.

- **Sturgeon** – Very few sturgeons pass through the Priest Rapids Project, noted Dresser. Fish put into the Rocky Reach pool are now being seen in the Priest Rapids Project Area. Dresser reported that a large female was seen passing through the project in May 2002. PRFF members discussed the proposed management plan. A modeling exercise will be updated annually to predict the numbers of sturgeon in the project. Dresser explained that the 401 Certification discusses different broodstock collection and juvenile fish sources, and that Grant PUD intends to build a sturgeon supplementation facility at Priest Rapids Hatchery. He noted that the implementation timelines outlined in the 401 Certification will be difficult to meet due to consultation requirements and permitting timelines. Members were also asked to provide any updated data they may have. Dresser explained that Grant PUD is in the process of bringing on regional sturgeon experts to assist in design and development of Grant PUD's sturgeon hatchery process.
- **Bull trout** – It is rare that bull trout are seen during operations. Four bull trout were seen at the Priest Rapids Video Fish Count Station in June 2008.
- **Native Resident Fish** – Grant PUD has not developed a Native Resident Fish management plan. Biological objectives are to maintain native fish populations, and harvest objectives. Easterbrooks, WDFW questioned if early implementation of a tanker truck purchase could happen. Dresser stated that Grant PUD and WDFW will need to develop a contractual funds disbursement agreement before disbursements can occur. A question regarding if a native resident fish management and monitoring plan needs to be approved by FERC before moving forward was asked. Dresser responded that native resident fish management will need FERC and WDOE approval prior to moving forward. Dresser explained that the 401 Certification requires that Grant PUD provides funds, not to exceed \$1,500,000 to renovate the existing Columbia Basin Hatchery facility to ensure stable operations at current capacity for the term of the license. Each year, on or before February 15th, Grant PUD will contribute \$100,000 to a fund established for resident fish monitoring and purchase. Dresser stated that funds not used one year would accumulate and

remain in the fund until needed. Surveys and inventories of resident fish species within the Priest Rapids Project will be conducted at a frequency of not less than every five years. Easterbrooks was in agreement with Dresser's assessment of the 401 Certification guidelines.

Grant PUD will draft a Native Resident Fish Management Plan. It will be sent to PRFF members via e-mail 10 days prior to the next meeting.

- E Consultation process – Grant PUD sent requests to agencies and tribes requesting the names of representatives, and alternates to participate as voting members of the PRFF. To date, the following have replied: Bob Dach, U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Stephen Lewis, U.S. fish and Wildlife Service, Bill Tweit, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Marci Mangold, Washington Department of Ecology.

- IV. **Next Meeting:** August 06, 2008, 9:00 to 2:00, Grant PUD Natural Resources, Ephrata, WA.