

PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 16, 2009; 8:30 – 4:30

Cedar's Inn – 80 Ninth St. NE, East Wenatchee

Call-in Number: 1-800-391-1709, access code 369546

Attendees

Ray Brunson, USFWS (first hour only, by phone)
Lela Buck, Wanapum Tribe (morning only, by phone)
Chris Carlson, GCPUD
Bill Gale, USFWS
Russ Langshaw, GCPUD
Jerry Marco, CCT
Keely Murdoch, YN
Todd Pearsons, GCPUD
Kris Petersen, NMFS
Bob Pfeifer, WDFW
Julie Pyper, Chelan PUD
Tom Scribner, YN
Elizabeth McManus, Facilitator
Patrick Donovan, Facilitator

Action Items

1. CCT and WDFW will send official letters stating their changes in HSC representation.
2. Russell will follow up with Tom for background information on YN's proposal to locate an expanded multi-species acclimation site in the Wenatchee and Methow for spring Chinook and Steelhead.
3. Elizabeth and Patrick will review and summarize all suggested changes to past meeting summaries (November 2008 – February 2009); add language to each summary identifying a change in facilitators and a disclaimer of accuracy. Elizabeth will distribute final summaries to the HSC for final approval via email.
4. Elizabeth and Patrick will update the HSC protocols to incorporate comments and draft an SOA to document HSC agreement on the protocols.
5. Elizabeth and Patrick will add HCP and HETT plan dates to the HSC calendar and continue to add other dates as they are submitted.
6. Elizabeth will distribute the Density Index (DI) and Flow Index (FI) for the Cle Elum hatchery to the HSC.
7. Bob will check on the status of circulating the draft Grant PUD Nason Creek Fish Rearing Alternatives report to USFWS and WDFW fish pathology staff for internal review.
8. Elizabeth will work with HSC members to draft an SOA on Nason Creek water supply issues.
9. Grant PUD will follow-up with the HSC about discharge permitting for the Gloyd Springs site.
10. Bob will check on the status of Kirk sending Grant PUD information on previous White River experience with microelement analysis.

11. Ray Brunson will send comments to Todd on the document titled, *Comparing Spring Chinook Redds and BKD Optical Density Values for the Proposed Nason Creek Hatchery with the Yakima and Chiwawa Rivers*.
12. Patrick will send out scheduling requests to the JFP via Doodle to gauge availability in late August to discuss finalizing the Wenatchee Spring Chinook Implementation Plan.
13. Kris will work with Todd to review final drafts of the Nason Creek and White River HGMPs and the overall M&E plan.
14. Russell will coordinate a statistician contracted by Grant PUD to re-run the PIT Tag data collected for White River Spring Chinook and will circulate a proposed timeline to the HSC.
15. Elizabeth will follow-up with Mike Schiewe to discuss the HCP's current NTTOC efforts and to gauge their willingness to coordinate with Grant PUD on a risk assessment.
16. Julie will circulate to the HSC a list of NTTOC taxa and experts identified to date.
17. Elizabeth and Patrick will follow-up with HSC members to determine the next appropriate steps in reducing the Summer Chinook Implementation plan schedule.
18. Grant and Chelan PUDs will follow up on options for expanding Dryden Left Bank; Elizabeth will work with the PUDs to draft an SOA on Dryden.
19. Elizabeth will circulate to the HSC the Priest Rapids Hatchery Design PowerPoint presentation.

Decisions

1. The HSC conceptually agreed to the Nason Creek and White River HGMPs, the Methow Spring Chinook APP, and the Overall M&E plan and committed to provide final editorial comments to Grant PUD by July 31 and to act on the plans at the August HSC meeting.

Meeting Summary

- I. **Welcome and Agenda Review** - Elizabeth McManus welcomed the Hatchery Subcommittee (HSC) and reviewed the agenda items. The HSC provided the following updates and additions to the agenda:
 - Tom Scribner updated the HSC on the YN's proposal to locate an expanded multi-species acclimation site in the Wenatchee and Methow for spring Chinook and Steelhead. The HSC discussed and agreed to have the YN move forward with the proposal and to have committee members review the plan on completion.
 - Add discussion of White River fish returning to the Little White Salmon National Fish Hatchery (LWSNFH) under program updates.
 - Kirk Truscott has accepted a position with the CCT and will replace Jerry Marco as the primary CCT representative on the HSC. Jerry will be the CCT alternate. Bob Pfeifer represented WDFW for the July meeting. A replacement for Kirk at WDFW has not yet been identified. In the meantime, Jeff Korth will be the WDFW representative to the HSC and Bob may serve as the WDFW alternate. CCT and WDFW will send official letters stating change of positions.

II. Action Items Review & Other Committee Updates – Elizabeth reviewed and provided updates to the action items identified during the May HSC meeting. The following items were discussed in substance:

- **Past Meeting Summaries.** Elizabeth briefed the HSC on suggested revisions submitted by members for past meeting summaries (November 2008 – February 2009). Suggested changes are primarily grammatical in nature and are not likely to change the overall direction or content of the summaries. The HSC reviewed the November and December summaries and made a number of additional changes. The HSC discussed and agreed to add language explaining the context of the approval of meeting summaries to the older summaries, so it is clear that they were approved months after the meetings occurred. Elizabeth and Patrick will review and summarize all suggested changes to past meeting summaries, add the context language, and circulate all the past meeting summaries to the HSC for final approval.
- **June Meeting Summary.** The HSC reviewed the June meeting summary and made a number of corrections and clarifications. The HSC discussed and agreed to limit meeting summary reviews to substantive comments and to send all editorial changes to Elizabeth and Patrick prior to meetings. Elizabeth and Patrick will ensure that the summaries are proofread thoroughly to minimize the need for editorial changes. The revised summary was then approved by the HSC. (A redline/strikeout draft showing changes and clarifications made will be posted to the secure HSC website.)

III. Nason Creek Water Issues and Alternatives –Todd briefed the HSC on Grant PUD’s proposed experimental hatchery design, which would rear Nason Creek Spring Chinook salmon populations in phases using re-circulated ground water, surface water and ground water only. In particular, Todd provided additional information on the spawning density within 1 mile and above the planned hatchery intake compared to densities at Cle Elum hatchery, spawning density normalized by flow, and hatchery costs of sterilizing incoming water.

A. Fish Health and Pathology Perspectives – Ray Brunson, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) provided the HSC with the following comments related to fish health issues:

- Due to the subjectivity of the collection process and lab variability, Ray cautions the comparison of BKD profiles from the Yakima and Chiwawa Rivers. The Yakima and Chiwawa Rivers represent two separate stocks, and use of this information to make generalizations about a third distinct stock at Nason Creek would need to be applied with necessary caveats.
- Use of eggs from high-BKD risk females should be avoided. The Cle Elum Hatchery uses culling to avoid high-BKD risk eggs; a similar model should be considered to minimize BKD risks at Nason Creek.

- Since ground water is not adequate to support the entire Hatchery operation, sterilization of surface water is the most conservative and predictable path to follow to reduce disease risk. (Although, in general, vertical transmission has seemed a higher risk and therefore, the concern about proper management and culling of high-BKD risk females.)

B. HSC Discussion

- The HSC discussed the pros and cons of an experimental approach. While some remained interested in the data, in general, the HSC was of the view that given the risks associated with disease, and given that the cost of sterilization was not as great as some had anticipated, sterilization would be a faster, more efficient and predictable path than the experimental design.
- The HSC discussed the JFP's emphasis on the importance of Grant PUD's commitment to the 2013 date for NNI. The HSC agreed to revisit review implementation timelines in an effort to compress schedules to make as much progress as possible by 2013.
- Grant PUD expressed some concern about whether the pros and cons of the experimental design, and the utility of the data it might generate, have been thoroughly considered. At the same time, they expressed understanding of the JFP interest in moving quickly to a design decision and about the potential advantages of the predictability of selecting sterilization. Grant PUD will continue to follow up on this issue and will work with Elizabeth to draft a revised SOA for consideration by the HSC in August.

IV. HSC Protocols

- A. Review Final Revisions to Draft HSC Protocols** - Elizabeth provided a high-level review of the final changes made to the protocols document. The HSC provided minor grammatical changes to the draft document, noted that representation for the CCT and WDFW would change, and requested that a SOA be prepared to finalize agreement on the protocols. The HSC also reviewed the flow chart identifying the various PRCC committees and agreed that the language describing the HSC in the flow chart should be updated to reflect the broader language of the license and that the flow chart should then be appended to the protocols.
- B. Voting or Next Steps, as Appropriate** – Elizabeth will make the protocol revisions and draft a SOA for HSC review.

V. Wenatchee Spring Chinook Implementation Plan

- A. Review Of Co-Manager's Plans For Next Steps** - Keely Murdoch briefed the HSC on the next steps for the Wenatchee Spring Chinook Implementation Plan. WDFW and the YN would like to finalize the implementation plan; they have been reviewing and including comments from Grant PUD and believe that

comments can be addressed and the plan finalized. Keely and Bob will work with Grant PUD to set up a meeting to discuss the PUD's comments and how they can be addressed in the implementation plan. There is still some discussion about whether the implementation plan should be an "official" JFP document or remain a co-managers document. Either way, the desire of the JFP including the co-managers is for all involved in implementation to be comfortable and supportive of the content of the implementation plan so work can move forward smoothly. Elizabeth will poll the JFP for a meeting in late August to discuss finalizing the implementation plan. HGMPs will be updated as necessary, or adjusted during implementation, to reflect the final implementation plan.

VI. Nason Creek & White River Spring Chinook HGMPs

A. Discussion of any final substantive comments on the draft HGMPs – The HSC discussed final substantive comments. HSC members made the following comments on the draft HGMPs:

- USFWS – remaining comments already provided should be incorporated. Grant PUD agreed to do this.
- WDFW – does not believe there are any additional comments beyond those already provided, but Bob will check and will update Todd if there are additional comments as soon as possible and definitely before July 31.
- YN – would like to ensure that all the pertinent information on the performance of the White River captive brood program is included in the HGMPs. Grant PUD agreed to do this and provided an update on White River program performance which was discussed by the HSC (see below).
- CCT – has language on adult management that it would like incorporated. Jerry will provide this language to Todd as soon as possible and definitely before July 31.
- NMFS – Kris has not had time to review the plans in detail, but will complete her review as soon as possible. Kris reiterated that she does not plan to participate in HSC voting on the HGMPs in August, since she has a review/approval responsibility associated with permitting decisions. At the same time, she recognized the importance of raising any substantive concerns she has in time for the HSC to consider them in their voting.
- The HSC reiterated its commitment to provide and finalize editorial comments to Grant PUD by July 31 and to act on the Methow APP at the August HSC meeting.

B. Conceptual Agreement On The Draft Plan (If Appropriate) and Next Steps – Provided the comments described in A above are addressed, and pending NMFS review, the HSC conceptually agreed to the Nason Creek and White River HGMPs. The HSC continues to feel confident that they will be able to complete any final review of the HGMPs by July 31 so the plans can be acted upon the August HSC meeting.

VII. White River Program Update – Russell provided the HSC with the following preliminary results of the Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tagging for White River Spring Chinook. Based on data collected through June 29th, no adult White River Spring Chinook have been detected returning; in addition, very few smolts have been detected downstream of Tumwater (Note that following the July HSC meeting, White River adults were detected over the Tumwater Dam. This will be discussed at the August meeting and will be recorded in the minutes.). The HSC discussed the preliminary data results and made the following points:

- The HSC was very concerned that there were no adult returns. The YN in particular was concerned that if the captive brood program cannot produce adult returns it should be reconsidered and potentially retired in favor of another (yet to be determined) approach. This would have important implications for the HGMPs, since they assume that the captive brood collection will continue for at least another year.
- The HSC discussed and agreed to obtaining a second opinion on the smolt emigration data and to quality-check the query run on June 29th, 2009. Russell will coordinate with a statistician contracted by Grant PUD to re-run the PIT Tag data and will circulate a proposed timeline to the HSC. In addition, Bob will check with the Tumwater Dam staff to get updated data, in case returning adult fish have been detected since June 29th.
- The HSC discussed what additional information on smolt migration would be necessary to make a directional decision about the captive broodstock program. Information needed include: 1) location and method of release; 2) location and method of acclimation; 3) fish health; 4) any other detections; 5) method of calculating emigration survival. Grant PUD agreed to provide available data.
- It may be wise to adjust 2010 implementation strategies either to improve program performance (e.g., by releasing fish closer to the outlet of Lake Wenatchee) or to gather additional performance data (e.g., by tracking the performance of a number of different acclimation and/or release strategies) or both. Russell will follow up on these ideas and bring a proposal to the HSC for discussion.
- The HSC discussed the importance of this issue and of obtaining needed information and thinking through implications of the data and analysis for policy setters; in particular, if data seems to show that the captive brood program is not working, the HSC felt it would be important for them to provide policy makers with a complete picture of the program and alternatives to improve program success and/or alternative implementation approaches. The HSC will discuss this issue again, with updated data, at their August meeting.

VIII. Methow Spring Chinook APP

A. Update on JFP’s discussion of additional acclimation site locations - Todd briefed the HSC on Grant PUDs efforts to locate an acclimation site within the Methow Valley. Initial efforts showed limited availability in the higher parts of the Valley. The HSC had the following discussions:

- The HSC discussed the viability of overwintering high in the upper Methow due to snow and ice. It may be that it is necessary to split acclimation, so the main winter acclimation occurs lower in the basin with fish transferred to upper basin acclimation sites as soon as conditions permit in the early spring. The HSC was generally comfortable with this approach, if it were to become necessary. Alternatively some of Grant PUD’s 200K fish obligation could be overwintered in the upper Methow and some overwintered lower in the Basin with the Foghorn Dam as a potential site for the collection of broodstock or broodstock management.
- The YN is actively pursuing acclimation sites in the Methow as part of its multi-species acclimation project. The HSC discussed and agreed that Grant PUD should, for now, plan to “piggy back” on the YN’s efforts to identify acclimation sites. The YN has identified a number of potential natural pond sites and, so far, is having some receptivity to their approaches. The HSC recognized the utility of identifying one primary “face” for land owners to work with on potential acclimation sites and projects. Grant PUD and the YN agreed to stay coordinated on the YN’s work and Grant PUD recognized that they will be asked to participate in funding for development of acclimation sites that would serve their programs.
- Adult management in the Methow is also an issue. In particular, how to collect brood stock remains to be worked out, including whether there should be a trap or other additional facilities built at the Foghorn site. Bill stated that there would be a full discussion of the Foghorn site and adult management in USFWS’s Winthrop National Fish Hatchery. The HSC agreed to continue discussions of adult management issues at future meetings.

B. Discussion of any Final Substantive Comments on the Draft APP and Conceptual Agreement – There were no additional substantive comments or concerns raised about the Methow Spring Chinook APP. The HSC conceptually agreed to the APP and reiterated its commitment to provide final editorial comments to Grant PUD by July 31 and to act on the Methow APP at the August HSC meeting. (Note that, as with the Nason and White River HGMP’s, NMFS has not yet completed its review of the Methow APP and may provide additional comments.)

IX. Overall M&E Plan

A. Discussion of Any Final Substantive Comments on the Draft M&E Plan – There were no additional substantive comments or concerns raised about the overall draft M&E Plan. The HSC conceptually agreed to the M&E plan and reiterated its commitment to provide final editorial comments to Grant PUD by July 31 and to act on the M&E plan at the August HSC meeting. (Note that, as

with the Nason and White River HGMP's, NMFS has not yet completed its review of the overall M&E plan and may provide additional comments.)

- B. Non-Target Taxa of Concern (NTTOC) Risk Assessment** - Todd briefed the HSC on Grant PUD's proposal to conduct a coordinated NTTOC risk assessment with Douglas and Chelan PUDs. The HSC discussed and tentatively agreed to move forward with the proposal, with the understanding that due to difference in circumstances, the Grant PUD portion of the NTTOC risk assessment might include additional taxa and/or experts than the Douglas and Chelan portions. In particular, the HSC discussed whether Grant PUD's coordination with the Services on Bull Trout management was as current as Douglas and Chelan PUDs' (if not, Bull Trout may need to be added to the NTTOC taxa list for Grant PUD) and whether additional expertise would be needed for Hanford Reach fish. Elizabeth will follow-up with Mike Schiewe to discuss the HCP's current NTTOC efforts and to gauge their willingness to coordinate with Grant PUD. Julie will provide the HSC with the HCPs current list of NTTOC taxa and experts. All HSC members will review this list and come to the August meeting prepared to discuss whether Grant should include additional taxa and/or additional experts for its portion of the NTTOC risk assessment.

X. Summer Chinook

- A. Update on Dryden Left (LB) and Right Bank (RB) and SOA Discussions** - Tom briefed the HSC on discussions to build out Dryden LB to support overwinter acclimation of Chelan and Grant PUD fish. Both Chelan and Grant PUDs are open to combined overwinter acclimation at Dryden left bank, provided capacity and certainty issues can be worked out. In particular, as discussed at past meetings, Grant PUD remains concerned that if it invests in Dryden LB it needs assurance that capacity will be available for the entire 44 year duration of their commitment. The HSC had the following discussion:
- The most straightforward path forward would be to simply expand the Dryden LB pond so that it could accommodate both Grant and Chelan PUDs entire obligations (i.e., more than 864K fish). Grant and Chelan PUD will look into whether this expansion is feasible.
 - The HSC discussed pursuing the following options if expansion of the Dryden LB Pond is not feasible:
 - Capping Grant or Chelan PUD's Production,
 - Expansion of the existing Carlton Pond or adding an additional pond at the Carton site to accommodate additional acclimation needs, or
 - Exploring the potential for additional capacity within the Entiat Basin
 - Grant PUD and Chelan PUD agreed to work with Elizabeth to draft a SOA on the Dryden site.
- B. Review/Refine Status Report** - The HSC discussed the need to compress the Summer Chinook Implementation Plan schedule to get to NNI by 2013.

Elizabeth and Patrick will follow-up with HSC members to determine when and how to best frame an HSC discussion of the details of this work.

XI. Fall Chinook HGMP and M&E Plan

A. Next Steps – August Agenda Items – The HSC discussed and agreed that the timelines for both the HGMP and M&E plans will be dependent upon their anticipated release to public notice by NMFS. Elizabeth and Patrick will work with Kris to determine the public notice release schedule and propose a review timeline plan to the HSC. The HSC tentatively agreed to act on the Fall Chinook HGMP and M&E plans during their September meeting.

XII. Next Wave of Plans – The HSC discussed the October 1st NMFS submittal deadline for the Wenatchee Summer Chinook, Methow Summer Chinook, & Sockeye HGMPs and the Okanogan Spring Chinook, Okanogan Summer Chinook, & Steelhead Trout APPs. The HSC discussed and agreed to review the HGMPs and try to act on them prior to their submittal to NMFS. To support this goal, the HSC agreed to discuss substantive comments on the plans during their August meeting and review revised draft plans in time to act on them at the September HSC meeting.

XIII. Priest Rapids Hatchery Design Updates/Discussion - Chris Carlson of Grant PUD presented an update on the proposed Priest Rapids Hatchery Design. Numerous changes have been made to the design based on past HSC comments. The design is rapidly progressing, and Grant PUD hopes to be in a position to contract for detailed plans and specifications in September. The HSC had the following discussion:

- The HSC discussed the purpose of designing the facility to segregate spawning by run timing; the HSC was not convinced that such segregation was necessary. Grant PUD clarified that fish would be spawned when they became ripe, regardless of what part of the run they are in.
- The HSC discussed the importance of reducing fish loss from avian predators. The hatchery design calls for raceways to be completely enclosed with predator nets and channel section ponds to be covered.
- The HSC discussed hatchery security. Alarm systems will be placed within the new residences and ponds will be enclosed with high security fences.
- The HSC discussed the process of surplusing adult fish and suggested incorporating a mechanical means for managing fish to minimize wear-and-tear and risks to workers associated with handling heavy fish.
- Elizabeth will circulate the PowerPoint presentation to the HSC.

XIV. Remaining Program Updates

A. Spring Chinook – Smolt Trap Update

- Water levels have continued to drop throughout the month of June.

- Sub-yearlings have been collected at both traps.
- B. Spring Chinook – Lake Wenatchee Net Pens and Next Year’s Planning –**
Discussions to continue between Grant PUD, YN and WDFW to determine fish culture activities for 2010 and beyond. Russell will provide a substantive update on this effort at the August HSC meeting.
- C. Fish at the Little White Salmon National Fish Hatchery (LWSNFH) -** No White River fish have returned to the hatchery. The hatchery is currently experiencing a higher than average rate of fish mortality due to BKD issues in the broodstock year 2005. An additional round of injections will take place within the next two weeks and the HSC will be kept updated. Almost all of the fish mortality has been females.
- D. Fall Chinook – Working Group Update –** The workgroup submitted a study plan outlining the conceptual framework for evaluation of operational impacts on June 30, 2009. The comment period for the workgroup’s flow fluctuation report identifying Grant PUD’s contributions to fluctuations in the Hanford Reach, has been extended to July 31, 2009.
- E. Fall Chinook – Mass Marking Dispute Resolution Update -** Discussions between WDFW and YN continue.

XV. Wrap-Up / Next Steps

A. Next Meeting: Thursday, August 20, 2009 – Cedars Inn

B. Review of August Meeting Agenda Items

- Path forward for finishing up past meeting notes.
- Four potential Decision documents:
 - SOA on protocols,
 - SOA Nason Creek Waters source, and
 - SOA on Dryden LB
 - Approval of Nason and White River spring Chinook salmon HGMPs.
- Review and discuss next steps for HGMPs and APPs due to NMFS on October 1st.
- Discussion of YN’s proposal to locate an expanded multi-species acclimation site in the Wenatchee and Methow Basins for Spring Chinook and Steelhead.
- Updates on the NTTOC, including:
 - Coordination with HCP,
 - Identifying NTTOC, and
 - Identifying key experts.
- Final substantive comments for the Priest Rapids Hatchery Design.