PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee Meeting

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 17, 2009
Grant County PUD SeaTac Office
18000 Pacific Hwy South, Tower Suite 1006, Kilroy Office Bldg
Call-in Number: 1-800-391-1709, access code 369546

Attendees

David Duvall, GCPUD
Bill Gale, USFWS
Kim Hyatt, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (Joint session only)
Tom Kahler, DCPUD (Joint session only)
Jeff Korth, WDFW
Russell Langshaw (alt) GCPUD
Greg Mackie, DCPUD (Joint session only)
Joe Miller, CCPUD (Joint session only)
Keely Murdoch (alt), YN
Mike Nicholls, GCPUD (Priest Rapids Hatchery design discussion only)
Todd Pearsons, GCPUD
Kris Petersen, NMFS
Bob Pfiefer, WDFW
Mike Schiewe, Anchor Environmental (Joint session only)
Tom Scribner, YN
Kirk Truscott, CCT
Ali Wick, Anchor Environmental (Joint session only)
Howie Wright, Okanogan Nation Alliance (Joint session only)
Elizabeth McManus, Facilitator
Patrick Donovan, Facilitator

Action Items

1. Kim Hyatt will send Elizabeth an electronic version of the document entitled the "Okanogan Fish and Water Management Tool Project Assessments: Record of Management Strategy and Decisions for the 2005-2006 Fish-and-Water Year," for distribution to the HSC and HCP.
2. Jeff will check on the status of WDFW's official letter stating changes in HSC representation.
3. Elizabeth will complete and distribute to the HSC for their final approval, revision summaries for past HSC meeting summaries (November 2008–February 2009).
4. Patrick will continue to add dates to the HSC calendar as they are submitted.
5. Bob will circulate, for the HSC's consideration, emails on White River microelements analysis.
6. Elizabeth will follow up with Kris to determine if she has any final comments on the Nason Creek SOA.

7. Elizabeth will work with the HCP to see if they will consider a HCP SOA on the Dryden Pond to mirror the HSC SOA. Kirk will draft and send Todd revised language for the Methow Summer Chinook HGMP addressing a commitment to investigate the use of live capture gear as a broodstock collection method.
8. Elizabeth and Patrick will work with Todd and Debbie to assure that the correct versions of the Fall Chinook HGMP and M&E plans are properly named and posted on the Grant PUD's secure website. Elizabeth will distribute the most recent versions of both plans to the HSC.
9. Elizabeth will contact Denny Rohr to determine the process for elevating the Priest Rapids Hatchery design issue and will draft a notification to the PRCC outlining the HSC's intention to raise the hatchery design issue to the policy level.
10. Russell will develop and distribute to the HSC a more detailed study plan of the White River spring Chinook Acclimation Activities prior to October meeting.
11. Elizabeth will follow up with the YN to discuss the best approach for locating and obtaining a Grant PUD acclimation site within the upper Methow.
12. Elizabeth and Patrick will distribute all future White River Spring Chinook Salmon monthly production reports.
13. Elizabeth and Patrick will develop and distribute to the HSC an electronic evaluation form using criteria within HSC Operating Procedures.

Decisions

1. The HSC approved the August meeting summary.
2. The HSC voted on and approved the Wenatchee and Methow Summer Chinook HGMPs as edited and revised during the meeting.
3. The HSC voted on and approved the SOA on Dryden LB as edited and projected on the screen during the meeting.
4. The HSC voted on and approved the SOA on Net Mesh for the White River Chinook acclimation site as edited and projected on the screen during the meeting.
5. The HSC approved the contents of the Interlocal Agreement with Douglas PUD to raise up to 80,000 steelhead and 201,000 spring Chinook salmon

Meeting Summary

Joint Committee Session of the HCP and the HSC

I. Sockeye discussion and Water Management Tool briefing – Howie Wright, Okanogan Nation Alliance (ONA) and Kim Hyatt, Fisheries and Oceans Canada presented to the joint committees on current dealings with the Sockeye salmon artificial propagation program at Skaha Lake in addition to an overview of a fish and water management tool developed to help regulate the Okanogan River.

A. Presentation/ Update on ONA Sockeye Artificial Propagation Program – Howie Wright presented background and the current status of the ONA's reintroduction of Sockeye salmon into Skaha Lake.

- The differential between the total number of sockeye past the Wells Dam and the spawning escapement estimate in 2008 likely declined from previous years due to river conditions. An additional factor may include the variation created by comparing the calibrated counts at Wells dams and the estimates at the spawning grounds. Efforts have been under way to standardize these methods in order to produce more consistent counts.
- Sockeye are reintroduced at the shoreline of Lakes Okanagan, Skaha, and Osoyoos via tanker truck. To decrease loss of fish due to predators, the ONA has piloted and is considering midnight instead of evening releases.
- The 2004 Broodyear (BY) Smolt to Adult Ratios (SAR) for the 2004 Sockeye BY within Lakes Osoyoos (6%) and Skaha (8%) follow normal production patterns for the region and are representative of the upper bound of survival. In non-peek years SARs can drop to 2% to 3%.

B. Presentation/ Update on the Okanagan Fish-Water Management Tool – Fisheries biologist Kim Hyatt with Fisheries and Oceans Canada presented to the joint committees on the Okanagan Fish-Water Management (OKFWM) Tool. The OKFWM Tool is an internet-accessible, multi-user decision support model used as a decision-making framework by water and fisheries managers to control water releases at Okanagan Lake dam. Five biophysical models are coupled with the OKFWM tool, which generate performance measures at a variety of lake and down-river sites. The database for the OKFWM system is updated daily with the actual recorded data for Okanagan Lake elevation, water temperatures and discharge at several sites. This real-time information feeds into the hydrology and fisheries components of the model to "self-correct" inflow forecasts and adjust forecasts for accumulated thermal units (ATUs) which determine the windows of vulnerability for developing sockeye and kokanee eggs. Kim made the following comments and clarifications.

- The response time of the KFWM Tool associated with the "self correction" of inflow is approximately 6 to 24 hours. Two primary things are being done to provide relief to the lake: 1) the lake is flushed of any and all organic matter which increases BOD in the lower levels; and 2) injecting oxygen into deeper layer of lake.
- The KFWM Tool makes projections as to when an acute squeeze event may occur on an annual basis. The Tool does not identify how severe or how long the acute squeeze event will last. Fish and water managers can predict a date of onset and duration of an acute squeeze through manual monitoring at a depth of 15 meters, which is not cost effective. The ONA is discussing the feasibility of installing a continuous oxygen and temperature profiler
- A prospective analysis of potential adverse conditions attributed to climate change has been conducted within the Tool and the results indicate a small amount of management latitude for problem solving.
- Kim Hyatt will send Elizabeth the document entitled the "Okanogan Fish and Water Management Tool Project Assessments: Record of Management Strategy and Decisions for the 2005-2006 Fish-and-Water Year," for distribution to the HSC and HCP.

PRCC HSC Meeting Summary

I. Welcome and Agenda Review – Elizabeth McManus welcomed the Hatchery Subcommittee (HSC) and reviewed the agenda items.

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

A. HSC Operating Procedures - Elizabeth confirmed the dispute resolution language in the Operating Procedures was checked and was modified so that it matches verbatim the language in the SSA. Elizabeth sent the final Operating Procedures to Denny Rohr for review by the Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee (PRCC) and will follow up to determine if the PRCC has completed their review.

B. Nason Creek HGMP - Todd reviewed the costs presented within Table-1 of the Nason Creek HGMP and revised the steelhead survival numbers.

C. August Meeting Summary - The HSC reviewed the August meeting summary and made a small number of corrections and clarifications. 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. Priest Rapids Hatchery Design

A. Review and discussion of final HSC substantive comments on Priest Rapids Hatchery design – Todd briefed the HSC on the current status of the Priest Rapids Hatchery design. Comments were received from WDFW on adult holding and handling. No comments were received on the hatchery design leading up to the adult stage. The HSC discussed, approved the designs up to the adult stage, and agreed that Grant PUD should move forward with the hatchery design elements leading up to the adult stage. The HSC further discussed the following elements of the hatchery design related to adult handling:

- Additional mechanization of the handling process.
- Use of anesthetic during handling.
- Location of the adult handling ponds.

Grant PUD had considered these issues, and visited the Spring Creek Hatchery to review their operations and tentatively determined that changes to the Priest Rapids Hatchery design are not warranted at this point. Currently there is a 95% prespawn adult fish survival rate at the hatchery, so any design changes could only provide up to a 5% increase in fish survival. At the same time, design changes at this late date could add 6-12 months to the schedule, depending on how quickly the changes could be made/ resolved. (There is a very narrow yearly construction window for the hatchery.) Furthermore, documented injuries at the Priest Rapids hatchery have been low (1 L&I claim on a shoulder injury). The HSC, particularly USFWS and WDFW expressed continuing concern that their concerns about adult handling were not being adequately addressed or considered by Grant PUD.

B. Path Forward/ Next Steps – HSC members expressed an interest in resolving the hatchery design issue without elevating it to the PRCC. The HSC agreed to have Elizabeth work with WDFW, USFWS, and Grant PUD to schedule a site visit of the hatchery to further discuss design concerns, fish handling issues, and site constraints. All parties agreed to work towards development of more specific language on the hatchery concerns including:

- A comparison of labor costs required to operate the trap as designed vs. a more mechanized trap operation.

- An explanation of issues associated with locating the adult ponds some distance from the adult trap, particularly regarding cultural resource surveys, the relative size of the footprint, and the approximate cost to provide water to the ponds if sited at the trap.
- A review of how other hatcheries within the region address adult handling.
- A statement of the benefits in terms of fish health/survival that might be expected if design changes were to be made.

The HSC further agreed to have Elizabeth contact Denny Rohr to determine the proper process for elevating the design issue to the PRCC if that becomes necessary.

IV. Non-Target Taxa of Concern

A. Update on NTTOC Process (e.g., proposed list of experts and proposed risk assessment process) - The HCP reviewed and approved the proposed list of experts and proposed risk assessment process put forward by the Hatchery Evaluation Technical Team (HETT). The HSC indicated that they also agree with the proposed list of experts and process put forward by HETT. Since agreement has been reached across both committees and the joint risk assessment will move forward.

B. Path Forward or Next Steps – The HETT will develop and distribute to the HCP and HSC a draft NTTOC expert request letter and a list of potential expert panelists. The expert request letters will be distributed after the next HETT meeting occurs (Oct, 13). Edits and/ or comments on the draft letter will need to be submitted within two weeks of its distribution.

V. Fall Chinook HGMP and M&E Plan

A. Review of Final Substantive Comments Received on Draft HGMP and M&E Plans – No additional substantive comments were received prior to the September meeting for either plan. The HSC discussed and agreed to add language within the Fall Chinook HGMP requiring Grant PUD to consult with the HSC prior to executing the option to collect broodstock from the left bank ladder of the Priest Rapids Dam.

B. **Path Forward/ Next Steps –** Elizabeth and Patrick will work with Todd and Debbie to assure that the correct versions of the both plans are properly named and posted on the Grant PUD's secure website. Elizabeth will distribute to the HSC the most recent versions of both the Fall Chinook HGMP and M&E plans. The HSC agreed to be prepared to discuss and vote on these plans during the October HSC meeting.

VI. Dryden Left Bank

A. **Review and Discuss Revised Draft SOA on Dryden Left Bank –** Elizabeth briefed the HSC on revisions made to the Dryden Left Bank SOA.

- Added clarifying language throughout the SOA to indicate that the feasibility assessment contains two separate (but related) dimensions: 1) Can the pond be expanded to provide capacity for additional fish?; and 2) Can overwinter acclimation be achieved?; and
- Language from the background section was incorporated with language within the agreement language, including the feasibility considerations.

The HSC discussed whether overwintering capacity at Dryden Pond was meant to accommodate both Grant PUD and Chelan PUD fish or only Grant PUD fish. It was clarified that the intention is to (if possible) create overwintering capacity for the full combined PUD obligation of 1,142,000 fish. Objective #1 within the statement of the SOA to read, "Modify Dryden Pond to provide over-winter rearing and acclimation capabilities for up to 1,142,000 Wenatchee summer Chinook salmon."

B. **Voting -** The HSC voted on and approved the SOA on Dryden LB as edited and projected on the screen.

VII. Next Steps/ Path forward –

Because the work at Dryden Pond will impact both Chelan PUD's and Grant PUD's programs, Elizabeth will work with Chelan PUD to put a Dryden Pond SOA in front of the HCP for review/approval. Substantive Review of Comments Received On Draft Wenatchee and Methow Summer Chinook HGMPS

A. Methow Summer Chinook HGMP – No substantive comments were submitted by the HSC on the Methow Summer Chinook HGMP. The HSC discussed and agreed to add additional language calling for a commitment to investigate the use of live capture gear as a broodstock collection method. Kirk will draft and send Todd revised language for inclusion into the plan.

B. **Wenatchee Summer Chinook HGMP -** There were no additional substantive comments or concerns raised about the Wenatchee Summer Chinook HGMP.

C. **Voting and Next Steps -** With NMFS abstaining, the HSC voted on and approved the Wenatchee and Methow Summer Chinook HGMPs as edited and revised during the meeting.

VIII. White River Chinook Acclimation Site Net Size

A. **Discuss draft SOA and determine preferred mesh size –** The HSC discussed and agreed that the mesh size of net used in temporary semi-natural acclimation side-channel at the rivermile 11.5 site for Wenatchee spring Chinook in the White River should be 1/4 inch. The HSC further discussed and agreed that the 1/4 inch mesh size net used within the impoundment area should be supplemented by a larger upstream debris catching net that can be pulled for cleaning.

B. **Voting -** The HSC voted on and approved the Net Mesh SOA as edited and projected on the screen.

IX. White River spring Chinook Acclimation Activities – Russell briefed the HSC on the acclimation activities for the White River spring Chinook BY 2008. The HSC supported releasing fish from the net pens, downstream of Lake Wenatchee near the lake outlet, and the McComas and rivermile 11.5 sites. The fish released downstream of Lake Wenatchee will be acclimated in the net pens. PIT-tagged fish (approximately 10,000 per site) will be released from each location to evaluate survival from release to detection at McNary Dam. A more detailed study plan will be developed by Russell and distributed to the HSC prior to the October meeting.

X. Upper Methow Acclimation Sites – The HSC reviewed and discussed progress on finding multi-species acclimation sites in the Upper Methow. The YN has begun the process of identifying some acclimation sites for Spring Chinook within the upper Methow. Elizabeth will follow up with the YN to discuss this progress and there will be an update at the October HSC meeting.

XI. Okanogan Spring and Summer Chinook and Steelhead APPs –The Okanogan Spring and Summer Chinook and Steelhead APPs will be submitted along with the Wenatchee Summer Chinook, Methow Summer Chinook, and Sockeye HGMPs on September 30, 2009.

XII. Smolt Trap Summaries

A. White River Trap

- Approximately 96 sub-yearlings were trapped with 85 used in efficiency trials and 91 PIT tagged.

B. Nason Creek Trap

- High stream temperatures and low water flows shut down operations for five total days.
- Approximately 149 Spring Chinook were trapped with 141 used in efficiency trials and 143 PIT tagged.

XIII. White River Captive Brood Information

A. Update on Post Release Survival of White River Spring Chinook - Russell updated the HSC on the revisions made to the post release survival of White River spring Chinook report, which included adding citations of Skalski's work and methods, and updating fish detection counts at Tumwater and McNary Dams. Elizabeth and Patrick will distribute White River Spring Chinook Salmon monthly hatchery production reports.

B. Update on Egg Take at Little White Salmon NFH (LWSNFH) - Russell updated the HSC on the anticipated egg take at LWSNFH. With the current level of females, approximately 160k eggs are anticipated for collection. Russell will summarize final egg take at LWSNFH and will distribute to the HSC.

XIV. White River and Nason Creek HGMPs – Todd provided a brief update on the White River and Nason Creek HGMPs. Both plans were submitted to NMFS on Tuesday, September 15, 2009. Following the HSC's vote and approval of both plans during the August meeting a typo was discovered and corrected by Grant PUD. The typo was in the acclimation vessel volume provided within Table 11 of the Nason Creek HGMP and Table 9 of the Nason Creek HGMP. The HSC agreed that since the change didn't impact rearing criteria or other substantive elements of the HGMP, the plans should move forward without further review. The HSC further discussed and agreed that in the future minor technical corrections and clarifications of this nature that do not impact substantive elements of the HGMPs will not require additional notification and/or review by the HSC.

XV. McComas issues – Todd provided a brief updated on the McComas site. Grant PUD's had been concerned that site issues at McComas might affect design and would require a special meeting or conference call. They now believe that this can be addressed during

the regularly scheduled October HSC meeting. The HSC expressed interest in visiting the McComas site during the October meeting. Elizabeth will follow up on this with Grant PUD.

XVI. Nason Creek Water Supply, FWI Update – Todd provided a brief update on the current status of the Fresh Water Institute's (FWI) water source assessment for Nason Creek. FWI is anticipated to conduct a site visit on October 12, 2009 and Grant PUD will provide an update at the October HSC meeting.

XVII. Interlocal agreement with Douglas PUD about steelhead and spring Chinook salmon – Todd provided a brief update on Grant PUD's Interlocal agreement with Douglas PUD, which will allow Grant PUD to rear 80,000 steelhead at the Wells Hatchery and 201,000 spring Chinook at the Methow Hatchery. The HSC discussed and agreed to revise the Interlocal agreement so as to allow for "up to 80,000 steelhead" to be reared at Wells Hatchery. The HSC further discussed and agreed that they would provide future direction as to whether a higher proportion of steelhead would be reared within the Cassimer Bar program.

XVIII. September Facilitator Assessment – The HSC discussed and agreed to move forward with conducting a facilitator assessment. Elizabeth and Patrick will develop and distribute to the HSC an electronic evaluation form using criteria within HSC Operating Procedures. The evaluation form will include boxes for ranking performance on a scale of 1 to 5 with additional space for specific/ additional comments. The HSC discussed and agreed to send completed evaluation forms to Tom Scribner and to further discuss the evaluation results during the October meeting.

XIX. Wrap-Up / Next Steps

A. Next Meeting: Thursday, October 22nd, 2009 – TBD

B. Review of October meeting agenda items -

- Fall Chinook HGMP – Voting.
- Update on HCP's consideration of the Dryden LB SOA.
- Updated on Priest Rapids Hatchery design issues.
- Update on the FWI's work at Nason Creek.
- Review of implementation schedules, starting with Nason Creek spring Chinook (potentially).
- Site visits.