

PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday, November 19, 2009
Cedars Inn – Wenatchee, WA

Attendees

David Allison, Jacobs Engineering
Bill Bosch, (YKFP Presentation and Priest Rapids Hatchery Design Only)
Chris Carlson, GCPUD (On Phone)
Melinda Davis, YKFP (YKFP Presentation and Priest Rapids Hatchery Design Only)
Tom Dresser, GCPUD (On Phone)
Dave Fast, (YKFP Presentation and Priest Rapids Hatchery Design Only)
Chris Frederiksen, YKFP (YKFP Presentation and Priest Rapids Hatchery Design Only)
Bill Gale, USFWS
Ross Hendrick, GCPUD (On Phone)
Jeff Korth, WDFW
Russell Langshaw (alt) GCPUD
Keely Murdoch (alt), YN
Mike Nicholls, GCPUD (On Phone)
Todd Pearsons, GCPUD
Bob Pfiefer, WDFW
Julie Pyper, GCPUD
Tom Scribner, YN (On Phone)
Kirk Truscott, CCT
Elizabeth McManus, Facilitator
Patrick Donovan, Facilitator

Action Items

1. Patrick will follow up with Kim Hyatt to get 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. Elizabeth will complete and distribute to the HSC for their final approval, revision summaries for past HSC meeting summaries (November 2008–February 2009).
3. Once approved by WDFW, Todd will re-submit the fall Chinook HGMP as amended to NOAA with a cover letter outlining the revised language.
4. Elizabeth will work with Todd to confirm draft language of a Carlton Pond SOA and will distribute a draft version to the HSC prior to their December meeting.
5. Jeff will send Elizabeth WDFW’s PRH pre-conceptual drawings for circulation to the HSC prior to their December meeting.
6. The YKFP will send Grant PUD the specifications of any PRH design changes necessary to accommodate their 1.7-Million egg proposal.

7. Todd will revisit the Sockeye HGMP to clearly identify Grant PUD as a co-operator (co-permit holder) and will follow up with Chelan PUD to determine their willingness to do the same.
8. Elizabeth and Patrick will follow up with Jeff and Kirk to determine if they have any final comments and/or suggested edits to the Sockeye HGMP.
9. Grant PUD will compare the benefits of an EA to and EIS, regarding the White River implementation plan and will prepare a recommendation for presentation to the HSC during their December meeting.
10. Grant PUD will circulate to the HSC any updated information or studies on the feasibility of the conceptual design for the McComas site and design options under consideration. Grant PUD will revisit the construction timeline within the White River implementation schedule and will assess the feasibility of shrinking it by 1 to 2 quarters.

Decisions

- 1.

Meeting Summary

- I. Welcome and Agenda Review** – Elizabeth McManus welcomed the Hatchery Subcommittee (HSC) and reviewed the agenda items. The HSC agreed to move their discussion of the Priest Rapids Hatchery design to immediately after the YKFP's presentation on the Yakima River Fall Chinook proposal (instead of later in the day).
- II. Action Items Review & Other Committee Updates** – Elizabeth reviewed and provided updates to the action items identified during the October HSC meeting. The following items were discussed in substance:
 - A. Fall Chinook HGMP**: Final approval of the Fall Chinook HGMP remains contingent on WDFW's approval of language added and conditionally approved by the HSC during their October meeting. The added language requires Grant PUD to consult WDFW and the JFP prior to executing an option to collect broodstock from the left bank ladder of the Priest Rapids Dam. Elizabeth will follow up with Jeff and Bob to determine if they have any final comments on the revised language. Once approved by WDFW, Todd will re-submit the HGMP as amended to NOAA with a cover letter highlighting the revised language.
 - B. WDFW's Pre-conceptual Drawings for the Priest Rapids Hatchery Design**: Due to a variety of factors, WDFW's pre-conceptual drawings for the Priest Rapids Hatchery (PRH) redesign have been delayed one month and will be made

available to the HSC in preparation for their December meeting. Additional discussion on this agenda item can be found below under “Priest Rapids Hatchery Design”.

- C. Carlton Pond SOA: Elizabeth will work with Todd to confirm that discussions between Grant PUD and Douglas PUD are accurately reflected within an SOA on the Carlton pond and will distribute a draft version to the HSC prior to their December meeting.
- D. Monthly Reports on Steelhead at the Cassimer Bar Program: The CCT and Grant PUD are continuing efforts to finalizing the formatting and content of monthly updates on steelhead at the Cassimer Bar program. The first update will be made available to the HSC during their December HSC meeting.
- E. October Meeting Summary: The HSC reviewed the October 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. YKFP’s Presentation on Yakima River fall and summer Chinook Program – Chris Frederickson, Fisheries Biologist, Yakama/Klickitat Fisheries Project (YKFP) gave a brief presentation to the HSC on their Yakima fall and summer Chinook programs.

- A. **YKFP Yakima Fall Chinook Program** – The YKFP’s Yakima fall Chinook program includes an out-of-basin, segregated program and an in-basin, integrated program. The current fall Chinook program does not meet the conservation goals identified for the Subbasin. The Yakima Subbasin Summer and Fall Run Chinook Master Plan propose to transition the existing hatchery program. Under this proposal approximately 1.7-million fall Chinook from Little White Salmon would be replaced with an egg transfer from PRH. The integrated program, using local fall Chinook brood stock to augment harvest and natural spawning escapement, would continue to be developed. The proposed program would use local brood stock collected at or near Prosser Dam and would mark all releases so that natural-origin returns can be distinguished. These fish would be released from Prosser Hatchery or acclimation sites upstream in the lower Naches or middle Yakima Rivers. The HSC were asked to provide comments specific to the YKFP’s fall Chinook program proposal. The HSC discussed the following points.

- At this point the YN and Grant PUD are only discussing the YKFP’s proposal for an egg transfer from PRH and have not reached a formal agreement. The only agreement in place is for Grant PUD to provide the YN with green eggs in 2010.
- Under the YKFP’s proposal, egg collection for the fall Chinook program would be transitioned to the PRH. The current in-basin program is not a true integrated program and probably should more properly be referred to as a local program, which the YKFP are working toward and managing for an integrated program.
- The HSC said that there may not be enough NORs available at PRH to properly manage an integrated population. With the low availability of NORs to supplement the YKFP’s program, the HSC were concerned that it would be difficult to adequately achieve a true integrated population.
- Kirk Truscott (Colville Tribes) voiced concern that the program implementation using 100% NOR broodstock may have adverse impacts to upriver populations if broodstock needs are satisfied through collections at the Off-Ladder Fish Trap at Priest Rapids Dam. Additional Colville Tribes concern was voiced regarding negative impacts to upriver stocks if production increases the harvest rates through the harvest schedules in U.S.-v-Oregon.
- Program priorities for egg collection have already been established at the PRH facility and account for pretty much all the eggs produced. If Grant PUD is to consider supplying new programs with eggs or smolts, impacts to existing program priorities will need to be assessed. The HSC agreed that Grant PUD’s mitigation programs along with Corps of Engineers mitigation will receive the highest priority for PRH production under any scenario. There was concern that PRH may not be able to support all production, particularly production through early rearing phases which would require additional water. The current program prioritization is:
 - 5-Million eggs for Grant PUDs mitigation requirements
 - 1.7-Millon eggs for the mitigation of The Dalles and John Day Dam (Corps of Engineers)
 - 3.5-Million eggs for the Corps of Engineers
 - Unspecified amount of eggs for small programs and donations to educational groups (i.e. Fish in class rooms and the Hanford Reach program)

- The HSC discussed and agreed to postpone further discussion of program prioritization until Grant PUD makes the determination as to which, if any, programs would be impacted by the YKFP’s proposal.
- The HSC discussed that it is important for specifics of the YKFP’s proposal to come forward to Grant PUD as soon as possible, so potential design changes or other modifications could be considered in concert with the changes that will be suggested by WDFW and final decisions made on PRH design.
- The YKFP’s Yakima Subbasin Summer and Fall Run Chinook Master Plan (Master Plan) will summarize all discussions with Grant PUD and WDFW regarding the potential transition of their existing hatchery program (1.7-Million fall Chinook) to the PRH.

B. YKFP Yakima Summer Chinook – In addition to the YKFP’s transition of their fall Chinook program, new hatchery releases targeted at reestablishing the summer run component would be implemented. Summer Chinook collected from Wells Hatchery or Wells Dam will be used initially to re-establish a summer run until adult returns are sufficient to meet the targeted summer run release objective with an integrated local brood source program. The combined annual release goal for the fall-run and summer-run portion of the program would be approximately 1.7 to 2.5 million Chinook.

Kirk Truscott (Colville Tribes) voiced concern that the YN summer Chinook program supported through NOR extractions at Wells Dam will adversely effect the upriver populations and negatively effect the implementation of the Chief Joseph summer/fall Chinook hatchery broodstock collection. Additionally, the YN summer Chinook program may result in increased harvest rate on upriver stocks through the harvest schedule in U.S.-v-Oregon and adversely effect the upriver populations and the Colville Tribe’s Chief Joseph summer/fall Chinook Hatchery Program.

C. Path Forward/ Next Steps - Grant PUD and the YN will continue discussions of the YKFP’s proposal and will take into account the issues raised by the HSC. WDFW will be made aware of any major advancement in discussions. The HSC agreed to hear an update on the YKFP’s Yakima River fall Chinook program proposal during their December meeting. There was also discussion about the need to prioritize who gets the available space and fish at PRH.

IV. Priest Rapids Hatchery Design

- A. Review and Discussion of WDFW’s “Pre-conceptual” Drawings:** Jeff briefed the HSC on the status of WDFW’s pre-conceptual drawings for the PRH redesign. Due to unforeseen factors the pre-conceptual drawings have been delayed one month. In the interim, WDFW will meet with Grant PUD on November 20, 2009 to discuss changes proposed for the PRH redesign. Once WDFW completes the pre-conceptual designs, Jeff will send them to Elizabeth for circulation to the HSC.

- B. Update and Review of Grant PUD’s Time/Cost Estimates Regarding “Pre-conceptual” Drawings:** Due to WDFW’s one month delay with their pre-conceptual drawings for the PRH, Grant PUD’s time and cost estimates for the PRH redesign will be circulated to the HSC prior to their January meeting.

- C. Remaining Issues and Discussion:** The HSC discussed the ability of the PRH rebuild to accommodate egg collection for future programs similar to the YKFP’s fall Chinook program. The HSC acknowledged that accommodating new egg collection programs may require design changes to increase the hatchery’s brood holding capacity. Todd indicated that current designs of the PRH will likely accommodate existing programs, but it is not clear how much (if any) excess capacity there will be. The HSC discussed and agreed to have the YN, WDFW, and Grant PUD further discuss the feasibility of the PRH rebuild to accommodate new programs and any associated design changes. The intent of these discussions are to clearly identify and layout any additional revisions to the PRH design prior to its finalization and to ensure that the PRH is rebuilt in such a way to be as robust as possible. The YKFP will send Grant PUD their ideas for specific design changes that could be made to accommodate their 1.7 million egg proposal at the PRH.

V. Sockeye HGMP

- A. Remaining Issues and Discussion -** Todd briefed the HSC on the status of the sockeye HGMP, which relies on a sockeye reintroduction plan developed by the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA). The HGMP was submitted to NOAA on September 30, 2009. The purpose of the current HSC discussion is to identify any major issues that would prompt a revised submittal and to advise NOAA on the HSC’s perspective on the HGMP concurrent with NOAA’s initial review. The HSC discussed and agreed that as primary funding agencies, both Grant and Chelan PUD should be identified as co-operators throughout “Section 1” of the

HGMP. Todd will revisit the Sockeye HGMP to clearly identify Grant PUD as a co-operator (co-permit holder) and will follow up with Chelan PUD to determine their willingness to do the same.

- B. Voting or Next Steps, as Appropriate** – Voting on the HGMP will be postponed until the December HSC meeting to allow CCT and WDFW additional time for review. Elizabeth and Patrick will follow up with both Jeff and Kirk to determine if they have any final comments and/or suggested edits to the Sockeye HGMP.

VI. Discussion of White River and Nason Creek Implementation Schedules – Todd briefed the HSC on the status of the White River and Nason Creek implementation schedules. The most up-to-date versions of both implementation schedules are dated 11/16/09. Monthly status reports on activities for the White River and Nason Creek programs and remaining issues to be resolved are available on the HSC’s secure website.

- A. Review of White River Implementation Schedule** – Russell walked the HSC through key assumptions and drivers used to build timeframes within the White River spring Chinook implementation schedule. He further identified areas of the schedule that have been expanded or compressed in Grant PUD’s latest revisions/updates. The HSC discussed various components of the implementation schedule and offered the following comments and clarifications.

- NMFS responded to Grant PUD’s draft White River HGMP with a request for additional information and clarification. Once the additional information is received, NMFS will coordinate with USFWS to assess the feasibility of merging their respective consultations. The HSC agreed that any delays in either consultation would likely impact timeframes within the “Compliance – NEPA/ESA” section.
- The HSC discussed whether it would be prudent to replace the McComas acclimation site environmental assessment (EA) with a full environmental impact statement (EIS). The HSC felt that an EIS offers a more detailed evaluation of the proposed McComas acclimation facility and may speed up the implementation process by preemptively addressing potential future concerns, questions, and potential “process” challenges. Grant PUD will compare the benefits of an EA to and EIS and will prepare a recommendation for presentation to the HSC during their December meeting. If an EIS is not implemented, the HSC encouraged Grant PUD to expand the EA section of the schedule to include a more detailed list of the potential/real environmental impacts being considered.

- Construction of the McComas acclimation facility will require approval from both federal and state/local agencies, requiring compliance with both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). The NEPA analysis focuses on the impacts of the Federal action and likely will take a more regional or basin wide approach. The SEPA analysis focuses on site-scale, site-specific impacts.
- The HSC agreed that all permits tied to the implementation schedule (i.e. JARPA, SEPA, ground water rights, etc.) should be identified and prioritized based on the amount of time necessary for processing and completion and submit them accordingly.
- Two primary components driving the “Final Facility Design” include the construction bid/contract award process and construction windows. The construction timeframe has been expanded due to the inability of construction crews to access the site because of poor weather conditions. The HSC discussed this timeframe and Grant PUD agreed to revisit it with an eye towards trying to shrink it by 1 to 2 quarters.
- The HSC discussed and agreed to add a footnote within the “Operations” section identifying that permit 1592 will expire May 31, 2010.
- As Grant PUD moved towards permitting and conceptual design of the McComas acclimation facility further ongoing evaluation of the site indicated that the original idea for in-ground earthen ponds might not be feasible and that circulars or raceways might be more appropriate design directions. Conceptual designs of the McComas site, including the three rearing vessel options, will be presented at a stakeholder meeting scheduled for December 2, 2009 in Leavenworth, Washington. The HSC expressed concern that they did not have adequate information on the ongoing public outreach Grant PUD is conducting in the upper White River area, in particular that there would be updated information on site conditions and design evaluations and directions presented to the public before it had been made available to or discussed with the HSC. The HSC made the following comments and recommendations with respect to Grant PUD’s public outreach process.
 - Comments previously submitted on the White River program – expressly those requesting the removal of raceways as a rearing vessel

option – should be blended into stakeholder discussions as a means to reaffirm that past public input is being considered.

- Grant PUD will circulate to the HSC all information leading up to conceptual design of the McComas acclimation facility, including a draft of the McComas site evaluation plan. Grant PUD will follow up with the HSC following the December 2, 2009 stakeholder outreach meeting to share outcomes and their anticipated path forward.
 - The HSC discussed the pros and cons of use of third party facilitator in place of Grant PUD staff to run stakeholder outreach meetings. At this point in the process, Grant PUD is interested in building effective one-on-one relationships in the community and believes that using its own staff and officials front and center at the meeting contributes to this overall goal. The HSC stressed the importance of stakeholder relationships at both the county level and with the local land trust, nature conservancy, and any relevant environmental organizations. The HSC agreed to consider any relationships/connections they may have with such organizations and will work to connect them with Grant PUD.
 - The HSC agreed that future discussions of the McComas acclimation facility should include the potential to reduce site impacts (e.g., to wetlands) by decreasing the footprint of the facility.
 - Elizabeth will follow up with Gerry to relay the HSC’s concerns about the approach to public outreach in the upper White River area directly.
- B. Review of Nason Creek Implementation Schedule:** Todd briefly addressed changes made to the Nason Creek implementation schedule (version 11/16/09). Current estimates are that the Nason Creek facility will not release smolts until 2019. The HSC were very concerned about that delay. Todd raised the potential to explore more aggressively the potential to use excess capacity (if any) in the system and/or consider expansion or retrofit of existing facilities to get the Nason Creek program up and running sooner. The HSC was interested in this potential, either as a stepping stone program or as a replacement for the facility currently planned for Nason Creek. The HSC agreed to discuss this potential approach further at their December meeting. Individual HSC members, particularly USFWS and WDFW agreed to evaluate their facilities for capacity.

- The HSC identified inconsistencies between timeframes for similar implementation activities within the Nason Creek and White River implementation plans. Elizabeth and Patrick will conduct a side by side comparison of the Nason Creek and White River implementation plans and will further identify inconsistencies between the two schedules for discussion with Grant PUD and the HSC.

C. Next Steps: The HSC agreed that their December meeting include discussions of a path forward on all outstanding issues as identified within the Nason Creek and White River program status and pending issues reports. Elizabeth and Patrick will distribute program status reports to the HSC prior to the December meeting and will work with Grant PUD to upload all associated materials to the secure website. Russell will relay the HSC's comments on the Nason Creek and White River schedule to Grant PUD's management and engineers and will provide an update during the December HSC meeting.

VII. Progress on Finding Multi-Species Acclimation Sites in the Upper Methow – Tom provided the HSC with an update on expanded acclimation in Methow for 2010. The YN engaged Grant PUD on getting involved in expanded acclimation in the upper Methow through funding passive integrated transponders (PIT) tags and operation and management for the mitigation fish they pay for at Methow spring Chinook Hatchery (MSCH). The YN proposed that Grant PUD use some or most of their mitigation at MSCH for the acclimation at Biddle Pond and Goat Wall. The total number of spring Chinook transferred for the acclimation project would be determined by Grant PUD in consultation with Keely, who is developing a refined experimental design that would maximize M&E data and comparisons that would then be discussed in the PRCC HC. Grant PUD would pay and be responsible for PIT tagging, and the operation and management of approximately 10K spring Chinook going to each pond.

The YN and USFWS are currently working on plans to test multispecies acclimation at a smaller scale within current Coho (YN) and spring Chinook (USFWS) programs currently reared at Winthrop NFH. In the spring of 2010, approximately 50,000 spring Chinook would be moved into the back channel and mixed with approximately 57,000 Coho, which are now being reared at the Willard National Fish Hatchery and are already programmed for final rearing and acclimation in this channel. The back channel is a juvenile bypass channel connecting the hatchery point of diversion (at Foghorn Ditch) with the Methow River. A portion of this channel has been used by the YN for Coho rearing/acclimation for several years. The YN considers this to be a good pre-test for their 2011 proposal which will look at this same species mix at Lincoln Ponds located along the Twisp River. The remainder of WNFH spring Chinook production will be

released directly from the hatchery into the Methow River in April of 2010 as per standard procedures.

- VIII. Acclimation for the White River spring Chinook BY 2008** – Russell briefed the HSC on the status of acclimation activities for the White River spring Chinook BY 2008. Grant PUD is continuing to assess the options for transporting fish to the potential release locations, including the use of a fish via “Fly Box”, which entails fish being dipped out of net pens and flown by helicopter to the release sites.
- IX. Non-Target Taxa of Concern (NTTOC)** – Keely briefed the HSC on the status of the NTTOC. The HETT is currently working to populate the risk assessment template. The HSC discussed and agreed that the assessment template should be distributed to the HCP and HSC prior to its distribution to the panelists.
- X. Fall Chinook Workgroup** – Russell briefed the HSC on the Fall Chinook Working Group and indicated that the Workgroup is in the process of finalizing their flow fluctuation study.
- XI. Carlton Pond Work/SOA Update** – Todd updated the HSC on recent discussions between Grant, Chelan and Douglas PUDs regarding the Carlton pond as an alternate acclimation site, similar to the plan for the Dryden LB pond. A bathymetric survey of the site is scheduled to take place within the month of December 2009. Grant PUD requested drawings from Chelan PUD and upon receiving them will evaluate the technical aspects of overwintering at Carlton Pond. Elizabeth will draft an SOA on exploration of the Carlton Pond as an acclimation site, modeled after the SOA on the Dryden LB pond.
- XII. FWI’s Nason Creek Water Assessment** – Todd briefed the HSC on actions taken by Grant PUD subsequent to the Fresh Water Institute’s (FWI’s) Nason Creek water source assessment on October 12, 2009. The assessment concluded that the variation in water transparency would determine if Ozone or UV should be used as the primary method of water treatment. Grant PUD is working to locate and contract with a specialist who can assess the proper amount/dosage of Ozone and UV needed for water treatment. In the interim, Grant PUD is working to determine the most suitable rearing vessel design for the Nason Creek site (i.e. raceways, earthen ponds, or circulars).
- XIII. Wrap-Up / Next Steps**
 - A. Next Meeting:** Thursday, December 17, 2009 – Cedars Inn

B. Potential December Meeting Agenda Items

- Review Nason Creek and White River implementation schedules and pending issues
- Update on Grant PUD's public meeting at the White River
- Update on the YKFP's Yakima River fall Chinook program proposal
- Update on the Dryden LB process and Carlton Pond draft SOA
- Sockeye HGMP – Voting.
- Update on Priest Rapids Hatchery– WDFW's pre-conceptual designs
- Update on NTTOC risk assessment template.
- Update on the Steelhead at the Cassimer Bar Program
- Update on acclimation activities for White River spring Chinook BY 2008.
- Update on the Fall Chinook workgroup