

PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday, December 17, 2009
Cedars Inn – Wenatchee, WA

Attendees

Bill Gale, USFWS
Jeff Korth, WDFW
Russell Langshaw (alt) GCPUD
Keely Murdoch (alt), YN
Mike Nicholls, GCPUD (On Phone – Priest River Hatchery Discussion Only)
Todd Pearsons, GCPUD
Bob Pfiefer, WDFW
Kirk Truscott, CCT
Elizabeth McManus, Facilitator
Patrick Donovan, Facilitator

Action Items

1. Patrick will follow find a link to the 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. Patrick will also follow up with Tom Kahler, Douglas PUD as a potential source.
2. 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. (In progress)
3. Kirk will follow up with Jerry Marco to determine if he has any final comments on the past HSC meeting summaries.
4. Todd will re-submit the Fall Chinook HGMP as amended to NOAA with a cover letter highlighting the revised language.
5. Elizabeth will follow up with Tom to check on the status of the YKFP’s 1.7-Million egg proposal and associated design change specifications for the PRH.
6. Elizabeth will contact Tom to determine his willingness to provide updates on PAC discussions during monthly HSC meetings.
7. Todd will send Howie the latest version of the Sockeye HGMP (9/30/09).
8. Elizabeth will follow up with Gerry to determine who at the policy level he will be soliciting advice from regarding opposition to supplementation.
9. Elizabeth will follow up with Kris to determine her HGMP review and publication schedule and to clarify if consultation needs to take place prior to the White River ESA permit expiration date of May 31, 2010.
10. Russell will send Elizabeth for circulation to the HSC an official scope and description of the White Rive public working group along with a list of community members being considered.

11. Kirk will coordinate with Keely on a path forward for addressing CCT's concerns with harvest language within the YN Spring Chinook Implementation Plan.
12. Elizabeth will follow up with the HCP to obtain any documentation (i.e. SOA) they may have on their protocols concerning culling vs. rearing and will work with Grant PUD to draft an SOA for discussion at the January HSC meeting.
13. Patrick will locate and circulate to the HSC the 2003 agreement between WDFW and Grant PUD, which describes the history of PRH program and intent of the hatchery re-design.

Decisions

1.

Meeting Summary

- I. Welcome and Agenda Review** – Elizabeth McManus welcomed the Hatchery Subcommittee (HSC) and reviewed the agenda items. The HSC requested and agreed to start future meetings at 9:00AM instead of 8:30AM.
- II. Action Items Review & Other Committee Updates** – Elizabeth reviewed and provided updates to the action items identified during the November HSC meeting. The following items were discussed in substance:
 - A. Past Meeting Summaries:** Elizabeth updated the HSC on the status of the Subcommittee's past meeting summaries (November 2008–April 2009). In preparation for their December meeting the HSC received redline/strikeout versions of each meeting summary showing all changes made, including disclaimer language explaining that the Subcommittee's review and approval of the meeting summaries was taking place significantly after the dates of the meetings. HSC members tentatively approved finalizing the past meeting summaries with the disclaimer language. Final approval of the past summaries will be contingent on further review by CCT. Kirk will follow up with Jerry Marco to determine if he has any final comments on the past HSC meeting summaries. Elizabeth will update the HSC via email once CCT makes a decision and will send the final meeting summaries to Grant PUD for web posting.
 - B. Fall Chinook HGMP:** Language added to the Fall Chinook HGMP and conditionally approved by the HSC during their October meeting was approved by WDFW. Todd will re-submit the Fall Chinook HGMP as amended to NOAA with a cover letter highlighting the revised language.
 - C. Carlton Pond SOA:** Grant PUD sent a draft version of the Carlton Pond SOA to Douglas and Chelan County PUDs and anticipates receiving comments revisions

by January 1, 2010. Todd will incorporate any suggested revisions and will distribute to Elizabeth for circulation to HSC prior to and for discussion during their January meeting.

- D.** YKFP Egg Proposal: Todd briefed the HSC on the status of the YKFP's 1.7-Million egg proposal. The YKFP have not submitted any further information on the design change specifications they suggest could be made to accommodate their proposal at the Priest Rapids Hatchery (PRH). Elizabeth will follow up with Tom to check on the status of the YKFP's 1.7-Million egg proposal and any associated design change specifications. The HSC discussed and agreed to revisit the YKFP's November PowerPoint presentation and to seek an update on YKFP's programs after the release of the YKFP's Yakima Subbasin Summer and Fall Run Chinook Master Plan. Patrick will send Grant PUD the YKFP's November PowerPoint presentation for uploading to the secure website.
- E.** Update on PRCC Activities: Elizabeth briefed the HSC on PRCC activities. The next PRCC Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for mid-to-late January 2010. Any discussion items for the Policy Committee should be elevated as soon as possible. Elizabeth will follow up with Denny to confirm the PRCC Policy Committee meeting date and will work with the HSC to queue any issues they need elevated to the PRCC or the PRCC Policy Committee. The HSC agreed that in addition to PRCC updates they would like to hear updates on the Production Advisory Committee (PAC). Elizabeth will follow up with Tom to determine his willingness – as a member of the PAC – to provide updates on PAC discussions during monthly HSC meetings.
- F.** Sockeye HGMP: Kirk met with the Okanogan Nation Alliance (ONA) and expressed his concerns about the Sockeye HGMP, including a concern that the HGMP needs to describe additional coordination points with the HSC. Todd will send ONA the latest version (9/30/09) of the HGMP to ensure that any changes are made in the current draft. The HSC agreed to vote on the Sockeye HGMP during their January meeting.
- G.** November Meeting Summary: The HSC reviewed the November meeting summary and made a small number of corrections and clarifications. Specifically, the CCT added language articulating their concerns with the adverse impacts associated with the YKFP's Yakima Fall Chinook Program. 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. White River Spring Chinook Program

- A. Update on White River Stakeholder Outreach** – Elizabeth briefed the HSC on her discussions with Gerry O’Keefe about the outcome of the December 2, 2010 stakeholder outreach meeting for facilities on the White River and Nason Creek. The meeting went well; stakeholders provided clear input and some willingness to continue discussions about how best to accommodate salmon recovery facilities. Gerry is still planning to attend the HSC meeting in January to offer a fuller update on stakeholder outreach activities for White River and Nason Creek and to see HSC input and guidance on these activities.

From the input offered, it appears that some stakeholders oppose facilities on the basis of a more general opposition to supplementation as a recovery strategy. As part of the discussion in January, Gerry would like the HSC to discuss how best to address opposition to supplementation as a recovery strategy. This type of opposition puts the PUD in a particularly difficult position, since they are not the policy makers for recovery strategy but are only implementers. It seems that one key to the discussion with stakeholders will be to ensure that there is a clear and accessible forum/process in which they can raise any concerns about supplementation. The HSC talked about the upcoming HGMP public review processes as one potential place for this discussion. A gaps analysis for fish recovery, authored by NOAA, was identified as potential information sources to help understand and describe the role of supplementation. The gaps analysis identifies hatchery supplementation as a necessary and vital step in reaching full recovery for fish populations. The HSC also discussed that, since they are largely a technical committee, stakeholder concerns about supplementation in general also should be raised at the policy level. Gerry is working to contact his counterparts at the policy level to solicit additional advice on how best to address stakeholder opposition to supplementation. Elizabeth will follow up with Gerry to determine who at the policy level he will be soliciting advice from regarding opposition to supplementation.

- B. Update on White River Rotary Screw Trap** – Keely briefed the HSC on the November White River smolt trap collection. A portion of subyearling spring Chinook collected at the White River trap have been found with fungus growing under their pectoral fins. A fish health report conducted by the UFWS concluded that these subyearlings had sustained both fin and skin damage from the attachment of copepods (small crustaceans), likely brought about due to weakening from infection with a fungus called Saprolegnia. The HSC discussed whether an unprecedented rise and fall in White River water temperatures may have weakened the subyearling’s immune response lessening their ability to fight

off the fungus. The HSC discussed and agreed that Grant PUD should be cognizant of these types of issues, as they could further complicate supplementation within the White River.

C. Review of White River Status Report – Elizabeth opened the discussion of Grant PUD’s White River spring Chinook program status report. Grant PUD uses this report both for internal management purposes and to brief the HSC on the program’s accomplishments, pending issues, and implementation activities. The purpose of the HSC discussion is to review and become better acquainted with the format and content of the status report and to identify potential areas of improvement and/or revisions.

– **Review and Discussion of “Work and Accomplishments”** – Russell provided an overview of the work and accomplishments list as provided in the White River project status report. The HSC discussed the list and offered the following comments and clarifications.

- The HSC discussed task #1 and requested that future status reports be appended with and/or include schedules and submittal dates of Grant PUD work tasks.
- The HSC was reminded that NMFS’ HGMP review process entails providing the authoring agency with a letter summarizing what they believe to be the contents of the plan. As identified in task #2, Grant PUD met with NFMS to discuss comments drafted in responses to a request for clarification of sections of the White River HGMP. The HSC questioned whether decision making on the HGMP needs to be complete prior to the expiration o the ESA permit on May 31, 2010. Elizabeth will follow up with Kris to clarify NOAA’s HGMP review schedule, publishing timeline, and whether HGMP decision making needs to take place prior to the expiration of the ESA permit.
- The HSC discussed task #5 and recommended that Grant PUD invite upper level policy representatives to attend the second stakeholder meeting on facilities in the White River and Nason Creek.
- Grant PUD is organizing a public working group to advise the PUD on habitat development, vessel types, and vessel locations for the McComas acclimation site. Russell will send Elizabeth, for

circulation to the HSC, an official scope and description of the working group and list of potential members. The HSC advised Grant PUD to consider the use of a third party facilitator to ensure that a complete record exists for each meeting.

- The HSC discussed and clarified the intent of task #10. Grant PUD will plant vegetation on the proposed McComas acclimation in the spring of 2010 to screen future development activities.
- **Review and Discussion of Pending Issues** – Todd provided an overview of the pending issues matrix as shown within the White River project status report. The HSC discussed the pending issues and offered the following comments and clarifications.
- Resolution of a number of the pending issues is dependent on finalization of the co-managers Spring Chinook Implementation Plan. Finalization of the implementation plan is contingent on the CCT’s final approval. Kirk will coordinate with Keely on a path forward for addressing CCT’s concerns with harvest language in the Plan.
 - The HSC discussed and agreed that Grant PUD should revisit the pending issues matrix and remove all resolved issues.
 - The HSC agreed that pending issues #1 and #2 were stated in conceptual terms and should be clarified with more quantitative details.
 - The HSC discussed pending issue #8 and requested that Grant PUD confirm that net pens for the McComas acclimation site are exempt from DNR permitting.
 - Grant PUD clarified that the DNR lease issued for net pens in Lake Wenatchee had expired and a new permit was being processed. DNR has confirmed to the PUD that they have all of the information they need and will be issuing the permit as soon as possible.
 - The HSC expressed the importance of reviewing pending issues on a monthly basis and to further prioritize them for discussion purposes. The following pending issues were identified as

priorities: #5, #6, #7, #8, and #9. Elizabeth and Patrick will add a discussion of pending issues to monthly agendas and will work with Grant PUD and the HSC to better understand the intricacies of each issue and how best to resolve them.

D. Continued Review of the Implementation Schedule – Russell briefed the HSC on the status of White River implementation schedule, specifically focusing on follow up activities requested by the HSC during their November meeting.

- EA vs. EIS: Grant PUD is moving forward with a benefits analysis of replacing the environmental assessment (EA) for the McComas acclimation facility with a full environmental impact statement (EIS). The HSC reiterated that the intent of replacing an EA with an EIS is that it 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. The HSC noted that one of the most substantial criticisms USFWS received during the public comment period for the Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery pertained to why an EA was used in place of a full EIS. Julie Pyper will brief the HSC on the specific details of the benefits analysis during the January HSC meeting.
- Two Year Construction Window: Grant PUD engineers identified weather restrictions, legal permitting construction windows, and uncertainty of the acclimation facility design as the primary reasons for establishing a two year construction window for the McComas acclimation facility. As designs of the facility become more concrete there may be an opportunity to further compress the implementation schedule.
- Water Rights Permit Application: Grant PUD has developed a draft letter of support for their water right application for the White River site. The document is intended to be a template for use by the agencies to draft their letter of support (if they so choose). Agency support is needed to qualify Grant PUD’s application for the "priority processing" list, which will significantly speed up the process of obtaining the water right. The HSC discussed and agreed that the “50 foot bypass” identified within the water rights letter should be changed to 100 meters. Russell will distribute the draft letter of support to the Elizabeth for circulation to the HSC.
- Captive Brood Program: The HSC discussed the captive brood program and the feasibility of moving up the 2015 collection date identified in the

implementation schedule. Grant PUD indicated that brood collection in 2013 would be possible if an alternate holding pond can be identified. The HSC discussed the Little White Salmon National Fish Hatchery as a potential alternate holding facility, but agreed that Grant PUD should look for holding capacity at facilities closer to the McComas site first. The HSC further discussed the captive brood program's transition to an adult-based program, whether enough adults exist to support an adult based program, and whether or not egg collection from the captive brood should be extended beyond 2009 as a backup plan. Some HSC members remain very concerned about the captive brood program and would have to very carefully consider any extension of the program. The HSC acknowledged that a decision about the captive brood should be made by September of 2010. To make an informed decision the HSC would like to have the results of the adult returns study as identified within the White River management plan. Russell clarified that results of the study are largely dependent upon detections at arrays located at the Wenatchee and McNary dams and may be available at the earliest in June and at the latest in August. The HSC discussed the pros and cons of accepting as a default that the HSC would move forward with extending egg collection. Some HSC member thought that they would prefer a one or two year extension of the captive brood program to no program at all; however other HSC members did not feel able to accept that framing of the issue without further data.

- E. Path Forward/ Next Steps** – Gerry will attend the January HSC meeting to present Grant PUD's outreach strategy and to discuss a path forward for the White River program. The HSC agreed that discussion of the White River implementation schedule is an iterative process that they should continue to review. The HSC continues to have significant concerns about the implementation dates in the schedule, particular the delay in getting to no net impacts. The White River project status report and implementation schedule will be updated and placed on the January agenda for further discussion.

IV. Nason Creek Spring Chinook Program

- A. Review and Discussion of Project Status Report** – Todd provided an overview of the Nason Creek program status report. The HSC discussed various components of the status report and offered the following comments and clarifications.

- The HSC recommended that Grant PUD contact the Western Fisheries Research Center to see if Alec Maule would be available to evaluate the UV dose response for BKD treatment at the Nason Creek site.
- The HSC agreed that Grant PUD should aggressively pursue excess capacity in the system and/or consider expansion or retrofit of existing facilities to get the Nason Creek program up and running sooner than the current implementation schedule contemplates. Specifically, the HSC felt that Grant PUD should discuss potential options to coordinate the Nason program with Chelan PUD’s existing programs. An evaluation of federal facilities identified the Leavenworth and Eniat National Fish Hatcheries as the two possible candidates; however, USFWS noted that the Leavenworth facility would require the use of re-circulated water, and the Eniat facility would require water treatment. The HSC advised that while exploring alternative facilities that Grant PUD should continue to review and compress areas of the Nason Creek implementation schedule with the intention of having an acclimation facility built and operating by 2015. The HSC discussed, for example, the potential to use the Nason Creek site only for an acclimation facility and pursuing egg collection and rearing at other, existing facilities.

B. Continued Review of Implementation Schedule and Key Assumptions Used to Create the Schedule – Todd provided a brief update on the Nason Creek implementation schedule. No revisions and/or updates have been made to the implementation schedule since the November’s HSC meeting.

C. Review and Discussion of Pending Issues – Todd provided an overview of the pending issues matrix. The HSC discussed the pending issues and offered the following comments and clarifications.

- The HSC discussed adopting a similar set of culling vs. rearing protocols to that of the HCP’s, which stipulate that 20% capacity will be reserved for low density rearing for high ELISA fish and hatchery origin fish will be culled on a case by case basis. Russell indicated that if similar protocols were adopted for the Nason Creek and White River programs the footprint of their respective facilities could be reduced by up to 40%. The HSC discussed and agreed that their preferred approach would be to cull high ELISA hatchery fish and wilds on a case by case basis. Elizabeth will follow up with the HCP to obtain any documentation (i.e. SOA) they may

have on their protocols on culling vs. rearing and will work with Grant PUD to draft an SOA for discussion at the January HSC meeting.

- The HSC discussed a request to add, as a pending item, the development of an exit strategy for both Nason Creek and White River programs. Todd clarified that an exit strategy would identify when program supplementation would be complete. The HSC agreed that since Grant PUD will likely always have the mitigation requirement to produce fish that it would be more appropriate to call it a transition strategy, as the program would transition from recovery to harvest.

V. 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 designs for changes being requested to the PRH. WDFW met with Grant PUD on November 20, 2009 to discuss re-design criteria for the PRH trap and adult holding pond. Jeff provided Grant PUD with the following design recommendations for the adult holding pond and trap in addition to photographs depicting a similar set-up mostly at Cowlitz Hatchery. Except for Grant PUD, HSC members were in agreement with WDFW’s recommendations, which are as follows.

- **Adult Fish Trap** – WDFW recommends: 1) the trap to hold two days of returning adults (approximately 500 fish); 2) a mechanical crowder for moving fish to one end of the trap; 3) a pescalator to lift fish into transport trucks; and 4) a sorting mechanism at the top of the pescalator.
- **Holding Ponds** – WDFW recommends: 1) four adjacent ponds with an outlet to a common transport channel; 2) capacity to hold enough adults for the entire priest rapids program (approx 5,800 fish) as well as provide a place to hold wild adults separate from the hatchery brood stock; 3) mechanical crowdors in each pond and the transport channel; 4) truck access to each pond and the transport channel; and 5) a spawning building at end of transport channel, containing an anesthesia lift tank at end of transport channel (eventually electro-anesthesia), a sorting table for handling fish (inoculation, spawning, etc), and tube transfer back to ponds.

B. Update and Review of Grant PUD’s Time/Cost Estimates Regarding “Pre-Conceptual” Drawings – Todd briefed the HSC on the status of Grant PUD’s time and cost estimates on what it would take to implement WDFW’s

recommendations. Draft estimates completed by Grant PUD engineers suggest that the changes being requested would add an additional 12 months to the schedule and would increase the overall cost of the hatchery by \$3.5-Million. With no quantitative proof that WDFW's design criteria would improve the hatchery's fish survival rate, Grant PUD management would like to move forward with the current PRH re-design, unchanged. The HSC raised serious concerns with the decision to move forward without additional mechanization of the PRH trap and adult holding. The HSC felt that the original design and re-design of the PRH was completed without the input of the current HSC membership, and that Grant PUD has not been open to HSC advice and recommendations on mechanization and anesthetic use, which have been consistently offered for a number of months now. Todd reminded the HSC that Grant PUD had worked with the hatchery operators on the re-design and had brought each individual modules of the hatchery design forward for review by the HSC. At this point, it seems the PRH re-design issue will not be successfully resolved by the HSC and will require elevation to the PRCC and/or the Policy Committee. Jeff will check with the WDFW representative to the PRCC to determine if WDFW wishes to elevate the issue for dispute resolution.

- C. Path Forward/ Next Steps** – Jeff will check with the WDFW representative to the PRCC to determine if WDFW wishes to elevate the issue for dispute resolution. Elizabeth will contact Denny to confirm when the PRCC will meet next and let him know there may be an issue for dispute resolution. With an increased probability of the PRH design being elevated to the PRCC, Elizabeth will begin organizing the issues in dispute. Patrick will locate and circulate to the HSC the 2003 agreement between WDFW and Grant PUD, which describes the history of program and intent of the PRH re-design.

The HSC agreed that they should be included in all future design discussions from the start. Grant PUD expressed concern that additional review loops will add time to the program schedules being discussed. The HSC agreed to discuss the best process for approaching future construction/design processes during their January meeting.

- VI. Multi-Species Acclimation in the Upper Methow** – Todd briefed the HSC on the current status of multi-species acclimation in the Upper Methow. Grant PUD is working to develop a scope of work for expanded acclimation, which entails funding PIT tags and operation and management for fish at the Methow spring Chinook Hatchery. Keely and Todd will meet to discuss the current status of the Upper Methow Study plan.

- VII. 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. Russell will check with Grant County and DNR to make sure that all release sites are covered under the current permit. All fish have been PIT tagged and are ready for the multi-site acclimation study. The JARPAs are mostly done and the BA is currently under review.
- VIII. Non-Target Taxa of Concern (NTTOC)** – Keely briefed the HSC on the status of the NTTOC. The HETT is continuing its efforts to populate the risk assessment template. Todd briefed the HSC on an ecological conference titled, “State of the Salmon for Ecological Interactions between Wild & Hatchery Salmon”, taking place in May 2010 in Portland, Oregon and asked whether the HSC was interested in presenting the NTTOC study process at the conference. The HSC discussed the pros and cons attending the conference and some HSC members expressed serious concern over releasing details of the NTTOC risk assessment before it is finalized. The HSC further requested that if the presentation is to move forward that it be limited to the process that will be used to determine the hatchery affects to non-target species. The HSC felt that attending and presenting at the conference may act as a possible recruitment vehicle for experts to participate in the NTTOC risk assessment. Todd further updated the HSC on papers of interest on ecological interactions and hatchery operations. A paper on “adaptive stocking” will be in the January edition of *Fisheries* and an evaluation of spring Chinook supplementation and its potential impacts on *O. mykiss* in the Teanaway River will be in the January edition of *Transactions*.
- IX. Fall Chinook Workgroup** – Russell briefed the HSC on the Fall Chinook Working Group and indicated that the Workgroup is continuing to work through and finalize their flow fluctuation study. The Workgroup is hosting a workshop January 5, 2010 on hourly coordination and how the mid-Columbia coordinates its hydro systems. Russell will send Patrick a flyer on the Fall Chinook Workgroup workshop being held on January 5, 2010 for circulation to the HSC.
- X. 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. Grant PUD requested drawings from Chelan PUD and upon receiving them will evaluate the technical aspects of overwintering at Carlton Pond. Grant PUD circulated a draft version of a Carlton Pond SOA to Douglas and Chelan County PUDs and anticipates receiving comments/ revisions by January 1, 2010. Todd will incorporate any suggested revisions to the draft SOA and

will distribute to Elizabeth for circulation to HSC prior to and for discussion at their January meeting.

XI. 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 having trouble contracting a specialist to evaluate the proper amount/dosage of UV needed for BKD treatment. The HSC requested that Grant PUD contact Alec Maule to determine his availability to evaluate the UV needed to treat BKD.

XII. Wrap-Up / Next Steps

A. Next Meeting: Thursday, January 21, 2009 – Cedars Inn

B. Potential December Meeting Agenda Items

- 1) Update on HGMP review, publication, and consultation
- 2) Update on captive brood program
- 3) White River stakeholder outreach (Gerry)
 - a. Public workgroup
- 4) Culling vs. rearing density discussion
- 5) Update on Grant PUD assessment of an EA vs. EIS
- 6) Review and voting on Sockeye HGMP
- 7) Update on PRH/ elevating to the PRCC
- 8) Review and discuss Carlton Pond SOA
- 9) Update and review of Nason Creek and White River project status reports