



MEETING

Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee

Wednesday, January 28, 2009

9:00 – 3:00

Grant PUD SeaTac Office

PRCC Members

Scott Carlon/Bryan Nordlund, NMFS
Jerry Marco, CCT
Bob Rose, YN
Bill Tweit, WDFW

Jim Craig, USFWS
Tom Dresser, GCPUD
Carl Merkle, CTUIR

Attendees: (*Denotes PRCC member)

Scott Carlon, NMFS*
Bob Rose, YN*
Bill Tweit, WDFW*
Curt Dotson, GCPUD
Dana Jeske, GCPUD
Denny Rohr, Facilitator

Bryan Nordlund, NMFS*
Jerry Marco, CCT*(by phone)
Tom Dresser, GCPUD*
Alyssa Buck, GCPUD (by phone)
Debbie Williams, GCPUD

Action Items:

1. WDFW and Grant will provide a document outlining their respective positions on mass marking to the PRCC and PRCC HSC one week prior (February 12, 2009) to the PRCC HSC meeting on February 19, 2009. PRCC members will attend or call-into the PRCC HSC meeting on February 19, 2009 in Wenatchee, WA.
2. Carlon and Nordlund will speak internally regarding the appropriate staff member to represent NMFS on the newly formed policy committee.
3. Dotson will email the 2009 Survival Study Plan to members. Comments are due by February 05, 2009.
4. Dotson will email the 2008 Survival of Acoustic-Tagged Steelhead Smolts through the Wanapum – Priest Rapids Projects to members. A 30 day review will be provided.
5. Williams will upload the 2009 Survival Study Plan and 2008 Survival of Acoustic-Tagged Steelhead Smolts through the Wanapum – Priest Rapids Projects to the PRCC website.
6. Dotson will discuss PIT-tag detections at McNary, and how they affect the 2008 Survival Study estimates with Skalski.

7. Grant will draft a Statement of Agreement (SOA), for the next PRCC meeting, noting the PRCC's approval that a sub-yearling study not be required in 2009 due to technological and/or methodology reasons.
8. Williams will upload documents distributed by Dresser (FERC and PRFF timelines) to the PRCC website.
9. Dresser will send out a draft Downstream Passage Action Plan time extension letter for member review.
10. Carlon will discuss the need of a letter from NMFS approving Grant HGMP extensions with Kris Petersen.

Decisions:

1. PRCC members agreed to hold the May 27, 2009 PRCC meeting at Wanapum Dam.
2. PRCC members approved the 2009 Grant-Douglas Interlocal Agreement.
3. PRCC members agree they will travel to Iowa the week of May 4-8 for PR Top-Spill / training wall scenario modeling.
4. PRCC members approved the 2009 Acoustic Tag Behavior Study Plan.
5. PRCC members approved Phase 2 revised SOW of the USGS/WDFW Predator Study contract. Dotson will send a task authorization to USGS/WDFW notifying them of the approval.
6. PRCC members agreed the 2009 requirement to perform a Sub-yearling Survival Study can be pushed to 2010, due to present technological and/or methodological limitations.

Final Meeting Minutes

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Rohr welcomed attendees.
- II. **Agenda Review** – Grant-Douglas Interlocal Agreement was added to the agenda. **PRCC members agreed to hold the May 27, 2009 PRCC meeting at Wanapum Dam.**
- III. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - December 03, 2008 - Approved
- IV. **Action Items Review** – Jeske updated members on installation of avian wire arrays. Anchor supports will be completed by the end of February. Wire installation will start on March 2, 2009, and be complete by the end of the month (March).
- V. **Grant-Douglas Interlocal Agreement** – The Grant-Douglas Interlocal Agreement was approved by the PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee (HSC) on January 22, 2009. The HSC suggested Grant identify what needs to be prepared for the potential reprogramming at the Wells Hatchery in anticipation of the 2010 agreement. Group 5 fish provide access to study/additional fish if needed. **PRCC members approved the 2009 Grant-Douglas Interlocal Agreement.**
- VI. **WDFW Dispute Resolution Letter** – WDFW initiated the dispute resolution process of the Salmon and Steelhead Settlement

Agreement (SSA) via a letter sent to Tom Dresser, dated November 24, 2009. The letter was sent to Dresser because the PRCC does not have a standing chairman, as stated in the SSA. The dispute focuses on the preferred method of mass marking (adipose fin clipping or thermal otolith marking) fall Chinook at the Priest Rapids Hatchery (PRH). This topic was on the December 18, 2008 HSC agenda. The HSC could not agree on marking protocols, so it was elevated to the PRCC via the dispute resolution process. If this topic can not be resolved in the PRCC forum, it will be elevated to the newly formed policy committee that will meet on February 20, 2009.

Tweit explained that the issue revolves around WDFW working with Grant to develop the annual contract that covers expenses for the fall Chinook program, updating of the HGMP and M&E for the PRH. As they (WDFW and Grant) have tried working through these issues, they haven't been able to agree on an appropriate mark to identify fall Chinook produced from the hatchery as hatchery origin fish. WDFW's preferred mass marking strategy is to adipose fin clip 100% of hatchery origin fall Chinook. Tweit noted that this is the suggested recommendation of the HSRG.

Dresser explained that technical members of the HSC have been unable to agree to a mass marking strategy, and that Grant staff believes thermal otolith marking is sufficient at this time. Grant started mass marking two years ago at PRH by thermal otolith marking, and could be seeing returns this coming year. Grant will be distributing the PRH HGMP & M&E to the HSC within the next week, now that the Quantitative Objectives (QO) have been finalized by the HSC. Dresser explained that PRH facility designs are still being worked on, and mass marking capabilities are being incorporated into those designs.

Members discussed pros and cons associated with adipose fin clipping versus thermal otolith marking. PRCC members will review the QO while developing opinions regarding mass marking. **WDFW and Grant will provide documents outlining their respective positions on mass marking to the PRCC and PRCC HSC one week prior (February 12, 2009) to the PRCC HSC meeting on February 19, 2009. PRCC members will attend or call-into the PRCC HSC meeting on February 19, 2009 in Wenatchee, WA.**

Nordlund stated that NMFS had not yet received a request to select a Policy Committee member, and as such, questioned how the Feb 20 date was selected and who the NMFS representative was supposed to be. He stated his desire to work within the SSA, which calls for each Party to designate representatives for the various committees.

VII. Priest Rapids Top-Spill – Grant would like to repeat the 2008 Priest Rapids Top Spill test procedures in 2009 to evaluate Grant's "fish operations" configuration under a normal water year (i.e. without high

volumes of inadvertent spill, which may have distracted from the 2008 study results. A possible training wall that would “intercept” fish heading towards the power house, and direct them towards the top-spill was proposed to members at the December PRCC meeting, if additional fish passage efficiency (FCE) was needed at the top-spill bulkhead to meet dam passage performance standards. Training wall modeling will happen when the Design Team goes to Iowa in February. Carlson predicted that survival numbers will remain the same, or go down from the 2008 statistics if the same procedures are used. Dotson stated that if that happens, then the training wall will have some merits, and should be built in 2010 for testing.

Use of pumps to enhance the zone of influence in front of the top-spill bulkhead and create an edge that the fish would follow along the training wall is being discussed, noted Dotson. Members discussed fish entrainment, turbulence, pump requirements, and the shape of the training wall. Jeske noted that if the wall is to be installed in 2010, work will need to follow parallel paths.

Nordlund’s Suggestions: 1.) Instead of a simple wall, use a full depth exclusion barrier net to keep fish from moving away from the surface spill towards the power house. The exclusion net would allow flow to go through, but it wouldn’t allow fish to travel through it.. 2.) Include an angled component at partial depth that would point fish to the passage route, in the vicinity of the surface collector.

Nordlund noted that the Lewis River guide net system design allows the top part of that guidance curtain to be lowered to pass debris during high flows and to allow some entrained debris to be removed. This would be an option to consider at Priest Rapids. The concept was proven at Baker utilizing a 3/16” knotless nylon mesh, with first year tests indicating over 80% collection efficiency, noted Nordlund.

A. Design Team to Iowa in February – The Design Team will travel to Iowa to model training wall configurations, Feb 24-27, 2009. Travel is available the following dates: March 16-20, April 14-17, April 20-22, and May 4-8. The week of May 4-8 works well for all PRCC members. Dotson will give an update regarding the February Design Team trip at the March 25th PRCC meeting. **PRCC members agree they will travel to Iowa the week of May 4-8 for PR Top-Spill/training wall scenario modeling.**

B. 2009 Acoustic Tag Behavior Study Plan – PRCC members approved the 2009 Acoustic Tag Behavior Study Plan.

VIII. 2009 Steelhead Survival Study Plan – See discussion below.

IX. 2009 Sockeye Survival Study Plan – Dotson distributed the DRAFT 2009 Sockeye and Steelhead Survival Study Plans (Study Plan for the Estimation of Juvenile Steelhead and Sockeye Salmonid Survival

through the Priest Rapids Project Using Acoustic-tags in 2009). 2009 is the second year of the study for steelhead and year 1 of 3 for sockeye survival studies and will be conducted the same as in 2008 with 650 fish being released at Rock Island, Wanapum, and Priest Rapids tailraces, to provide for a paired-release for both projects. During recovery, transport, and release (33 fish per release), sockeye and steelhead will be separated at all times.

The 795E tag (air weight - 1.5 grams) will be used for steelhead. The micro tag, which is 40% - 50% of an E-tag (air weight - .65 grams) will be used for sockeye. Chelan PUD study fish will also be monitored by Grant, as in past seasons. Dotson explained that an additional 150 steelhead will be used at the Rock Island tailrace to create a more rigorous release group for the study. **Dotson will email the 2009 Survival Study Plan to members. Comments are due by February 05, 2009. Dotson will email the DRAFT 2008 Survival of Acoustic-Tagged Steelhead Smolts through the Wanapum – Priest Rapids Project to members. A 30 day review will be provided. Williams will upload the 2009 Survival Study Plan and DRAFT 2008 Survival of Acoustic-Tagged Steelhead Smolts through the Wanapum – Priest Rapids Projects to the PRCC website.**

Depending on sockeye counts at Rock Island, April 24th is the proposed survival study start date, depending on sockeye coming down at Rock Island. Dotson looked at the last seven years of data to establish the estimated start date. Rock Island indexes are used to start the survival study. Hydro-acoustic equipment will be installed on Saturday, February 7, 2009.

Dotson reminded members that the 2006 Survival Study was invalidated, and that in 2007 Grant was instructed to look at methodologies, and the source of survival study fish, not conduct a paired-released survival study. The 2008 study was designed from information learned in the 2007 study. Dotson explained that while reading the 2008 draft report and looking at PIT tag detections at McNary Dam, he noticed PIT-tag information that was concerning. Grant used a unique tag for the 2008 Survival Study that incorporated a PIT-tag into an acoustic tag. Recovered tags showed that avian predation (tern's) needs to be considered in survival study statistics, and also that tags once considered mortalities might not be, as they were detected downstream at the McNary PIT tag detection array. Of the 1,800 fish released in the survival study, 192 were later detected at McNary. 29 of those were originally considered study mortalities due to loss of detection on the downstream acoustic detection arrays. Based on a 17 ½ detection efficiency of PIT tagged steelhead at McNary, these 29 fish could represent 163 fish that were considered mortalities in the acoustic tag survival study, but weren't really mortalities. That 7% mortality assigned to Grant was actually alive at

McNary (just “mortalities” due to tag failure). Dotson emphasized that in a three year average, Grant will never reach passage efficiency if the 7% is not accounted for.

Members discussed proper acoustic array placement for maximum detection, and tag battery testing to assure proper tag life. Grant arrays and tag batteries are calibrated and tested prior to start up; test tags show approximately 97% array efficiency, depending upon each individual array. Bottom-line: there are PIT tag detections at McNary that strongly indicate that some fish traveled past the last 4 acoustic arrays without being detected. Rose questioned the validity of the 2008 study. Dotson stated he thinks it’s valid, but would like to discuss the matter with Skalski. **Dotson will discuss PIT-tag detections at McNary, and how they affect the 2008 Survival Study estimates with Skalski.** Nordlund noted that survival studies have been conducted comparing PIT-tag survival estimates vs. an acoustic tag survival estimates, with the results very similar. Mid-season array failure isn’t likely. Members agreed that a strategy to improve confidence levels must be found. Dotson will report back to the PRCC on this issue.

- X. **Predation Study Update** – A conference call to discuss the Predation Study generated a list of questions for Tim Counihan, USGS. After receiving his response, members felt comfortable enough to move forward with Phase 2 of the amended Statement of Work (SOW). **PRCC members approved Phase 2 of the USGS/WDFW Predator Study contract. Dotson will send a task authorization to USGS/WDFW notifying them of the approval.**

- A. **SOA for Invoice Authorization** – During a January 20, 2009 Predation Study Conference Call, PRCC members agreed that Curt Dotson and Bob Rose would be authorized to approve all invoices associated with the USGS/WDFW Predation Study contract.

- XI. **Sub-yearling Survival Studies** –

- A. **SOA for 2009** – The Salmon, Steelhead and Settlement Agreement (SSSA) requires Grant to conduct a sub-yearling study in 2009, 2010 and 2011. A pilot study was conducted in 2008 with fish released in the Wanapum and Priest Rapids (PR) tailraces. Only fifty-one percent of fish released in the Wanapum tailrace were detected at the Vernita/Ringold detection arrays. Tag failure (.65 gram tag used for sub-yearling Chinook), surgery, life history (over-wintering) could be contributors to the low detection rate.

Because of the lack of technology and methodologies, Grant asked PRCC members to agree that a sub-yearling study not be performed in 2009. **PRCC members agreed the 2009**

requirement to perform a Sub-yearling Survival Study can be pushed to 2010, due to the present technology &/or methodology available to conduct a study in 2009. The HCP was also directed to conduct a sub-yearling study in 2010. **Grant will draft a Statement of Agreement (SOA) noting the PRCC's approval that a sub-yearling study not be required in 2009.** The SOA will be included in a letter to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) explaining why the study will not be conducted in 2009.

Members discussed the logistics of performing sub-yearling survival studies. Additional PIT-tag arrays downstream of the Priest Rapids Project (Project), smaller groups of study fish, and use of the new JSAT Model 4, .5 tags (smaller tags) could be components of a productive study. Nordlund suggested that the COE and NMFS Science Center studies conducted on the lower Columbia and Snake rivers be looked at for more information on conducting sub-yearling survival studies. And, that studies conducted by all three utilities (Chelan, Douglas, and Grant) could benefit, if PIT tag arrays were installed at Priest Rapids or Wanapum bypass routes. All three utilities could reduce the number of fish required for a sub-yearling PIT tag study by use of flat plate (or other mass flow) PIT tag arrays at the Priest Rapids Project's primary bypass routes. He suggested that Grant PUD investigate this further, by discussing statistical study design with Skalski, and feasibility of PIT tag array installation with engineering staff.

XII. FERC License Articles Update – Williams will upload documents distributed by Dresser (FERC and PRFF timelines) to the PRCC website.

A. Progress/Status – Dresser explained the various stages of all License Article requirements to members. He emphasized the importance of getting comments back to Grant as soon as possible to allow FERC deadlines to be met.

B. Potential Extension of Time Requests – Time extensions will be filed for the following:

Downstream Passage Action Plan, Hanford Reach Draft Study Plan, DO pH and Temperature in Shallow Water Habitats Plan, Fish Ladder Water Supply Monitoring Study Plan, Hatchery Genetic Management Plans (HGMP) and Monitoring and Evaluation Plans (HGMP/M&E) for UCR spring Chinook-White River, Nason Creek, and the Methow River, UCR steelhead, and summer and fall Chinook. The Habitat Plan, White Sturgeon Management Plan, Native Resident Fish Management Plan, Wildlife Habitat Management Plan, and the Wildlife Habitat Monitoring and Information & Education Plan.

The Downstream Passage Action Plan is similar to the old Fish Passage Plan. Grant will be requesting a time extension to this plan. Dresser asked members to review the plan quickly, and notify Grant if a longer review period is necessary. **Dresser will send out a draft Downstream Passage Action Plan time extension letter for member review.**

Grant will write an Artificial Propagation Plan for the Okanagan basin summer Chinook population, and will combine the Methow and Wenatchee basin summer Chinook HGMPs. PRCC Hatchery Sub-committee (HSC) members are currently reviewing a draft letter asking for HGMP time extensions. Because it is unknown how long agencies will take to review HGMPs, Dresser is concerned that some HSC members want to include hard HGMP implementation schedules. Dresser didn't think that the HGMP extension letter would have to be submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for their HGMP review process. **Carlton will discuss the need of a letter from NMFS approving Grant HGMP extensions with Kris Petersen.**

Dresser explained that the Habitat Plan needs additional work before being submitted.

XIII. 401 Certification –

- A. Progress/Status –** Dresser explained the various stages of all 401 Certification requirements to members.
- B. Priest Rapids Fish Forum –** Dresser distributed a timeline developed to show Priest Rapids Fish Forum (PRFF) task requirements.
- C. Fall Chinook Working Group –** No discussion took place.

XIV. FERC Activities Report – Dresser explained that the FERC activities report addressing the Biological Opinion is now being called the Progress and Implementation Plan, and is due to FERC on February 15, 2009.

XV. Fish Ladder Plan – Dresser distributed a DRAFT time extension letter regarding the Fish Ladder Water Supply Monitoring Study Plan to members.

XVI. Habitat/NNI Funding

- A. Account Updates –** No discussion took place.

XVII. PRCC Hatchery SC Report – No discussion took place.

XVIII. PRCC Habitat SC Report – No discussion took place.

XIX. Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 25, 2009, 9:00 – 3:00, Grant SeaTac office.