



## MEETING

### Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee

Wednesday, May 27, 2009

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Meeting

11:00 a.m. - 3:30 Wanapum Dam Tour

Grant PUD HED – Trailer T

15655 Wanapum Village Lane S.W., Beverly, WA 99321

#### PRCC Members

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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)

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Scott Carlon, NMFS\*  
Aaron Beavers, NMFS  
Jim Craig, USFWS\*  
Bob Rose, YN\*  
Tom Dresser, GCPUD\*  
Dana Jeske, GCPUD  
Debbie Williams, GCPUD

Bryan Nordlund, NMFS\*  
Dale Bambrick, NMFS  
Steve Lewis, USFWS  
Alyssa Buck, Wanapum  
Curt Dotson, GCPUD  
George Thompson, GCPUD  
Denny Rohr, Facilitator

#### Action Items:

1. Dotson will contact Skalski regarding his attendance at the June 24, 2009 PRCC meeting.
2. Rohr will send Habitat Plan, Section 2.3 language to PRCC members after approval of the Habitat Subcommittee.
3. Dotson will provide sampling block information timelines to PRCC members.
4. Dotson will send sample size of fish for a PIT-tag study to members.

#### Decisions:

1. PRCC members approved the Habitat Plan as it reads minus Section 2.3.

# Final Meeting Minutes

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Rohr welcomed attendees.
- II. **Agenda Review** – Predator Study Update, Sub-yearling Chinook Pilot Study, 2009 Steelhead Survival Study update, and the 2009 Sockeye Acoustic Tag Study update were added to the agenda.
- III. **Action Items Review** – Action items from the April 29<sup>th</sup>. PRCC meeting were reviewed and discussed.
  - #3 - Pumping cost from the No Net Impact (NNI) Fund will be discussed at the next PRCC Habitat Subcommittee meeting.

Bambrick's opinion is to complete a cost evaluation and pay, one time the equivalent of what it would cost for a long term pumping operation. Before he would agree to pay indefinite pumping cost, great biological benefit would need to be shown. Bambrick explained that some projects get sidetracked because the operator doesn't want to pay long term pumping cost.

Grant PUD's intent is to reach survival standards which would eliminate the NNI Fund. Dotson questioned how long term payments could be committed to if the fund goes away.

#5 - Nordlund met with McManus and provided her with comments he received on PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee (HSC) meeting protocols. After protocols are adopted by the HSC, they will be formally approved by the PRCC.
- IV. **Skalski's tag-failure survival** – The Survival of Acoustic Tagged Steelhead Smolts Through the Wanapum – Priest Rapids Projects in 2008 was distributed to members and uploaded to the PRCC website. The 45 day comment period will end on July 10, 2009. Dotson asked that members provide questions one week prior to the June 24<sup>th</sup> meeting so Skalski has time to prepare answers for member's questions. **Dotson will contact Skalski regarding his attendance at the June 24, 2009 PRCC meeting.**
  - Chelan PUD has cancelled their steelhead and yearling Chinook acoustic studies this year because of tag failure issues.
  - Members discussed use of the combination acoustic and PIT-tag used by Grant PUD last year to locate tags at the bird colony. Swimming performance with the combination tag has not been evaluated. Turbine pressure is currently being studied by USACOE. Skalski and Nordlund support using the combination tag.
- V. **Discussion/Comment on PRCC Habitat Plan LA-(a) (3)** – Rohr explained that Section 2.3 of the Habitat Plan deals with coordination of the Habitat and Hatchery Subcommittee's. WDFW has suggested

specific language be added to the plan regarding coordination. The Habitat Subcommittee is still amending language for this section. Rohr will update PRCC members on the progression of Section 2.3. **PRCC members approved the Habitat Plan as it reads minus Section 2.3.** Dresser reminded members that if specific binding language is incorporated into Grant PUD plans, FERC could potentially mandate such actions. Habitat Plan Section 2.3 comments are due to Rohr by Habitat Subcommittee members on June 02, 2009. **Rohr will send Habitat Plan, Section 2.3 language to PRCC members after approval of the Habitat Subcommittee.**

- VI. **2009 Steelhead Survival Study Update** – Saturday, May 23rd was the last flight. 20 replicates were run. The normal E-tag failure rate is 1-2%. E-tag failure this year was 5%.
- VII. **2009 Sockeye Acoustic Tag Study Update** - The Sockeye Acoustic Tag Study started on May 12, 2009. The study plan called for 20 replicates, but 16 were conducted because the fish out-migration arrived late this year. Sockeye out migration is behind the 10 yr average (Data Access in Real Time – DART). S-tags weigh between 0.63 – 0.65 grams (air weight). About 50% of the sockeye collected this year for study fish were found to have parasites on the gills. Dotson explained that if parasites were found and the fish were used for the study, the data was recorded in the study/tag data base. Because no hydrophones have been lost this year, 100% of the steelhead and sockeye data has been collected.
- VIII. **NNI Predator Study Update** – Dotson explained that the United States Geological Survey (USGS)/WDFW team conducting the Predator Study is working in the field. They received permission to shut off the by-pass for an hour or so between 12:00 a.m. and 1:00 a.m. to collect data in the tailraces of WAN and PR dams. **Dotson will provide sampling block information timelines to PRCC members.**
- IX. **Sub-yearling Chinook Pilot Study Plan** – The Chinook Sub-yearling Pilot Study Plan was distributed to members and uploaded to the PRCC website. Last year's pilot sub-yearling study "lost" nearly half of the test fish between the WAN tailrace and PRD forebay. JSAT tags can be turned on after fish surgery (15 days later) to minimize some tag surgery effects upon the test fish. Tags will be placed in fish on June 1<sup>st</sup>. On June 2<sup>nd</sup> tags will be turned off for 2 weeks, and turned back on June 15<sup>th</sup>. The lot of pilot study fish will be released on June 16<sup>th</sup>. A pilot study will take place to determine if predation, life history, tag affects, or tag failures are causing this 50% loss in the Priest Rapids Reservoir. This study will tell us if the JSAT tag can be used for survival studies. Bambrick suggested the study would provide more information if it is conducted around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July because of flow conditions and small mouth bass predation. **Dotson will send sample size of fish for a PIT-tag study to members.**

Biomark will visit Priest Rapids Dam on June 16<sup>th</sup> to determine if a PIT-tag collection system at the by-pass is feasible. Dotson hopes to have this information to members by the June 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. Hydro acoustics would be hard to use because of the noise of the project. Feasibility of detection is still in question.

**X. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- **April 29, 2009** - Approved

**XI. Next Meeting:** Wednesday, June 24, 2009, 9:00 – 3:00, Grant PUD SeaTac Office.