

PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday, May 20, 2010
Cedars Inn, East Wenatchee, Washington
Call-in Number: 1-800-391-1709, access code 369546

Attendees

PRCC HSC Members

Bill Gale, USFWS
Rob Jones, NMFS (via phone, first hour only)
Russell Langshaw, (alt) GCPUD
Keely Murdoch, (alt) YN
Todd Pearsons, GCPUD
Mike Tonseth, WDFW
Kirk Truscott, CCT
Tom Scribner, YN (via phone)

Others

Pat Burdick, GCPUD
Ian Hunter, GCPUD
Sam Dilly, Chelan PUD
Joe Miller, Chelan PUD

Elizabeth McManus, Facilitator
Andy Chinn, Facilitator

Actions

1. Elizabeth and Andy will coordinate with NMFS and Grant PUD to reach agreement on neutral language concerning comments on the February meeting summary.
2. Elizabeth will follow up with HSC members on the possibility of a joint meeting between the HSC and the Habitat Subcommittee in August, as well as a possible site tour in the WR area to see sites of mutual interest (e.g., the Nason Wetlands project).
3. Elizabeth will follow up with Denny on the status of the Tall Timbers easement.
4. Elizabeth will compile all relevant materials on the mass marking discussion including the SOA agreed on by the PRCC Policy Group and distribute to the HSC.
5. Elizabeth will follow up with Denny to request the draft PR Hatchery SOA for distribution to the HSC.
6. Tom will request that YKFP get a copy of their master plan to the HSC; this will be important for informing discussions about the YKFP request for eyed-eggs from PR Hatchery.
7. Elizabeth will compile HSC members' HGMP prioritization concerns for discussion with NMFS.
8. HSC members will consult with their respective engineering staff on the Gloyd Springs BOD and bring any potential concerns to the attention of the group.
9. Elizabeth will develop a draft SOA on adult holding, spawning, and incubation at Eastbank for HSC consideration in June.

Decisions

1. The HSC voted on and approved the April meeting summary.
2. The HSC confirmed that there should be no additional egg collection for the WR captive brood.
3. The HSC offered preliminary thoughts on direction for a conceptual approach to vessel type and usage for the WR site, pending additional input from the WR working group.

Draft Meeting Summary

- I. **Action Items Review, HSC Updates & Other Committee Updates:** The following topics were discussed in substance.
- A. **NOAA Fisheries Representation** – Rob Jones will fill Kris Peterson’s position on the HSC until her permanent replacement is designated. NOAA will post a job announcement shortly and will notify the HSC when it is available. Rob estimates it will be approximately 4 months before a replacement is hired.
 - B. **NOAA Fisheries Prioritization of Upper Columbia HGMPs** – Several HSC representatives expressed concern about timing for review of HGMPs. NOAA agreed that they should examine the HGMP schedule and consider re-prioritization in light of current timing and other parties’ needs. Elizabeth will gather information from each HSC member about drivers that might inform the timing of HGMP review and get that information to NOAA Fisheries.
 - C. **White River Section 10 Permit** – The current permit expires at the end of May. NOAA Fisheries has no plans to initiate enforcement for program activities that are within the scope of the expired permit and consistent with the proposed HGMPs and HSC guidance/direction. NOAA Fisheries is open to sending a letter to Grant PUD that will encapsulate this information; however, it is unclear what type of legal protection the letter would provide. Grant PUD, YN and WDFW will discuss risks associated with the lapse in permit coverage and will continue discussions with NOAA Fisheries as needed. It is expected that the lapse will be no more than a few months.
 - D. **Action Items Review:**
 - WR Captive Brood Information Gathering and Decision Process – The JFP met earlier in May and confirmed that they agree there should be no additional egg collection for the WR captive brood. If productivity is as projected, releases from the current brood should be able to continue at reasonable rates through 2016. The JFP emphasized that this places increased pressure on moving as aggressively and comprehensively as possible to improve fish management, acclimation and release strategies to get maximum survival and returns from the existing captive brood. The group discussed a number of approaches including review of data being collected this year, radio-telemetry or other work to examine the effects of the predator population in Lake Wenatchee, and improvement of acclimation strategies including the potential use of mobile acclimation units. The HSC also recognized the need to closely monitor adult

returns to determine the viability of transition to an adult-based program. They recognize that if returns do not improve, program transition will not be possible. Discussion of improvements to current fish management, acclimation and release strategies will continue. Data from this year should be available in the August - September time frame.

- April Meeting Summary – The HSC made editorial comments and approved the April meeting summary as revised and projected on the screen.

II. Gloyd Springs Basis of Design (BOD)

A. Gloyd Springs BOD Presentation – Todd delivered a presentation on the Gloyd Springs BOD; the detailed BOD document was distributed to HSC members prior to the meeting. Todd urged HSC members to consult with their staff engineers on the proposed BOD, so that any concerns can be identified and addressed as early as possible. The Gloyd Springs project is working on a parallel development path with the Eastbank project. Eastbank is currently the preferred alternative.

B. HSC Comments and Clarifications on the BOD

- Design flexibility: HSC members commented that the facility should be designed with enough flexibility to accommodate changes for contingencies such as holding fish on-station. GC PUD explained that the facility is being designed with a 10% accommodation, and the primary limiting factor is water availability, rather than space for fish.
- Vessel type: Grant PUD clarified that the vessel type being anticipated for Gloyd Springs is circulars. There was a brief discussion of why circulars are now appearing in so many of the facility proposals. The HSC discussed that design of circulars has improved as has understanding of how best to operate them. There is not agreement on whether circulars perform better than raceways, but most HSC members seemed to believe that with attention to detail a good operator could raise good fish in either type of vessel.
- Water chilling: There was a significant discussion of the need to chill water at the facility. Water chilling will be needed for significant parts of the year. The JFP asked for clarification of when water would need to be chilled and when it wouldn't.
- Recirculation: Some HSC members asked for more information and clarification on when re-circ would be used and how any re-circ system would operate. It was observed that re-circ remains a relatively un-proven technology.
- Anesthesia type: USFWS commented that electro-anesthesia is listed in the BOD, however it may not be necessary at Gloyd Springs because of the lower number of fish being managed compared to larger hatcheries. The JFP were comfortable

with the idea that GPUD might explore use of chemical anesthesia instead of electro.

- Long-term costs: The JFP were interested in information/analysis on the long-term cost of operating the facility at Gloyd Springs, particularly related to chilling water; it is likely that operating costs will be high. It might be prudent to look one more time to see if a better site location could be found – the costs of this effort now could be off-set with lower operating costs over time. Crescent bar was mentioned.

C. Path Forward and Next Steps

- HSC members will consult with engineers at their respective organizations to identify any potential concerns.
- There will be detailed discussion of the Gloyd Springs BOD at the June meeting; official comments (if any) from HSC members are needed by the July meeting; and a vote is anticipated in October.

III. Fall Chinook Updates

- A. Priest Rapids Hatchery Redesign** – Grant PUD and WDFW continue to make progress towards agreement on the PR Hatchery rebuild. An SOA has been developed and once it is agreed to by Grant PUD and WDFW it will be raised at the PRCC for PRCC review and action. Elizabeth will work with Denny to get a copy of the draft as soon as it is available. The hope was the draft would be considered by the PRCC at their May meeting, but it may not be finished in time.
- B. PR Hatchery Smolt to Fry Issue** – This issue has been tabled by the PRCC until further studies are completed. Elizabeth will continue to check with Denny about the status of PRCC discussions on this issue.
- C. YN Request for fall Chinook Eyed Eggs** – YKFP is requesting 500,000 fall Chinook eyed eggs from Priest Rapids Hatchery broodstock collected in the fall of 2010. The HSC discussed the need to review the YKFP’s master plan (previously requested) as part of considering this request and acting upon it. Bill reiterated his request to find out what the plan is for the phase out of upriver bright stock that are naturally returning to the Yakima River, and the phase in of new stock. Tom will request a copy of the Master Plan for distribution to the HSC. The HSC plans to act on YKFP’s egg request in June.
- D. M&E and Marking Evaluation** – Chris Ryding (WDFW statistician) will take the lead on reviewing the data, and will make recommendations on the best marking strategy to achieve M&E objectives. Mike will check the timeline for the data review.

Kirk reiterated that the Colville Tribes have concerns about moving to OLAFT and collecting 100% of the broodstock for the fall Chinook program at Priest Rapids. The concerns were twofold: 1) just because a fish is collected at the ladder does not automatically mean that it is wild. 2) If they are truly wild fish, their final destination is unknown. There is no plan to use the OLAFT this year.

IV. Acclimation Updates

- A. Methow Acclimation** – As reported during the April meeting, fish were volitionally released during the week of April 19. Any stragglers will be out of the pond with this month's high flows. The metric of in-pond survival, to be calculated based on downstream PIT tag detections, is not yet available.

- B. Acclimation in the WR** – Russell provided an update on releases from the WR net pens. Before the releases, work was done to try to get data that could use mark-recapture techniques to estimate the remaining fish in each tag group. The detection efficiency from putting antennae into the net pens was good, at approximately 3,000 - 6,000 fish per day. The down-lake releases on Lake Wenatchee went well, despite significant wind. Russell observed one bull trout and approximately ten pike minnow in the vicinity of the down-lake release site. The HSC agreed that lessons learned from the net use at McComas were understood; they also discussed interest in other acclimation strategies including mobile acclimation units and better/earlier use of the side channel at Tall Timber. Keely will research the mobile acclimation program for Coho in the Yakima basin and share the information with the HSC at the next meeting.

V. White River and Nason Creek Program Updates

- A. Update and Review of Project Status Report**
 - Stakeholder Outreach Process & WR Working Group – The WR Working Group is planning their next meeting for June 15 in Leavenworth; HSC members are invited to attend.
 - Tumwater Dam Trapping Facilities – Keely reported that the process of researching modifications at Tumwater Dam began last summer with the Tumwater Working Group. The modifications would allow for collection of multiple broodstocks as well as safety net programs. Keely asked whether Grant County would be willing to participant on the Tumwater Working Group and provide funding for the modifications. One possible funding scenario is that Chelan County PUD would fund the engineering designs for the modifications and Grant County, with the Coho program, funds the actual implementation. The Working Group did not discuss whether the Coho program contribution would come from the Grant County or BPA funding.

VI. White River Basis of Design (BOD) – Russell provided an update on the WR BOD with further details on footprint, vessel types, and on-site facility location at McComas. As a reminder, the final HSC vote on the BOD is tentatively scheduled for July 2010 (depending on how quickly the White River Working Group can complete their process and offer recommendations).

A. Updates to Overall Facility Concept

- Mitigation: Impacts to the McComas site will be mitigated through on-site habitat restoration (primarily flood plain restoration). The habitat restoration could be augmented through partnerships with local habitat improvement groups.
- Location on the site: Final on-site location of the facility has not been decided. Two HSC members indicated that they were comfortable with either of the proposed on-site locations at McComas, while one HSC member supported locating the facility as far from the river as possible
- Footprint: Efforts are being made to reduce the size of the footprint. Operating circulars at 5.5 feet deep (similar to Eastbank) reduces the tankage needed significantly. Russell also suggested that partially buried free-standing circular tanks with roofs could be an alternative to circulars or other tanks in buildings or Quonset-hut structures.

B. Vessel Types

- Freshwater Institute is preparing a vessel-type performance assessment based on interviews with 33 hatchery managers in and around the Pacific Northwest; Russell described some of the initial results in his presentation. HSC members commented that a significant number of variables could affect the results of Freshwater Institute’s study of vessel type performance assessment, including facility age and experience of individual hatchery managers.
- The HSC discussed some preliminary input/discussions of the White River Workgroup to date. Although the Workgroup has not yet finished its process or made recommendations, in discussions to date Workgroup members have expressed the most interest in natural or semi-natural features for fish acclimation.
- The HSC discussed the pros and cons of constructed vessels (such as circulars) and more natural options (such as engineered ox-bows). There are concerns about the ability to detect disease and manage fish health in semi-natural features since those likely will freeze in the winter. There also are concerns about circulars and whether they will be acceptable to the local community. HSC members could support a combination of at least 2 semi-natural ponds/features and some constructed vessels (e.g., circulars). The HSC discussed a 50/50 split between vessel types, with appropriate overage to provide management

flexibility. No final decisions will be made until the WR Stakeholder Workgroup offers final recommendations.

- C. **Path Forward & Next Steps** – The White River Workgroup should be completing their process soon, hopefully in June. Following that input, Grant PUD will compile the input provided by the HSC and incorporate all of it into a revised BOD. The exact schedule will be worked out based on when the White River Workgroup finishes its process; no decisions will be made until the Workgroup makes recommendations.

- VII. **Other Grant PUD Status and Pending Issues Reports** – Elizabeth reviewed the current Grant PUD status and pending issue reports and noted a number activities that have taken place within the following Grant PUD supplementation programs: 1) Cassimar-Bar and Methow Steelhead; 2) Coho; 3) Methow spring and summer Chinook; 4) Okanogan spring and summer Chinook; 5) PRH fall Chinook; 6) Sockeye; and 7) Wenatchee summer Chinook.

VIII. **Eastbank Feasibility Study Update**

Eastbank Feasibility Study Presentation – Sam Dilly from Chelan PUD gave a presentation on the proposed modifications to the Eastbank hatchery. This included a summary of the current adult Chinook broodstock collection plans and associated water holding demands. Sam described the proposal to use water that seeps through the Rocky Reach Annex as a supplemental supply for the Eastbank hatchery. Sam showed how water supply will be adequate with little or no re-circulation.

The current proposal is to create a spring Chinook area of the facility that will house all the fish near one another but maintain bio-security between individual stocks.

- A. **Path Forward** – Elizabeth, Todd and Sam will work together to draft an SOA on adult holding, spawning, and incubation at Eastbank. The HSC will decide by fall 2010 on rearing prior to acclimation.

IX. **Wrap-Up / Next Steps**

- A. **Next Meeting:** Thursday, June 17, 2010 at 9:00 A.M. – Cedars Inn

B. Potential June Meeting Agenda Items

- WR Workgroup and WR Basis of Design
- NOAA’s approach to HGMP prioritization, in light of all necessary steps in the review process
- Experience and lessons in use of mobile acclimation units
- Detailed discussion of Gloyd Springs Basis of Design
- Voting on Eastbank for adult holding, spawning and incubation
- Fall Chinook mass marking and PR Hatchery resolution, if available
- Program status reports