



## MEETING MINUTES

### Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee

25-26 October 2011

Grant PUD SeaTac Office

#### PRCC Members

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Scott Carlon, Bryan Nordlund, NMFS	Jim Craig, USFWS
Jerry Marco, Colville Tribes	Bill Tweit, Teresa Scott, WDFW
Bob Rose, YN	Carl Merkle, CTUIR
Tom Dresser, Curt Dotson, GCPUD	Denny Rohr, Facilitator

#### Attendees: (\*Denotes PRCC member)

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Jim Craig, USFWS\* (present both days)  
Jerry Marco, Colville Tribes\* (present both days)  
Teresa Scott, WDFW\* (present 25<sup>th</sup>, via phone the 26<sup>th</sup>)  
Tom Dresser, GCPUD\* (present both days)  
Curt Dotson, GCPUD\* (present both days)  
Bob Rose, YN\* (via phone on the 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Scott Carlon, NMFS\* (present the 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Bryan Nordlund, NMFS\* (present the 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Debbie Williams, GCPUD (via phone both days)  
Denny Rohr, Facilitator (present both days)  
Mark Timko, Blue Leaf Environmental (presented the 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Leah Sullivan, Blue Leaf Environmental (presented the 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Audrey Thompson, Blue Leaf Environmental (presented the 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Tim Counihan, USGS (presented the 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Jill Hardiman, USGS (presented the 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Dave Burgess, WDFW (presented the 25<sup>th</sup>)  
Katrina Simmons, WDFW (presented the 25<sup>th</sup>)

## Action Items:

1. Provide comments on the 2011 JSATS Steelhead Study report from Blue Leaf Environmental and the 2011 Predator Index Study report from USGS/WDFW to Dotson prior to 11/16/2011.
2. T. Scott will draft a letter to Tim Counihan (USGS) regarding PRCC report expectations. Rohr will review, edit and distribute the letter to the PRCC. Rohr will then send it to Counihan.
3. Dresser will distribute draft SOA 2011-06 (including edits made during the Oct. 26 meeting) to PRCC members. He will discuss the matter with Carlon and Nordlund.
4. Rohr will discuss SOA 2011-06 with Bob Rose.
5. Rohr will discuss SOA 2011-07 and 2011-08 with Rose.
6. Dotson will do a trend analysis of fish movement through the Priest Rapids Dam ladders one week prior to Priest Rapids Bypass "Pier 23 demolition" and compare it to fish movement through the Left Bank ladder during the first week of the demolition and report (via e-mail) to the PRCC.
7. Rohr will discuss with Elizabeth McManus the PRCC's expectations of the Hatchery Subcommittee regarding the Priest Rapids Hatchery fall Chinook marking exercise given to them.

## Decisions:

1. SOA 2011-06 was approved (10/26) by Craig, Marco and Scott, contingent on approval by Carlon, Nordlund and Rose.
2. SOA 2011-07 – Triggers for Ceasing Supplementation in the White River – Carlon, Nordlund, Craig, Marco, Scott and Dotson gave their approval (10/25), contingent upon Rose' approval.
3. SOA 2011-08 – 2012 White River Spring Chinook Acclimation Plan - Carlon, Nordlund, Craig, Marco, Scott and Dotson gave their approval (10/25), contingent upon Rose' approval.

## Final Meeting Minutes

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Rohr welcomed members and visitors.
- II. **Agenda Review** – No additions were made to the agenda.
- III. **Action Items Review** – Action items were either completed or discussed during today's meeting.
- IV. **Follow Up Review and Discussion from October 25<sup>th</sup> Presentations of the 2011 JSATS Steelhead Study and the 2011 Priest Rapids Reservoir Predator Study**

**A. 2011 JSATS Steelhead Study** – PRCC members discussed information they heard yesterday in the PRCC workshop regarding 2011 JSATS Steelhead Study.

Craig asked how an additional year of the Steelhead Survival Study fits with the forecasted studies in 2014, 2015 and 2016. Dotson explained that the 2011 study was looking for specific causes of low survival rates for one group of steelhead released into Priest Rapids Reservoir (PRR). Studies in 2014, 2015 and 2016 will study the entire Priest Rapids Project (PRP) using paired releases (control and treatment) to evaluate Project performance standards.

Dresser explained that Grant PUD has implemented all of the measures and survival studies included in the Biological Opinion and the Priest Rapids Salmon and Steelhead Settlement Agreement, as they relate to Project performance standards. The question now is whether the Priest Rapids Bypass (PR Bypass) will get Grant PUD where they need to be to meet steelhead survival standards.

Dresser and Dotson said the 2011 study should be called a “JSATS Study, not a “survival study” because it was a study to determine where shortfalls in steelhead survival were occurring in a specific reach, not the entire PRP. Members discussed the pros and cons of conducting another (different) JSATS study in 2012, repeating the 2011 JSATS study in 2012 or doing no study at all in 2012.

Dotson said that even though high flows and environmental conditions created study related obstacles in 2011, the objectives defined (determine predation hotspots) in the 2011 JSATS Study were met. He believes that conducting the same study in the Wanapum Reservoir (WR) would provide the same critical predation information as found in the PRR. Prior to the 2011 JSATS Study predation hotspots were unknown. Marco questioned what new information would be gathered if the study was repeated and what would that information be used for. Dotson explained that there was a 9% steelhead survival difference from 2010 to 2011; he questioned if that difference is due to fish predation, avian predation, or an equal split between the two. If it's determined which predator causes the highest mortality rates, programs could be developed and implemented to remove them.

Teresa Scott suggested Grant PUD eliminate things out of their control in order to identify things that can be done to eliminate the predation of steelhead in the PRP. Dresser said research and biology doesn't always show the exact cause and cure of something, and that costs must also be a consideration. Dresser said that if data analysis determines that small mouth bass are the major predators, Grant PUD can't do anything about it. Avian predation has been addressed extensively with avian array installation and avian hazing by USDA at both dams. Dresser said the same amount of effort will be given to the avian program that is currently

taking place, but that Grant PUD has no control of birds that move outside the PRP. Additional efforts to catch NPM could include traps in the fishways and increasing catch efforts off the transformer deck of Wanapum Dam. Because contract development is a lengthy process it's unlikely Grant PUD could wait until March to decide which predation efforts to undertake.

Marco asked if the study identifies areas that need more research. Dotson suggested that while PRCC members read the study, they ask the following questions: were objectives of the study answered in the PRR. Because the WR hasn't been dissected to the extent that PRR has, should those objectives be answered for the WR or can you take what was learned in the PRR and assume it will work in the WR.

Marco asked if the PR Bypass will alleviate any of the forebay predation hot spots identified in the study and if that predation is considered reservoir or concrete mortality. Dotson explained that fish detected on the forebay array, but not seen at the downstream detection arrays are counted as concrete mortality, even though predation may have taken place in the forebay after the smolt had been detected by the forebay detection array. Dotson reminded PRCC members that the concrete survival rate is +95% for both dams. Dotson explained that the PR Bypass will only increase flows by 3 kcfs. While testing was being conducted for the PR Bypass, two gates were configured to pass 8 kcfs via top-spill and two gates were configured to pass 4 kcfs via bottom spill. The final design will include three top-spills, each passing 9 kcfs. Dotson believes the PR Bypass will create some benefit and impact to fish milling in the forebay. The PR Bypass will increase concrete survival, but not reservoir survival. Overall PRP survival will go up if concrete survival is increased.

In preparation for the next PRCC meeting on November 16<sup>th</sup>, Dotson explained that since this was a joint PRCC/Grant PUD study, PRCC members should feel free to give Mark Timko, Blue Leaf Environment, a call if they have any questions related to the 2011 JSATS Steelhead report.

Members agreed to have further discussion at the next PRCC meeting.

- B. 2011 NNI Predator Index Study** – Discussion regarding what are the deliverables from the USGS/WDFW group, based on the new Statement of Work (SOW) for the NNI Predator Index study took place amongst PRCC members. Dotson explained that Item #5 of the NNI Predator Index Study Statement of Work states USGS/WDFW will produce two reports. One report on efforts made in 2009, 2010 and 2011 for the whole PRP. In addition, they will collaborate with Blue Leaf Environmental (BLE) to produce a second report focused on the 2011 Priest Rapids Reservoir predator field study. Collaboration of steelhead survival data from BLE, not a collaboratively written report was discussed. The report distributed by USGS/WDFW is for the 2011 Priest Rapids Reservoir predator work. The

PRCC has not received a report for 2009-2010. BLE has provided one mile incremental survival data to Tim Counihan, USGS. Dotson explained that Counihan has data available to him to figure out survival estimates and shouldn't have to wait on John Skalski for stratified data. Dotson asked that any inconsistencies between the BLE and USGS/WDFW reports be commented on during the PRCC's 30 day review (reports were sent 10/17/11). **The comment period will end on 11/16/11, but please submit comments earlier if possible. Send comments to Dotson.** Scott asked if the PRCC should send USGS/WDFW an email explaining the collaborative reporting request of the report. T. Scott will draft a letter to Tim Counihan (USGS) regarding PRCC report expectations. Rohr will review, edit and distribute the letter to the PRCC. Rohr will then send it to Counihan Please have reviews by the next meeting because comments need to be sent back to BLE/USGS/WDFW.

- V. Action Item: Draft Statement of Agreement (SOA) 2011-06 – Survival Study Schedule** – During last month's PRCC meeting, members discussed the SOA and made suggestions. Dresser incorporated those suggestions and redistributed the SOA for review prior to today's meeting. Dresser walked through SOA revisions during today's meeting. He explained that steelhead and spring Chinook survival evaluations were decoupled.
- Dresser will distribute draft SOA 2011-06 (including edits made during today's meeting) to PRCC members.** SOA 2011-06 was approved by Craig, Marco and Scott, contingent on approval by Carlon, Nordlund and Rose. Dresser has a meeting with Carlon and Nordlund on November 8<sup>th</sup>; he will discuss the SOA with them at that time and notify Rohr of their vote. **Rohr will discuss the matter with Rose.**
- VI. Review and Discussion of Fish Screens in the Upper Columbia River Watersheds** – Ongoing; Teresa Scott and Bryan Nordlund will update the PRCC as they move forward with the project.
- VII. Action Item: PRCC Hatchery subcommittee Statements of Agreement Needing PRCC Approval**
- A. SOA 2011-07 – Triggers for Ceasing Supplementation in the White River** – Carlon, Nordlund, Craig, Marco, Scott and Dotson gave their approval, contingent upon Rose' approval.
- B. SOA 2011-08 – 2012 White River Spring Chinook Acclimation Plan** Carlon, Nordlund, Craig, Marco, Scott and Dotson gave their approval, contingent upon Rose' approval.
- VIII. Updates:**
- A. Priest Rapids Hatchery Fall Chinook marking Decision Paper** – Rohr explained that Elizabeth McManus, Hatchery Subcommittee Facilitator (HSC), provided him with the following update: WDFW agreed to take the lead on compiling information requested by the

PRCC. HSC members requested further information from the PRCC on the assignment. They questioned how their evaluation will align with U.S. vs. Oregon discussions regarding the same topics which will take place on October 26<sup>th</sup> by the U.S. vs. Oregon Policy Committee.

The PRCC assigned the HSC to look at technical questions/cost of different marking strategies and to make a recommendation. Members agreed that how that aligns or doesn't with U.S. vs. Oregon's policy is up to the PRCC, not the HSC. **Rohr will discuss this matter with Elizabeth McManus.** Dresser suggested PRCC members discuss this with their HSC representative, reminding them that this is a technical request, not a policy request.

- B. Priest Rapids Bypass** – Dotson reported that barges and cranes are in place and that the contractor would like to start pouring footings at Tainter Gate (TG) 5-6 in preparation of moving the bulkhead from TG 19-20 over to TG-5 & 6 (for surface-spill smolt passage during construction of the PR Bypass). Dotson said the contractor is a little behind schedule, but that staging is almost complete. Adult fallback is currently taking place at Tainter Gate 22 (i.e. sluiceway) and will be concluded on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

Dotson explained that contractors have asked for approval to start working on the exterior of the fish ladder earlier than originally proposed. They would like to start removing Pier 23 on November 7<sup>th</sup>. The contractor plans to work from scaffolding to remove concrete that is above the water line at Pier 23. This would be done by drilling holes in the concrete and then using a hydraulic separator to spall off chunks of concrete. All concrete removed would be transported from the site and not dumped into the river. This work would be conducted with the sluice operated for adult fallback (until Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>), and the ladder operational (in criteria). The fish ladder would remain in criteria until late November at which time it would be dewatered for annual repairs.

After discussion, PRCC members decided to allow work to be conducted during the time frame of (one hour after sunrise to one hour before sunset), starting Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>. **Dotson will do a trend analysis of fish movement through the ladder one week prior to Priest Rapids Bypass Pier 23 demolition and compare it to fish movement at the Left Bank ladder following one week of demolition, to see if the demolition work is negatively impacting fish movement thru the Left Bank ladder.** If a negative impact is seen, then "early demolition work" on Pier 23 will be halted and have to wait until the regularly scheduled fish ladder de-watering takes place the end of Nov.

- C. 2013 Hatchery Production Recalculation** – The PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee (HSC) continues their work on this topic. Dresser reported that Chelan, Douglas and Grant PUD submitted a 2013 hatchery production recalculation proposal to the Joint Fisheries Party

(JFP). The JFP offered a counter proposal; full JFP consensus wasn't reached regarding Wenatchee River recalculation numbers. The HSC will likely have a recommendation for the PRCC in December or January.

- D. White River Acclimation Permits** – Dresser reported that White River Acclimation Permits submitted to Chelan County are in the 14 day public comment period. A hearing examiner meeting hasn't been set yet; possibly in December or January. Discussions with Chelan County and Washington Department of Ecology (WDOE) have gone well. A public meeting was held Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup> at the Lake Wenatchee Recreation Club. This outreach meeting provided the public and other stakeholders with information regarding the White River spring Chinook 2011 survival evaluation and to provide updates on the White River and Nason Creek facility designs. There were three members of the public in attendance. Construction bids will go out the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2012 if the permit isn't appealed. Construction would start in June or July 2012.

**E. Committee Reports**

- 1. Fall Chinook Work Group (FCWG)** - Rohr distributed the Fall FCWG report electronically. He explained that the FCWG will be holding a Nonparametric Multiplicative Regression Workshop on 2-3 November at Grant PUD's Hydro Engineering Department in Beverly, WA. The workshop will be taught by Dr. Heather Lintz, Oregon State University. The purpose of the workshop is to help educate FCWG members on how to use data analysis to make decisions.

Redd surveys started Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup>. 38 kcfs flows were requested. No redds were counted then. Two redds were found at the 36-50 kcfs flow level on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Five active redds above a certain flow level are required to establish Initiation of Spawning. Redd activity seems to be a little behind schedule this year. Projected Hanford Reach escapement on the spawning ground is 64,000.

- 2. PRCC Habitat Subcommittee (HSC)** – Rohr explained that the HSC met via conference call on October 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss issues with the Nason Creek Lower White Pine (LWP) reconnection project. Rohr briefly explained that the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad has requested additional funding for future possible mitigation needs and that the HSC has not reached consensus on this request. A \$400,000 funding shortfall has been identified. HSC members are discussing options to address it. Use of NNI funds was discussed. If consensus had

been reached, Rohr would have brought their request to use NNI Funds to the PRCC for consideration. The HSC will discuss this matter at their next meeting on November 10<sup>th</sup>.

- F. NNI and Habitat Funds Report** – Rohr distributed the report electronically earlier in the month. Additional funds will be deposited by Grant PUD on February 15, 2012. Totals include all encumbrances. Fund totals are:
- NNI Fund - \$4.3 million
  - Habitat Supplemental Fund - \$4.7 million
  - Habitat Fund \$1.03 million.

**IX. Next Month's Topics**

- A.** JSTAT Steelhead Study (C. Dotson)
- B.** Fish Screens in the Upper Columbia River Watersheds (T. Scott and B. Nordlund)
- C.** Annual Report Deadlines (T. Dresser)
- D.** Doc Minder Deadline Tracker (T. Dresser)
- E.** Quincy Valley Tourism (QVT) Fishing Derby Funding – Dresser reported that QVT is planning a May 2012 fishing derby next year and will bring a funding request to the PRCC.

**X. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- A. August 24, 2011** – Craig, Marco, and Dotson gave their approval, contingent upon Carlon, Nordlund, and Rose' approval. Scott was not present at the meeting.
- B. September 28, 2011** – Craig, Marco, and Dotson gave their approval, contingent upon Carlon, Nordlund, Rose and Scott's approval.

- XI. Next meeting:** November 16, 2011, 9:00 – 3:00 at the Radisson Hotel Boardroom.