



Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee Meeting

FINAL APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

9:00 am

Wanapum HOB, Room 107

PRCC Representatives

Scott Carlon, Justin Yeager (Alt), NMFS
Keely Murdoch, Bob Rose (Alt), YN
Chad Jackson, P. Verhey (Alt) WDFW
Curt Dotson, Peter Graf (Alt), GCPUD
Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc, Facilitator

Jim Craig, USFWS
Kirk Truscott, Casey Baldwin (alt), CCT
Tom Skiles, CTUIR
Erin McIntyre, Admin Ass't, GCPUD

PRCC Meeting Attendees

Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc, Facilitator
Keely Murdoch, YN
Chad Jackson, WDFW
Scott Carlon, NMFS (Via Phone)
Erin McIntyre, Admin Ass't, GCPUD

Jim Craig, USFWS
Kirk Truscott, CCT
Tom Skiles, CTUIR
Peter Graf, GCPUD
G. McMichael, Mainstem Fish Research

MEETING MINUTES

Decisions made during July 25, 2018 Meeting

1. None

I. **SAFETY BRIEFING - completed**

II. **Welcome and Introductions**

III. Agenda Review (D. Rohr) – No additions

IV. Meeting Minutes (D. Rohr) – May 23, 2018 Meeting; June 27, 2018 Conference Call – Under review and development

V. Action Items from June 27, 2018 Meeting (D. Rohr) –

A. Murdoch and Rohr will coordinate details of G. McMichael attending July meeting for presentation of status and update information regarding Predator Fish Recruitment Reduction Project activities. Completed

VI. (10:00 am) Status and Update Presentation of Predator Fish Recruitment Reduction Project Activities, Geoff McMichael (K. Murdoch) – McMichael shared a Power Point presentation with the committee. The project area covered was from the McNary pool up to Priest Rapids pool. McMichael feels there is a low juvenile salmonid survival in this area which he believes is due to high non-native predator populations. He feels there is a need to reduce predation losses in order to improve stock productivity and facilitate recovery. The concept he is proposing is to study the use of the hydropower system to create short term changes in the McNary pool WSE (water surface elevations) to reduce the productivity of predators, including walleye and smallmouth bass. McMichael had discussed this subject with the PRCC previously in 2016 and had received \$10,000 from the NNI Fund to study the question further, including searching for funding sources for the project. He presented a proposal to BPA in October of 2017 for \$956,000 for a 5-year study to be completed in 3 phases, and to date he has not yet received a decision and the proposal is still under review. PRCC members discussed the presentation with McMichael including several questions and comments. After extended discussion, committee members thanked McMichael for the presentation prior to his departing the meeting.

Committee members continued to discuss the presentation, including PRCC possibly providing some NNI funding for the project, cost share funding with the McNary Group, and the BPA funding request. In conclusion, committee members posed the following questions to be addressed by McMichael and this subject will be on the next meeting agenda for further discussion.

- 1) Are there any known conflicts with the study proposal that would make implementation impossible, such as juvenile bypass operations or requirements for the Columbia River Systems Operations (CRSO)?
- 2) If McMichael were to request additional funding for the first phase, are there cost-share opportunities which could be applied for and reasonably secured?
- 3) Has McMichael had any indication that if this proposed WSE action were implemented BPA would look for compensation for lost revenue?
- 4) Any foreseeable impacts to cultural resources with changing WSE?

Murdoch agreed to communicate the questions to Michael, and Rohr will add this subject to the agenda of the next meeting for additional discussion.

Additionally, committee members will contemplate additional questions for B. McMichael and send to Rohr as finalized.

VII. **Priest Rapids Dam Spillway Work Update (C. Dotson)** – Graf shared the PR Dam Spillway update. Questions were asked about abnormal high-water levels, and this will be discussed in detail at next meeting when Dotson returns.

VIII. **2018 PRP Spill Report (C. Dotson)** – Spill continues and will be discussed further next meeting when Dotson returns.

IX. **NNI Funding Guidance Review and Discussion (T. Skiles)** – Rohr distributed an electronic copy of the PRCC approved NNI Funding Guidance Document dated August 28, 2016 to committee members prior to the meeting. Skiles commented that he had some recent discussions with others regarding how NNI funds are spent and that the Fund will be winding down in the future. He has been thinking about how we will manage what's left in the NNI account, including how projects are funded and how proposals are coming to the PRCC for consideration. For example, Skiles stated some proposals are currently coming from professional networks, but might we consider turning the tables and broadcast a message that we do have funds available and request proposals from others with the intention of improving the Priest Rapids Project fish survival gap. Skiles further commented that perhaps the PRCC should have a process discussion regarding these types of questions regarding use of the NNI funds. Graf shared his thought that the linkage to habitat is strong and should some proposals perhaps be coming through the Habitat Subcommittee (HabSC). Rohr provided an explanation of the work of the HabSC plus a review and description of the 3 primary funding sources and their application, No Net Impact (NNI) Fund 601, Habitat Supplemental Fund 602, and Habitat Fund 603. After extensive discussion, there was agreement to discuss this subject further. Skiles will continue to gather ideas and coordinate with Rohr, and Rohr will continue this subject on the agenda for the next meeting and additional discussion.

X. **Potpourri (D. Rohr)**

A. **Endangered Salmon Predation Prevention Act (Sea Lions)** – Rohr provided some update comments regarding sea lion legislation, particularly H.R. 2083 and SB 3119. H.R. 2083 was passed by the House on June 26, 2018, and recently Senator Cantwell/WA and Senator Reich/ID introduced a companion Bill in the Senate. The companion Bill has been assigned to committee, and Rohr will continue to monitor and keep the PRCC members advised. Sea lions are having an impact on Upper Columbia salmon and steelhead, and Rohr will continue to monitor this legislation. Carlon also commented that NOAA is involved in the permitting activities related to this legislation.

XI. **GENERAL UPDATES**

A. **Avian Predation Activities (C. Dotson)** –Nothing new reported
B. **FCRPS BiOp – Corps/BOR Avian Predation Management in Columbia Plateau Region (C. Dotson)** – Carlon expressed concern about the lower level of the lake around Goose Island and the resulting new habitat could

be created by this development. Scott concerned about lake drop and new habitat takes advantage of, next year once a week. He also shares some of the same concerns as Dotson regarding future dissuasion activities and possible changes.

- C. Estimating the Survival of Juvenile Spring Chinook in Lake Wenatchee (D. Rohr) – Under discussion in the Hatchery SC.
- D. Review of Outstanding NNI Funded Projects
 - 1. Continued Support for Upper Columbia Fish Screen Monitoring Program (C. Jackson) – Nothing new. The next quarterly report will occur probably in September.
 - 2. Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II (C. Jackson, D. Rohr) – Rohr commented this continues to undergo an internal water rights review and it is several months before completion.
 - 3. Predator Fish Recruitment Reduction (K. Murdoch) – See agenda item VI above.
 - 4. Northern Pike Removal in Lake Roosevelt (K. Truscott) – No update.
 - 5. Satellite Telemetry of Caspian Terns (C. Dotson) –No update
 - 6. Evaluation of Caspian Tern Management to Reduce Predation on ESA-listed Salmonids in the Columbia Plateau Region (C. Dotson) – No update, see weekly reports
 - 7. 2018 Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby, Wanapum Reservoir, September 21-23 (C. Dotson) –No updates

XII. **Committee Reports (D. Rohr)** – No July meetings

XIII. **Qtrly NNI and Habitat Funds Report (D. Rohr)** – Final will be sent out in August.

XIV. **Next Meeting** – Wednesday, August 29, 9:30 am, Wanapum Dam HOB, Room 107 (D. Rohr)

- XV. **Additional Discussion** – Skiles commented that during one of his recent fish ladder inspections at Priest Rapids Dam he found a large amount of adult shad in the ladders with many dead and dying as they are unable to back out of the ladders. Skiles brought this subject up as something that might possibly need further review and discussion. For example, would such densities negatively effect passage of salmon ascending the fish way, or might the ladder need to be modified at the bottom end to essentially keep them out of the ladder, and so forth. Rohr will add this subject to a future meeting agenda for additional review and discussion.

Action Items from July 25, 2018 Meeting

- 1. Murdoch will share questions posed by committee members for Geoff McMichael to address.
- 2. Committee members will contemplate additional questions for B. McMichael and send to Rohr as finalized.
- 3. Regarding NNI Funding Guidance Review and Discussion, Skiles will continue to gather ideas and coordinate with Rohr.

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