



**Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee
Final Meeting MINUTES
Tuesday, May 24, 2022
1:00 pm**

Chelan Fire District #3 Meeting Room, 228 Chumstick Hwy, Leavenworth, WA 98826

To Join Zoom Meeting: Not available

PRCC Representatives

Scott Carlon, Justin Yeager (Alt), NMFS	Jim Craig, USFWS
Keely Murdoch, Brandon Rogers (Alt), YN	Kirk Truscott, Casey Baldwin (alt), CCT
Chad Jackson, P. Verhey (Alt) WDFW	Tom Skiles, CTUIR
Curt Dotson, Tom Dresser (Alt), GPUD	

PRCC Meeting Attendees

Curt Dotson, GPUD	Keely Murdoch, YN
Scott Carlon, NMFS	Jim Craig, USFWS
Chad Jackson, WDFW - Absent	Erin Harris, GPUD
Tom Skiles, CTUIR (Via Speaker Phone)	
Kirk Truscott, CCT	
Bryan Nordlund, FPE (facilitator)	

Decisions, Approvals and Action Items Made During May 24, 2022, Meeting

1. **Spill season commenced for juvenile outmigration in April 2022.**

Meeting Minutes

- I. **Welcome, Announcements and Introductions** – Bryan Nordlund welcomed everyone to our first in person meeting in over two years.
- II. **Agenda Review** – No additions were made to the agenda.
- III. **Meeting Minutes Approval**

- A. April 26, 2022, PRCC meeting minutes – April meeting minutes were distributed by Bryan Nordlund by email on May 10. Comments are due by June 10, 2022.

IV. Status of Actions Items from April 26, 2022, PRCC Meeting

- A. **Phase II Upper Columbia Re-introduction plans presentation.** - Completed
- B. **Operations protocols – Bryan Nordlund drafting straw man document to be discussed.** – Completed, for further discussion during the meeting.
- C. **Curt Dotson drafting memo on P-4 turbine outage plans to share with PRCC** – Completed – Curt Dotson discussed the commissioning tests of Turbine P-4 at Priest Rapids Dam, including a document describing the work that he shared with committee members. Work on P-4 started in the Fall of 2020, and Grant PUD is required by FERC to complete and pass flow and load tests before returning turbines back online. He shared that some of the commission testing will take the turbine (P-4) out of the flow range of fish mode for short durations of time. He provided charts showing the past 10 years for fish passage timing and that the testing would be taking place when (historically) the smolt out-migration is at the low end for each species involved.
- D. **March and April PRCC meeting minutes are final.** – March minutes are approved. April edits are due by June 10, 2022.

V. 2021 Fish Passage Operations Report

A. *Update on investigations for fish count discrepancy:*

Updates provided by Curt Dotson were followed by PRCC discussion. Curt handed out a document regarding GPUD fish counter performance. Curt stated Grant PUD currently has seven fish counters on staff that are receiving additional fish counting training. Grant PUD has hired a 3rd party contractor who will perform a double-blind quality control test to check fish counters work. The double-blind test will review sections of fish count station video to check fish count data by comparing counts from Grant PUD fish counting staff with a count by the contractor. These “double-blind checks” are scheduled to be done on a weekly basis.

Curt also handed out printouts from the new picket lead logbooks for the past 5 weeks of fishway operation which recorded dates and periods of time when the picket leads were open. The picket lead logbooks are used to report the open and/or closed times that the picket leads are either opened or closed, based on the alarms for hydraulic differential in the control room. This data is not automatically generated – rather, they are self-reported by operators. Curt stated that the operators do fishway walk-throughs daily. In addition, if an alarm activates, an operator will inspect the location and rectify the issue. Typically, debris accumulates and increases the head differential triggering an alarm when it exceeds the criterion.

B. Fish ladder inspections:

Tom Skiles performs monthly ladder inspections at the GPUD dams for the fisheries agencies and tribes. Tom Skiles shared he will perform his first inspection in 2022 at Wanapum Dam on 5/25/2022.

C. Fish spill updates:

Spill season in progress. Bryan Nordlund shared fish counts look good this season. He also noted discrepancies don't typically show up until later in the season.

D. Fish counts for 2022 (April 15 – May 7)

Project/Life Stage	Spring Chinook	Summer Chinook	Sockeye	Fall Chinook	Steelhead	Coho
Priest Rapids adults	4102				1	
Rock Island adults	1584				4	
Priest Rapids jacks	20					
Rock Island-jacks	4					

VI. Discussion - Develop PRCC operations protocols (e.g., SOA development, timing, agenda items, presentations etc.)

Bryan Nordlund distributed a spreadsheet by email on 5-13-22 of the type of items to be included in a strawman document. Bryan Nordlund discussed how he drafted this spreadsheet strawman document (expanded bullet list) and asked if there were any other items that need to be added. Committee members discussed and would like more time to review.

Also, all PRCC members were encouraged to review Section 5.4 of the SSSA as it pertains to operations of the PRCC.

ACTION: Committee members to review and send additions/edits to Bryan Nordlund.

VII. Future discussion topics – early planning for survival studies (2025)

Default study per SSSA – repeat study. Potential discussion points include:

- timing, species, life stage(s)
- future workshops needed?
- tag type
- standard to measure (combine projects? combine adult + juvenile?)
- accuracy/precision of data analysis
- fish source
- release points
- assessing tag and tagger effects

- detection points
- dealing with adverse river flow conditions
- plant operations
- achieving standard or not – path forward
- factoring in avian predation
- others, per PRCC discussion?

Bryan Nordlund asked if all committee members have taken part in survival studies in the past at GPUD projects or other locations. All members reported to have had varying levels of experience with survival studies. The members talked about earlier GPUD survival studies and discussed changes with study methodology over the past years.

Committee members discussed past GPUD methods of using gate well dipping to provide study fish. Since this is no longer available due to loss of specialized personnel, other study fish sources will need to be developed. Curt Dotson discussed options for study fish sources. He stated that Grant PUD is open to looking into all options for test fish needed for future fish studies.

The committee also discussed how avian predation issues are again increasing as colonies are increasing. If the USBR catches up and completes their assigned work on Goose Island, this predation will be reduced, which will impact measured fish survival at the GPUD projects.

UPDATES

VIII. Review of Outstanding NNI Funded Projects

- A. **Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II** – (no updates)
- B. **Avian Predation on ESA-listed Juvenile Salmonids on the Mid-Columbia River, 2021** (no updates)
- C. **Barkley Irrigation Company Permanent Point of Diversion - Completing Implementation of the Permanent Solution** (no updates)
- D. **Northern Pike Removal (2022-2024)** – In progress.
- E. **Quincy Pikeminnow Derby** – In progress.
- F. **Wenatchee PIT tag barge** – In progress.

IX. Committee Updates

Bryan Nordlund has forwarded the latest subcommittee distributions he has received to date via email.

- A. **Priest Rapids Fish Forum** – PRFF met on May 4, 2022.

- B. Habitat Subcommittee – HabSC met on May 12, 2022.
- C. Fall Chinook Work Group – The FCWG will next meet on October 4, 2022,
- D. Hatchery Subcommittee – The next meetings are May 18 and July 20, 2022.

X. SOAs discussed in 2022

SOA number	Key words	Last Discussed	Status
2021-06	Facilitator selection	January 25, 2022	open

XI. Next Meetings

The next PRCC meetings are scheduled June 28, and July 26, 2022. Committee members discussed meeting locations going forward.

Douglas PUD has reserved their Auditorium in East Wenatchee for June, July, and August, with a HCP site visit to Rocky Reach also included in July. Douglas PUD has extended an invitation to the PRCC to hold meetings at the DPUD Auditorium.

Grant has meeting room HOB-107 available at Wanapum.

Bryan Nordlund proposed that meetings alternate in some fashion between these locations. He also added that virtual meetings could remain an option, especially in those months where holidays and poor travel conditions might inhibit physical meetings. Curt Dotson proposed that if the meetings were held at the DPUD Auditorium, the PRCC should occur in the morning and the HCP in the afternoon with the order of the meetings reversing when held at Wanapum.

Bryan will coordinate with committee members and with the HCP Facilitator John Ferguson to get to a mutually satisfactory solution.

XII. Today’s Action Item Summary: (each member)

Action: Erin Harris to reserve the Wanapum HOB-107 room.

Action: PRCC to complete April PRCC meeting minutes review by June 10.