

Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee Conference Call

Microsoft Teams
Tuesday, January 28, 2025
9:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

Conference Call Minutes

PRCC Representatives, Alternates, and Facilitation

Tom Dresser, Rod O'Connor (Alt), Tim Taylor (Alt) GPUD Scott Carlon, Justin Yeager (Alt), NMFS Bill Gale, USFWS Chad Jackson, Andrew Murdoch (Alt), WDFW Kirk Truscott, Casey Baldwin (Alt), CTCR	Keely Murdoch, Brandon Rogers (Alt), YN Tom Lorz, CTUIR Clayton Buck, Wanapum Larissa Rohrbach, Anchor QEA, Facilitator Kristi Geris, Anchor QEA, Technical Support
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Meeting Attendees

Tom Dresser, GPUD Rod O'Connor, GPUD Tim Taylor, GPUD Scott Carlon, NMFS Bill Gale, USFWS Chad Jackson, WDFW Andrew Murdoch, WDFW	Kirk Truscott, CTCR Dennis Moore, CTCR Keely Murdoch, YN Tom Lorz, CTUIR Pete McHugh, CRITFC (CTUIR) Larissa Rohrbach, Anchor QEA, Facilitator Kristi Geris, Anchor QEA, Technical Support
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Action Items

- K. Truscott will verify the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CTCR) PRCC Policy Committee representation. *(A CTCR PRCC Policy Representation Designation Letter was distributed on February 7.)*
- T. Lorz will provide an updated Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) PRCC Representation Designation Letter. *(This item is ongoing.)*
- L. Rohrbach will work with T. Dresser to identify proposed dates for a PRCC Policy Committee meeting, including a timeline for materials preparation, tentatively in the July to August 2025 time frame. *(This item is ongoing.)*
- K. Murdoch will draft language for a new objective to develop a statistically and scientifically sound approach for better understanding population- and origin-specific

avian predation rates, for PRCC review, and discussion with Real Time Research (RTR) at the PRCC February 25 meeting. (*Note: this draft language was distributed to the PRCC on February 18.*)

- Anchor QEA will inform S. Carlon of PRCC's approval of RTR's 2025 Avian Predation Study proposal. (*Note: this follow-up was completed on January 30.*)
- Grant PUD will revise Quincy Valley Chamber of Commerce/Tourism Association's 2025 Northern Pikeminnow Derby proposal, as discussed in the meeting.
- Anchor QEA will circle back with B. Gale and S. Carlon regarding interest in remaining the agency spill representatives for the 2025 spill season.

Review Items

- None.

Decisions and Approvals

- The PRCC approved the No Net Impact (NNI) funding (H601) request of \$358,501 from RTR for the project titled "Avian Predation on ESA-Listed Juvenile Salmonids on the Middle Columbia River, 2025," contingent on the PRCC developing a new objective in coordination with RTR on a statistically and scientifically sound approach for better understanding population- and origin-specific avian predation rates in the next deliverable. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) approved RTR's 2025 proposal, as written, via email on January 23.¹
- The PRCC approved the NNI funding (H601) request of \$25,000 from Quincy Valley Chamber of Commerce/Tourism Association for the project titled "2025 Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby – Wanapum Reservoir," contingent on adding language to release adult spring Chinook Salmon and Bull Trout and to encourage participants to retain other non-native piscivores. NMFS abstained via email on January 23.² U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) also abstained. CRITFC approved via email on January 28.³

I. Welcome, Announcements, Agenda Review, and Meeting Minutes Approval

L. Rohrbach reviewed the agenda. B. Gale added "USFWS representation." The agenda was approved as revised by all parties in attendance.

¹ S. Carlon had to leave the meeting before this vote took place, as he anticipated per his email on January 23.

² S. Carlon had to leave the meeting before this vote took place, as he anticipated per his email on January 23.

³ T. Lorz had to leave the meeting before this vote took place.

The draft November 18 PRCC conference call minutes were distributed by K. Geris on December 13, 2024. The draft December 16 PRCC conference call minutes were distributed by K. Geris on January 13, 2025. No revisions were received on either sets of minutes, and both minutes were approved by members who attended those meetings.

II. Actions Items Review

Action items from the PRCC December 16 conference call and follow-up discussions were as follows (*Note: Italicized text corresponds to agenda items from the December 16 conference call.*):

- *K. Truscott will verify the CTCR PRCC Policy Committee representation.*
This item is ongoing.
- *T. Lorz will provide an updated CRITFC PRCC Representation Designation Letter.*
This item is ongoing.
- *L. Rohrbach will work with T. Dresser to identify proposed dates for a PRCC Policy Committee meeting, including a timeline for materials preparation, tentatively in the June to July 2025 time frame.*

Recall, Grant PUD agreed to take the lead on preparing draft materials for PRCC review. L. Rohrbach suggested a timeline that targets mid-May for distributing the materials, discussion at a subsequent PRCC meeting, then finalize and distribute materials ahead of a July policy meeting. T. Dresser said Grant PUD will be busy with survival study activities starting in April and into May. He suggested holding off on reaching out to policy representatives about a meeting date and revisiting this topic in about a month. S. Carlon suggested moving the policy meeting to August or September. K. Murdoch agreed it would be beneficial to set a date far enough in advance to provide adequate preparation time. This item is ongoing.

- *PRCC representatives will provide questions for RTR to address during a presentation of their NNI avian predation 2024 work and 2025 proposal (scheduled for January 9, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.) to Anchor QEA no later than Friday, December 20, 2024.*

Questions received were sent to RTR on December 23, and to the PRCC on December 26. RTR verbally addressed these questions during their presentation on January 13, and RTR's written responses were distributed on January 22.

- *Anchor QEA will provide H. McLellan with the updated PRCC NNI-Funded Project Specifications and Guidance Document (distributed to the PRCC on October 15).*

The updated guidance was forwarded to H. McLellan after the meeting on December 16.

III. USFWS Representation

B. Gale notified the PRCC that Jason Romine resigned from USFWS, and the PRCC alternate representation role is now vacant and will be for the foreseeable future given the current hiring freeze. J. Romine is now with Kleinschmidt, so he will still be working in the region.

IV. DECISION: RTR 2025 Avian Predation Work

L. Rohrbach said the PRCC NNI Funds Specification Sheet for RTR's 2025 Avian Predation Study (Attachment A) was distributed on January 13. Under "Project description," RTR's proposal for work is summarized in Objectives 1 to 5. She asked whether the PRCC had any questions or comments about whether these objectives meet the NNI funding guidance.

A. Murdoch said there are no data that suggest the Rock Island (RIS) bypass provides a representative sample of the entire evolutionary significant unit. RTR does a good job of collecting a representative sample that is captured at the RIS bypass, but this bypass is limited by operation and low and variable capture probability that is not understood. He would like to discuss how the results of this work can be better integrated into a life-cycle modeling approach. The concern is that a special group of fish collected at RIS is being used for estimating avian predation impacts, but all the other passive integrated transponder (PIT)-tagged fish are being used for the rest of the modeling. It would be advantageous if everyone used the same groups of fish for all purposes so there would be no need to make corrections or weight the data. He would like RTR to work with the PUDs and fish managers to identify which fish sources are needed to obtain population-specific information that can be analyzed in RTR's models and the rest of the models so there is no issue with discontinuity in the data. L. Rohrbach asked what A. Murdoch means by "special group of fish" versus "fish used for life-cycle modeling". A. Murdoch said fish managers use fish PIT-tagged and released at hatcheries and rotary screw traps (RSTs) within the watershed and not those collected at a dam. These fish are used for life-cycle modeling in the Methow, Wenatchee, and Entiat River basins. The Okanogan River Basin is a data gap, which relies on PIT-tagging *Oncorhynchus mykiss* parr in the tributaries. If RTR used these same fish, it would make exchanges of data and applying results easier versus doing a post-hoc transformation of whatever the RIS bypass represents.

T. Dresser understands A. Murdoch's point, and Grant PUD is open to having these conversations. However, the purpose of this discussion is to review and vote on RTR's proposal. If there are other things to discuss with RTR that are outside of this scope of work, this needs to be a separate conversation. Additionally, PRCC NNI funds are specifically intended to address project impacts, and it sounds like A. Murdoch is talking about regional comanager needs and wants related to hatchery practices. Lastly, every

sample location has biases. It is frustrating because it seems these conversations imply that RTR is not doing a good job. Without RTR's research, the comanagers do not have the data needed to meet the objectives of the Inland Avian Predation Management Plan, and it is these same comanagers who are requiring U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to implement it.

K. Murdoch said to make these data more useful, both for the Inland Avian Predation Management Plan and for an overall understanding of how avian predation relates to recovery and informs management actions, it does need to be better understood which populations are being preyed upon and at what rate. These data are not collected by tagging at RIS. There is little information about which fish are tagged at RIS, which fish choose the RIS bypass, and what effects tagging at RIS have on survival and behavior. This is not unique to RIS; this is true for any mainstem sites. This means estimated predation rates in the Upper Columbia River are artificially high. To look into this, she would like to request adding an additional deliverable to RTR's 2025 Avian Predation Study proposal. She would like RTR to work with fish managers to develop a statistical plan that allows this study to move away from tagging at RIS, not this year, but to evaluate what it would take to do this in future years. She imagines this would involve using PIT-tag rates at Rocky Reach and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Wenatchee River PIT Tag Barge to see where more fish need to be tagged, and then this information can be used to craft a proposal in the future. Additionally, what is being proposed here is no different than what RTR implemented on the Snake River. That study historically used tagging at lower Snake River dams, but there is no tagging there anymore, so the study now uses passive detection for Snake River fish.

T. Lorz understands there are concerns about RIS, and he was also wondering whether RTR could develop an alternative to using RIS that would still maintain the dataset and get the same level of precision. He is also interested in whether an additional work element can be added to the current proposal. To clarify, RTR was formerly tagging at Lower Monumental Dam. Overall, he thinks K. Murdoch's suggestion would alleviate concerns.

B. Gale is supportive of this direction; however, he suggested reaching agreement on what the next iteration should be. What is most important? Moving away from RIS or obtaining population- and origin-specific information? He suggested the ask should be for RTR to work with the PRCC to develop a statistically and scientifically sound model for obtaining population- or origin-specific information. He does not like presuming moving away from RIS. L. Rohrbach also reiterated T. Dresser's concern related to NNI funding guidance. This study design uses a source population at RIS to define the project area. How would this work to move the starting line to a different location or into the tributaries?

K. Murdoch said moving away from RIS and obtaining population- and origin-specific information are both important. Regarding NNI funds, she understands these funds are intended for actions that increase survival of fish through Grant PUD's projects but also include actions to increase survival of fish overall. The PRCC has funded habitat projects outside of Grant PUD project areas and these met the funding criteria. The starting line does not need to be in the project area.

P. McHugh recalled Slide 33 in RTR's presentation that was shared on January 13.⁴ RTR bulleted pros and cons of including other tagging programs as well as suggested a possible feasibility study. He heard there may be limitations, things may not be perfect, but there may be an opportunity to combine efforts to produce the best estimate possible, which he believes is ultimately everyone's interest.

L. Rohrbach summarized that there is no opposition to the objectives in RTR's proposal as they are written, but there is a request on the table to create an additional work element. Is this feasible under the current proposal? K. Murdoch suggested that this fits under Objective 4. This will provide a full year for RTR and those who want to be involved to think this through. T. Dresser said Grant PUD is supportive of this, but he reiterated Grant PUD's major concern about using NNI funds outside of the project area. Yes, NNI funds have been used outside of the project before; however, when drafting the Salmon and Steelhead Settlement Agreement, Grant PUD was very clear that NNI funds will be prioritized within the Grant PUD project area. If this proposal extends outside of the project area, he suggested that parties to this committee start talking to other entities about matching funds. Also, if this leads to sampling outside of the project area, this will not be approved by the Grant PUD commissioners.

L. Rohrbach acknowledged there may be future discussions and decisions to make about extending to a larger area, but for now she suggested focusing on what is needed to approve this proposal today. She questioned what level of funding development of a statistical plan is likely to require and whether Grant PUD has a sense of whether this will fit with the other work already anticipated under Objective 4. T. Dresser said he suspects it would not fit within the proposed scope and budget, based on past RTR work and budget planning. This would require circling back with RTR. L. Rohrbach suggested approving the proposal as written today, understanding that Objective 4 or an additional objective may be refined, and perhaps develop a timeline to do this.

K. Murdoch said the cost share is already there. Most PIT-tagging in the Upper Columbia is funded by sources other than NNI funds. These are tags that the study would be leveraging. Grant PUD funds some tagging, but USFWS, Bonneville Power Administration, Chelan PUD, and Douglas PUD, also fund tagging, whether at RSTs or

⁴ The presentation *Avian Predation in The Columbia Plateau Region, 2024*, distributed on January 13, and Attachment B to the PRCC January 13 meeting minutes.

hatcheries. If additional tags need to be put in the system, this is analogous to what RTR is doing at RIS; it may even be cost saving by not tagging at RIS. She feels these data would better fit the NNI funding guidance if fish managers could make more management decisions based on the outcome of the results. T. Dresser understands there are multiple sources of PIT tags in the region. His concern is there is a lot of labor associated with expanding activities to other or additional locations. Further, if fish are collected and tagged farther upstream, this now includes predation from other project areas. Grant PUD has been trying for years to elevate issues about avian predation in the Columbia Plateau. He would like others to help push and fund. Fish source can be debated, but ultimately, hatchery and wild fish are ending up on islands. To this day, fish managers are still not meeting all the requirements and obligations that federal agencies agreed to in the Inland Avian Predation Management Plan. He would like more participation from other signatories.

B. Gale supports the approach to approve the proposal today and clarified that the PRCC should work on an additional objective. He does not support describing this as only a statistical plan because there are logistics to figure out before moving away from RIS, in addition to the statistics. There are study fish selection criteria and many other things to consider. He does not want to overly prescribe what RTR should do.

T. Lorz agreed with B. Gale's comments. Also to note, CRITFC have also been pushing and funding to address avian predation issues. Grant PUD is not alone. K. Murdoch added in the Teams chat that the Yakama Nation has also been working on bird predation at Miller Rocks and helping at Badger Island.

L. Rohrbach agreed this needs to be crafted carefully. Today, she is requesting PRCC approval of RTR's proposal, as written, with the proposed funding amount. Moving forward, the PRCC needs to carefully wordsmith language describing what the PRCC is requesting RTR to do under this new objective, then RTR can review this to develop a scope to understand true costs. Can the PRCC approve this proposal, contingent on developing language for this new objective, and who might want to be involved in developing phrasing of a proposed objective? K. Murdoch offered to take the lead on phrasing. T. Dresser supported K. Murdoch drafting language for PRCC review. He suggested at the PRCC February 25 meeting, inviting RTR to hear the request from PRCC representatives directly as opposed to interpreting words on paper. Then RTR can take it from there.

K. Murdoch will draft language for a new objective to develop a statistically and scientifically sound approach for better understanding population- and origin-specific avian predation rates for PRCC review and discussion with RTR at the PRCC February 25 meeting.

The PRCC approved the NNI funding (H601) request of \$358,501 from RTR for the project titled “Avian Predation on ESA-Listed Juvenile Salmonids on the Middle Columbia River, 2025,” contingent on the PRCC developing a new objective in coordination with RTR on a statistically and scientifically sound approach for better understanding population- and origin-specific avian predation rates in the next deliverable. NMFS approved RTR’s 2025 proposal, as written, via email on January 23.

Anchor QEA will inform S. Carlon of PRCC’s approval of RTR’s 2025 Avian Predation Study proposal. *(Note: this follow-up was completed on January 30.)*

V. DECISION: Quincy 2025 Northern Pikeminnow Derby

L. Rohrbach said the PRCC NNI Funds Specification Sheet for Quincy Valley Chamber of Commerce/Tourism Association’s 2025 Northern Pikeminnow Derby (Attachment B) was distributed on January 21. This year’s proposal is largely the same as last year. T. Dresser highlighted three changes: 1) the sponsor tried a fall event last year but moved the event back to spring this year based on input from participants and catch records; 2) the sponsor restructured the prizes for youth and adult divisions based on feedback; and 3) the sponsor changed the rules for raffle tickets to encourage fishing efforts on pikeminnow large enough to be preying on native fishes. Consistent with past years, the sponsor once again requested to use funds to purchase the Grand Prize of an all-terrain vehicle Side x Side, which has increased interest in these events. The total project cost is \$25,000. Typically, about \$3,000 is used for advertising and planning, and the rest goes to prizes. The sponsor does provide some cost share in kind, ranging from \$2,000 to \$4,000 for their labor. This event is not for profit; rather, it is more a community effort to get the locals involved in saving the salmon. The sponsor did a good job at highlighting this last year. Grant PUD also spoke with the sponsor again this year about reporting any non-native predators such as walleye, bass, and channel catfish. Recall, there are WDFW regulatory issues with including game fish in this derby.

K. Truscott asked, under “Additional Requirements,” is “adult steelhead” a carryover from last year’s fall event? It seems in May, there is more potential for encountering spring Chinook Salmon. T. Dresser said this language has been the same for years, as requested by Jeff Korth (WDFW, retired). So yes, it is carryover language, but it has been the same for both spring and fall events. K. Truscott suggested adding spring Chinook Salmon and Bull Trout to this list. T. Dresser said he can add this but noted he is not aware of participants ever encountering these species. L. Rohrbach also noted there is language under “Project description” that states derby participants shall comply with all applicable WDFW laws.

K. Murdoch said there are publications suggesting that Northern Pikeminnow removal may have compensatory impacts on other non-native species. She understands there

are regulatory issues with removing non-native species, such as walleye, bass, and channel catfish, for the derby. However, under “Additional Requirements,” she asked whether the proposal can include that participants retain these fish, separate from the derby, and report data on non-native piscivores encountered.

C. Jackson said WDFW would be supportive of K. Truscott’s and K. Murdoch’s requests if Grant PUD is willing to make these revisions. L. Rohrbach asked whether these revisions need to occur before a vote. T. Dresser said no and suggested voting now and Grant PUD will revise the proposal, as discussed. To note, reporting non-native species is already described in No. 10 under “Additional Requirements” in this proposal.

The PRCC approved the NNI funding (H601) request of \$25,000 from Quincy Valley Chamber of Commerce/Tourism Association for the project titled “2025 Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby – Wanapum Reservoir,” contingent on adding language to release adult spring Chinook Salmon and Bull Trout, and to encourage participants to retain other non-native piscivores. NMFS abstained via email on January 23. USFWS also abstained. CRITFC approved via email on January 28.

Anchor QEA will inform S. Carlon of PRCC’s approval of this proposal.

VI. PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee Update – White River Hatchery Program

L. Rohrbach said the PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee (HSC) is still working on the Panel Reading List (bibliography) for the Expert Panel package. R. O’Connor recalled that the PRCC HSC has been working on a collection of documents that describe the Expert Panel process. Once approved by the PRCC HSC, the package will come to the PRCC for review and approval.

VII. 2025-2027 Smolt Survival Study Updates

R. O’Connor said Grant PUD has been actively working on contracting to line up resources for equipment, professional services support, and a helicopter for in-river fish releases. Grant PUD has finalized and created purchase orders for equipment, including acoustic tags, data loggers, and releases for loggers.⁵ LGL Environmental Services is under contract to provide professional services, as well as Buchanan Statistical Services, which is Rebecca Buchanan and University of Washington—essentially the same staff who have been involved for years under Dr. John Skalski’s team. Grant PUD has received zero bids for a helicopter contract. The request for proposals has been out for months; there have been in-person visits from potential bidders and safety meetings but no bids. He believes this is due to the ongoing wildfires and helicopters being in high demand, and also given what Grant PUD is asking to meet contracting requirements, timing, and scope. Plan B, which aligns with what other

⁵ Acoustic releases that secure the loggers to anchors on the river bottom.

entities are doing or have done, is releasing study fish from boats. Yesterday, Grant PUD convened the first full study kickoff meeting with all contractors. A lot of time was spent outlining what it will take to transition from helicopter to boat releases. Everything stays the same until release day. Rather than putting fish in a fly tank, fish are loaded onto a truck for transport to a release location. Grant PUD is exploring options for leaving boats at the release locations, which are the same as the historical helicopter locations, approximately 1/2 mile downstream of RIS and Priest Rapids Dam. The release zone is the same, which is the thalweg. Grant PUD is reaching out to other entities, such as Chelan PUD, for insight to help make this successful.

K. Murdoch said the rejection rate of study fish collected at RIS needs to be tracked. Particularly because this is the first time collecting study fish at RIS (for Grant PUD survival evaluations). It will be informative to understand, when selecting fish randomly at RIS, what the rejection rate is due to injury or other reasons and also the rejection rate at tagging. Additionally, last year there were oddly low collection rates at RIS, where there were not even enough fish for the RTR study. Has there been discussion about how to prioritize steelhead between these two studies if collection is low?

T. Dresser said Grant PUD, Chelan PUD, and RTR have discussed this. Grant PUD's compliance requirements come first and foremost, so fish will be prioritized for the passage survival study. Grant PUD will notify the PRCC if this becomes an issue.

R. O'Connor said rejection rate has also been discussed, with more to come. The idea is to identify criteria so that the fish transported from RIS to the tagging location will already likely be included in the study. Taking a raw sample from RIS to the tagging location greatly expands the effort on the contractors. T. Dresser said, similar to past years, Grant PUD will follow the same metrics for rejection as the region. K. Murdoch recalls that fish collected at RIS tend to show high levels of gas bubble trauma, other trauma, and descaling.

K. Truscott said the control fish will not have as far to travel compared to the test fish.

R. O'Connor said Grant PUD will standardize the time fish spend in boats and trucks.

L. Rohrbach said Grant PUD will also stay coordinated with the PRCC about any study plan revision needs or future updates. A. Murdoch requested in the Teams chat that a discussion on dead fish releases be held next month, to discuss number, location, and timing.

VIII. 2024 Fish Passage Operations Report

A. Fish Ladder Inspections

Anchor QEA will circle back with B. Gale and S. Carlon regarding interest in remaining the agency spill representatives for the 2025 spill season.

B. Fish Spill Updates

No updates were shared.

C. Adult Fish Counts for 2024 (April 15 to November 15)

Adult salmon and steelhead passage is complete for 2024. No updates were shared.

Project	Spring Chinook Salmon (Adult + Jack)^a	Summer Chinook Salmon (Adult + Jack)^b	Fall Chinook Salmon^c	Sockeye Salmon	Coho Salmon	Steelhead
Priest Rapids	15,720	40,766	31,032	699,785	38,653	9,746
Wanapum	16,810	37,622	16,279	697,922	28,281	9,197
Rock Island	15,676	44,621	10,974	728,872	26,395	8,827

Notes:

a: Chinook counted from April 15 to June 13 are considered spring Chinook Salmon.

b: Chinook counted from June 14 to August 13 are considered summer Chinook Salmon.

c: Chinook counted after August 14 are considered fall Chinook Salmon.

UPDATES

VI. Review of Outstanding NNI-Funded Projects

- **Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II**
L. Rohrbach will inquire about the next update.
- **Northern Pike Removal (2022 to 2024)**
H. McLellan is working with Grant PUD on a change order to add environmental DNA monitoring to the 2025 contract. A proposal for post-2025 work is forthcoming (February or March, TBD).
- **WDFW PIT-Tag Detection Barge**
Preliminary update in spring 2025 (TBD).
- **2025 Quincy Northern Pikeminnow Derby**
(Covered above)
- **2025 RTR Avian Predation Study**
(Covered above)

VII. Subcommittee Updates

K. Geris will continue to forward subcommittee notes and materials to PRCC members and alternates.

- Priest Rapids Fish Forum – met Nov 6, December/January canceled, next meeting February 5.
- Habitat Subcommittee – met December 12, January canceled, next meeting February 13.
- Fall Chinook Work Group – met October 8, next meeting May 6.
- Hatchery Subcommittee – met January 15, next meeting February 19 to 20.

VIII. SOAs Discussed in 2025

SOA number	Key Words	Last Discussed	Status
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IX. Next Meetings

The next PRCC meeting will be on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., to be held virtually. A joint session with the Habitat Conservation Plan Coordinating Committee (HCP-CC) for a Subyearling Chinook Salmon Workshop Recap (Joint Session 3) will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (TBD).

X. Subyearling Workshop Recap (Joint Session 2 with HCP-CC)

The PRCC and HCP-CC convened Joint Session 2 to discuss the 2024 Subyearling Chinook Salmon Workshop (see separate joint session minutes).

XI. Attachments

Attachment A – PRCC NNI Funds Specification Sheet for RTR’s 2025 Avian Predation Study

Attachment B – PRCC NNI Funds Specification Sheet for Quincy’s 2025 Northern Pikeminnow Derby

**PRCC NNI Funds
Project Specification Sheet
Avian Predation on ESA-Listed Juvenile Salmonids - 2025**

Date submitted: January 9, 2025
Project Sponsor: Real Time Research, Inc. (RTR)
Project Liaison: PRCC Representative – Tom Dresser ~ TDresser@gcpud.org
Project Title: Avian Predation on Juvenile Salmonids on the Middle Columbia River, 2025
Project Type: Research (Avian Predation)

Location: The avian predation research activities will be conducted in the Columbia River Plateau (CRP) region and include colonies that are within foraging distance of the middle Columbia River. This encompasses/includes Potholes Reservoir, Lenore Lake, Banks Lake, Island 20, Hanford Island, and any incipient colonies that form in the CRP region above the Snake River confluence

Requested Funding Amount: \$358,501.00.

Project description: Similar to prior years, this work is part of a comprehensive program to implement avian predation management plans (including adaptive management), evaluate action effectiveness of those plans, and identify emerging predation concerns. Four primary objectives are included in this proposal as follows. Specific details on each objective can be reviewed in the proposal.

- Objective 1. Evaluate response of Caspian terns and other piscivorous colonial waterbirds to nest dissuasion activities on Goose Island and elsewhere in Potholes Reservoir.
- Objective 2. Determine changes in nesting distribution and colony size of Caspian terns and other piscivorous colonial waterbirds on or near the mid-Columbia River
- Objective 3. Determine changes in survival and predation rates on salmonid smolts by Caspian terns and other piscivorous colonial waterbirds nesting on or near the mid-Columbia River.
 - ✓ *Task 3.1. RIS Steelhead PIT-tagging*
 - ✓ *Task 3.2. PIT tag recovery*
 - ✓ *Task 3.3. Survival and predation rate analyses*
- Objective 4. Provide technical assistance to GPUD/PRCC in developing and adaptively managing short- and long-term plans to reduce avian predation on juvenile salmonids.
- Objective 5. Conduct an analysis of avian predation on double-tagged steelhead in the Priest Rapids Project in 2025.

Project Justification: This proposal provides NNI funds to ensure the continuation of a comprehensive program which informs and aids the co-managers in the implementation of the avian predation management plans (including adaptive management), provides data to evaluate the effectiveness of those plans and identify emerging predation concerns.

Project Cost: Real Time Research, Inc. is requesting \$358,501.00. Similar to years past, cost sharing provided by other agencies in 2025 (i.e., BPA, USACE, and BOR) reduces the costs to do the work proposed below with funding from the PRCC.

Estimated cost of the work proposed to the GPUD/PRCC in 2025 are provided by objective (see below). As was the case in previous years, most of the funding for avian predation RM&E in the Columbia River Basin in 2025 will come from other sources (e.g., BPA). Costs in 2025 are like those in 2024 but include an additional fixed-wing aerial survey as part of Objective 1 and the costs to analyze doubletagged smolts as part of Objective 5 (a newly proposed objective).

Objective	Description	Estimated Cost
1	Evaluate response of Caspian terns and other piscivorous colonial waterbirds to nest dissuasion activities on Goose Island and elsewhere in Potholes Reservoir	\$59,855
2	Determine changes in the nesting distribution and colony size of Caspian terns and other piscivorous colonial waterbirds on or near the mid-Columbia River	\$75,469
3	Determine changes in survival and predation rates on salmonid smolts by Caspian terns and other piscivorous colonial waterbirds nesting on or near the mid-Columbia River	\$173,249
4	Provide technical assistance to GPUD/PRCC in developing and adaptively managing short- and long-term plans to reduce avian predation on juvenile salmonids	\$13,379
5	Conduct an analysis of avian predation on double-tagged steelhead in the Priest Rapids Project in 2025.	\$36,549
	Total Cost	\$358,501

Estimated Timeline: The field and data collection, data analysis, and reporting activities for the avian predation are anticipated to begin in February and extend through October 2025. Like prior years a draft report to the PRCC is anticipated to be provided to the PRCC in February 2026. Below is a proposed schedule for this proposal.

- (1) Feb – Mar 2025 Hire field crew & submit research permit applications (WDFW, USFWS, BOR)
- (2) Apr – Jul 2025 Colony monitoring.
- (3) Apr – Jun 2025 PIT-tagging of steelhead at Rock Island Dam.
- (4) Jul – Oct 2025 PIT tag recovery on bird colonies.
- (5) Jan 2026 Submit draft annual report.
- (6) Mar 2026 Submit final annual report

Deliverables: Research results would be presented in (1) an Annual Report, (2) periodic in season reports, (3) peer-reviewed journal articles, and (4) presentations at regional planning meetings and other professional meetings.

**PRCC NNI Funds
Project Specification Sheet
Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby 2025**

Date submitted: January 21, 2025
Project Sponsor: Quincy Valley Chamber of Commerce - Quincy Valley Tourism Association
Project Liaison: PRCC Representative – Tom Dresser ~ TDresser@gcpud.org
Project Title: 2025 Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby – Wanapum Reservoir
Project Type: Predator Removal (Northern Pikeminnow)

Location: The Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby (derby) is located on the mainstem of the Columbia River in Washington State and extends from the forebay of Wanapum Dam (above the boat restricted zone) to the tailrace of Rock Island Dam (below the boat restricted zone).

Requested Funding Amount: \$25,000

Project description: The Quincy Valley Chamber of Commerce (QVCC) will host a northern pikeminnow fishing derby (in 2025) at Crescent Bar, Washington or another location located on the Wanapum Reservoir. The overall goal of the derby is to remove as many predators (northern pikeminnow) from the Wanapum Reservoir (above the Wanapum Dam boat restricted zone to below the Rock Island Restricted zone) as possible during the three (3)-day event.

The participants will catch northern pikeminnow by rod and reel during the time periods specified in the derby rules. Northern pikeminnow will be removed from the reservoir waters for inspection by QVCC derby officials and Grant biological staff as appropriate. Northern Pikeminnow shall be turned into the QVCC derby officials at locations specified for inspection and subject to the following restrictions: Derby participants and the QVCC shall comply with all applicable Washington State Fish and Wildlife Laws.

Project Justification: This proposal provides NNI funds to remove northern pikeminnow from the Priest Rapids Project, which is consistent with the primary purpose and use of NNI Funds, which is to implement measures or activities to improve near term survival for juvenile salmon and steelhead.

Project Cost: Quincy Valley Chamber of Commerce - Quincy Valley Tourism Association is requesting \$25,000 to fund the 2025 northern pikeminnow fishing derby.

NNI will be used to conduct activities associated with the northern pikeminnow derby and includes advertising, banquet, cash awards, etc. The proposed cash prize system will include a youth and adult division, which will consist of the following cash awards.

Youth Division.

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| (1) Largest Fish = | 1 designated prize. |
| (2) Smallest Fish= | 1 designated prize. |
| (3) Weight Total 1 st Place = | 1 designated prize |
| (4) Weight Total 2nd Place = | 1 designated prize |
| (5) Weight Total 3rd Place = | 1 designated prize |
| (6) Weight Total 4th Place = | 1 designated prize |
| (7) Weight Total 5th Place = | 1 designated prize |
| (8) Weight Total 6th Place = | 1 designated prize |
| (9) Weight Total 7th Place = | 1 designated prize |
| (10) Weight Total 8th Place = | 1 designated prize |
| (11) Weight Total 9th Place = | 1 designated prize |

(12) Weight Total 10th Place = 1 designated prize

Adult Division.

(1) Largest Fish =	1 designated prize
(2) Smallest Fish =	1 designated prize
(3) Weight Total 1 st Place =	1 st pick of prize pool
(4) Weight Total 2nd Place =	2 nd pick of prize pool
(5) Weight Total 3rd Place =	3 rd pick of prize pool
(6) Weight Total 4th Place =	4 th pick of prize pool
(7) Weight Total 5th Place =	5 th pick of prize pool
(8) Weight Total 6th Place =	6 th pick of prize pool
(9) Weight Total 7th Place =	7 th pick of prize pool
(10) Weight Total 8th Place =	8 th pick of prize pool
(11) Weight Total 9th Place =	9 th pick of prize pool
(12) Weight Total 10th Place =	10 th pick of prize pool

The estimated \$10,000 prize budget will be used to purchase prizes for all awards listed above. After all prizes have been awarded, for Youth and Adult divisions, the remaining prize pool will be raffled off with tickets earned by catching Northern Pikeminnow.

The remaining funds (after covering prize pool, advertising, banquet costs, etc.), which is estimated to be \$10,000, will be used to purchase the Grand Prize of an ATV Side x Side. The Grand Prize will be raffled off with tickets earned by catching Northern Pikeminnow.

Raffle tickets will be awarded as follows to encourage fishing efforts on pikeminnow >9”.

- (1) 2 tickets will be awarded for each Northern pikeminnow >9” total length, and
- (2) 1 ticket will be awarded for each Northern pikeminnow between 6-9” in length (total length).

No raffle tickets will be awarded for fish under 6 inches long. Fish under 6 inches long will be eligible for the Smallest Fish awards.

All prizes and winner of the Grand Prize ATV Side x Side will be awarded at the banquet immediately following the final weigh-in.

QVCC shall be responsible for all services related to the planning and organization of the derby which includes but is not limited to; marketing/advertisement (newspaper, radio, TV, website, Facebook and Twitter), registration (website, local stores, and mail-in), banners and posters, fishing seminar, associated prizes and/or awards, food, labor, equipment (measuring boards, scales, sound system, wrist bands, vests, paper products) and fish disposal.

Estimated Timeline: 2025 Northern Pikeminnow Derby will occur over a three (3) day period during May 16th, 17th and 18th, 2025.

Additional Requirements:

If **Northern Pike** are caught, anglers are required **to retain and immediately present the fish to QVCC derby officials** with details on where the fish was collected. QVCC derby officials are required to preserve all northern pike caught (by freezing) and notify the Grant PUD Representative (Tom Dresser - Tdresse@gcpud.org) immediately.

If **adult steelhead** are caught, anglers are required to release them immediately without removing them from the water and report the encounter to QVCC derby officials during weight in. QVCC derby officials will notify the Grant PUD Representative (Tom Dresser - Tdresse@gcpud.org) immediately.

QVCC shall provide the Grant PUD Representative, Tom Dresser (Tdresse@gcpud.org) a written summary by June 30, 2025, with the following information.

1. Total funds expended,
2. Total number of anglers participating,
3. Number of boats participating,
4. Residency (zip code) for all participants,
5. The total number of northern pikeminnow removed during the 3-day event.
6. Total weight for all northern pikeminnow removed during 3-day event.
7. Average weight of northern pikeminnow removed during 3-day event.
8. Total number (by species) of non-native predators caught and retained.
9. Overall cost per fish removed.
10. Report on the number of non-native predatory fish retained (e.g. walleye, bass, & channel catfish).
11. Comparison or prior spring versus fall derby events (total and average weight, total number, total number of anglers participating); and
12. Prizes awarded.