



PRCC Habitat Subcommittee

Conference Call

Thursday, 8 January 2026
 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Final Meeting Minutes

PRCC Habitat Subcommittee Members

Tracy Bowerman, Shelby Fowler (alt), USFWS	Chris Fisher, CTCR
Dave Duvall, Deanne Pavlik-Kunkel (alt), GPUD	Brandon Rogers, Hans Smith (alt), YN
Scott Carlon, Sean Gross (alt), NMFS/NOAA ¹	Carl Merkle, CTUIR
Jeremy Cram, Cody Gillin (alt), WDFW	Erin Harris, GPUD
Nathan and Clayton Buck, Wanapum	Tracy Hillman, BioAnalysts, Chair

Meeting Attendees

Chris Fisher, CTCR	Dave Duvall, GPUD
Jeremy Cram, WDFW	Tracy Bowerman, USFWS
Brandon Rogers, YN	Chris Mott, GPUD
Cody Gillin, WDFW	Nathan Buck, Wanapum
Tracy Hillman, BioAnalysts, Chair	

Action Items:

- None.

¹ NOAA Fisheries did they notify the Chair requesting a delay in voting on decision items. Therefore, decisions were made by members present.

Decision Items²:

- **Decision:** PRCC Habitat Subcommittee members approved \$450,000 for the Roaring Creek RM 0.5-1.5 Nysether Acquisition Project. Funding for this project will come from Fund 602.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the meeting and participants introduced themselves.

II. Agenda Review

The PRCC Habitat Subcommittee reviewed and approved the January meeting agenda.

III. November Meeting Notes

PRCC HabSC members reviewed and approved the 13 November 2025 meeting notes on 9 December 2025.

IV. Review Action Items

The PRCC HabSC reviewed the following action item from the November meeting:

- Dave Duvall will check with the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation to see whether the Bartsch Acquisition – Lower Twisp River – Reach 2A Project can be closed. **Complete; see discussion under Section V.**
- Dave Duvall will contact the Okanagan Nation Alliance and let them know that the PRCC HabSC would accept a specification sheet requesting funding to extend the ORRI Okanagan Falls Project. **Complete. The PRCC HabSC should receive a specification sheet soon.**

V. Project Updates

Members of the PRCC HabSC provided the following updates on funded projects:

- **Primary Appraiser (Pacific Appraisal Associates)** – Dave Duvall reported that there is no update on Pacific Appraisal Associates.
- **Primary Appraiser (Noble Ag Land Valuation)** – Dave Duvall reported that there is no update on Pacific Appraisal Associates.
- **Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project, Phase II Project (TU)** – Tracy Bowerman reported that Smith Excavation finished installing the remainder of the High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) pipe in early December and continued to install service valves, drains, and air relief valves along the 2.5 miles of pipeline. With the HDPE pipe installed, Smith moved forward with the required hydrostatic pressure testing along the 2.5 miles of HDPE pipe. Testing was done between isolation valves allowing the line to be tested in 3 separate sections. Smith followed the specifications outlined in the contract and the system passed all 3 pressure tests. Additionally, Smith's sub-contractor finished siding and roofing installation on the pump house building and began working on installing interior wall paneling. Future work includes mechanical and electrical work in the pump house. If the weather cooperates, Smith may resume installing services valves.

² All decision items listed here were approved by PRCC HabSC members.

- **Peshastin Creek RM 2.5 Project (CF)** – Tracy Bowerman indicated that there was no update on this project.
- **Bockoven Entiat and Stormy Acquisition Projects (CDLT)** – Jeremy Cram reported that there is no update on this project. The landowner has put the sale on pause.
- **Canyon Creek Culvert Design and Construction Project (CF)** – Tracy Bowerman indicated that there is no update on this project.
- **Eagle Rocks Habitat Enhancement Project (MSRF)** – Tracy Bowerman said this project was completed in 2024 and is in the monitoring and adaptive management phase. The sponsor has completed coordination on gate construction. The recent flooding did not damage any components of the project; however, a few fence posts that were bent during flooding were straightened by the sponsor.
- **Kedrowski Acquisition Project (MSRF)** – Tracy Bowerman indicated that the acquisition closed on 1 December 2025. The recording of the deed and BLA (Boundary Line Adjustment) was completed during closing.
- **Bartsch Acquisition – Lower Twisp River – Reach 2A Project (MSRF)** – Dave Duvall said this project is complete and can be closed once the sponsor submits the final invoice. The sponsor expects to submit a final invoice for the remaining \$2,700 in February. Dave added that the home on the property cannot be moved and sold because of the way the house was constructed. Therefore, it has been cleaned and re-purposed to host workshops and for staff use. Members questioned whether full floodplain reconnection can occur if the home remains on site.

Following the meeting, Dave reached out to the sponsor and asked about the effects of the home on floodplain reconnection. The sponsor provided the following information:

The question of what to ultimately do with the Bartsch house is far from resolved. We have had two modeling exercises completed to evaluate whether removing the house or levee is necessary to create meaningful habitat uplift, both of which determined that the quick answer was no. Concerns were also raised about downstream impacts to other private properties that could result from actions taken at Bartsch w/o corresponding actions on the MSRF properties downstream. As a result, we are working with one of the consultants to put together a larger scope of work/proposal for modelling and channel concepts that could be implemented as part of a reach effort in the short term.

We have reached out to several contractors from the west side about moving the house and have not found anyone willing to take it on yet, based primarily on how it was built. If the modelling results support removing the house, then we will make efforts to raze the structure once permits are in hand. Until then, it made good sense to me to maintain the home's condition and use it for staff, intern, and community outreach meetings.

Removing the road system and culverts was a much easier analysis to complete, and we have started on the permitting needed to complete those actions next season. We will also be repurposing fencing to support additional riparian planting.

We are making use of the house currently for office space, as the Twisp Community Center is undergoing an extensive remodel. The space is also allowing us to keep closer

tabs on the riparian restoration efforts open to us now that we are able to step back the prior owner's clearing activities in the riparian.

The sponsor agreed to join the February meeting to discuss the long-term goals for this project.

- **Skyline Screen and Fish Return Upgrades Project (MSRF)** – Tracy Bowerman reported that the sponsor demobilized heavy equipment and trailers from the staging area and removed garbage from the site. She said Phase 1 of the project included replacement of an aging trestle across Cub Creek and 6,000 feet of aging conveyance pipe to increase irrigation efficiency. The photo below shows the Skyline Screen during winter flows.



- **Penticton Dam Fish Passage Construction (ONA)** – Chris Fisher reported that this project is complete. Grant PUD is waiting for the final invoice.
- **White River Ohme Acquisition (CDLT)** – Dave Duvall said the sponsor delivered a certified check to the title company and the sponsor has signed all required documents. Once the transaction closes, which should be soon, the sponsor will add the property to its insurance and start a series of actions (e.g., prepare a covenant, collect information for forest management, prepare a stewardship plan, etc.).
- **Enloe Dam Sediment Analysis and 30% Design (TU)** – Chris Fisher reported that the sponsor continues to make progress on this project. The elutriate tests should be completed soon. Those tests will be conducted in two dilution series using composite samples from (1) the four hottest samples (with the most concentrated arsenic, >1,000 mg/l) and (2) moderately hot samples (arsenic concentrations over CSL but under 1,000 mg/l). The tests will use both rainbow trout and daphnia. This work is required for the 401 Certification. Depending on the testing results, selective dredging may be necessary. Chris added that the sponsor began outreach to the four

irrigation districts on the potential effects of elevated suspended sediment during dam removal on irrigation systems. At this time, no irrigation district has responded negatively to the issue of elevated suspended sediment.

- **Methow River Riparian Stewardship (MSRF)** – Dave Duvall reported that the sponsor is using funds for site cleanup at Bartsch, clearing and filling at Stanley, and adding trail signs at Robinson.
- **M2@3R Habitat Construction (MSRF)** – Dave Duvall reported that this project will connect multiple side channels upstream of the Sugar project. The sponsor held internal meetings to discuss wood purchasing and to identify a staging strategy. In addition, the sponsor compiled a list of potential contractors in the region.
- **Libby Creek Fish-Passage Barrier Dam Removal (CF)** – Tracy Bowerman reported that the sponsor is pursuing the idea of moving away from the surface-water diversion and installing a well for the landowner. This would require a water right conversion from surface water to groundwater. The landowner indicated that he is willing to entertain the idea of moving to a well but was concerned about ongoing power/pumping costs. The sponsor is also working with a hydrogeologist to develop a feasibility assessment for various options, including a groundwater well, a Ranney well, or modifications to the existing surface-water diversion.
- **Sugar Channels Reconnection Project (MSRF)** – Tracy Bowerman reported that the Phase 1 Sugar Left project has been completed and is now in the monitoring and adaptive management phase. The recent high flows resulted in full activation of all channels and structures (see photo below). Phase 2 of the project will begin in 2026. The sponsor has prepared bid materials for advertisement in January 2026.



- **Methow River – Integrated CMZ Project (MSRF)** – Dave Duvall reported that the sponsor is waiting on clarification from Ecology about matching funds.
- **Wenatchee-Okanogan Comprehensive Thermal IR Surveys (CCD)** – Dave Duvall indicated that the sponsor is evaluating whether to conduct winter or summer flights. They are also working on insurance coverage as required in the contract. Dave said he asked the sponsor about the cost of using a fixed-wing aircraft versus a helicopter. The sponsor does not believe there is much difference in cost but will investigate.

VI. Restoration/Protection Projects

Roaring Creek RM 0.5-1.5 Nysether Acquisition Project

Jeremy Cram introduced the Roaring Creek RM 0.5-1.5 Nysether Acquisition Project Specification Sheet. He said the purpose of this project is to acquire two parcels totaling 796.25 acres in the Roaring Creek watershed, which is in the Entiat River basin. The acquisition will protect 1 mile of Rearing Creek, which is 2 miles of streambank. Roaring Creek is one of the most important spawning and rearing areas for natural-origin steelhead in the Entiat River basin. Jeremy noted that this property is just downstream from the site where stage-0 restoration will occur. About 80 acres of the parcel are zoned for rural residential 10-acre lots and could be developed for streamside recreational parcels with direct road access. The other half of the parcel is zoned for rural residential 20-acre lots. Permanent protection of this property will prevent degradation from fragmentation into private parcels with wells, septic systems, and removal of riparian vegetation. The total cost of the project is \$871,000. The sponsor requested \$851,000 from the PRCC HabSC.

Prior to the meeting, members had the following questions, which the sponsor addressed (in italics) before the meeting:

1. Are there any structures on the property? *We are not aware of any other than the gage referred to by CCD. The title shows a 2003 agreement with Ecology and CCD for the gage. We have not yet set foot on the forested hillside. The County Records do not have any improvements listed.*
2. Are there water rights associated with the property? *Subject to the caveat that this will need to be reviewed by someone more knowledgeable about water matters, there do appear to be certificated water rights from 1919, and Ecology’s mapping shows this as an adjudicated stream. However, the document states that the right is limited to “an amount actually beneficially used” for irrigation. Due diligence will include learning the extent to which these rights have been used and their current extent and validity.*
3. How confident is the sponsor that the cost is \$851,000? *The landowner reports that the property was appraised in 2021 for \$717,000, so we added some for general increase in values. It was acquired through a 1031 exchange with other properties, and the family is now interested in selling. We will request their appraisal for comparison, but obviously the current one will prevail.*
4. Is there a road through the property? *The title commitment reflects Roaring Creek Road (County Road 252) crossing almost all of the northern parcel and a portion of the southern parcel.*
5. What amount was requested from the Conservation Commission Riparian Grant Program and when do you expect a decision? *CCD submitted and is tracking this and has not been able to provide a timeline for knowing whether there will be funding. This avenue was suggested by CCD and has not been used by CDLT before.*

During discussion, there were additional questions raised for which members needed responses before they were able to vote on the proposal. Jeremy submitted the following questions to the sponsor. The sponsor provided responses (in italics) on 8 January.

1. What is the urgency (i.e., is there a high risk that the property will be sold to a developer)? *There is no clear and present danger of this property being sold to another party. However, the owners would likely sell to the first buyer that presents themselves. They own other parcels around the PNW (hence the LLC), and they are moving towards offloading them. The sponsor will check in with the owners soon and report back.*
2. Can you provide more information on the water rights (e.g., size of the water right)? *The sponsor confirmed that they will evaluate them as indicated in their previous response, but there is unlikely to be real benefits to streamflow from the protection action. Rather, the acquisition would prevent further draining of the aquifer through wells.*
3. Is there a possibility the uplands can be sold after the parcel is acquired? *The sponsor settled on the idea that this pathway is unlikely to yield major financial gain given that most of the uplands were burned last year, they are landlocked, and fairly desolate. There may be some potential but nothing obvious to bank on – the sponsor could include language about transferring uplands in the contract.*
4. Can you provide more information on the Conservation Commission cost share? *The sponsor will follow up with Cascadia and the SCC to see whether they can learn anymore about the Conservation Commission timelines. They also want to ensure that their policies and timelines are congruent with their expectations (e.g., Yellow Book appraisal).*

Following the meeting, and after reviewing the responses to questions, on 13 January 2026, the PRCC HabSC approved via email \$450,000 for the acquisition. Although this is less than the total amount requested, the PRCC HabSC is hopeful that the sponsor will be successful in acquiring the remaining funds from the Conservation Commission Riparian Grant Program, or some other funding program. If the sponsor is unsuccessful in acquiring the remaining funds, or there is a high likelihood the landowners will sell the property to an investor before the sponsor can secure the remaining funds, the sponsor needs to contact the PRCC HabSC and the PRCC HabSC will revisit their funding decision. As a final point, if there are any water rights acquired during the transaction, the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee requires that those flows are permanently protected in Ecology’s Trust Water Rights Program.

Decision: *PRCC Habitat Subcommittee members approved \$450,000 for the Roaring Creek RM 0.5-1.5 Nysether Acquisition Project. Funding for this project will come from Fund 602.*

VII. Administration and Information Updates

PRCC HabSC Third Quarter 2025 Expenditures and Unencumbered Balances

Dave Duvall shared the following financial information with the HabSC:

Habitat Fund	Expenditures through 30 September 2025	Unencumbered Balance
601	\$400,665.27	\$6,477,911
602	\$3,334,817.29	\$6,848,619
603	\$114,527.64	\$2,810,707
Total	\$3,850,010.20	\$16,137,237

Dave also walked through the projects identified in the financial report and noted which ones will be closed because the projects are completed and Grant PUD has received the final invoice.

Review Operating Procedures

The PRCC HabSC reviewed their operating procedures and made no changes to the document.

VIII. Adjourn

Tracy Hillman adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm.

IX. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the PRCC HabSC will be on 12 February 2025.