



Grant County
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
Excellence in Service and Leadership

Priest Rapids Fish Forum
Meeting

Wednesday, 7 November 2018
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Call-In Number: 1-800-977-8002, Bridge: 7422882

MEETING MINUTES

PRFF REPRESENTATIVES

Steve Lewis, USFWS
 Bob Rose, YN
 Pat Wyena, Wanapum
 Jason McLellan, CCT
 Mike Clement, Grant PUD
 Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

Patrick Verhey, Chad Jackson, WDFW
 Breean Zimmerman, WDOE
 Aaron Jackson, Carl Merkle, CTUIR
 Keith Hatch, BIA
 Chris Mott, Grant PUD
 Erin Harris, Grant PUD

ATTENDEES

Mike Clement, Grant PUD
 Breean Zimmerman, WDOE (Via Phone)
 RD Nelle, USFWS
 Patrick Verhey, WDFW
 Donella Miller, YN (Via Phone)
 Chad Jackson, WDFW (Via Phone)

Chris Mott, Grant PUD
 Erin Harris, Grant PUD
 Ralph Lampman, YN (Via Phone)
 Kirk Truscott, CCT
 RD Nelle, USFWS
 Tracy Hillman, Chair

Action Items:

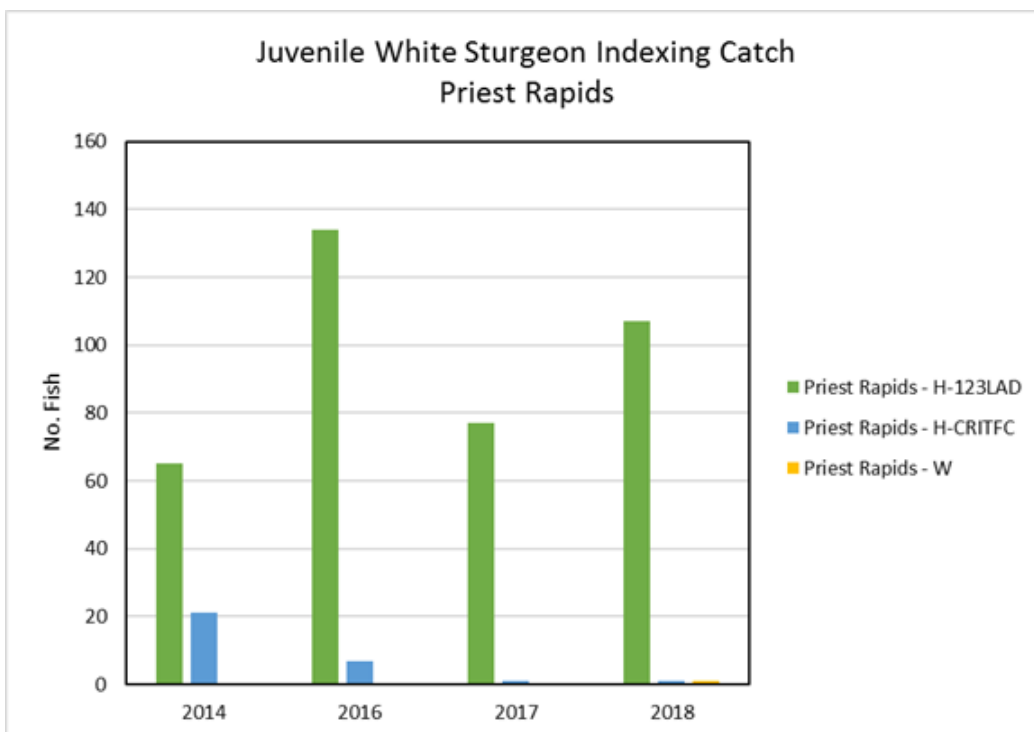
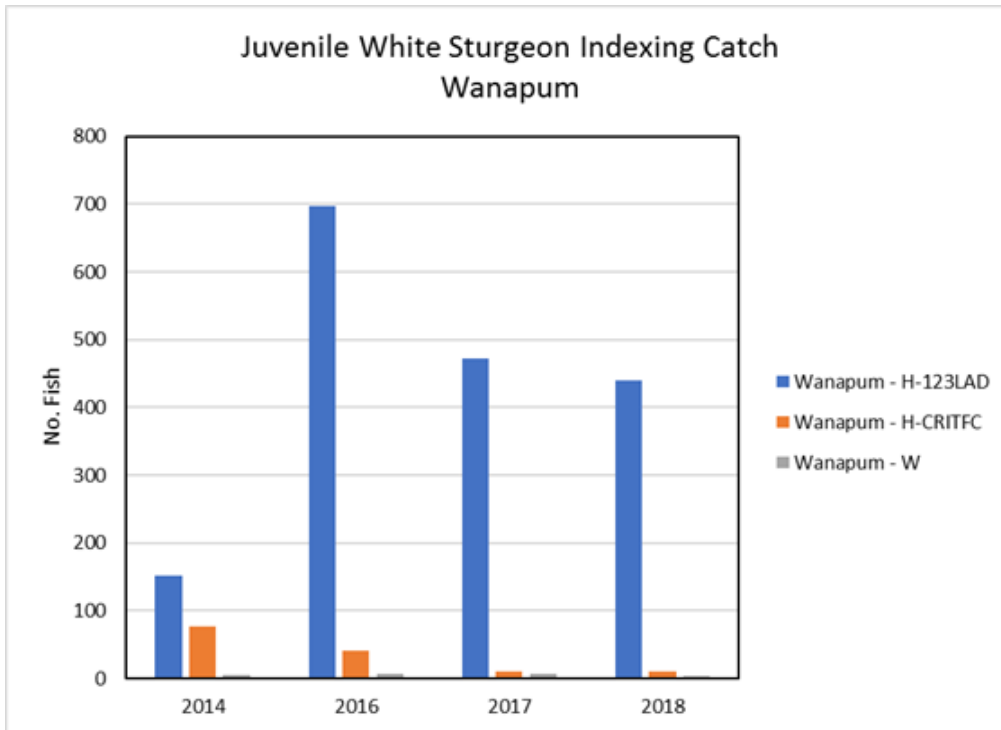
- Steve Lewis will add Wanapum to the invasive species action plan’s participation list. He will also provide updates to the PRFF on the status of the draft action plan.
- Members will identify their respective policy representatives who serve on the PRFF Policy Committee.
- Patrick Verhey will identify where WDFW plans to collect northern pike eDNA samples.

- I. **Safety Briefing** – Mike Clement and Erin Harris provided a safety briefing before the meeting started.
- II. **Welcome and Introductions** – Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone; participants introduced themselves.
- III. **Agenda Review** – Members reviewed and approved the draft agenda with the addition of “Reporting Updates.”
- IV. **Approve September Meeting Notes** – The September 2018 Meeting Minutes were reviewed and approved during the meeting.
 - A. **Action Items from the September Meeting:**
 1. Steve Lewis will add Wanapum to the invasive species action plan’s participation list. He will also provide updates to the PRFF on the status of the draft action plan. **Ongoing.**
 2. Tom Skiles will check with the Yakama Nation on numbers of tagged sturgeon captured in the winter tribal fishery. **Complete.**
 3. Chad Jackson will send the final report on the 2018 sturgeon recreational fishery to Tracy Hillman, who will forward it to the PRFF. **Complete. Chad send the report to Tracy, who sent it to the PRFF (the report was the Excel harvest table).**
 4. Mike Clement will send the final adult lamprey trapping numbers to Tracy Hillman, who will forward them to the PRFF. **Complete.**
 5. Ralph Lampman will send the adult lamprey release plan for the Methow River to Tracy Hillman, who will forward it to the PRFF. **Complete. Ralph sent the plan to Tracy today. Tracy sent the report to the group following the meeting.**

V. **White Sturgeon Management Plan**

- A. **Update on Juvenile Rearing** – Donella Miller reported that the juvenile sturgeon on station at Marion Drain are doing well. Currently, juvenile sturgeon average 15 fish per pound (30 g per fish). Last year at this time fish averaged 20 grams. Fish are a bit larger this year because broodstock were spawned earlier this year compared to last year. They plan to do another culling soon. They currently have about 8,000 fish on station (roughly 2,000 fish per family). Mike Clement thanked Donella and the Yakama Nation for providing fish for Archeology Days.
- B. **Population Assessments** – Chris Mott summarized initial results on both juvenile and adult sampling conducted in the Project Area this year. For juveniles, Chris said they captured fewer fish this year than in past years (see following table and figures). Sampling in 2014 included less effort and that explains why it had the lowest number of captures.

Row Labels	Priest Rapids		Priest Rapids Total	Wanapum			Wanapum Total	Grand Total
	H-123LAD	H-CRITFC W		H-123LAD	H-CRITFC	W		
	2014	65	21	86	151	77	5	233
2016	134	7	141	698	41	7	746	887
2017	77	1	78	473	10	7	490	568
2018	107	1	109	440	11	3	454	563
Grand Total	383	30	414	1762	139	22	1923	2337



Chris added that they are seeing fewer CRITFC fish (see Table above). He also said juvenile sturgeon released during the initial years of the supplementation program are now

growing to a size that is beyond the limits of the juvenile sampling gear. Some of these fish are greater than four-feet long. Thus, these fish are now recruiting to the adult gear. Chris reminded the group that these are early results and Golder will provide more complete information in the draft report.

Chris then shared initial results from the adult index monitoring work that occurred this fall (see Table below). He noted that the early brood year releases are recruiting to the adult sampling gear. He also noted that they have documented low entrainment rates (i.e., released sturgeon tend to stay within the Project Area; entrainment rates <4%).

H-123LAD = Grant PUD/YNSH fish

H-CRITFC = CRITFC fish

W = wild fish

2015

Sum of CountOfPITNumber	Column Labels		Grand Total
	Row Labels	Priest Rapids	
H-123LAD	24	51	75
H-CRITFC	100	297	397
W	3	57	60
Grand Total	127	405	532

2018

Sum of CountOfPITNumber	Column Labels		Grand Total
	Row Labels	Priest Rapids	
H-123LAD	63	145	208
H-CRITFC	4	17	21
W	1	8	9
Grand Total	68	170	238

It was pointed out that compared to 2015, few CRITFC fish were captured in 2018 (note, the numbers in the above tables are total captures not population estimates). This implies the recreational and tribal fisheries have been very successful in removing CRITFC fish, the

initial estimates of CRITFC numbers may have been biased high, several CRITFC fish emigrated out of the Project Area, or a combination of these. Donella noted that the tribal fishery, which is monitored closely, has harvested a total of 254 sturgeon. One would expect the harvest to be much larger if there were thousands of CRITFC fish in the Project Area. Chad Jackson also noted that the recreational fishery has not harvested many sturgeon in the Project Area. Members indicated they want to see the draft monitoring report before drawing too many conclusions about the status of CRITFC sturgeon in the Project Area.

Members voiced some concern with the reduction in wild sturgeon captured in 2018. Although there were few wild fish captured in 2015, significantly fewer were collected in 2018. Members are unsure why this is, but it may be related to high flows or a redistribution of sturgeon within the Project Area. The latter should not be an issue because a GRTS design is used to sample sturgeon. This is a spatially balanced design, which should pick up any redistribution of sturgeon in the Project Area. Members look forward to reviewing the draft monitoring report, which should be available early next year.

- C. **Recreational Sturgeon Fishery Results** – Chad Jackson shared a table showing the number of sturgeon harvested in the recreational fishery in the Project Area (see Table below). Few sturgeon were harvested in 2018; however, several undersized sturgeon were captured and released. The overall catch per unit effort in 2018 was 0.039.

Estimated total fishing effort and catch for the Upper Columbia Sturgeon Fishery April 29 - September 1, 2018.								
Section	Anglers	Angler Hours	Total Sturgeon	Sturgeon			% Harvest of Total Catch	Sturgeon CPUE
				Harvested	Undersized Released	Oversized Released		
537	411	1,409	76	0	76	0	0.00%	0.0539
539 (1)	372	2,080	83	3	41	39	3.61%	0.0399
539 (2)	120	591	0	0	0	0	--	0.0000
Total	903	4,080	159	3	117	39	1.89%	0.0390

537	Priest Rapids Dam to Wanapum Dam
539(1)	Sunland Cove to Rock Island Dam
539(2)	Wanapum Dam to Sunland Cove

Members questioned why there was a low catch rate this year. It was noted that because of higher flows in 2018, it is possible anglers were unable to anchor in locations where sturgeon occurred, or the sturgeon moved to locations where anglers did not fish. It is also possible several sturgeon were harvested and not reported. Depending on the results presented in the draft monitoring report, managers may recommend a different slot limit for next year. Recall that the slot limit was set primarily to target CRITFC fish.

- D. **Tribal Sturgeon Fishery Update** – Chad Jackson shared an email he received from the Yakama Nation regarding a tribal fishery within the Project Area. The email from Roger Dick (YN) states, "The treaty setline fishery in the Bonneville Pool is closing today and the

Yakama Nation is considering opening the sturgeon setline fishery. YN sturgeon fishers are still showing a lot of interest. Regulations would be the same as before and the timeframe would be as early as Monday, November through December 1. YN Fisheries will provide staff for sampling and we'd ask for assistance from WDFW on ticket landings like before. The last tally from previous openings is 154 from Priest Rapids Pool and 100 from Wanapum Pool." Tracy Hillman noted that this is an FYI only. The PRFF has no regulatory authority but needs to be aware of this as it may affect Grant PUD monitoring efforts and results.

Donella Miller said the YN received no feedback on the proposed fishery; therefore, the fishery is occurring under the same regulations as in the past.

- E. **Three-Year Check-in with Policy Committee** – Tracy Hillman reminded the Forum that under the Grant PUD SOA, they need to prepare a three-year check in with the Policy Committee. Tracy noted that after the Forum receives the draft monitoring reports and hears presentations from Golder and Blue Leaf, the Forum can then decide if there is a need to convene the Policy Committee to discuss results, or, as Mike Clement suggested, provide the Policy Committee with a report from the Forum summarizing results and recommendations (without convening the Policy Committee). Grant PUD suggested convening the White Sturgeon Subgroup to review and evaluate the monitoring results. The Subgroup would then make a formal recommendation to the PRFF. The PRFF would then decide if it is necessary to convene the Policy Committee. The Forum agreed to this approach.

Tracy Hillman said he will need an updated list of Policy members. Therefore, he asked each member to provide him with the names of their Policy representatives. Members noted the following:

- Yakama Nation: Paul Ward and Steve Parker
- Colville Tribes: Unknown (Kirk Truscott will check)
- Umatilla: Unknown (Tom Skiles will check)
- Wanapum: Rex Buck, Jr. and Alyssa Buck
- CRITFC: Unknown (Tom Skiles will check)
- BIA: Unknown (Tracy Hillman will check)
- USFWS: TBD (Steve Lewis will check)
- WDFW: Jim Brown
- Grant PUD: Tom Dresser and Jeff Grizzel

- F. **Other White Sturgeon Items** – None.

VI. Pacific Lamprey Management Plan

- A. **Final Adult Lamprey Collection and Transport Results** – Mike Clement said Grant PUD trapped 531 adult lamprey for the Grant PUD program and 320 for the Douglas PUD program. Thus, a total of 851 adult lamprey were trapped, transported, and released into several different locations upstream from Rock Island Dam. Kirk Truscott said the Colville Tribes released adult lamprey into Omak Creek, Salmon Creek, and the Similkameen River.
- B. **Adult Lamprey Translocation and Results** – Ralph Lampman said he has no results from the translocation efforts to share at this time. He will provide an update during the next PRFF meeting. Ralph provided the PIT-tag codes to Tracy Hillman, who shared those with

the PRFF. Ralph said all the fish they (YN) translocated were collected in the lower Columbia River (at The Dalles and Bonneville dams). He said they also released 200 adult lamprey into the Yakima River in 2018.

- C. **Other Pacific Lamprey Items** – Mike Clement reported that their PIT-tag exit readers in Priest Rapids and Wanapum Dam fishways are beginning to fail. During the winter fishway outages, Grant PUD will remove and refurbish the readers. They will then reinstall the readers before the fishways are re-watered. This will take a lot of coordination with their mechanics. Chris Mott indicated the fishways will begin going out of service in late November or early December. Fishway outages are staggered so upstream fish passage is always provided at the projects.

Mike reported that several adult lamprey PIT-tagged in the lower Columbia River were detected at Priest Rapids and Wanapum dams. Based on detections of these fish, they estimated an 85% passage efficiency at Priest Rapids Dam, which is consistent with results from past years. Mike is waiting on passage data from Chelan PUD at Rock Island Dam. Once he has these data, he can estimate passage efficiency at Wanapum Dam.

- VII. **General Reports Update** - Mike Clement said the annual bull trout report will be sent to the PRFF for review later this month. The Pacific lamprey and white sturgeon draft reports are due at the end of January. Grant PUD will provide the draft reports before Golder and Blue Leaf give presentations to the Forum.

- VIII. **Northern Pike Update** – Mike Clement said Grant PUD is in the process of updating their invasive species plan. As part of the update, they are considering doing away with plankton tows and replacing it with eDNA, which will be used to identify the presence of invasive mollusks and northern pike. Members agreed with the inclusion of eDNA to identify the possible presence of northern pike but questioned the cancellation of plankton tows. If eDNA is used to document the presence of invasive mollusks, additional work, such as plankton tows, will be needed to demonstrate if eDNA analyses are providing false positives. Mike said Grant PUD is currently discussing this and may provide a recommendation for PRFF review.

Mike asked where WDFW is planning to conduct eDNA sampling for northern pike. Patrick Verhey said he will check and report back to the PRFF.

- IX. **Next Meeting** – If necessary, the next PRFF meeting will be on 5 December 2018. Tracy Hillman will ask for agenda items about two weeks before the scheduled date for the meeting.