



## FINAL APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

### Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee

Wednesday, March 28, 2018

9:00 am

Wanapum HOB, Room 107

#### **PRCC Meeting Representatives**

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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**

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Scott Carlon, NMFS  
Keely Murdoch, YN  
Chad Jackson, WDFW  
Curt Dotson, GCPUD  
Erin McIntyre, Admin Ass't, GCPUD  
Mark Timko, Blue Leaf Environmental  
Don Lyons, Oregon State University  
Allen Evans, Real Time Research

Jim Craig, USFWS  
Kirk Truscott, CCT  
Tom Skiles, CTUIR (by phone)  
Peter Graf, GCPUD  
Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc, Facilitator  
Kyle Hatch, Blue Leaf Environmental  
Ken Collis, Real Time Research

## Meeting Minutes

#### Decisions Made in March 28, 2018 Meeting:

1. NNI Funding Request – 2018 Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby, Wanapum Reservoir - approved for funding up to \$25,000 from NNI Fund 601.
2. NNI Funding Request – Evaluation of Caspian Tern Management to Reduce Predation on ESA-listed Salmonids in the Columbia Plateau Region - approved for funding up to \$146,700 from NNI Fund 601.

3. PRCC 2018 Spill Representatives - Dotson, Murdoch, and Craig.

- I. Welcome and Introductions – Rohr welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- II. Agenda Review (D. Rohr) – Carlon added a discussion of tagging Summer Chinook in the Entiat River. No other additions.
- III. Meeting Minutes (D. Rohr) – February 28, 2018 - APPROVED.
- IV. Action Items (D. Rohr) – Review from February 28, 2018 Meeting – No action items for review.
- V. (Added) NNI Funding Request - Evaluation of the Northern Pikeminnow Program in the Priest Rapids Project, 2018, Kyle Hatch, Blue Leaf Environmental (C. Dotson) – Blue Leaf Environmental (BLE) gave a power point presentation and they will send a copy to Rohr for distribution to the PRCC. The original Proposal was distributed to the PRCC on March 26<sup>th</sup>. BLE also handed out a one-page summary evaluation of the Proposal at the meeting. The Proposal outlines a program to evaluate the current Priest Rapids Project Pikeminnow removal effort, Pikeminnow collection methods, and relative predator abundance. In summary, BLE is proposing a field study and analysis that is designed to evaluate the GCPUD northern Pikeminnow removal program by estimating exploitation rates, comparing alternative collection methods, and understanding the relative abundance of non-targeted aquatic predators. BLE feels analytical results of this study will bring a significant boost of knowledge to the current removal effort. Recommendations will also be provided by BLE to GCPUD to maximize fishing efficiencies, ensuring project goals can be achieved and maintained. Dotson pointed out a Northern Pikeminnow Program requirement for GCPUD is included in the PRP license. The Program is in place and funded by GCPUD, and FERC license obligations are being met. This would be an NNI-funded Proposal to improve the efficiencies of the ongoing GCPUD Program. The PRCC members discussed the proposal further including questions about the current GCPUD Program, the gaining of efficiencies with the BLE Proposal, responsibilities to fund Northern Pikeminnow removal programs, and the gaining of knowledge that could be shared with others, including perhaps Douglas and Chelan PUDs

PRCC members commented that his proposal was sent out Monday afternoon and the PRCC has had a short time to review. Therefore, they are not prepared to make a decision today. Dotson commented that there may be some timing issues with set up for processing this

spring in order to implement this proposal, and he requested a decision not be delayed until the May PRCC meeting. –Accordingly, after further discussion, PRCC members agreed to Rohr scheduling a WebEx conference in 2 weeks to discuss this proposal and make a decision at that time.

- VI. UPDATE - ISAB UC Spring Chinook Presentation and Report, ISAB 2018-01 (C. Dotson, P. Graf) – Discussion focused on the recently released ISAB Report 2018-01, dated February 9, 2018 as UC Spring Chinook are integral part of the function of the PRCC. Comments were made that supplemental information was recently presented to ISAB members to more clearly describe UC Spring Chinook activities, including clarification of emigration timing from the Wenatchee River into the Columbia River. A copy of ISAB 2018-01 can be located on the NWPC website.
  
- VII. UPDATE - Pinnipeds in the Lower Columbia River (D. Rohr) – Rohr reported on this subject as information to the PRCC regarding lower Columbia River impacts of pinnipeds on Upper Columbia Spring Chinook. The recently released ISAB Report 2018-01, dated February 9, 2018, on page 96, comments on pinnipeds and the negative effect upon UC Spring Chinook. The Congressional House Bill 2083 is proposed to address the pinniped problem in the lower Columbia River, including lethal take under certain circumstances of up to 100 pinnipeds. The Governors of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho have collectively sent a letter to the Northwest Congressional Delegation requesting that something be done about the lower Columbia River pinniped problem. Rohr will continue to monitor this activity and requests the PRCC do the same.
  
- VIII. Avian Predation – Draft 2017 Satellite Report (C. Dotson) – Don Lyons, OSU, Ken Collis, Real Time Research, and Allen Evans, Real Time Research attended the meeting to provide a power point presentation of the 2017 Draft Annual Report – Satellite Telemetry. A copy of the power point presentation will be emailed to Rohr for distribution to PRCC members. The draft report pertains to the 2017 NNI funded proposal of “An Evaluation of Management to Reduce Predation on ESA-Listed Salmonids in the Columbia Plateau Region”.

The power point presentation covered an overview and update of the Corps and BOR funded Inland Avian Predation Management Plan 2014-2018, plus a summary of the 2017 PRCC funded research results. The PRCC 2017 research objectives included **(Task 1)** – Tracking tagged Caspian terns to identify nesting and foraging

locations relative to management activities in 2017, **(Task 2)** – Recovery of PIT tags and analysis of predation/consumption rates on salmonid smolts, with a focus on incipient Caspian tern colony sites, tern roosting or loafing sites, and breeding colonies of other species of piscivorous colonial water birds (i.e. cormorants, gulls, pelicans) within foraging distance of the Wanapum-Priest Rapids Project in 2017, and **(Task 3)** – Multi-year synthesis report of PRCC-funded avian predation study results (progress update) including (3.1) – Caspian tern colony sizes, distribution, and movement prior to and following management activities, (3.2) – cumulative predation rates on steelhead prior to and following Caspian tern management.

**Task 1 Summary / Satellite Tracking Take Home Information:** (1) a majority of terns tagged at Goose Island and Crescent Island (approximately 75%) continue to be present on the Columbia Plateau during the smolt outmigration and tern breeding season, (2) the Blalock Island colony and habitat in Potholes Reservoir continue to attract significant proportions of tagged terns; re-sights of banded birds corroborates these observations of low nest success (Blalock Islands) or the prevention of nesting (Potholes Reservoir) has yet to deter the majority of terns from using these sites, (3) tagged terns were active at colonies at Lenore Lake and Badger Island in greater proportion than previous years, and (4) there was minimal prospecting at alternative sites in eastern Oregon and northern California in 2017.

**ADDITIONALLY,** the Satellite Tracking Take Home Information concluded that (1) tagged and banded individuals represent birds with significant prior investment in the Columbia Plateau, (2) terns are capable of long-distance dispersals, quickly identifying alternative habitat, but not displaying much of this behavior, and (3) improved water conditions during the 2016-2017 winter did not translate into improved breeding conditions in SONEC region, with the exception of Malheur Lake late in the season.

**Task 2 Summary - 2017 PIT Recovery (RI to McNary) Take Home Information:** (1) predation rates were greater on steelhead relative to Chinook, (2) predation by Caspian terns in Potholes Reservoir was eliminated in 2017; impacts by Lenore Lake terns were low (1% on steelhead), (3) predation rates on smolts by the cormorant colony on Lenore Lake were extremely low (<0.1% on steelhead), and (4) of those species and colonies evaluated, predation/consumption by gull colonies were the highest.

**Task 3 Summary – Predation and Survival – Preliminary Take Home Information:** (1) colonial water bird predation is one of the greatest causes of UCR steelhead mortality during outmigration, (2)

management has significantly reduced tern predation upstream of McNary Dam (17% seasonal average prior to management; 4% seasonal average since management), (3) management has significantly increase tern predation downstream of McNary Dam (Blalock terns now consume an appreciable proportion of UCR steelhead (4 – 10% DOY), (4) preliminary analyses indicate tern predation was largely an additive source of steelhead mortality between Rock Island and McNary dams (analysis at larger spatial scales and survival to adulthood on-going, estimates of survival in the absence of tern predation on-going), and (4) Gull consumption rates were substantial (consumption rates exceed those of tern predation in some river reaches and years, highest estimates are from gulls nesting on Miller Rocks Island (5-18% DOY), and uncertainty regarding consumption of dead, moribund, or compromised smolts).

In conclusion, Lyons informed the PRCC that their website contains reports, data, photos, and in-season updates of avian information. Lyons will contact Rohr with the website details to be shared with PRCC members. PRCC asked how many satellite tags are remaining from the original that were first put into service. Lyons remarked that 13 satellite tags continue to be active, and he expects the majority to make it through the breeding season, based on past tag failure rates. PRCC also questioned gulls versus terns, and Lyons commented that terns were the target species in terms of management. If gulls chose to leave the area, that would be good. PRCC commented that gulls seem to be a bigger problem than terns and questioned why more emphasis is not placed on them. Lyons commented that on a per bird basis, the impacts are much higher from terns. However, gulls are a larger management unit than terns, and a broader view is needed on both.

- IX.** DECISION ITEM - NNI Funding Request – 2018 Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby – Wanapum Reservoir (C. Dotson) - A project specification sheet titled “Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby 2018, dated March 19, 2018 was submitted by the Quincy Valley Chamber of Commerce – Quincy Valley Tourism Association to the PRCC with a funding request of up to \$25,000. It was noted the PRCC has provided NNI funding for this fishing derby for the past several years. After committee discussion, the proposal was approved with NOAA representative abstaining from the vote. Additional discussion of the PRCC members continued regarding the question of reviewing if the \$25,000 would be more effective to be used in the GCPUD Northern Pikeminnow removal program.

- X.** DECISION ITEM - NNI Funding Request – Evaluation of Caspian Tern Management to Reduce Predation on ESA-listed Salmonids in the Columbia Plateau Region, Allen Evans, RTR - (C. Dotson) – A 2018 Study Proposal, titled “Evaluation of Caspian Tern Management to Reduce Predation on ESA-Listed Salmonids in the Columbia Plateau Region, was submitted for NNI funding by Dan Roby, USGS and OSU, and Ken Collis, Real Time Research. Allen Evans of Real Time Research provided a power point presentation to outline the details of the proposal. The funding request included was for up to \$146,700. The proposal included 3 tasks to (1) track previously satellite-tagged Caspian terns to monitor dispersal patterns from Goose and Crescent island and to identify nesting and foraging locations, (2) estimate colony sizes and predation rates by piscivorous water bird from unmanaged colonies in the Columbia Plateau region, and (3) update, maintain, and administer project websites and databases to disseminate in-season data/information and track project accomplishments. After PRCC members’ questions and additional discussion, the PRCC voted to approve the proposal for up to \$146,700 from NNI funds.
- XI.** DECISION ITEM - PRCC 2018 Spill Representatives (C. Dotson) – Dotson, Murdoch, and Craig will be the spill representatives for 2018.
- XII.** (Addition to agenda) Discussion of Tagging Summer Chinook in the Entiat River (S. Carlon) – Carlon had been approached to ask the PRCC if they would consider tagging and monitoring such in the Entiat River. Carlon gave some background to the question and PRCC discussed. PRCC concluded that more information would be needed prior to further consideration. Carlon will report back.
- XIII.** (Addition to agenda) US v Oregon Decision (T. Skiles) – Skiles discussed a recent court decision wherein US v Oregon was dismissed. Skiles reviewed some of the background of the ongoing case, and there was some PRCC discussion. Skiles has forwarded some of the legal files to Rohr who will distribute to the PRCC members for their review.
- XIV.** Potpourri – (D. Rohr)
- A April 4, 2018 Comment Deadline: Final Draft Calendar Year 2017 Activities Under Priest Rapids Hydroelectric Project. Rohr reminded PRCC members of this deadline.

## **XV. GENERAL UPDATES**

- A Avian Predation Activities (C. Dotson) – Nothing additional to report.
- B Estimating the Survival of Juvenile Spring Chinook in Lake Wenatchee (D. Rohr) Ongoing review.
- C Review of Outstanding NNI Funded Projects –
  1. Continued Support for Upper Columbia Fish Screen Monitoring Program (C. Jackson) – Danny Didricksen will be at the April meeting. Jackson met with Danny and Jenny Novak on the presentation format. It's the start of the work window for them, so not a lot of progress has been made to date, but the presentation will follow the proposal. Jackson will have Danny send the PowerPoint to Rohr.
  2. Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II (C. Jackson, D. Rohr) - Trout Unlimited, project sponsor, will brief the Habitat Subcommittee at their next meeting on status. Rohr will keep the PRCC advised of the discussion.
  3. Methow Valley Irrigation District (MVID) Instream Flow Improvement Project (T. Dresser, K. Truscott) – Rohr commented that the project is very near completion.
  4. Predator Fish Recruitment Reduction (K. Murdoch) – Murdoch contacted Geoff McMichael. He reported wide support for the project, but BPA apparently doesn't have money to fund the proposal. The proposal would be in three phases, with the first as early as 2019 with a cost share for the first phase maybe with the McNary Fund. Geoff McMichael would be willing to come talk to PRCC again if desired. Murdoch will get back to McMichael and coordinate with Rohr.
  5. Northern Pike Removal in Lake Roosevelt (K. Truscott) - Truscott stated he has little to update. For 2017 all told, 4,771 pike removed through gill-netting efforts. 1,095 heads were submitted to reward program which capped at \$600/angler (which had something to do with the IRS). The plan is to double the gill-netting efforts in 2018. A full proposal has been submitted to BPA for funding. Currently going through ISRP. A decision is expected in middle of April. Program funding is \$204,000. Likely going to see CCT coming back to the table with an NNI funding request. Dotson asked if BOR "owns" Lake Roosevelt and if so, is BOR helping with funding for the removal of this invasive predator in their reservoir. Truscott responded with a "yes" on BOR ownership and a "no" for any funding coming from BOR. Wyena sent Rohr two emails for distribution to PRCC members, one being a presentation at a forum on April 24, 25 in Spokane regarding Lake Roosevelt and Northern Pike, and the other was an award notification that Rohr will send to committee members. The 2017 report will be out soon.
  6. Satellite Telemetry of Caspian Terns (C. Dotson) – Covered above in agenda item VII.

- XVI.** May meeting – Rohr commented that the May meeting of each year is a time that the committee usually does some touring of dam facilities. He requested the members let him know if they are interested in anything particular to tour.
- XVII.** Committee Reports (D. Rohr) – Distributed electronically by Rohr to PRCC members.
- XVIII.** Qtrly NNI and Habitat Funds Report (D. Rohr) – End of year deposits were made on Feb 15, 2018. McIntyre to check on end of 1<sup>st</sup> quarter report status before April 25<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- XIX.** Next Meeting – Wednesday, April 25, 9:00 am, Wanapum Dam HOB, Room 107 (D. Rohr)

#### Action Items of March 28, 2018 Meeting

1. NNI Funding Request - Evaluation of the Northern Pikeminnow Program in the Priest Rapids Project, 2018, Kyle Hatch, Blue Leaf Environmental – Rohr will schedule a WebEx in the next couple of weeks and the PRCC will address this proposal and make a final decision.
2. Discussion of Tagging Summer Chinook in the Entiat River (S. Carlon) – Carlon will follow up and report back.
3. Rohr will distribute US v Oregon information received from Skiles to PRCC members.
4. Rohr will distribute Northern Pike information received from Wyena to PRCC members.
5. PRCC members will let Rohr know if there is anything of interest to potentially tour on the day of the May 23<sup>rd</sup> PRCC meeting.
6. McIntyre will check on status of Q1 NNI and Habitat Funds Report prior to April 25<sup>th</sup> meeting.