



Grant County **PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT**

Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee

Wednesday, March 26, 2014
Grant PUD SeaTac Office

PRCC Members

Scott Carlon/Bryan Nordlund, NMFS
Bob Rose, YN
Jeff Korth, C. Andonaegui, P. Verhey, WDFW
Tom Dresser/Curt Dotson, GCPUD

Jim Craig, USFWS
Kirk Truscott, CCT
Carl Merkle, CTUIR
Denny Rohr, Facilitator

Attendees

Scott Carlon/Bryan Nordlund, NMFS
Steve Parker, YN (Via phone)
Jeff Korth, WDFW
Jeremy Cram, WDFW (Via phone)
Debbie Williams, GCPUD (Via phone)

Jim Craig, USFWS
Kirk Truscott, CCT (Via phone)
Tom Skiles, CRITFC
Tom Dresser/Curt Dotson, GCPUD
Denny Rohr, Facilitator

Decision Summary:

1. PRCC members affirmed their March 14th approval of modifications made to the 2014 Survival Study Plan that was approved in November, 2013.
2. The PRCC approved funding 50% of \$456,241 for the Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II, from the NNI Fund.

Distributed Items:

1. Wanapum Dam Spillway Monolith 4, Interim Fish Passage Operation Plan & Reservoir Surveys
2. Biological Performance Assessment for Support of Turbine Designs Associated with the Priest Rapids Dam Turbine Upgrade Project
3. Priest Rapids Project NNI/Habitat Fund Request Support to Continue a Fish Screen Monitoring Program including Inspection and Maintenance, Construct new screening projects, and conduct a screen inventory
4. Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II
5. PRCC Habitat Fund spreadsheet
6. FCWG and PRFF Briefing Reports
7. Emergency Action – Modification of Adult Fish Ladders at Wanapum Dam and Contingency Trapping and Transport of Adult Salmon, Steelhead and Migratory Bull Trout from Priest Rapids Off-Ladder Adult Fish Trap

8. Flume Plan Sect-Full Capture Rev 0, Flume Plan Set-Concept Sketch, Rev 0, OLAF-
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Action Items:

1. Dresser will provide a Grant PUD cultural resources contact to Tom Skiles, CRITFC.
2. Dresser will find out if the boat launch below Wanapum Dam will remain closed during fishing season.
3. Dotson will duplicate the graph he was working off and distribute to PRCC members (See Item 7, Bullet 3).
4. Dotson will send the Priest Rapids White Paper to Rohr for distribution. Friday, April 11 @ 1:30 p.m., PRCC members will hold a conference call to discuss this matter further.
5. PRCC members will review the Upper Columbia Fish Screen Monitoring Program proposal and discuss on the April 11th conference call.

Final Meeting Minutes

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Meeting Minutes Approval – January 29, 2014 -Approved, February 26, 2014 – Approval will be asked for by email.
- III. Agenda Review – No additions were made to the agenda.
- IV. Action Items Review – February 26, 2014 Meeting
 1. Send Korth an email if you would like to participate in the New Zealand Mudsail meeting. **Complete** – Korth said the meeting went very well and to contact him if you would like more information.
 2. Dotson will send Priest Rapids Bypass pictures to PRCC members. **Complete**
 3. Rose will check with Phil Rigdon, Yakama Nation, about attending the Priest Rapids Bypass celebration. **Complete**
- V. **AFFIRMATION: Modification of 2014 Survival Study** – PRCC members affirmed their approval of modifications made to the 2014 Survival Study Plan that was approved in November 2013. Grant PUD agreed to look at juvenile PIT-tag data from out-migrating smolts, as well as from fish tagged for the avian study.

Dotson provided a brief summary of the survival study that will start towards the end of April. Blue Leaf Environmental will be the primary contractor. Tags have been ordered, receivers were installed at Priest Rapids (PR) last week, Teknalogic receivers will be installed by the first of April, and fish town is being put back together.

The study will consist of two releases, one in the Wanapum tailrace, and the other in the Priest Rapids tailrace. 1200 steelhead and 1200 Chinook, double tagged with PIT and JSAST tags, will be released into the Wanapum tailrace (this includes the 650 fish that would have been released into the Rock Island tailrace), and 500 steelhead and 500 Chinook into the PR tailrace. Additionally, PIT-tagged fish (5000 steelhead and 5000 yearling Chinook) being

released for the OSU avian study, as well as other fish tagged and released upriver of the Priest Rapids Project (PRP). Studies conducted this year at Wanapum Dam, will not be considered as one of the 3-years of studies required for Wanapum meeting steelhead performance standards.

- VI. **Review of Weekly Briefings for Wanapum Dam Activities** – Rohr noted that this conference call is for briefings only, and that PRCC activities will not be discussed during the call.
- VII. **Wanapum Dam Spillway Pier No.4 – Status Update** – Dresser presented a PowerPoint presentation “Wanapum Dam Spillway Monolith 4, Interim Fish Passage Operation Plan & Reservoir Surveys.” An independent Board of Consultants will be the governing board for all decisions related to the repair. An independent Forensic Investigation Team has also been formed to identify the root cause of the fracture.

A drill team is currently drilling 4” investigative holes at varying depths into the Wanapum Dam Spillway Pier Monolith No. 4 as part of the examination of the fracture found at 485’. Water levels were lowered to 541’-545’ in an effort to stabilize the monolith. The monolith has settled into a safe position with the crack essentially closed. A larger platform will be constructed on the monolith to support workers and their equipment. Drilling is expected to take about three to four weeks. The drilling will help determine the geometry of the fracture and how far it reaches into the monolith. Grant PUD hopes to reach a 562’ forebay level by May. All piers will be investigated for structural integrity.

Temporary Mitigation- Subgroups have been developed for each of the five categories: Cultural Resources, FERC Communications, Fish Passage, Shoreline Closures, and Irrigators. **Dresser will provide a Grant PUD cultural resources contact to Tom Skiles, CRITFC.**

Modifications to the Wanapum Left Bank Fish Ladder are being made. Electric pumps are currently being installed in the fish ladder in order to pump 40 kcfs into the weir box that will be located at the opening to the forebay. A flume will be attached to the weir box in order to minimize the drop to the forebay. Modifications will also be made to accommodate lamprey passage. Engineers are confident that ladder modifications will be in place by April 15th, which is the start of the spring Chinook salmon run. Dresser received a call from FERC regarding the interim fish plan yesterday; he expects to see something from FERC next week. Downstream fish-passage features can operate under the low-reservoir conditions.

The Off Ladder Adult Fish Trap (OLAFT) will be used to trap and haul fish around Wanapum Dam. A flume system will be utilized for a water to water fish transfer to the truck. Engineers hope to have the ability to sort fish at the OLAFT by April 15th. Fish densities are based on a 14 pound fish. Nordlund suggested the truck be moved parallel to the OLAFT so fish are not damaged during the transfer. Plans call for six trucks to be used for trap and haul; WDFW offered two more if needed. PRCC members agreed that trap and haul be utilized while determining if spring Chinook are utilizing the ladder. In order to determine if the ladder is successful, proof of concept needs to be discussed and determined. The question of how much proof is needed in order to determine that the ladder is working and trap and haul isn't necessary? Fish would be off-loaded at either Rocky Ford Coulee or the Kirby Billingsley Hydro Park above Rock Island Dam. Korth said a backup plan is needed in case trap and haul has to be conducted exclusively.

Temporary PIT arrays are being installed at Wanapum. In an effort to gather passage information quickly, Grant PUD would like to PIT-tag 2000 fish at Bonneville Dam in order to

get passage information proving that ladder modifications are working. Historic data points will be used for passage comparison purposes.

Hydro Operations will have 9 units available to run turbines between 8-15 kcfs by April 12th. Wanapum Dam fish mode upper limit is 15.7 kcfs. Modeling shows that as the net head on the turbine is decreased, the range for fish survival expands. Six spillways are expected to be available at Wanapum by April 1st. Turbine and spillway passage combined will pass between 340-360 kcfs (280 kcfs spillway passage) of river flow.

Grant PUD will continue to prioritize work as well as continue to meet the requirements contained within the FERC License, NOAA & USFW Biological Opinions, 401 Certification, Hanford Reach Fall Chinook Protection Plan and Priest Rapids Salmon and Steelhead Settlement Agreement, without interruption.

Sampling of stranded Benthic Fauna and other organisms started last Tuesday by Blue Leaf Environmental. WDFW and the Pacific Freshwater Society also participated in sampling efforts. The Wanapum Reservoir was divided into 40 transects for sampling. SCUBA sampling has also been conducted in wet areas.

Water Quality is being monitored at 12 temporary locations, as well as at Fixed Monitoring sites.

Questions:

- Which PRP boat launches will be open during fishing season? Desert Air and Huntzinger in the Priest Rapids Pool are open. **Dresser will find out if the boat launch below Wanapum Dam will remain closed during fishing season.**
- When will the analysis showing the best estimate of survival by passage route at Wanapum Dam, be complete? PIT-tag analysis from the OSU/RTR study will occur in August when tags can be detected in nesting areas.
- Under normal turbine operations, project survival rates for Chinook and sockeye are in the 95% range. Where do you expect it to be under projected forebay elevations? Dotson said it should be close. Efficiently curves overlaid with survival estimates showed that as net head decreases, survival ranges expanded out. If you take that same trend with this lower head, Dotson expects turbine survival will be as good as, or better than normal operations. **Dotson will duplicate the graph he was working off of and distribute.**

VIII. **Interim Fish Passage Operation Plan – Status Update** – See item above

IX. **Priest Rapids Turbine – White Paper** – Grant PUD proposes the use of the BioPA Scores to be used to evaluate the new turbine designs as they relate to fish passage performance, in lieu of a balloon-tag study, and acceptance by the PRCC as the initial biological performance testing of the new turbine design selected for the Priest Raids Turbine Upgrade Project. **Dotson will send the white paper to Rohr for distribution. On Friday, April 11 @ 1:30 p.m., PRCC members will hold a conference call to discuss this matter further.**

X. **Review of DRAFT Proposal for the “Upper Columbia Fish Screen Monitoring Program”** – WDFW requested \$681,562.21 from the No Net Impact Fund (NNI) to continue the program the PRCC approved a couple of years ago. Funds would cover inspection, maintenance, which includes upgrading existing facilities, construction, which includes completing new screening projects, and screen inventory and project prioritization. This proposal doesn’t cover any work covered in the extension approved by the PRCC last month. **PRCC members will review the**

proposal and discuss on the April 11th conference call. PRCC members are concerned that this program is becoming an entitlement program with no responsibility to the owner/operator. **Korth will find out what the protocols are of discussions with owner/operators.**

- XI. **NNI Funding Request from Habitat SC – Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II** – Jeremy Cram, WDFW, Habitat Subcommittee meeting representative joined today's meeting to request \$456,241 from NNI. Phase I was changing Pioneer Water Users Association from a gravity fed earthen channel system to a pressurized system. 38 cfs of water was protected Instream in the lower Wenatchee River. Phase II will remove the Jones-Shotwell Ditch Company's earthen system and replace it with a pressurized system, at a minimum this project will protect 4 cfs continuously instream. The 4 cfs will be put into trust in order to convey water. The new on demand pressurized pump system will provide instream flow benefit throughout the irrigation season, compounding the 4 cfs baseline by anywhere from 0-12 cfs of additional instream benefit, depending on demand. The Irrigation District will cover O&M cost.

The HSC felt this project qualified for NNI because the additional water volume to the system has benefits to survival, capacity, quality and growth that affect the number of fish that can be supported in the Wenatchee. The PRCC discussed whether this will indeed provide benefit to the mainstem Columbia, or if this project is just a habitat project. Cumulative effects of these small water projects will eventually benefit the mainstem Columbia. PRCC members agree that this is a good project but question how to fund it. Nordlund proposed that the PRCC provide a specified amount of NNI dollars that the PRCC HSC can use to fund whichever projects they feel fit NNI. **The PRCC approved funding 50% of \$456,241 from the NNI Fund.**

Cram was told by Trout Unlimited, that Cascadia Conservation District is interested in funding this project, and that they are awaiting word on the funding. Cram will get an update.

XII. Updates

- A. Inland Avian Predation Work Group (IAPWG) Activities – Proceeding. Goose island dissuasion has been set up. Last week a lot of gulls were observed, but no nesting. Only 12 terns were observed at Goose Island. Additional ropes are being added to the dissuasion grid. It was questioned if terns will move to islands in the Wanapum Reservoir that have no vegetation on them. Grant PUD staff is being told to take note of areas of birds when they are on the river. ACOE and BOR visited the Edwards Wildlife Refuge in San Francisco two weeks ago. The location could possibly be the "new home" for the Goose Island terns.
- B. Priest Rapids Bypass – April Ceremony – The ceremony has been postponed to a later date. Construction is complete. Operation testing will be conducted on April 1st @ 10:00 a.m.
- C. Priest Rapids Turbine Installation – No update
- D. Hatchery Construction Activities -
- a. Carlton Acclimation Facility – Summer Chinook are on station.
 - b. Nason Creek Acclimation Facility – The facility is expected to up and running by June. Fish are due in October.
 - c. PR Hatchery Modifications – Grant PUD is working with WDFW regarding operations, additional staffing, and modifications to the finger weir at the volunteer trap.

- E. Hatchery Permits (Section 10 for Summer Chinook and Section 7 Consultation for Bull Trout. – Ongoing – potential revisit of spring Chinook permit, which doesn't affect Grant PUD.
- F. NNI Funded Projects
 - a. Upper Columbia Fish Screen Monitoring Program Phase I - Ongoing
 - b. "Mid-Columbia River Intake Screen and Diversion Assessment" – Ongoing – contract is in place. A lot of intake structures are being extended and screened because of water levels in the Wanapum Reservoir.
- G. Committee Reports – Distributed electronically by Rohr.
- H. NNI and Habitat Funds Report – Waiting for an update from Grant PUD Accounting.
- I. Other
- XIII. Review of Next Month's Agenda Topics – None
- XIV. Next Meeting – April 22, 2014, 1:30 p.m., conference call/WebEx; June meeting will be held in the PRP area.