



Grant County
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
Excellence in Service and Leadership

Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee

Wednesday, March 25, 2015

9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Radisson Hotel, SeaTac, WA

PRCC Representatives

Scott Carlon, Justin Yeager (Alt), NMFS

Bob Rose, YN

Jeff Korth, C. Andonaegui (Alt), P. Verhey (Alt), WDFW

Curt Dotson, Tom Dresser (Alt), GCPUD

Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc., Facilitator

Jim Craig, USFWS

Kirk Truscott, CCT

Tom Skiles, CTUIR

Debbie Williams, GCPUD, Administrative Assistant

Attendees

Scott Carlon, NMFS

Tom Skiles, CTUIR

Bob Rose, (Via phone)

Curt Dotson, GCPUD

Debbie Williams, GCPUD (Via phone)

Jeff Korth, WDFW (Via phone)

Jim Craig, USFWS

Kirk Truscott, CCT (Via phone)

Tom Dresser, GCPUD

Denny Rohr, Facilitator

Distributed Items:

1. March 25, 2015 Agenda
2. Calendar Year 2014, Activities Under Priest Rapids Hydroelectric Project License (FERC No. 2114)
3. PRCC Fish Mode BR pdf: Evaluation of "Fish Mode" in 2015
4. PRCC Fish Mode 3 pdf: Priest Rapids Dam Turbine Operations Fish Mode
5. PRCC Fish Mode 4 pdf: Review of Turbine Operations
6. PRCC Fish Mode 5 pdf: Fish Passage Advancements at the Priest Rapids Project
7. PRCC Fish Mode Discussion PowerPoint Presentation
8. WFB Flow 20 vs 15 kcfs: Hydraulic Model Studies for Fish Diversion at Wanapum/Priest Rapids Development Part XXII: Model Studies of a Future Unit Fish Bypass for Wanapum Dam
9. Wanapum Refill Status/Wanapum Pool Filling to Start Today, Monday, March 16, 2015
10. PRFF & FCWG Briefing Report, March 2015
11. Crescent Bar Agreement Press Release, March 24, 2015
12. SOA 2015-01 PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee Goat Wall Acclimation Plan

Decision Summary:

1. NNI Funding – “Barkley Irrigation Company Permanent Point of Diversion Change and Pressurization-CONSTRUCTION” was affirmed by Rose.
2. PRCC members approved the Fish Mode evaluation at the Priest Rapids Dam powerhouse during the 2015 survival study.
3. PRCC members approved Wanapum Fish Bypass Flow Requirements evaluation during the 2015 survival study.
4. PRCC members approved SOA 2015-01, subject to Korth’s approval.

Action Items:

1. Rohr will determine if PRCC protocols require SOA’s approved by the Hatchery Subcommittee need to be approved by the PRCC.
2. Rohr will distribute a copy of the federal congressional proposal for House Resolution 564: Endangered Salmon and Fisheries Predation Prevention Act.

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Meeting Minutes

A. **Affirmation (Bob Rose) of Approval for December 16, 2015; January 28, 2015** – Affirmed by Rose.

B. **Approval February 25, 2015** – Minutes were not distributed prior to today’s meeting. They will be approved next month.

III. **Agenda Review** (D. Rohr) – No additions were made to the agenda.

IV. **Action Items Review for February 25, 2015 Meeting** (D. Rohr) – All action items were reviewed.

V. **Update of Wanapum Dam Activities** (T. Dresser) – Refilling of the Wanapum Reservoir started on March 16th at 3 feet per day. Full pool of 571.1 was reached on March 21, 2015. Construction activities are ongoing on the downstream side of the dam and should be complete by the end of April. On March 19th, FERC approved Grant PUD’s January 30, 2015 request to discontinue the Interim Fish Operations Plan. Grant PUD will develop a draft Biological Assessment and distribute to NOAA & USFWS by May 1, 2015, with a 30 day comment. It will then be sent to FERC by June 12, 2015.

VI. **Affirmation of Approval (Bob Rose) – NNI Funding – “Barkley Irrigation Company Permanent Point of Diversion Change and Pressurization- CONSTRUCTION”** (D. Rohr) – Affirmed by Rose.

VII. **ACTION ITEM: Re-evaluation of Out-migration Turbine Operations** (C. Dotson) – Dotson presented a PowerPoint discussing the operation of “fish-mode” at Priest Rapids Dam (PRD). The presentation discussed PRD turbine operations (5 years of historical data) on either side of the out-migration season, as it relates to not having the fish-mode control program in operation. Dotson presented a proposed study plan of how to incorporate evaluation of “fish-mode” at the PRD

powerhouse and also reduced flow thru the Wanapum Fish Bypass (WFB) within the present 2015 steelhead/sockeye survival study. Grant PUD would like to evaluate the impact of operating the turbine units at the PRD in Fish Mode during the 2015 steelhead/sockeye survival study in such a manner as to also evaluate Fish Mode's contribution to the total Priest Rapids Project smolt passage survival. The first proposal (2/25/2015 PRCC meeting) also included Wanapum Dam in the evaluation, but it is now being withdrawn due to concerns of having too many variables within one study. This evaluation can be accomplished by alternating powerhouse operations in three (3) day blocks of Fish Mode "on" and then three (3) day blocks of Fish Mode "off", for the duration of the 5 week study. Scott Carlon stated that he was concerned that fish mode "off" operation could negatively affect FGE of the Priest bypass, possibly lowering Project survival. Scott also said that he had reservations about interpretation of the study results and what this test means for future operations. The first fish release of the 2015 survival study will be May 4th and the study will end by June 13th.

Considerable discussion ensued regarding the Fish Mode "off" and Fish Mode "on" proposal, particularly concerning the likelihood that the proposal, if implemented would yield useful data/analysis to evaluate Fish Mode's contribution to the total Priest Rapids Project smolt passage survival. Truscott was skeptical that the proposal would provide such an assessment. Truscott indicated that based on the turbine operation (powerhouse discharge) data provided by Dotson, for the 5-year dataset immediately prior to and after the juvenile emigration season, it was unlikely that the proposed Fish Mode "off" and Fish Mode "on" operation will result in powerhouse operations during the Fish Mode "off" blocks of operation identified in the proposal where the turbine discharges will actually be outside of the Fish Mode "on" criteria. Based on this assessment, Truscott contended that the proposal was unlikely to yield data and analysis to actually compare survival differences between the powerhouse operating within Fish Mode "on" criteria and Fish Mode "off" criteria (i.e. turbine discharges outside of Fish Mode "on" criteria). Truscott continued to express concerns regarding the value of the proposal; however it was acknowledged that generation needs in the spring of 2015 are uncertain and it is not assured that the PRD turbine operations will not operate outside of the Fish Mode "on" criteria during the prescribed Fish Mode "off" operations identified in the proposal. For this reason, Truscott agreed with the balance of the PRCC to implement the Fish Mode "off" and Fish Mode "on" proposal during 2015, although with reservations. **PRCC members approved the Fish Mode evaluation at the Priest Rapids Dam powerhouse during the 2015 survival study.**

VIII. ACTION ITEM: Wanapum Fish Bypass Flow Requirements (C. Dotson) – To determine changes in Fish Passage Efficiencies (FPE), Grant PUD would like to collect fish data at different flow levels (20 kcfs and 15 kcfs) in order to determine the percentage of fish using the Wanapum Fish Bypass, based on flow through the WFB. Dotson noted that based on flow lines alone, fish passage could be the same between 15 kcfs vs. 20 kcfs, and he doesn't expect a big change in FPE. Dotson explained that the Wanapum Fish Bypass Design Team (IIHR and Duncan Hay) determined that the transition period for stabilization of flow lines between on and off is 1 to 2 hours and that tagged fish within the area of the WFB during the time of flow transition would not be used. He explained that in a low water year, Grant PUD could use this information to determine if it's feasible to pass less water through the bypass and still get the same FPE. **PRCC members approved this proposal.**

IX. Potpourri

A. SOA 2015-01 – Goat Wall Acclimation Plan - Rohr explained that this SOA was approved by the PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee on March 11, 2015, and asked if PRCC members want to

approve it. Members were split on SOA's having to be approved by the PRCC as some didn't care, and others thought it should be on a case by case basis. **Rohr will determine if PRCC protocols require PRCC approval of SOA's approved by the Hatchery Subcommittee. PRCC members approved SOA 2015-01, subject to Korth's approval.** (Note: at 11:30, Korth had to drop off the call due to other meeting commitments).

- B. Rohr will distribute a copy of the federal congressional proposal for House Resolution 564: Endangered Salmon and Fisheries Predation Prevention Act**, introduced on January 27, 2015. The resolution aims to amend the marine mammal act, including lethal take of 10 sea lions in the Columbia River, by agencies such as WDFW, ODFW, IDFW, CRITFC, Nez Perce, Yakama Nation, Warm Springs, and Umatilla.

X. Updates

- A. Inland Avian Predation Activities** (C. Dotson) – Dotson reported that dissuasion materials were installed two weeks ago on Goose Island, Crescent Island and Northwest Rocks. Starting the second week of April, an additional 58 Caspian terns will be tagged with satellite tags. On April 9th, PIT tagging of approximately 5500 Chinook and 8000 steelhead smolts will start at Rock Island as part of the avian predation study. The Inland Avian Predation Work Group will meet in mid-April. Alternative dissuasion activities have been selected for cormorants on East Sand Island, the plan can be found on the Corps website. Work on tern colony habitat at the Don Edwards Wildlife Refuge is complete.
- B. Hatchery Activities** (T. Dresser)
 - 1. **Carlton Acclimation Facility** – No update provided.
 - 2. **Nason Creek Acclimation Facility** – No update provided.
 - 3. **Priest Rapids Hatchery Modifications** – No update provided.
 - 4. **Penticton Hatchery** – No update provided.
- C. Hatchery Permits** (Section 10 for Summer Chinook and Section 7 Consultation for Bull Trout) (T. Dresser) – No update provided.
- D. 2014 / 15 P&I Reports – 30 Day Comment Period** (C. Dotson) – Comments closed on March 30, 2015.
- E. PRCC / Habitat SC Joint Meeting** (D. Rohr) – Rohr reported that the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee (HSC) felt that there is no need to meet at this time. Dresser told PRCC members that because Grant PUD is meeting survival standards, the estimated NNI payment in 2017 will be \$575,000, not adjusted for CPI.
- F. NNI Funded Projects**
 - 1. **2014 Real Time Research Avian Study** (C. Dotson)

Including **“Comprehensive Assessment of Total Smolt Mortality in Relation to Avian Predation on the mid and Lower Columbia River: Spatial and Temporal Analysis of Reservoir-Specific Smolt Losses”** – Dotson reported that he did not receive any comments from PRCC members and the final report should be distributed in May.
 - 2. **2015 Real Time Research / Oregon State University – “Evaluation of Foraging Behavior, Dispersal, and Predation on ESA-listed Salmonids from the Upper Columbia River by Caspian Terns Displaced from Managed Colonies in the Columbia Plateau Region”** (C. Dotson)

3. **Supplementary Tags and Tagging for Assessment of Predation Losses of Subyearling Chinook Salmon in the lower Hanford Reach and Upper McNary Reservoir (C. Dotson)**
See Item X(A) Inland Avian Predation Activities above. No final report has been received yet.
 4. **Upper Columbia Fish Screen Monitoring Program Phase I Contract Extension (J. Korth)** - No update provided.
 5. **Upper Columbia Fish Screen Monitoring Program Phase II – (J. Korth)** - No update provided.
 6. **Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II – (J. Korth)** - No update provided.
 7. **Mid-Columbia River Intake Screen and Diversion Assessment (T. Dresser)** - No update provided.
 - a. **Danny Didricksen, WDFW, Presentation/Update** - No update provided.
 8. **Methow Valley Irrigation District (MVID) Instream Flow Improvement Project (T. Dresser)** – No update provided.
- G. Committee Reports (D. Rohr)** – Distributed by Rohr via email.
- H. NNI and Habitat Funds Report (D. Rohr)** – Current balances are as follows: No Net Impact (NNI) Fund 601 - \$3,777,656.90. Habitat Supplemental Fund 602 - \$4,136,070.50. Habitat Fund 603 - \$1,200,374.40.
- XI. Next Meeting** – April 22, 2015; 9:00 am; SeaTac Radisson Hotel