

**Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee
Statement of Agreement on
Priest Rapids Hatchery Rebuild**

Submitted to Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee: May 26, 2010
Approved by Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee: June 23, 2010

Statement

The Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee of the Priest Rapids Project Salmon and Steelhead Settlement Agreement (Parties) agree to the planned rebuild of Priest Rapids Hatchery under Grant PUD's schedule with an expected start date of June, 2012 (anticipated completion by July, 2014).

The Parties have differing perspectives regarding the need for additional mechanization for adult broodstock collection, anesthetic capabilities, and/or adult spawning and sampling management. A lack of resolution of those differences has caused substantial delay in the rebuild schedule.

Since it will be beneficial to review the performance of the rebuilt facility after a few years of operation, the Parties commit to a collaborative review on the need for mechanization and anesthetic capabilities for adult collection and adult spawning upon completion of the third spawning year following completion of the full hatchery rebuild. This review will be based on the experience of the WDFW and Grant PUD staffs with the operation of the rebuilt facilities, and their observations on adult fish handling relative to crew size, working conditions and stress on the fish.

In addition, the parties agree that the following parameters will help inform the potential need for mechanization and anesthetic capabilities for adult collection and adult spawning at the Priest Rapids Hatchery as it relates specifically to Grant PUD's mitigation requirements: (1) Comparison of adult collection to adult spawning survival data pre and post hatchery modifications, (2) adult collection to adult spawning survival pre and post hatchery modification (relative to other facilities or program needs); (3) Egg to fry survival pre and post hatchery modification (relative to other facilities or programs needs); (4) steelhead encounters and mortality.

Particular attention will be paid to any recordable personnel injury rates/occurrences during the first three years. Any recordable personnel injury occurrences for the Priest Rapids Hatchery will be reviewed and a detailed assessment will be conducted into what measures may need to be implemented in the future (training, reprogramming, change in operations, and/or structural modifications such as additional mechanization and anesthetic capabilities).

Background

Grant PUD has invested approximately 8 years of engineering review and design into the rebuild of Priest Rapids Hatchery. To date, frequent coordination has occurred between Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife hatchery operations staff and Grant PUD biological and engineering staff. The other parties have reviewed the rebuild plans when progress reports have been provided to the Hatchery Committee.

Following a Hatchery Committee review, a number of Joint Fisheries Parties (JFP) representatives expressed a desire for increased mechanization and anesthetic capabilities at the adult trapping site for Priest Rapids Hatchery to improve collection, reduce handling stress to fish, and reduce physical demands on operation staff. In addition, JFP representatives have suggested alternative means of adult handling in the spawning area to include increased mechanization and anesthetic capabilities that could provide increased daily spawning options, given the large number of fish anticipated to be handled, and reduce the physical stress to fish as well as operation staff. Supporters of mechanization note that mechanization has the potential to reduce manpower and concurrently improve handling conditions for fish.

Summarily, the Parties recognize the significant investment in time and money by Grant PUD, as well as the overall benefit that will come to the resource upon completion of the rebuild. Under the current rebuild design and WDFW review, many of the proposed mechanizations could be accommodated post-construction if they are determined necessary to achieve Grant PUD's mitigation requirements.

Accordingly, the Parties agree that the rebuild should go forward as planned under Grant PUD's proposed schedule, as long as there is a clear commitment to provide the increased mechanization and anesthetic capabilities identified as necessary in the future through the Collaborative Review described in the Statement Section above.