

PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee Meeting

Thursday, August 21, 2014

Wenatchee, Washington

Meeting Summary

PRCC HSC Members

Bill Gale, USFWS

Peter Graf, GPUD

Lynn Hatcher, NMFS

Keely Murdoch, Yakama Nation

Todd Pearsons, GPUD

Mike Tonseth, WDFW

Other Participants

Rick Alford, YN*

Eric Lauver, GPUD**

Elizabeth McManus, Facilitator

Andy Chinn, Facilitator

* For agenda item XI only

** For agenda item IX only

Decisions

- A. Approved the July meeting summary as amended
- B. Approved the 2014 Priest Rapids Hatchery mating strategy pilot proposal
- C. Approved WR acclimation plan
- D. Approved the Wenatchee Implementation Plan

Actions

1. WDFW and/or USFWS will initiate discussion within the HC regarding Eastbank facility modifications.
2. WDFW will forward the summary tangle netting report to GPUD.
3. GPUD will draft an SOA on the NTTOC report fulfilling objective 10.
4. GPUD will post the final 2015 Wenatchee implementation plan as amended.
5. HSC will begin discussing the questions needed for a 2026 decision on the White River program during the September meeting.
6. NOAA will circulate the revised SOA on broodstock collection with the HSC.
7. WDFW will develop a section in the broodstock collection protocols that identifies marks and tags
8. WDFW will confirm whether the BY2013 Nason Creek and Chiwawa fish are identically marked (snout-wire).
9. WDFW will look at time of transfer for the Nason Creek fish with respect to a supplemental mark.
10. YN will provide juvenile PIT-tag data to McNary Dam and adult analyses of Methow reach distribution absent coded-wire tags.
11. NOAA will confirm GPUD permit coverage for PNI and pHOS target associated with acclimation and release from Mid-Valley Pond (e.g., relaxation of requirement until 2018).
12. CCT will circulate its Chief Joseph hatchery program workshop report with the HSC (status: carried over from April meeting summary).
13. GPUD will look into options for HSC document storage and access (status: in progress).

HSC Meeting Summary

I. Updates and Meeting Summary Review

- A. PAC Update** – ACOE, GPUD, and WDFW met on 8/19. ACOE is still revising the HGMP on John Day and Dalles mitigation but the document should go public soon.
- B. Fall Chinook Working Group** – The Working Group is close to issuing a report on wild and hatchery fish survival.
- C. Meeting Summary Review** – HSC approved the July meeting summary.

II. Priest Rapids Hatchery

- A. Alternative Mating Strategy Pilot Proposal** – A document describing GPUD’s proposed pilot mating strategy was circulated with the HSC prior to the August meeting. The proposal uses a spawning ratio of 1 male to 4 females. GPUD reported that during pre-meeting discussions NOAA geneticist Mike Ford commented that the general premise in the proposal regarding domestication risk versus effective population size was correct. Actual estimates of effective population size is influenced by assumptions used in the calculation. Angler broodstock collection for Priest Rapids is scheduled for October 24-26.
 - WDFW supported operating the proposed pilot program for one year but noted that the Agency is not convinced this is the optimal approach for the program; no other program in the state uses a 4:1 spawning ratio. WDFW will be holding internal policy discussions on this subject in the near future.
 - GPUD noted that fish will likely be separated in the rearing stacks and egg-to-fry survival would be tracked against the balance of production.
- B. Next Steps**
 - HSC members approved the pilot mating strategy; GPUD will proceed with strategy implementation.

III. Wenatchee Broodstock Collection

- A. Internal NOAA Discussions on Supplemental Biological Opinion** – NOAA reached a decision to write a supplemental biological opinion and forwarded to USFWS the three options developed by YN in 2013. After receiving USFWS feedback and analysis on impacts to bull trout, NOAA will begin writing the supplemental biological opinion and Section 10 permits. The biological opinion will be written narrowly to examine the genetic impact analysis. NOAA’s goal is to begin drafting the biological opinion in October and complete it in December, barring any unforeseen issues. NOAA emphasized that it recognizes the importance of consultation with USFWS on this issue.
 - USFWS noted that the two federal agencies are currently in preliminary notification discussions and more time may be required to analyze effects on bull trout.
 - NOAA commented that the 2005 Environmental Assessment did not specifically discuss PNI, pHOS, or other similar metrics. The broadness of the EA has positive

and negative implications; however, NOAA believes the EA is sufficient for this process. A supplemental EA would be subject to public review and comment.

B. SOA on Nason Creek Composite Broodstock Collection – YN is continuing internal discussion of whether to elevate the draft SOA to the PRCC via the dispute resolution process.

C. Draft Stray Rate Analysis Manuscript¹

- WDFW noted that managers are aware of the within-basin straying issue, as well as the out-of-basin straying issue in the Entiat that is likely due to the Eastbank facility. WDFW's long-term goal is to modify the Eastbank outfall for effective adult trapping, since this is the primary location for the Chelan Falls program and is the only Upper Columbia hatchery that does not have an adult return facility. WDFW and CPUD are in informal talks regarding Eastbank modifications, with CPUD stating that it would prefer to test for another year.

D. Next Steps

- WDFW and/or USFWS will initiate discussion within the HC regarding Eastbank facility modifications.

IV. Nason Creek Tangle Netting

A. Update on Activities – GPUD completed tangle netting activities on 8/13. 26 total adults were collected, and there were no bull trout incidents. GPUD has sufficient adult fish to produce full mitigation.

- YN commented that Chewuch tangle netting seemed to be relatively harmless, with some de-scaling and a small amount of time in nets. However, some fish escaped and there is the possibility of harassing the same fish if tangle netting is performed in the same pools.
- USFWS suggested including a note in the tangle netting summary report to indicate that observations of bull trout are likely the same individuals seen repeatedly.

B. Next Steps

- WDFW will forward the summary tangle netting report to GPUD.

V. NTTOC Report

A. Schedule for SOA Approval – The HC has drafted an SOA; an identical SOA will be developed for the HSC and distributed for voting during the September HSC meeting.

B. Next Steps

- GPUD will draft an SOA on the NTTOC report fulfilling objective 10.

VI. Wenatchee Implementation Plan

A. Report Approval – The draft 2015 Wenatchee implementation plan was circulated to the HSC on 7/24. The primary difference between the 2014 plan and the 2015 plan is

¹ See summary of July 2014 PRCC HSC meeting for additional discussion of this topic.

inclusion of Methow summer Chinook.

- YN requested that, after the sentence “Grant PUD has other hatchery production obligations, however those M&E activities are described in separate documents” (page 3), GPUD add a list or table of M&E activities and their associated documents.
- CCT provided an e-mail to the facilitators prior to the August HSC meeting (CCT was unavailable for the meeting) and suggested that for the Methow Basin summer Chinook spawning ground survey methodology, indicate that the methodology is the same as had previously been implemented in past years.

B. Voting

- HSC members approved the draft 2015 Wenatchee implementation plan, provided the requested additions are made.

C. Next Steps

- GPUD will post the final 2015 Wenatchee implementation plan as amended.

VII. White River Spring Chinook

A. PIT Tag Methodology

- YN commented that there is additional value in testing a PIT-tag methodology as was proposed last year, to begin refining life-stage specific survival. PIT tagging provides a method to derive a parr-smolt equivalency.
 - GPUD noted that for this year it will evaluate snorkeling and is still considering a PIT-tag methodology in the future.

B. White River Program

- WDFW noted that in 2012 the HSC reached a decision to halt the planning process for a White River hatchery program, with the understanding that the HSC would revisit the decision in 2026. To date the HSC has not developed the list of questions needed to inform a decision. These questions are critical as they will inform the data needs between now and 2026.
- USFWS suggested beginning with the question “Do we want a hatchery program in 2026” and working backward to develop the supporting questions that will inform this discussion.
- GPUD commented that any additional data gathering and analysis will require a separate funding source (NNI, habitat, etc.).

C. Next Steps

- HSC will begin discussing the questions needed for a 2026 decision on the White River program during the September meeting.

VIII. Broodstock Collection

- A. NOAA SOA on Broodstock Collection** – NOAA circulated a draft SOA, the intent of which is to memorialize the schedule and decision making process for annual broodstock collection.

- WDFW noted that the SOA refines the information included in the annual protocols

to identify the data needed for regulatory agency approval simultaneous with committee approval.

B. Next Steps

- NOAA will circulate the revised SOA on broodstock collection with the HSC.

IX. Spring Chinook

A. Draft 2015 White River Acclimation Plan – The draft 2015 White River acclimation plan is similar to previous plans; this is the final year of releases.

B. Voting

- HSC members endorsed the 2015 White River acclimation plan.

C. Marking and Tagging for Nason Creek and White River

- WDFW noted that the broodstock collection protocol is the best place to include (possibly as an appendix) the marking strategy for a particular group and year. For most programs this will not change unless there is a special request.
- YN believes it is important to develop a marking strategy that is consistent from year-to-year.
- USFWS commented that adding all marking and tagging details into the broodstock collection protocols would be overly cumbersome.

D. Distinguishing Between Nason Creek, White River, and Chiwawa Fish

- YN noted that the Wenatchee Conservation Plan envisions keeping the spawning aggregates separate. The fish would also be adipose-present so the safety net component can be easily identified for removal.
- WDFW commented that the BY2013 Nason Creek and Chiwawa fish might be identically marked and if so one of the groups will require a secondary mark.
- GPUD noted that a supplemental mark for the Nason Creek group of fish would add handling stress and should be completed two weeks prior to acclimation facility transfer.

E. Next Steps

- GPUD will move forward with implementing the 2015 White River acclimation plan.
- WDFW will develop a section in the broodstock collection protocols that identifies marking and tagging.
- WDFW will confirm whether the BY2013 Nason Creek and Chiwawa fish are identically marked.
- WDFW will look at time of transfer for the Nason Creek fish with respect to a supplemental mark.

X. Wanapum Dam

A. Status of Fish Passage – There have been some issues with aquatic plants and other debris clogging the water supply pumps for the fish ladders. GPUD divers are constantly cleaning the pump intakes on the left ladder, where the material is collecting. GPUD is considering an in-water debris diversion structure. There is significant lamprey passage

at Wanapum.

XI. Methow Spring Chinook

A. 2015 Request to Continue Acclimating GCPUD Spring Chinook at Mid-Valley Pond – YN is requesting 50,000 spring Chinook for acclimation at Mid-Valley pond.

- CCT provided an e-mail to the facilitators prior to the August HSC meeting (CCT was unavailable for the meeting):
 - CCT is in agreement with getting hatchery fish further up the basin into quality habitat to improve productivity of hatchery fish and efficacy of the supplementation program. However, the key is to put the right number of juveniles in these remote acclimation ponds such that the number of returning adults is consistent with habitat and pHOS targets (i.e. release of juveniles from the remote acclimation ponds will diminish the ability to control pHOS through extraction at the hatchery). Finally, remote acclimation will reduce the number of adults that return to the hatchery, and as such it will be more difficult to attain the broodstock target for the production programs, so it is a catch-22 between improved efficacy (productivity) of the supplementation hatchery fish and maintaining the broodstock necessary to meet production. Potentially, this could be a phased implementation, with enough fish released at the hatchery(s) to assure broodstock collection objective for all hatchery programs reliant upon hatchery adults returning to the Methow Basin and numbers in the remote acclimation ponds that are consistent with habitat in the reaches where the acclimated fish are expected to return. Monitoring will determine whether the hatchery fish released from the acclimation ponds actually return to the habitats intended and whether or not the ability to control pHOS is substantively impacted.
- YN commented that the issue of the number of fish returning to the hatchery is only speculative at this point. This is a conservation program, not a broodstock collection program, and the fish are intended to spawn in the habitat. YN is developing a plan that targets PNI on a reach-basis in the Methow. In order to finish the plan YN requires data on number of fish returning to the hatchery.
- GPUD noted concerns with lack of data on the effectiveness of this acclimation approach as well as ability to meet permit requirements.
- USFWS commented that putting hatchery fish into the M9 reach does not appear to provide benefits since there are already fish there. It would be more beneficial to put fish into the upper reaches.
 - YN agreed and noted that once its upstream ponds are completed (2017) the fish will be moved higher up in the basin.

B. Next Steps

- YN will provide juvenile PIT-tag data to McNary Dam and adult analyses of Methow

reach distribution absent coded-wire tags.

- NOAA will confirm GPUD permit coverage for meeting PNI and pHOS targets associated with acclimation and release from Mid-Valley Pond (e.g., waiver until 2018).

XII. Wrap Up and Next Steps

A. Next Meeting: Thursday, September 17, 2014

B. Potential September Meeting Agenda Items

- Composite broodstock collection
- NTTOC report SOA
- Wanapum Dam update
- White River spring Chinook program

Meeting Materials

The following documents were provided to HSC members in advance of this meeting:

- August meeting agenda
- Draft Broodstock Collection Protocol SOA
- Draft 2015 White River Spring Chinook Acclimation Plan
- Draft 2014 mating strategy proposal
- July Nason Creek Rotary Trap Summary
- July White River Rotary Trap Summary
- July PRH M&E Update
- July WR Report
- Draft SOA on broodstock collection protocols
- 2013 Annual Report for the White River Program at Little White Salmon NFH