

Joint HCP-HC and PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee Meetings

Wednesday, January 21, 2015

Wenatchee, Washington

Meeting Summary

Part I: Joint HCP/HSC Meeting

Joint HCP/HSC Meeting Participants

Matt Abrahams, Yakama Nation
Matt Cooper, USFWS
Peter Graf, GPUD
Lynn Hatcher, NMFS
Tom Kahler, DPUD
Cory Kamphaus, Yakama Nation
Greg Mackey, DPUD
Keely Murdoch, Yakama Nation
Deanne Pavlik-Kunkel, GPUD
Todd Pearsons, GPUD
Charlie Snow, WDFW (via phone)
Mike Tonseth, WDFW
Kirk Truscott, CCT
Alene Underwood, CPUD
Catherine Willard, CPUD

Other Participants

Mike Schiewe, Anchor QEA
Kristi Geris, Anchor QEA
Elizabeth McManus, Ross Strategic
Andy Chinn, Ross Strategic

Joint HCP/HSC Meeting Actions

1. CCT will check on current inventory of USFWS origin Spring Chinook eyed eggs at the Chief Joseph Hatchery to determine if there is any capacity to incorporate the overage at Methow Hatchery.
2. WDFW will send an e-mail update to Craig Busack (with a cc to the committees) on the Spring Chinook overage at Methow Hatchery.
3. NMFS will send an e-mail update on the January 28, 2015 UCR Hatchery Consultation Strategy Meeting to the HCP and HSC coordinators.
4. YN will add clarification around the graph in section 1.2 of the Upper Methow Spring Chinook Acclimation Proposal.
5. YN and DPUD will meet to discuss possible changes to the Upper Methow Spring Chinook Acclimation proposal that would satisfy comments from various committee members.
6. Anchor QEA will circulate the draft letter to NMFS requesting reconsultation on the Spring Chinook biological opinion.

Joint HCP/HSC Meeting Summary

I. Circular Pond Rearing

- A. Eastbank, Chiwawa, and Chelan Falls Facilities – CPUD provided an update on post-

release performance of Chinook salmon and steelhead reared in partial water reuse circular vessels compared to traditional flow-through raceways. The presentation included program background, fish performance (fish health, post-release survival, travel time downstream, smolt-to-adult returns, and age structure), conclusions, and next steps.

- The draft report on partial water reuse vessels as compared to flow-through raceways is in progress and will likely be issued for committee review in February.

II. Spring Chinook Updates

A. Methow Spring Chinook Status Update – There is an overage of approximately 37,000 wild by wild Spring Chinook progeny at the Methow Hatchery, due to higher than expected green to eyed egg survival and low BKD levels in females. Washington State’s policy precludes destroying these fish, so WDFW is pursuing alternatives. In the past WDFW has only been comfortable transferring fish to Banks Lake. WDFW and CPUD have discussed incorporating these fish into the CPUD component of the program, which currently does not have 100% natural origin broodstock. USFWS has a full program, and CCT’s program at Chief Joseph Hatchery is also likely full, since CCT receives fish from USFWS under its 10J permit. However, CCT will check the Chief Joseph Hatchery to determine if there is any capacity to incorporate the Methow Hatchery overage.

- YN stated that it is probably not supportive of transferring fish to Banks Lake.

B. Wenatchee Spring Chinook Status Update – WDFW culled two Nason Creek females due to BKD. There are now 37,000 eyed eggs for the 2014 brood; this could result in 34,000 smolts depending on in-hatchery survival. The Chiwawa conservation program is at 95%. The Wenatchee safety net has 217,000 eyed-eggs and 201,000 smolts. Combining the safety net and conservation programs results in 371,000 smolts for BY14. In other words, the Wenatchee program numbers will be met through a combination of conservation and safety net fish.

C. Next Steps

- CCT will check on mortality of USFWS origin Spring Chinook eyed eggs at the Chief Joseph Hatchery.
- WDFW will send an e-mail update to Craig Busack (with a cc to the committees) on the Spring Chinook overage at Methow Hatchery.

III. Permitting Updates

A. HGMP – The next bi-weekly consultation meeting is scheduled for the week of 1/26.

B. Next Steps

- NMFS will send an e-mail update on the HGMP to the HCP and HSC coordinators.

IV. Upper Methow Spring Chinook Acclimation

A. Comments on Draft Proposal – YN received comments from DPUD, CPUD, and GPUD. GPUD suggested that expanded acclimation sites could be part of the larger evaluation

of spawning distribution in the upper basin. YN is interested in trying various ways to meet production goals, but this would be separate from expanded acclimation.

- DPUD reiterated that only including a single graph in Section 1.2 (Mean spawner distribution based on female carcass recovery of hatchery and natural origin spring Chinook in the Methow River) is an incomplete picture of spawning distribution and the additional graphs in the five year M&E plan provide information which can be used for management decisions.
- CCT suggested calculating the proportions of hatchery and natural origin fish, by reach.
- YN commented that DPUD's suggestions for goals and objectives are beyond the scope of the proposal and are better suited to a management plan.
- DPUD noted that the purpose of the proposal should be clarified as to whether it is a learning experiment or a management action. If the proposal is a management action, then it should have performance objectives. Regardless of purpose, the proposal should include quantitative targets to test pre- and post implementation effects.
- YN commented that it does not consider the proposal to be a management plan and that specific goals and objectives are listed in the M&E plan.
- WDFW noted that the proposal is intended to test the feasibility of remote acclimation as a means of putting more fish in the available habitat, if adult management is successful.

B. Next Steps

- YN will add clarification around the graph in section 1.2 of the Upper Methow Spring Chinook Acclimation Proposal.
- YN and DPUD will meet to discuss possible changes to the Upper Methow Spring Chinook Acclimation proposal that would satisfy comments from various committee members.

V. Re-initiation of Spring Chinook Biological Opinion

A. Letter to NMFS – NMFS contacted CPUD and GPUD to outline applicant steps required to re-initiate consultation for the 2014 Wenatchee spring Chinook Biop (currently implemented by CPUD and GPUD under 10(a)(1)(A) Permits 18121 and 18118). CPUD drafted a letter from the HC and HSC to the NMFS (Rob Jones) submitting a new preferred broodstock collection alternative that was not considered under the previous biological opinion and will require further work.

- CCT notes that the letter may require signature from tribal authorities.
- WDFW commented that the broodstock collection protocols are proceeding under the assumption that permit coverage will be available by the time of broodstock collection in 2015.

B. Next Steps

- Anchor QEA will circulate the draft letter to NMFS requesting reconsultation on the Spring Chinook biological opinion.

Part II: HSC Meeting Summary

PRCC HSC Members

Matt Cooper, USFWS (alt)
Peter Graf, GPUD (alt)
Lynn Hatcher, NMFS
Keely Murdoch, Yakama Nation
Deanne Pavlik-Kunkel, GPUD (alt)
Todd Pearsons, GPUD
Mike Tonseth, WDFW
Kirk Truscott, CCT

Other Participants

Mary Peters, USFWS (via phone)

Elizabeth McManus, Facilitator
Andy Chinn, Facilitator

Decisions

A. Approved the November 2014 meeting summary.

Actions

1. YN will revise the 2016 Upper Methow spring Chinook acclimation proposal and distribute the revised version to the HSC by 12/3. HSC members will provide comments to YN by 12/17. YN will send a revised version prior to the January HSC meeting for decision. HSC members will review and comment on the SOA on the same timeline as the 2016 release proposal.
2. LWSNFH staff will cull sick fish from the high titer groups and begin the third oral azithromycin treatment on the remaining fish. Staff will also compare ELISA levels in fish from the upper and lower raceways. Staff will continue to monitor the fish up until transport; the HSC will re-assess the fish condition and potential risks prior to final decision. If at any time fish health and/or risks to other natural populations are such that transport for acclimation is not prudent, the HSC will make that determination.
3. WDFW and USFWS will draft a letter for NMFS with background and justification for discontinuation of the White River population at LWSNFH, if necessary.
4. GPUD will continue with net pen and temporary site acclimation preparations for 2015 smolt release of White River captive reared spring Chinook.
5. HSC members will review the White River decision tree and table in advance of the February HSC meeting.
6. WDFW will contact state invasive species staff to determine the timeline for development of a New Zealand Mud Snail protocol. (from 11/14 meeting summary)
7. WDFW will develop the 2015 draft broodstock collection protocol and distribute it to the committees by 2/1/15. (from 11/14 meeting summary)
8. YN will compile existing White River M&E or study activities; HSC members will forward any potential activities of interest to YN. (from 11/14 meeting summary)
9. CCT will circulate its Chief Joseph hatchery program workshop report with the HSC. (from 11/14 meeting summary)

I. Updates and Meeting Summary Review

- A. November Meeting Summary** – The HSC approved the November 2014 meeting summary as amended.

II. White River Fish Health

- A. Juvenile BKD at LWSNFH** – As of December 2014 the White River fish in one of the ponds at LWSNFH has reached epizootic levels of mortality due to BKD. White River fish have received two oral azithromycin treatments. PIT tagging is scheduled for 1/22 in raceways 11 and 12. It was decided not to PIT tag the high titer BKD fish to minimize additional stress. Based on the current rates of BKD increase, fish health staff estimate a monthly doubling effect. The fish are feeding well, so a third azithromycin treatment of 14 days duration is possible. After treatment the fish would need at least two weeks prior to transport.

- WDFW suggested looking at PIT tag data from high titer releases to determine if adult performance data could be projected.
- USFWS staff suggested sampling fish from the upper and lower sections of the raceways to determine if any of the fish are relatively healthier. This could be followed by culling the sick fish prior to azithromycin treatment.
- For the 41,000 fish, 70% survival until release would leave approximately 28,000 fish. At 0.01% SAR, 2.3 fish would return from the high titer group. These fish could be BKD carriers but may or may not break with BKD in the environment.
- CCT noted that in the upper Wenatchee watershed there is already likely Renibacterium present due to the sockeye population.

B. Next Steps

- LWSNFH staff will cull sick fish from the high titer groups and begin the third oral azithromycin treatment on the remaining fish. Staff will also compare ELISA levels in fish from the upper and lower raceways. Staff will continue to monitor the fish up until transport; the HSC will re-assess fish condition and potential risks prior to a final decision. If at any time fish health and/or risks to other natural populations are such that transport for acclimation is not prudent, the HSC will make that determination.
- WDFW and USFWS will draft a letter for NMFS with background and justification for discontinuation of the White River population at LWSNFH, if necessary.
- GPUD will continue with net pen and temporary site acclimation preparations, but stated that an HSC decision was needed during the February HSC meeting in order to decide whether to execute leases and install net pens.

III. White River Spring Chinook

- A. Path to 2026 Decision** – HSC members reviewed the draft decision tree distributed in advance of the meeting.
- CCT suggested eliminated step 2 in the diagram.
 - GPUD noted that data on limiting life stages and survival indicate that the White River population is currently not sustainable independent of a supplementation program. A key question is whether the population can contribute to recovery;

given SARs and in-lake survival issues, the answer might be no.

- WDFW commented that Agency's position is that the Upper Wenatchee is not a major spawning aggregate. The reproductive success study indicates that the Upper Wenatchee is essentially an overflow for Nason and Chiwawa.

B. Next Steps

- HSC members will review the White River decision tree and table in advance of the February HSC meeting.

IV. Wrap Up and Next Steps

A. Next Meeting: Thursday, February 19, 2015

B. Potential February Meeting Agenda Items

- Composite broodstock collection
- Broodstock collection protocols
- Methow remote acclimation
- White River spring Chinook program

Meeting Materials

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

- January meeting agenda
- White River decision tree
- Draft November meeting summary
- November Nason Creek rotary trap summary
- November White River rotary trap summary
- PRH M&E November update
- LWSNFH November report
- November PUD M&E Report
- HCP Adaptive Management Framework
- December 2014 PUD Hatchery Progress report
- PRH December 2014 M&E Update