

SOA 2008-05

Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee Hatchery Subcommittee Statement of Agreement on Participation in ISEMP remote PIT tagging program at GCPUD funded White River smolt trap

Submitted to PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee: February 12, 2009_____

Approved by PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee: February 19, 2009_____

Approved by PRCC: N/A _____

Statement

The Hatchery Subcommittee of the Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee (PRCC) collectively agrees to participate in the ISEMP remote PIT tagging program at the White River smolt trap. All PIT tags would be provided by the ISEMP program (BPA project 200501700). Trap operation and personnel would continue to be funded by GCPUD. PIT tagging would begin concurrent with trap operation in 2009. If take limits specified in Endangered Species Act (ESA) permit 1592 issued by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS 2007) are exceeded as a direct result of PIT tagging then PIT tag operations may be temporarily or permanently suspended pending review by NMFS.

Background

The ESA permit 1592 specifically authorizes the Permit Holders (Grant PUD, the Yakama Nation and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to capture, handle, and release up to 20 percent of the naturally produced spring Chinook salmon juveniles emigrating from the White River annually using standard juvenile fish trapping techniques such as rotary screw traps. For the purposes of developing population estimates, the Permit Holders may apply marks (caudal fin clip) to the spring Chinook salmon juvenile prior to release. For the purposes of monitoring natural fish emigration to the ocean, the Permit Holders may apply tags (e.g., coded-wire or passive integrated transponder (PIT) tags) to the spring Chinook salmon juvenile prior to release. The permit states that the lethal take may not exceed two percent of the fish captured (NMFS 2007).

The ISEMP has constructed a monitoring framework that builds on current status and trend monitoring infrastructures in the Wenatchee Basin through the coordination and collaboration with local monitoring practitioners. The intent of the ISEMP project is to design and implement monitoring programs that can efficiently collect information to address multiple management objectives over a broad range of scales including 1) evaluating the status of anadromous salmonids in their habitat, 2) identifying opportunities to restore habitat function and fish performance, and 3) evaluation the benefits of the actions to the fish populations across the Columbia River basin.

The ISEMP has designed a PIT tagging program that will compare habitat use, life history, and life stage specific survival rates between spring Chinook and steelhead sub-populations that rear in tributary streams to those that rear in the mainstem Wenatchee River. PIT tags will be detected at multiple locations with the Wenatchee

and Entiat subbasin at instream PIT tag arrays, recaptures at downstream smolt traps, as well as other locations throughout the Columbia River where PIT tag detection methodologies are in practice. Currently within the ISEMP program fish are PIT tagged at the Monitor smolt trap, Upper Wenatchee smolt trap, Entiat smolt trap, Nason Creek smolt trap, and Chiwawa River smolt trap. The White River smolt trap could serve as an additional tagging location providing life history and in-basin survival data for ISEMP and for the PRCC HSC.

No fish under 60 mm in length would be PIT tagged. All PIT tagging procedures will follow the ISEMP protocols for capture handling and tagging of wild salmonids in the upper Columbia River basin using Passive Integrated Transponder Tags document (Terraqua 2008).

To date, PIT tag operations at the Nason Creek smolt trap have not resulted in exceedance of take levels. In 2008 2,639 spring Chinook and 2,154 steelhead, 1 coho, and 12 bull trout were PIT tagged. There were no mortalities associated with PIT tagging as measured during the 24-48 hour holding period prior to release.

Literature Cited

Terraqua 2008. A field manual of scientific protocols for capture, handling, and tagging of wild salmonids in the upper Columbia River Basin using Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tags within the Upper Columbia Monitoring Strategy. *Prepared for: Bonneville Power Administration's Integrated Status and Effectiveness Monitoring Strategy.*

NMFS 2007. Scientific Research/Enhancement - Artificial Propagation Program Name: Upper Columbia River Spring Chinook Salmon White River Supplementation Program Section 10(a)(1)(A) Permit for Takes of Endangered/threatened Species, Permit 1592.