



# Grant County **PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT**

## Priest Rapids Fish Forum

Wednesday, 3 September 2014  
Grant PUD Wenatchee Office

### PRFF Members

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Stephen Lewis, USFWS  
Bob Rose, YN  
Carl Merkle, Umatilla Tribe  
Tom Dresser, GCPUD  
Aaron Jackson, CTUIR

Patrick Verhey, WDFW  
Keith Hatch, BIA  
Pat McGuire, WDOE  
Mike Clement, GCPUD  
Jason McLellan, CCT

### Attendees:

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Pat McGuire, WDOE  
RD Nelle, USFWS  
Doris Squeochs, Wanapum  
Jason McClellan, CCT (Via phone)  
Mike Clement, GCPUD  
Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

Patrick Verhey, WDFW  
Bob Rose, YN (Via phone)  
Chad Jackson, WDFW (Via phone)  
Steve Lewis, USFWS (Via phone)  
Debbie Williams, GCPUD

### Distributed Items:

1. PRFF Agenda 09-03-14
2. PRFF Draft Meeting Minutes 08-04-14
3. Revised Proposal from WDFW on the Number of Juvenile White Sturgeon to Release in 2015
4. CCT Letter to FERC regarding Sturgeon 08-26-14

### Action Items:

1. Verhey will ask Ben Truscott if he can give a guided tour on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Hillman will send a reminder to PRFF members to send their information to Clement.
2. Williams will post the lamprey trapping video to the PRFF box.net site and send the link to members.
3. On 17 September, Hillman will request a vote on the revised number of juvenile white sturgeon to be released into the Priest Rapids Project in 2015.

# Meeting Minutes

## I. Welcome and Introductions

## II. Agenda Review

- A. Additional agenda items – An update on juvenile sturgeon sampling in Wanapum Reservoir was added by Jason McClellan.
- B. Meeting Minute Approval – 06 August 2014 – Approved
- C. Action Items from last meeting
  1. Mike Clement will make sure that the SG3 Gate is opened after all WDFW OLAFT use. Patrick Verhey will send Pat Burdick's OLAFT Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to Tracy Hillman for distribution to the PRFF. Debbie Williams will look for a video showing how the OLAFT is operated. – **Williams was unable to find a video. Verhey did not have the SOP, but did forward an email correspondence regarding the SG3 gate operations. Clement explained that Grant PUD operators operate the SG3 gate after WDFW is complete with their operations.**
  2. Jim Powell will send necropsy protocols established for the Upper Columbia Sturgeon Program to Tracy Hillman for distribution. – **Complete**

## III. Update on Wanapum Dam and Fish Passage – Clement provided an update on issues at Wanapum Dam. He described the successful passage of fish, ongoing cleaning of aquatic vegetation from the pump screens, evaluation of adult Pacific lamprey passage including adult lamprey trap and haul, and the status of installation of tendons in the monolith piers. Development of a refill plan continues. The plan will allow the pool to be operated from 558' to 560'. Although the target refill time has not been determined, it is likely to occur between October and December 2014. Prior to implementation, the refill plan must be approved by the Board of Consultants and FERC. The expected full pool target date is Memorial Day 2015.

Clement reported that he's still awaiting results from the Benthic Survey. Currently, photographs are being sorted and cataloged with regards to sensitive cultural resource sites. Hillman reported that New Zealand mudsnail has been found in the Hanford Reach. Clement said that WDFW AIS specialist Mike Wilkinson conducted surveys in the Wanapum Reservoir, but none were found there.

## IV. Update on PLMP

- A. **NNI Update** – The PRFF Pacific Lamprey Subcommittee will meet on Wednesday, 17 September to discuss possible actions to implement over the next few years to address NNI. Clement said that anyone who wants to participate is welcome to attend.
- B. **Lamprey Passage and Trap-n-Transport** – Approximately 5,600 adult lamprey have passed Priest Rapids Dam. Based on daily counts, + 34% of the run has been trapped via mechanized and tube traps based on daily counts but not corrected counts. Clement reported that some of the lamprey traps have been tampered with and Grant PUD Operators will be relocating video cameras in an effort to dissuade anyone from tampering with the traps. A total of 1,971 adult lamprey have been captured within the adult ladders at Priest Rapids and Wanapum dams. These fish were released upstream from Rock Island Dam. About 200 captured lamprey were PIT-tagged by Chelan PUD and released at Confluence State Park. Grant PUD will continue to trap adult lamprey until 15 September. They will then reevaluate the need to do additional trapping.

- C. **OLAFT Visit on 15 September** – The PRFF will visit the OLAFT and its operations on Monday, 15 September, at 10:00 a.m. Please notify Mike Clement if you will be attending so he can secure visitor badges. **Verhey will ask Ben Truscott if he can give a guided tour on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Hillman will send a reminder to PRFF members to send their information to Clement.**
- D. **Lamprey Regional Implementation Planning Process** – Local experts will continue to meet to fill out templates for the Pacific Lamprey Regional Implementation Planning process. Templates for all Upper Columbia areas except the Methow and Okanogan have been completed.
- E. **Other Lamprey Items** – Clement showed a video of lamprey trapping. **Williams will post it to the PRFF box.net site and send the link to members.** The video shows that no handling by humans occurs during trapping.
- F. **HD PIT Detection** – Based on PIT-tag data through 14 August, 64 unique PIT-tag codes have been detected at Priest Rapids Dam. Of those, 84.4% have passed PRD and 32 have made it to Wanapum Dam (WD). Of those, 71.9% have passed WD. Grant PUD and Chelan PUD are sharing data; detection efficiencies won't be known until Rock Island Dam detection efficiency is known.

## V. Update on WSMP

- A. **Update on Dispute Resolution and Stocking Decision for 2014** – On 21 July, Ecology sent a letter to Grant PUD instructing them to release the remaining 2,168 juvenile sturgeon on station at Marion Drain. On 5 August, Chairman Boyd (Colville Tribes) submitted a letter to Director Bellon (Ecology) requesting a government-to-government consultation and asked Ecology to instruct Grant PUD to stay release of the juvenile sturgeon at Marion Drain. On 26 August, Chairman Boyd submitted a letter to FERC asking FERC to describe their role in ensuring compliance with the 401 Certification, clarification of the process for resolving PRFF disputes, and FERC's position on the appropriate release number for 2014. Future discussion of PRFF dispute resolution protocols needs to occur.
- B. **Review Draft Statement of Agreement (SOA)** – During later stages of the PRFF dispute resolution process, the White Sturgeon subcommittee (comprised of PRFF, Douglas ASWG and RRF members) met and identified a recovery population abundance target and strategy to achieve that target. Knowing that it would take time to develop a path forward, member's agreed to follow a sturgeon stocking plan of 0-6,500, achieving 18.5 families; the same plan devised prior to 2014 broodstock efforts.  
  
WDFW provided the PRFF with a revised proposal on the number of juvenile white sturgeon to release into the Project Area in 2015 (see Attachment 1). The PRFF has two weeks to review the proposal and members will submit their email vote on the proposal by Wednesday, 17 September. Rose stated that the Yakama Nation will not be in a position to vote prior to 17 September. Lewis asked that the WSMP outline whether this program is a genetic or harvest management plan, or a combination of both.
- C. **Rearing Update** – Juvenile sturgeon rearing at Marion Drain and at WDFW facilities are doing well. Culling and grading has begun at the WDFW facilities.
- D. **Protocol for Dealing with Dead Broodstock** – The PRFF discussed the need to examine sturgeon broodstock that die before, during, or after spawning. They are reviewing necropsy protocols established for the Upper Columbia Sturgeon Program. **Please review protocols**

**prior to next month's meeting.** Hillman will see if Powell can send the document in Word so that PRFF members can make edits.

- E. Future Harvest Activities Coordination** – Jackson reported that in an effort to target sturgeon released into the Wanapum Reservoir by the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC), in 2003, WDFW is interested in activating a temporary sport fishery in order to sample these fish in the Project area. This fishery could take place next year. Clement noted that he and Blain Parker, CRITFC, discussed the value of tribal harvest, in addition to other angling approved by WDFW. Rose said that recommendations made by other groups will be considered, but not necessarily followed; harvest decisions will be made by the YN, WDFW and ODFW.

Relative impacts to wild fish would be monitored. WDFW will review data collected by Golder and the Colville Tribes during sturgeon index surveys.

- F. Other White Sturgeon Items – Juvenile sturgeon sampling by CCT.** The Colville Tribes have been conducting sturgeon index surveys via set line in the Priest Rapids Project Area. They completed surveys in the Priest Rapids Reservoir two weeks ago and are in the middle of sampling in the Wanapum Reservoir.

- **Priest Rapids Reservoir** – A total of 85 fish from Grant PUD's FERC mandated release program were captured. A total of 33 fish of CRITFC origin were captured; they are widely distributed.
- **Wanapum Reservoir** (to lower end of Crescent Bar) – A total of 56 fish from Grant PUD's FERC mandated release program were captured. A total of 39 fish of CRITFC origin were captured with 88 lines. Four wild fish, ranging from 60 cm fork length to 200 cm fork length.
- **Overview** – About 37.5% of sets caught Grant PUD released fish. About 50% of sets captured white sturgeon. Fish were more widely distributed than originally thought. Sampling will take place this week from just below Crescent Bar (CB) to Rock Island Dam. CRITFC fish have a huge variability in length, 60 cm to 130 cm. All wild fish ranged from 60-100 cm. One 200 cm wild fish was caught when Clement and Skiles were on site. Pickled squid is used for bait.

- VI. Next Meeting** – 01 October 2014 at Grant PUD's Hatchery/Habitat Wenatchee office.

# Attachment 1

## Revised Proposal from WDFW on the Number of Juvenile White Sturgeon to Release in 2015

### 2015 White Sturgeon Stocking Agreement (Priest Rapids Project Area):

- I. Grant PUD currently has 40 half-sibling families available for stocking.
- II. Based off available half-sibling families in the hatchery, the PRFF agrees (through unanimous vote) to stock 6,500 age-1 juvenile white sturgeon into the Priest Rapids Project Area in 2015 provided:
  - i.  $\geq 18$  half-sibling families are available at the time of release.
  - ii. Half-sibling equalization is reflected in the release to the greatest extent possible.
- III. If  $< 18$  half-sibling families are available at the time of release, a reduced and pro-rated release strategy will be employed.
  - i. For example: If 10 half-sibling families are available then the 2015 release would be 3,610 age-1 juvenile white sturgeon ( $6,500/18$  half-sibling families = 361 fish/half-sibling family; 361 fish/half-sibling family X 10 half-sibling families = 3,610 stocking rate)
- IV. This white sturgeon stocking agreement only affects release year 2015 and does not have any bearing on future releases.