



Grant County
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
Excellence in Service and Leadership

Priest Rapids Fish Forum

Wednesday, 7 June 2017

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Grant PUD, 11 Spokane St., Suite 205B, Wenatchee, WA

Call-In Number: 1-800-977-8002, Bridge: 7422882

MEETING MINUTES

PRFF REPRESENTATIVES

Steve Lewis, USFWS

Bob Rose, YN

Doris Squeochs, Wanapum

Jason McLellan, CCT

Mike Clement, Grant PUD

Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

Patrick Verhey, Chad Jackson, WDFW

Breean Zimmerman, WDOE

Aaron Jackson, Carl Merkle, CTUIR

Keith Hatch, BIA

Chris Mott, Grant PUD

Erin McIntyre, Grant PUD

ATTENDEES

Mike Clement, Grant PUD

Ralph Lampman, YN (via phone)

Breean Zimmerman, WDOE (via phone)

Jason McLellan, CCT (via phone)

Bob Rose, YN

Sean Gaudy, YN

Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

RD Nelle, USFWS

Chad Jackson, WDFW (via phone)

Kirk Truscott, CCT

Patrick Verhey, WDFW

Tom Skiles, CRITFC

Steve Lewis, USFWS

Action Items:

1. Rod O'Connor will examine if "campers" or "dawdlers" are more likely to move downstream. To the extent possible, he will also evaluate the effects of fish size on downstream movement.
2. Rod O'Connor will double check the data and calculations in the fallback table on slide 24.
3. RD Nelle will look at the movements of adult lamprey released upstream and downstream of a diversion dam on the Yakima River.
4. Mike Clement will estimate the proportion of acoustic tagged fish released at Desert Aire or Vantage Bridge that moved downstream over the past two years.
5. Donella Miller will let members know when sturgeon spawning at Marion Drain occurs.

6. Chad Jackson will provide a map showing the locations where WDFW samples for sturgeon larvae.
7. Tom Skiles will provide information on the sturgeon diet analyses conducted by CRITFC on sturgeon captured during the Yakama Nation tribal fishery.
8. Chad Jackson will provide the PRFF with a study plan to sample resident fish in the project area.
9. Mike Clement will provide the PRFF with reports that identify the entrance efficiencies of adult Pacific lamprey at Priest Rapids and Wanapum dams.

I. **Welcome and Introductions** - Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the Priest Rapids Fish Forum (PRFF or Forum) meeting. Participants introduced themselves.

II. **Agenda Review** - Members reviewed and approved the draft agenda.

III. **Approve May Meeting Notes** – May 2017 Draft Meeting Minutes were reviewed during the meeting. Bob Rose asked for additional time to review the notes. *[On 9 June, Bob noted that he had no edits to the draft notes. The draft notes were finalized on 9 June.]*

A. **Review Action Items from May Meeting (All)**

1. Rod O'Connor will send to the Forums the publication titled, "Movements, Habitat Use, and Population Characteristics of Adult Pacific Lamprey in a Coastal River." **Complete**
2. Rod O'Connor will examine if "campers" or "dawdlers" are more likely to move downstream. To the extent possible, he will also evaluate the effects of fish size on downstream movement. **Ongoing. Mike Clement noted that work will be included in the final annual report.**
3. Rod O'Connor will modify the table on slide 21 by including additional information or add another column indicating the number of fish that were detected at an upstream location but not at the fishway exits. **Complete**
4. Rod O'Connor will add estimates of precision (confidence bounds) on the fish passage efficiency estimates. **Complete**
5. Rod O'Connor will double check the data and calculations in the fallback table on slide 24. **Ongoing**
6. RD Nelle will look at the movements of adult lamprey released upstream and downstream of a diversion dam on the Yakima River. **Ongoing**
7. Mike Clement will estimate the proportion of acoustic tagged fish released at Desert Aire or Vantage Bridge that moved downstream over the past two years. **Ongoing**
8. Tracy Hillman will contact Carl English (LGL) about the movement of steelhead during the 2002 radio-tag study. **Complete. Tracy compiled and reviewed all reports prepared by English and will share the results during the July meeting.**
9. Tracy Hillman will check with Bob Rose and Steve Lewis to confirm their availability for the 5 July meeting. **Complete. Both Bob Rose and Steve Lewis will be available for the 5 July meeting.**

IV. White Sturgeon Management Plan

A. Larvae and Broodstock Collection

Mike Clement reported that crews fished for sturgeon broodstock downstream from McNary Dam during the permitted seven-day period. Although they captured sturgeon during the first four days, they were unable to capture suitable broodstock. As a result, the PRFF held a conference call on Friday to discuss options for collecting broodstock. It was agreed during the call that the PUD would continue fishing for broodstock over the remaining three days as allowed under the permit. In addition, the comanagers (WDFW, Yakama Nation, and CRITFC) would contact ODFW managers and see if ODFW would be willing to extend the broodstock collection period. It was also agreed that the PUD would explore collection efforts in the Priest Rapids Project Area. Mike noted that fishing occurs from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm. For safety reasons, no fishing occurs at night.

Mike stated that during the last three days of fishing allowed under the original permit, they were able to collect four females and one male for broodstock. Mike said the Yakama Nation contacted ODFW and was able to get an extension on the original collection permit. The comanagers agreed that the PUD can fish for an additional 14 days in the area downstream from McNary Dam. Mike added that they had to hire a new fishing guide (the original guide was available only for the original seven-day period). Currently, there are two boats fishing downstream from McNary Dam and one boat fishing downstream from Rock Island Dam. Mike noted that spawning at Marion Drain will likely occur late next week. Bob Rose asked members of the Forum to help with spawning as it is a large effort and Donella Miller will accept all the help she can get. Donella will let members know when spawning at Marion Drain occurs. *[By 15 June, six females and six males had been collected and they were spawned on 16 June at Marion Drain.]*

Chad Jackson provided an update on sturgeon larvae collection work. He said WDFW crews have been out a couple days per week looking for the presence of larvae. He said water temperatures are not yet ideal for spawning; however, they captured one larvae on Monday. He said they intend to ramp up collection efforts as water temperatures increase and about 12 days after spawning begins. Jason McLellan recommending sampling for larvae at one site daily because the collection of a larvae on Monday means sturgeon have started spawning. Chad confirmed they have gear fishing in the river. They have nets placed downstream from the Highway 395 Bridge. Chad said he will provide a map of the larvae fishing locations.

B. Diet Surveys in June

Mike Clement indicated that one or two boats will be in the project area this month or July sampling CRITFC sturgeon for diet analysis. They will try to coordinate with recreational anglers as this will increase the sample size of stomachs examined. Mike noted that there will be no adult sturgeon population monitoring this year. Tom Skiles indicated that Blaine Parker (CRITFC) is examining the stomach contents of sturgeon harvested by the Yakama Nation during their tribal fishery in the project area. Tom will provide more information on Blaine's efforts during the next meeting.

Chad Jackson reported that so far this year WDFW creel surveys are showing low catches of sturgeon in the project area. Most of the fish captured are marked fish; one was a natural-origin sturgeon.

C. Update on Yakama Nation Sturgeon Fishery in Priest Rapids Project Area

Chad Jackson indicated that the Yakama Nation tribal fishery in the project area was extended to 15 June. The fishery began in March. He noted that because the catch rate has been relatively low, the fishery was extended two or three times this year.

D. Other White Sturgeon Items

None.

V. Resident Fish Study

A. Study Methods and Sampling Dates

Chad Jackson indicated that WDFW will conduct another resident fish survey in the project area this year. Mike Clement reminded the Forum that resident fish surveys are conducted every five years with the goal of documenting any changes in resident fish assemblages in the project area. Chad said he will provide a budget and study plan later this month. He indicated that sampling will likely occur later this summer. Referring to the 2013 resident fish report, Tracy Hillman noted that the recommendation is to sample during October. Chad said he will review the 2013 report and consider recommendations in the 2013 report as he develops the 2017 study plan.

VI. Pacific Lamprey Management Plan

A. Pacific Lamprey NNI Estimation

Tracy Hillman provided a brief overview of the May meeting discussion points, which was a joint meeting with the Rocky Reach Fish Forum (RRFF). During the May meeting, members were provided the most recent adult Pacific lamprey passage estimates. They then discussed methods for calculating passage success and what happens when a "failed" passage ends with the fish in a downstream spawning area. They also identified additional actions that can be implemented within the fishways, noting that there aren't any, and then talked about setting an upper passage success limit for calculating NNI. Tracy said the latter issue will be discussed during the July meeting, which will be a joint meeting with the RRFF.

Bob Rose reminded the group that dam count conversion rates from Priest Rapids to Rock Island Dam are poor (31.4% conversion) and we cannot ignore the reservoirs. Bob said there are about 2,900 adult lamprey missing between Priest Rapids and Rock Island Dam. Bob indicated that we need to find out what is happening to these missing fish and reminded the group that this effort falls under adaptive management. He identified the components of an acoustic tagging study to evaluate the "fate" of adult lamprey in reservoirs.

Mike Clement responded that they are in the third and final year of an acoustic study that will assess passage through the reservoirs. He noted that the current results suggest that more than 80% of the tagged fish convert to the next dam. This led to a discussion about the accuracy of adult lamprey counts at other dams on the

mainstem river. Bob Rose said he will discuss this with others and Chelan PUD, because there appears to be a large discrepancy between conversion rates based on dam counts and the acoustic study.

Bob Rose asked for clarification on the PUD's position on evaluating the losses of adult lampreys in the reservoirs. Mike Clement responded that there is no evidence that adult lamprey are dying in the reservoir. He stated that many could be spawning, overwintering, or some may be consumed by predators such as sturgeon. Mike added that the PUD's focus is on passage through the dams (fishways) and less so on passage through the reservoirs. He said no one at this time has identified or hypothesized a link between project operations and apparent loss of adult lamprey in the reservoirs. In other words, we need to know if an adult lamprey died in the reservoir because of project operations or some other non-project operation effect (e.g., sturgeon predation). Mike added that the presence of the reservoirs represents the environmental baseline condition, and their effects outside project operations are not part of the NNI discussion or calculation. He said we need to be clear on what we mean by project effects given the definition of baseline conditions.

Ralph Lampman asked why we only look at passage efficiency through the fishways, but we do not evaluate entrance efficiency. Mike Clement responded that entrance efficiency was evaluated several years ago using radio telemetry. Mike said he will provide the reports that evaluated adult lamprey entrance efficiency, which at the time, was roughly 96% based on two years of relicensing studies.

Using Excel, Tracy Hillman showed a simple model that could be used to estimate survival of adult lamprey through the entire project area. Kirk Truscott noted that values for some components of the model may need to be negotiated because we may not be able to measure those components (e.g., reservoir survival). Mike reiterated that reservoir losses need to be linked to project operations or there needs to be a clear and measurable link to project-related effects.

Bob Rose noted that under adaptive management, the PUD has the obligation to conduct studies that evaluate project effects. He added that those include evaluating interactions between lamprey and sturgeon.

B. Update on Adult Lamprey Monitoring

Mike Clement reported that adult lamprey are passing Bonneville Dam, but those fish have not yet reached The Dalles Dam. He added that the PUD has counted about 60 adult lamprey at Priest Rapids Dam; they have counted few at Wanapum Dam. Lamprey passing the dams in the project area are likely fish that overwintered in the Columbia River.

Tom Skiles asked if the acoustic tags record temperature. Mike responded that the tags used in the current study do not record temperature. As an FYI, Tracy Hillman noted that there are acoustic tags that indicate predation. Members would like to have a presentation on predation tags.

C. Other Pacific Lamprey Items

None.

VII. Fish Ladder Repair at Wanapum Dam

Mike Clement reported that he received a call from engineering stating that a 14-inch pipe broke that feeds the right-bank Wanapum fishway. As a result, the fishway was taken out of service for 4-5 days for repair. Mike noted the inconvenience of the shut down as the PUD was in the middle of a steelhead study. PUD crews were able to salvage the few fish in the fishway. Fortunately, most migrating fish use the left-bank ladder at Wanapum Dam. Within four days the engineers had fixed the problem and re-watered the fishway.

VIII. Next Meeting: 5 July 2017 – Grant PUD Natural Resources Wenatchee Office.