

Priest Rapids Fish Forum

 Meeting

Wednesday, 1 November 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 Patrick Verhey, Chad Jackson, WDFW

Bob Rose, YN Breean Zimmerman, WDOE

Doris Squeochs, Wanapum Aaron Jackson, Carl Merkle, CTUIR

Jason McLellan, CCT Keith Hatch, BIA

Mike Clement, Grant PUD Chris Mott, Grant PUD

Tracy Hillman, Facilitator Erin McIntyre, Grant PUD

ATTENDEES

Donella Miller, YN (Via Phone) Breean Zimmerman, WDOE (Via Phone)

Doris Squeochs, Wanapum (Via Phone) Mike Clement, Grant PUD

Chris Mott, Grant PUD Shawn Gowdy, YN (Via Phone)

Erin McIntyre, Grant PUD Pat Wyena, Wanapum (Via Phone)

Bob Rose, YN (Via Phone) Patrick Verhey, WDFW

Tom Skiles, CTUIR (Via Phone) RD Nelle, USFWS

Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

**Action Items:**

1. **Breean Zimmerman will contact Ecology’s Environmental Assessment Program to get more information on the active ingredients in the herbicide used to control Eurasian milfoil.**
2. **Tracy Hillman will invite Elena Nilsen (USGS) to a future meeting to discuss the effects of the herbicide on lamprey larvae.**
3. **Chad Jackson will provide an update to the PRFF on the Yakama Nation sturgeon fishery in the Project Area.**
4. **Chad Jackson will provide an update to the PRFF on the resident fish surveys conducted by WDFW in the Project Area.**
5. **Mike Clement will contact Chelan and Douglas PUDs to see if they need adult lamprey in 2018.**
6. **Mike Clement will draft an SOA that describes Grant PUD’s commitment to trap adult lamprey at Priest Rapids Dam and relocate them upstream from Rock Island Dam to address adult NNI at Priest Rapids and Wanapum dams.**
7. **Welcome and Introductions** – Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the Priest Rapids Fish Forum (PRFF or Forum) meeting. Participants introduced themselves.
8. **Agenda Review** – Members reviewed and approved the draft agenda with the following additions: Pacific Lamprey Summit Meeting in Portland and Adult Lamprey Collections at Priest Rapids Dam in 2018.
9. **Approve September Meeting Notes** – The September 2017 Draft Meeting Minutes were reviewed and approved during the meeting.
	1. Review Action Items from the September Meeting
	2. Bob will share a paper that describes white sturgeon autopolyploidy with the PRFF. **Complete**
	3. Breean Zimmerman will contact toxicologists within Ecology to find out about the toxicity of a triclopyr-based herbicide (used to control Eurasian milfoil) on fish, especially lamprey, and who is responsible for monitoring its effects on the ecosystem. **Ongoing. Breean said she did not find any specific studies that looked at the effects of the herbicide on Pacific lamprey. She noted that an EIS was completed for the General Use Permit. Ecology consulted agencies, tribes, and others on the use of the herbicide. Ecology approved the use of the herbicide, but applicants must follow the directions on the label. She noted that she was unable to find out who is responsible for monitoring the effects of the herbicide on the ecosystem. Patrick Verhey noted that a simple lab study could be conducted to determine the effect of the herbicide on lamprey larvae. Mike Clement stated that Grant PUD has concerns with the use of the herbicide in their project area. At this time, they have not been asked to use the herbicide, but they want to be prepared in case they are asked to use it in the future. Mike noted that milfoil beds in their project area have not changed substantially over time. Breean said she will contact Ecology’s Environmental Assessment Program to get more information on the active ingredients in the herbicide used to control Eurasian milfoil. Bob Rose asked to include Elena Nilsen (USGS) in future discussions on this topic. Tracy Hillman will contact Elena to see if she is available during a future meeting to discuss the effects of the herbicide on lamprey.**
	4. Tracy Hillman will check with the RRFF to see if they can hold a joint lamprey subgroup meeting with the PRFF. **Complete**
	5. Tracy Hillman will invite the Aquatic Settlement Work Group to the joint PRFF/RRFF joint lamprey subgroup meeting. **Complete**
10. **Approve October Joint PRFF/RRFF/ASWG Pacific Lamprey Subgroup Meeting Notes** – The October 2017 Draft Subgroup Meeting Minutes were reviewed and approved during the meeting.
	1. Review Action Items from the October Subgroup Meeting
		1. Tracy Hillman will share the four questions with John Ferguson, Chair of the ASWG. **Complete**
		2. Steve Lewis will review the comprehensive study at Wells Dam for information that may help answer the four questions. **Status unknown, but believed to be incomplete**
11. **White Sturgeon Management Plan**
	1. **Update on Juvenile Rearing** – Donella Miller reported that the juvenile sturgeon rearing at Marion Drain are doing well. Their growth and survival are on par with past performance. She said they continue to do monthly sampling to assess growth rates.
	2. **Use of Natural-origin Larvae** – Tracy Hillman reminded the Fish Forum that the Policy Committee made a decision in 2015 that, if available, natural-origin larvae were to be reared in the hatchery and released into the project area. This decision was made to address genetic concerns associated with using broodstock. At the time, the Policy Committee asked the Fish Forum to prioritize larvae collection sites. In 2016, the Forum provided the Policy Committee with the following prioritized list: Bonneville and The Dalles pools, Lake Roosevelt, mid-Columbia (Wanapum Pool), and downstream from Hells Canyon Dam. The Forum noted that managers need to consider that collections from Lake Roosevelt already support two supplementation programs and availability in the long-term (> five years) is dependent on upper Columbia Recovery Program goals and objectives. They also noted that collection of larvae downstream from Bonneville Dam is the least preferred collection site.
	3. **Update on Recreational Sturgeon Fishery in the Priest Rapids Project Area** – Patrick Verhey said he did not have information on the sturgeon fishery in the project area. He noted that it has likely slowed down. He said Chad Jackson will be able to provide an update at the next meeting.
	4. **Update on Sturgeon Monitoring within the Project Area** – Chris Mott reported that the 2017 juvenile index monitoring in the project area is complete. He said Golder will complete the final report soon and they will give a presentation on results in March 2018. Chris added that monitoring in 2018 will include both juvenile and adult monitoring. He said Grant PUD is scheduled to do egg-mat sampling in 2018; however, the PUD would like to do this work every five years instead of every three years. Mike Clement indicated that the purpose of the sampling is simply to demonstrate natural reproduction in the project area. Eggs are not retained or reared in the hatchery, in part because not enough eggs are collected to make it worthwhile. He added that they have documented natural reproduction every year they have conducted the study and they can measure if natural recruitment is occurring through other ways such as juvenile indexing. Thus, they believe it is not necessary to do the sampling every three years. ***Members present agreed to do the studies every five years. The next sampling event will be in 2020.***
	5. **Other White Sturgeon Items** – Mike Clement asked about the Yakama Nation sturgeon fishery within the Project Area. Donella Miller indicated that she has no specific information on the fishery. She said there are three families currently fishing within both reservoirs. Patrick Verhey said he will ask Chad Jackson to provide information on the fishery. As a final note, Chris Mott reported that the Upper Columbia White Sturgeon meeting in Coeur d’Alene will be on 14 and 15 November. The Columbia Basin White Sturgeon meeting will be on 15 and 16 November in Coeur d’Alene.
12. **Resident Fish Study**
	1. **Update on Resident Fish Sampling** – Mike Clement reported that WDFW conducted resident fish sampling within the Project Area during October. Sampling included electrofishing surveys. Mike asked for an update on the sampling. Patrick Verhey said he did not have information on the sampling effort, but he would ask Chad Jackson to provide an update to the Fish Forum. Mike noted that the final report is due to Ecology in early 2018. Mike asked to have Chad or Dave Burgess give a presentation to the Forum during the next meeting.
13. **Pacific Lamprey Management Plan**
	1. **Results from Subgroup Meeting** – Tracy Hillman provided a brief overview on the joint Pacific Lamprey Subgroup meeting that occurred in October. Tracy noted that the subgroups identified the following questions for the ASWG:
* Is there any evidence that adult sturgeon are in the fishways and tailrace of Wells Dam during the time adult lamprey are migrating through the project area?
* Is there a summary of results of tailrace and fishway passage efficiencies and entrance efficiencies for adult lamprey at Wells Dam? If so, would the ASWG please share those with the Subgroups?
* Are there velocity profiles for various flow conditions at the entrances of the fishways at Wells Dam? If so, would the ASWG share those with the Subgroups?
* Why is the ASWG not comfortable using adult lamprey trapped downstream (e.g., at Priest Rapids Dam or other downstream locations) for conducting passage efficiency studies?

Tracy said he shared these questions with John Ferguson (Chair of the ASWG) and Andrew Gingerich (Douglas PUD). At this time, he has not received a response from the ASWG; however, he noted that these questions are on the agenda for the ASWG, which will meet next week. RD Nelle noted that about 7-10% of the adult lamprey have entered the Entiat River.

* 1. **Identification of Testable Hypotheses Addressing Adult Lamprey “Fate” in Reservoirs**–Tracy Hillman noted the joint Subgroup also discussed hypotheses that may explain the “disappearance” of adult lamprey within the reservoirs. Those included:
* Hypothesis 1 (Kirk Truscott): Operations may affect the quantity and quality of spawning habitat used by Pacific lamprey in the reservoirs. If lamprey spawn successfully in the reservoir and operations change flows such that redds are scoured, dewatered, or covered with fine sediments, then operations may affect lamprey survival in the reservoir.
* Hypothesis 2 (Steve Lewis): White sturgeon predation. Although predation is not directly linked to project operations, supplementation of sturgeon is a project-operation mitigation measure.
* Hypothesis 3 (Kirk Truscott): Changes in operations at the dams associated with salmonid passage could affect Pacific lamprey entrance efficiency. This hypothesis targets dams with fish passage enhancements or bypasses.
* Hypothesis 4 (Ralph Lampman): A lack of pheromones of sufficient concentrations upstream from projects may reduce the tendency of adult lamprey to migrate upstream.

Bob Rose indicated that even if adult lamprey are spawning within the reservoirs, we need to know if the spawning is successful. That is, do adults spawning within the reservoirs produce surviving offspring. Bob voiced concern with the second and third hypotheses, noting that it is unlikely they have a large effect on adult lamprey. Mike Clement agreed that changes in operations at the dams associated with salmonid passage affect adult lamprey. He said hydraulic modeling conducted before and after construction of the bypass showed little change in hydraulics. Tracy stated that most subgroup members appeared to gravitate to hypothesis #4 as the most logical hypothesis at this time. RD Nelle stated that although this hypothesis has merit, conversion rates between dams in the Upper Columbia do not necessarily support the hypothesis. That is, conversion rates should decrease as the fish move upstream (because fish move into tributaries), but rather they increase from Priest Rapids to Rocky Reach. RD suggested that a simple test of this hypothesis, in addition to the translocation work conducted by the tribes, is to collect adult lamprey and hold them in nets or cages near the upstream exits of the fishways. Provided the fish are not secreting distress chemicals, the presence of more concentrated lamprey pheromones in the fishways should encourage lamprey to enter and pass the dams. If this doesn’t attract fish to and through the fishways, then something other than lack of pheromones is preventing the fish from passing the dam.

Pat Wyena asked if the presence of lamprey larvae in the sediments that collect within the fishways affect adult lamprey passage through the fishways. That is, do adults hold in the fishways because of the presence of larvae there. Members noted that this is unlikely to cause adult delays in the fishways because adult pass through reservoirs, which contain lamprey larvae. Bob Rose asked if large numbers of larvae occur in the sediments within the fishways. Pat did not have an estimate, but noted that they come across a few larvae when they clean the ladders. Mike Clement added that the sediments and all fish are released into the tailrace of the dams. The Forum agreed to continue discussing hypotheses during the next meeting.

* 1. **Update on Adult Lamprey Monitoring** – Mike Clement reported there are no new updates at this time. Grant will download data soon. He added that Grant PUD will begin shutting down ladders for maintenance after Thanksgiving. Lastly, Mike indicated that this is the 10th year of implementing the Pacific Lamprey Management Plan. Thus, a large draft report will be submitted to Ecology in early 2018.
	2. **Request for Adult Lamprey in 2018** – Mike Clement asked if there is a need to collect adult lamprey at Priest Rapids Dam for dam-passage studies or translocation work in 2018. He said as part of labor forecasting, he has to identify labor needs in 2018. He will be talking with both Chelan and Douglas PUDs about their adult lamprey needs. Mike said he needs to know by early December if there is a need to collect adult lamprey at Priest Rapids Dam. If the request isn’t made by then, it is unlikely adult lamprey will be collected at Priest Rapids Dam in 2018.

Bob Rose indicated that there will be a need to collect adult lamprey for translocation in 2018 to mitigate for passage efficiencies that are less than 100% at Priest Rapids and Wanapum dams. Mike asked if Bob was okay using translocation of adults as the means to address adult NNI at Grant’s projects. Bob said yes, and there may be a few other things that the Forum needs to address; however, translocation of adults is an important first step. Members present recommended that Mike prepare a draft SOA for review during the next meeting. Mike said Grant can commit to trapping adults at Priest Rapids and releasing them upstream from Rock Island Dam. Patrick Verhey recommended that the language in the draft SOA be written so that some of the fish to be released upstream from Rock Island Dam could be transported by other entities to upstream locations such as in the Wenatchee, Methow, Okanogan, and Upper Columbia rivers. Mike agreed and stated that accepting fish and transporting them to locations not covered under an agreement would be resolved between Grant and the entities wanting to move the adults further upstream.

* 1. **Pacific Lamprey Policy Meeting in Portland** – Bob Rose reported that there will be a Pacific Lamprey Policy meeting at the Convention Center in Portland during the first week of December. The theme of the summit is “Implementing Action.” Bob indicated that a lack of money is currently limiting the implementation of actions. He said they are preparing a proposal that will be submitted to BPA to help fund actions in 2018. Mike Clement asked if Tom Dresser and Jeff Grizzel should attend the meeting. Bob responded that policy-level people should attend the meeting. Bob said the policy meeting will be on 5 December, while technical discussions will occur on 6-7 December. Patrick Verhey asked Bob if he has discussed this meeting with John Easterbrook (WDFW). Bob said no, but he will.

Given that several members of the PRFF will attend the Pacific Lamprey Meeting in Portland on 6 December, members decided to cancel the 6 December meeting of the PRFF.

* 1. **Other Pacific Lamprey Items** – None.
1. Next Meeting: 3 January 2018 – Grant PUD Natural Resources Wenatchee Office. The December meeting was canceled because of the Pacific Lamprey Meeting in Portland.