

Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee Meeting

Microsoft Teams
Tuesday, September 24, 2024
1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

PRCC Representatives and Alternatives

Curt Dotson, Tom Dresser (Alt), GPUD
 Kirk Truscott, Casey Baldwin (Alt), CTCR
 Tom Lorz, CTUIR
 Scott Carlon, Justin Yeager (Alt), NMFS
 Bill Gale, Jason Romine (Alt), USFWS

Chad Jackson, Andrew Murdoch (Alt), WDFW
 Keely Murdoch, Brandon Rogers (Alt), YN
 Larissa Rohrbach, Anchor QEA, Interim
 Facilitator
 Kristi Geris, Anchor QEA, Technical Support

Meeting Attendees

Larissa Rohrbach, Anchor QEA, Interim
 Facilitator
 Kristi Geris, Anchor QEA, Technical Support
 Curt Dotson, GPUD
 Rod O'Connor, GPUD
 Tim Taylor, GPUD

Tom Dresser, GPUD
 Scott Carlon, NMFS
 Chad Jackson, WDFW
 Kirk Truscott, CTCR
 Tom Lorz, CTUIR
 Pete McHugh, CRITFC (CTUIR)

Action Items

- R. O'Connor will inform the PRCC of any updates to the 2025–2027 Smolt Survival Study data plan, should they arise. *(This item is ongoing.)*
- L. Rohrbach will work with T. Dresser to identify a date for a 2024 PRCC Policy Committee meeting. *(This item is ongoing.)*
- K. Truscott will verify the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CTCR) PRCC Policy Committee representation.
- T. Lorz will provide an updated Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) PRCC Representation Designation Letter.

- K. Truscott will coordinate with H. McLellan (CTCR) regarding an update on the Northern Pike Removal (2022 to 2024) effort in the November or December 2024 meetings.
- L. Rohrbach will connect with A. Murdoch and J. Ferguson (Habitat Conservation Plan Coordinating Committee [HCP-CC] Chair) about a joint session with the HCP-CC Subyearling Chinook Salmon Workshop topics.

Review Items

- None.

Decisions and Approvals

- None.

I. Welcome, Announcements, Agenda Review, and Meeting Minutes Approval

L. Rohrbach served as interim facilitator for the meeting.

T. Lorz introduced P. McHugh, who is now in the job formerly held by Tom Skiles at CRITFC and who previously represented the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation on the PRCC. T. Lorz will provide an updated CRITFC PRCC Representation Designation Letter.

L. Rohrbach reviewed the agenda. No additions or changes were requested by PRCC members, and the agenda was approved by all parties in attendance.

The draft minutes from the August 27 conference call were distributed on September 12. No revisions were received, and the minutes were approved by members who attended that meeting. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service abstained. *(Note: K. Murdoch approved the minutes via email after the meeting on September 24.)*

II. Actions Items Review

Action items from the PRCC August 27 conference call and follow-up discussions were as follows: *(Note: Italicized text corresponds to agenda items from the August 27 conference call.)*

- *C. Dotson will inform the PRCC of any updates to the 2025–2027 Smolt Survival Study data plan, should they arise.*

This item is ongoing.

- *L. Rohrbach will work with T. Dresser to identify a date for a 2024 PRCC Policy Committee meeting.*

L. Rohrbach distributed a Doodle Poll, and she is still awaiting responses. This item is ongoing. K. Truscott will verify the CTCR PRCC Policy Committee representation.

- *A. Murdoch will develop a draft agenda for further discussing Subyearling Chinook Salmon Workshop topics.*
This draft document was distributed on September 17.
- *T. Dresser will reach out to D. Duvall (Grant PUD) for an update on the Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II.*
An update from D. Duvall was forwarded on September 24.
- *K. Truscott will reach out to H. McLellan (CTCR) for an update on the Northern Pike Removal (2022 to 2024) effort.*
K. Truscott will coordinate with H. McLellan once the PRCC November and December 2024 meeting dates are confirmed.
- *L. Rohrbach will review the PRCC approval of Grant PUD's request for No Net Impact (NNI) funding for the 2024 Quincy Northern Pikeminnow Derby (PRCC meeting on February 27), regarding the request to review results of the derby for assessing the success of the derby compared to previous years.*
The derby will take place October 4 to 6. The metrics discussed last month were correct (see meeting minutes).

III. PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee Update – White River Hatchery Program

L. Rohrbach said the PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee (HSC) has convened extra meetings over the last couple of months working toward compiling the “framework and approach” materials for the expert panel, which ultimately require PRCC approval. The HSC has approved four of six documents: Panel Scope (description of task), Expert Panel Invitation Letter, Conflict of Interest Form, and Expert Panel Answer Form. The HSC is still working on the following two documents:

- The Panel Candidate List – The HSC is ranking individuals across a range of subject matter to prioritize who T. Hillman should reach out to first.
- Panel Reading List (bibliography) – The HSC is considering which resources should be required reading to understand the Wenatchee River basin and role of the White River spawning aggregate. Information is being sorted by, “essential,” “highly recommended,” or “other informative reading.” Some reading includes papers written as part of the 10-year Comprehensive Hatchery Program Review, as well as the Hatchery Monitoring and Evaluation Implementation Plan, which is still under review.

The HSC has proposed the following plan for obtaining PRCC approval of the package of materials. The HSC plans to approve these last two items during their October 17 meeting. One week later, an HSC representative will present all materials to the PRCC during the October 22 meeting. The PRCC will have a 2-week review before a vote via email. Once approved, this starts a 1-year clock to convene the expert panel.

L. Rohrbach recommended that PRCC representatives coordinate with their respective HSC representatives to make sure there are no surprises and the PRCC is ready to approve within this 2-week timeline.

B. Gale said that when this White River topic came up a decade ago, there was a lot of consternation in the community at large. Has the HSC talked about public outreach? L. Rohrbach said no, this has not been discussed in the HSC directly, but the HSC is aware of past challenges. T. Dresser said after concern was raised in the past, he provided two public outreach meetings in Plains, Washington. This was pre-COVID, and both meetings were attended by about 20 to 30 people. For background, a lot of players have changed up there. There was pushback, but mostly it was questions about why to implement this program up there. Within the last month, T. Dresser has reached out to M. Kaputa (Chelan County Natural Resources Department) to discuss the PRCC Policy Committee SOA related to White River, which included the process, timeline, and interest in reaching out to stakeholders again. T. Dresser is planning on having further conversations with M. Kaputa to develop a key stakeholder list. Once the PRCC approves the expert panel materials, this might be a good time frame for outreach with stakeholders.

IV. Subyearling Workshop Follow-Up – Draft Discussion Framework

L. Rohrbach said A. Murdoch's draft Subyearling Chinook Survival Study Workshop Synopsis (Attachment A) was distributed on September 18. A. Murdoch was not able to attend the meeting. This is his interpretation of a starting place for discussion; however, he is open to revision and additions. She suggested having A. Murdoch walk through this document, which includes his interpretation of pros and cons of subyearling survival study approaches, fish passage data, and a draft agenda at the end. There has been back and forth on whether this should be a joint discussion, and if it is, there needs to be agreement on which components should be joint or separate.

C. Dotson shared his initial comments. He is unsure what is being conveyed with the graphs. The workshop synopsis is missing the environmental components about timing of the study and issues with water temperature and tag rejection. There is a lot about estimation of delayed mortality when delayed mortality has not yet been well-defined. There are a couple pages about different models—why not use a traditional paired release study? Defining what is an active migrant also needs to be specified.

B. Gale suggested including study objectives or agreements so everyone is clear about the purpose of this subyearling study, including life history. Is this a study about spring Chinook subyearlings or summer Chinook subyearlings? R. O'Connor asked for clarification about whether the group is talking about a compliance evaluation versus a behavioral study. S. Carlon said in the next month or so, the National Marine Fisheries Service has an internal meeting for Section 7 about periodicity of runs. While adult run timing is pretty well understood, with juveniles, there is a lot of disagreement.

L. Rohrbach said these are all good points that could each require a lot of discussion. She suggested that A. Murdoch update his document based on this feedback.

C. Jackson said that during today's HCP-CC meeting, Chelan PUD and Douglas PUD agreed to a joint session, so long as decisions occur in separate committees. C. Dotson said Grant PUD is also supportive of a joint session.

L. Rohrbach will reconnect with A. Murdoch about his draft agenda for further discussing Subyearling Chinook Salmon Workshop topics and will connect with J. Ferguson (HCP-CC Chair) about a joint session with the HCP-CC.

V. 2024 Fish Passage Operations Report

A. Fish Ladder Inspections

C. Dotson said K. Murdoch and M. Clement (Grant PUD) meet in person every other month. October is the next in-person inspection.

B. Fish Spill Updates

C. Dotson said Priest Rapids Dam (PRD) and Wanapum Dam (WAN) are spilling for adult fallback, which will continue until November 15. S. Carlon asked about the volume of spill. C. Dotson said both projects are spilling 2,500 cubic feet per second.

C. Adult Fish Counts for 2024 (April 15 to November 15)

L. Rohrbach reviewed the adult fish counts through September 13, shown below, which are progressing as expected.

VI. Project	Spring Chinook Salmon (Adult + Jack) ^a	Summer Chinook Salmon (Adult + Jack) ^b	Fall Chinook Salmon ^c	Sockeye Salmon	Coho Salmon	Steelhead
Priest Rapids	15,720	40,766	11,584	699,679	13,371	7,665
Wanapum	16,810	37,622	4,970	697,869	9,414	6,906
Rock Island	15,676	44,621	3,113	728,799	6,402	6,156

Notes:

a: Chinook counted from April 15 to June 13 are considered spring Chinook Salmon.

b: Chinook counted from June 14 to August 13 are considered summer Chinook Salmon.

c: Chinook counted from August 14 to September 13 are considered fall Chinook Salmon.

T. Dresser said last month, he discussed crowder cleaning activities at PRD and WAN, and shared that WAN was not collecting data through August. He met with operators who clarified WAN has in fact been collecting these data (see last month meeting minutes for metrics). A more formal update will be provided in November.

UPDATES

VI. Review of Outstanding NNI-Funded Projects

- **Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II**

An update from D. Duvall was forwarded on September 24.

- **Northern Pike Removal (2022 to 2024)**

No updates were shared.

- **Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Passive Integrated Transponder Tag Detection Barge**

No updates were shared.

- **2024 Quincy Northern Pikeminnow Derby**

No updates were shared.

- **2024 Real Time Research (RTR) Avian Predation Study**

C. Dotson said a draft report and presentation will be available this fall. Allen Evans (RTR) is the contact.

VII. C. Dotson Retirement

C. Dotson announced he is retiring next week. T. Taylor will be the new contact for RTR Avian Predation Study activities. R. O'Connor will be the new contact for the 2025–2027 Smolt Survival Study. T. Dresser said he will be the new Grant PUD PRCC Representative.

VIII. Subcommittee Updates

L. Rohrbach will continue to forward subcommittee notes and materials to PRCC members and alternates.

- Priest Rapids Fish Forum – September 4 canceled; next meeting October 2.
- Habitat Subcommittee – met September 12; next meeting October 10.
- Fall Chinook Work Group – met May 7, next meeting October 8.
- Hatchery Subcommittee – met August 21, next meeting September 19.

IX. SOAs Discussed in 2024

SOA number	Key Words	Last Discussed	Status
SOA-2024-1	Fish Mode Exceptions	July 23, 2024	Approved

X. Next Meetings

The next meeting of the PRCC will be October 22, in person, at the Wanapum Dam Hydro Building, with a Teams meeting for virtual attendance.

The November and December meetings were rescheduled to Monday, November 18, and Monday, December 16, to be held virtually.

XI. Attachments

- Attachment A – Subyearling Chinook Survival Study Workshop Synopsis

Subyearling Chinook Survival Study

Workshop Synopsis

1. Tag Types

PIT tags

Advantages

- More representative sample using 8mm (> 45 mm; Tiffan et al. 2021)
- Estimate of delayed mortality (juvenile and adults)

Disadvantages

- No project specific survival (except Wells)
- Possible low detection efficiency at McNary
- Large effort to tag fish

ELAT tags

Advantage

- Estimate project survival

Disadvantage

- No estimate of delayed mortality
- Less representative sample (> 60 mm)
- Short battery life (~30 d)

2. Study Fish

Wild fish

Advantage

- More representative sample (size and migration timing)

Disadvantage

- Large effort to tag fish
- Complex migration/rearing behavior

Hatchery fish

Advantage

- Less effort to tag

Disadvantage

- Not representative of wild fish

3. Survival Model (Single project)

ViPRE

Advantage

- Common method in UCR

Disadvantage

- Requires twice as many study fish and money.
- Biased results due to no dead fish releases.
- No estimate delayed mortality due to short tag life.
- Sources of study fish maybe problematic for some projects (i.e., not representative).

ViRDCT

Advantage

- Fewer fish less cost
- Less biased and more precise

Disadvantage

- No estimate delayed mortality due to short tag life.
- Sources of study fish problematic for some projects (i.e., not representative).

4. Survival Model (Multiple projects)

ViPRe

Advantage

- More representative migration experience (i.e., multiple dams)
- Lower cost (i.e., use downstream release for the upstream release of the next project)
- Estimate project and reach survival

Disadvantage

- Requires twice as many study fish and money.
- Biased results due to no dead fish releases
- No estimate delayed mortality due to short tag life.

ViRDCT

Advantage

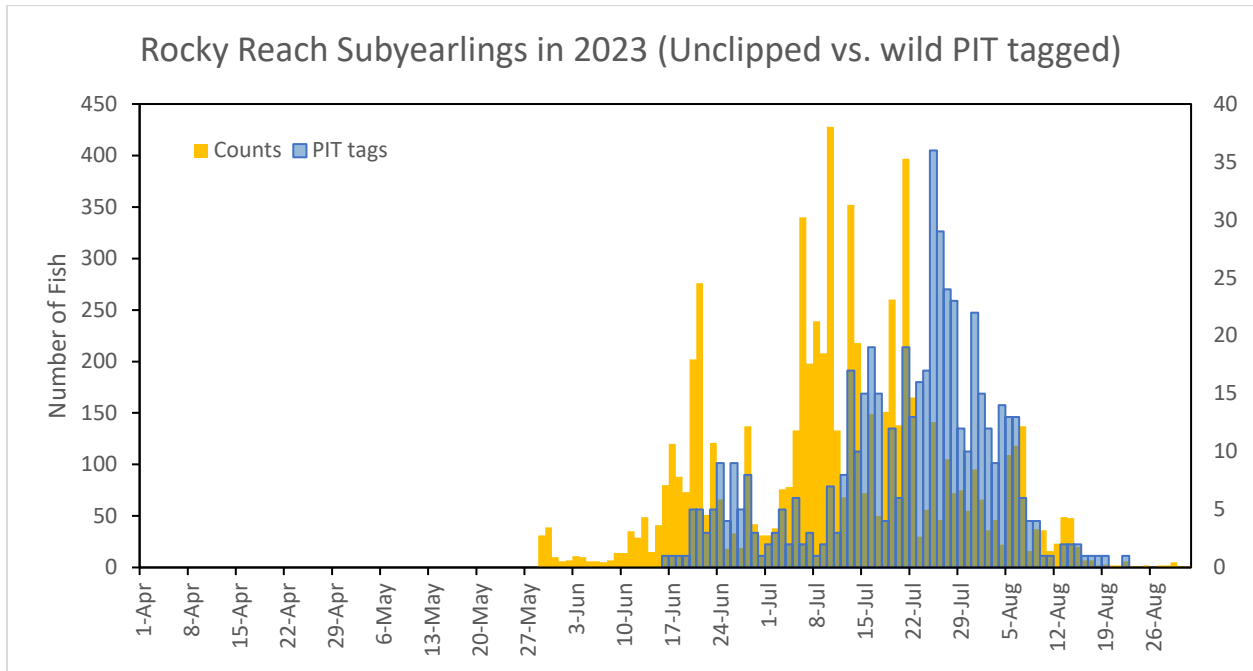
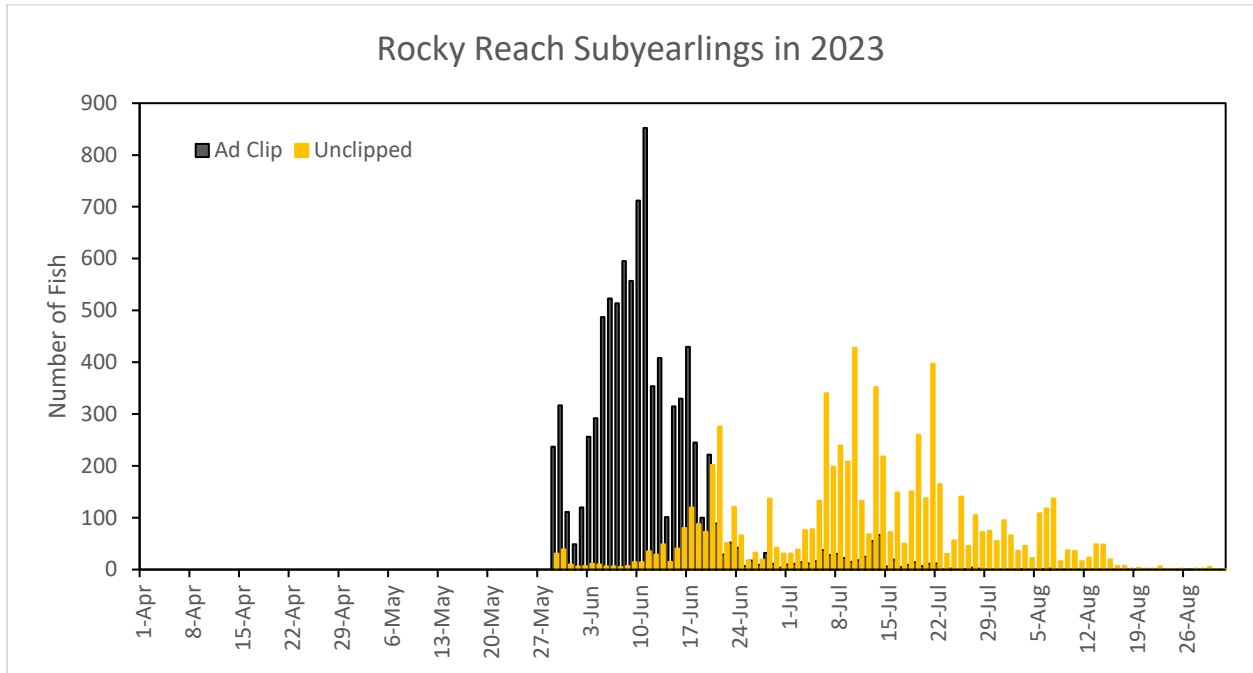
- Least cost (use survivors detected at tailrace array as virtual release group)
- Least biased and most precise estimates of survival
- More representative migration experience (i.e., multiple dams)
- Estimate project and reach survival.

Disadvantage

- No estimate delayed mortality due to short tag life.
- Need to time supplemental releases correctly to augment sample sizes for next project.

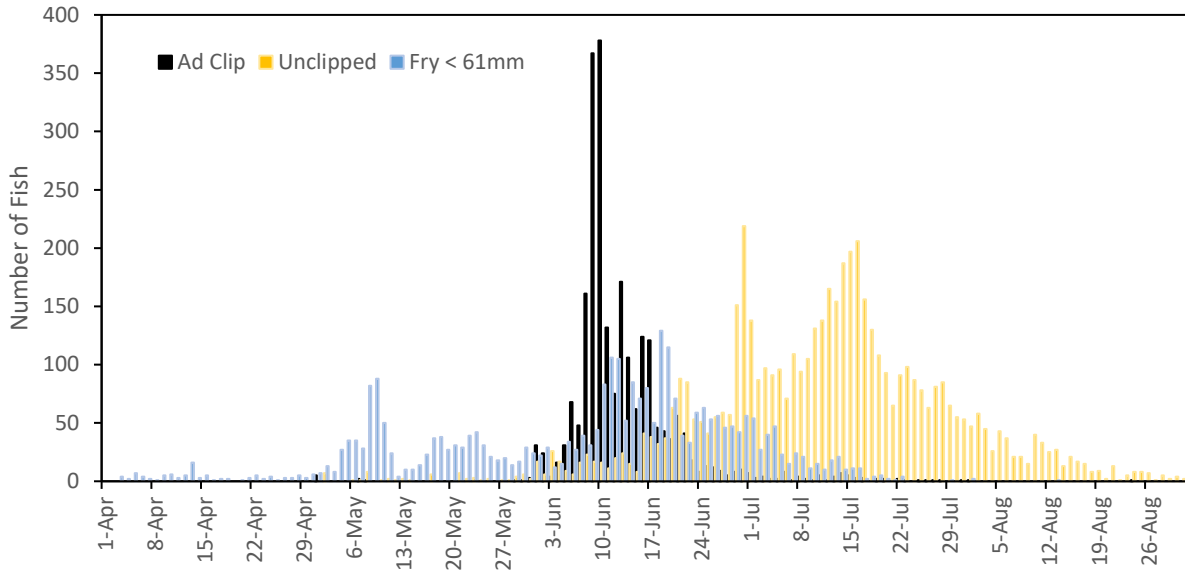
Background Information (What is missing?)

Migrations Timing (Unclipped include wild and some hatchery)

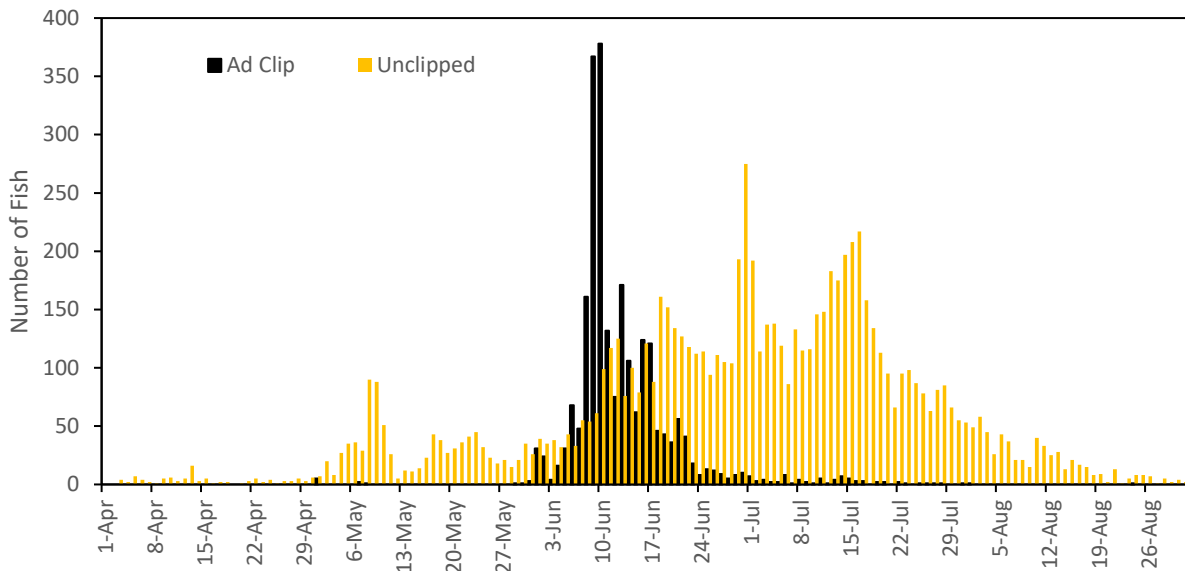


Passage	Unclipped	PIT tags
0%	29-May	16-Jun
5%	15-Jun	24-Jun
50%	11-Jul	24-Jul
95%	7-Aug	6-Aug
100%	17-Aug	19-Aug
Number of days		
95%	53	43

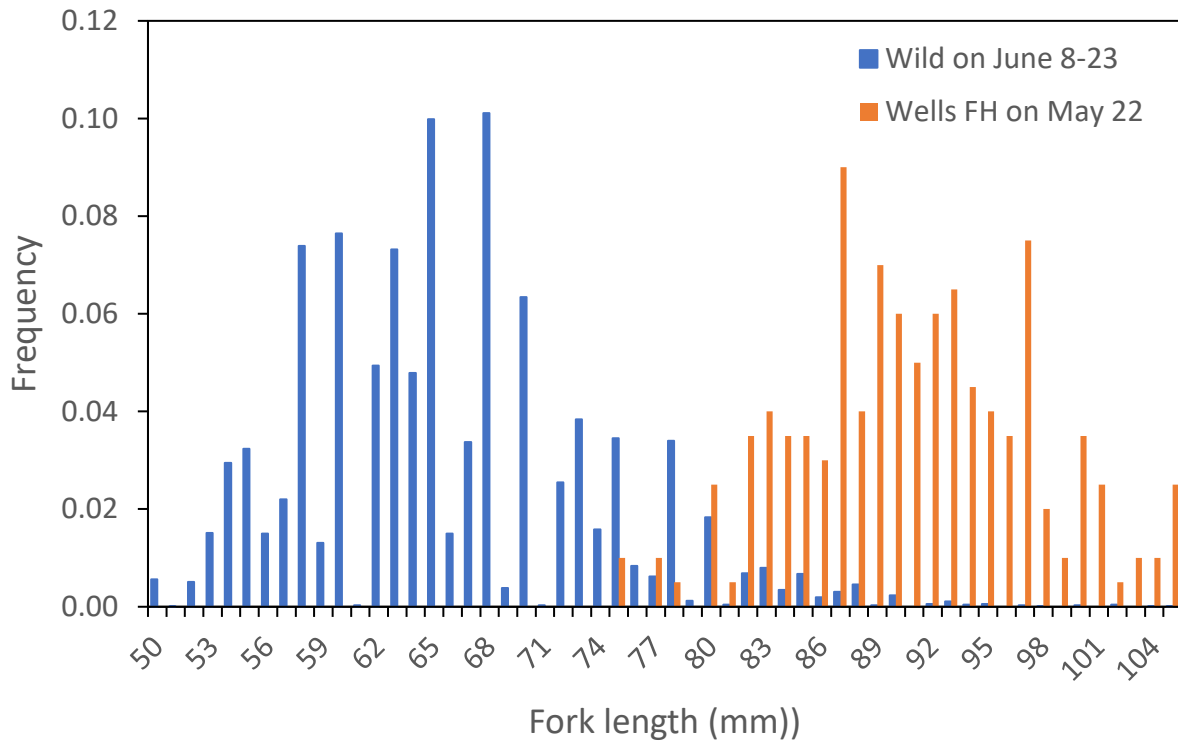
Rock Island Subyearlings in 2023



Rock Island Subyearlings in 2023

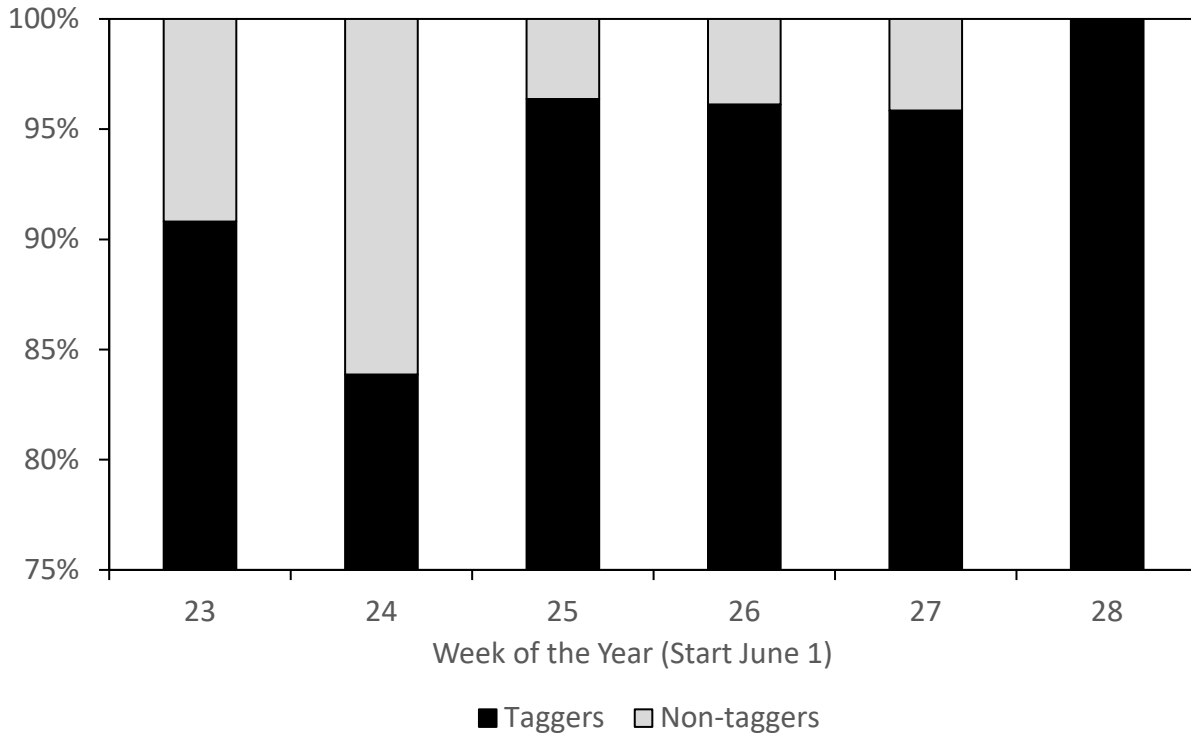


	Clip	Unclipped
0%	1-May	3-Apr
5%	5-Jun	9-May
50%	10-Jun	1-Jul
95%	25-Jun	3-Aug
100%	20-Jul	24-Aug
Number of Days		
95%	20	86



Origin	Date	FL	SD	N
Wild	6/8/2023	63	6	1280
Wild	6/12/2023	63	6	2887
Wild	6/14/2023	65	6	972
Wild	6/15/2023	69	7	411
Wild	6/16/2023	71	8	1134
Wild	6/22/2023	75	8	398
Wild	6/23/2023	74	11	187
Wild	All	66	8	7269
Hatchery	5/22/2023	91	7	200

- Migration timing at Rocky Reach seems skewed. No early fish (fry)?
- Can reporting be consistent across both projects (Fry, unclipped and clipped)?
- Wild fish are smaller and exhibit prolonged migration (I think we knew this)



Mean proportion of wild subyearling Chinook Salmon PIT tagged by CCT staff in Wells Reservoir (2019-2024).

Draft Agenda

1. Tag type.
 - a. PIT, AT or both?
 - b. Study goals (Project or dam)?

2. Study fish.
 - a. Are hatchery fish good surrogates for wild fish?
 - i. Can migration and size differences be addressed in the study design?
 - b. Wild collection locations (Wells, Rocky Reach and Rock Island reservoirs)
 - i. Can enough fish of taggable size be captured?
 1. Feasibility studies in Rocky Reach and Rock Island reservoirs?

3. Model type.
 - a. ViPRe vs. ViDCT

4. Study Design (single vs. multiple)
 - a. Spatial design (single vs. multiple)
 - i. Temporal design (number of weeks)

