



**Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee
 FINAL Meeting MINUTES
 Tuesday, August 16, 2022, 9 AM
 Douglas PUD Auditorium**

PRCC Representatives

Scott Carlon, Justin Yeager (Alt), NMFS	Jim Craig, USFWS
Keely Murdoch, Brandon Rogers (Alt), YN	Kirk Truscott, Casey Baldwin (alt), CCT
Chad Jackson, A. Murdoch (Alt) WDFW	Tom Skiles, CTUIR
Curt Dotson, Tom Dresser (Alt), GPUD	

PRCC Meeting Attendees

Curt Dotson, GPUD	Keely Murdoch, YN
Scott Carlon, NMFS -Absent	Jim Craig, USFWS
Chad Jackson, WDFW (via Zoom)	Kirk Truscott, CCT
Tom Skiles, CTUIR - Absent	Erin Harris, GPUD (Via Zoom)
Bryan Nordlund, FPE (facilitator)	Andrew Murdoch, WDFW (Via Zoom)

Meeting Minutes

Decisions and Approvals Made During August 16, 2022, Meeting

1. Action: Curt Dotson will add updates to his Survival Study discussion document built from the bullet list (in meeting’s agenda) and distribute for continuing this discussion at future PRCC meetings. He will also reach out to Chelan PUD to discuss feasibility of using their facilities as a source for study fish. Committee members will send any additions or questions to Curt Dotson.
2. **ACTION:** *Fish ladder inspections:* Bryan Nordlund will reach out to Tom Skiles for a current report on fishway operations.
3. **ACTION:** Bryan Nordlund will provide an updated Operations Protocols document for distribution at the next PRCC meeting.

4. **ACTION:** Bryan Nordlund will add Wanapum fish counts to table V.4 in the template meeting agenda.

- I. **Welcome, Announcements and Introductions** – Bryan Nordlund welcomed all the attendees to today’s meeting and noted Scott Carlon would not be present. Tom Skiles was also absent. Bryan announced that Nathan Buck from the Wanapum Band will be added to the PRCC email distribution list for announcements and materials and may also be attending the PRCC meetings in the future.

- II. **Agenda Review** – No additions were made to the approved agenda.

- III. **Meeting Minutes Approval**

1. July 26, 2022, PRCC meeting minutes were distributed by Bryan Nordlund by email on August 8. Comments are due by September 8, 2022. June 28, 2022, meeting minutes have been approved by the PRCC and are ready for posting.

- IV. **Status of Actions Items from July 26, 2022, Meeting**
No action items to report.

- V. **2021 Fish Passage Operations Report**

1. **Update on investigations for fish count discrepancy:**

Curt Dotson shared that Grant PUD is continuing the measures implemented to improve accuracy of fish ladder counts at Wanapum and Priest Rapids.

The topic of shad presence in large numbers was discussed by the PRCC. Could Wanapum sockeye counts be high relative to Priest Rapids because Priest Rapids sockeye counts are artificially low because of shad presence obscuring sockeye counting? Curt Dotson pointed out that there are orifice passage only control weirs upstream of the count station at Priest Rapids that effectively block most shad. As a result, if large numbers of shad are present at the count station, it may be difficult to accurately count other species especially smaller fish such as sockeye.

It was suggested that Bryan Nordlund add a row to the fish count report below in V.4 to show Wanapum fish counts.

2. **Fish ladder inspections:**

Tom Skiles performs monthly ladder inspections at the GPUD dams for the fisheries agencies and tribes. Tom Skiles was absent, and no update was provided. Bryan Nordlund will reach out to Tom Skiles.

3. **Fish spill updates:**

Per Curt Dotson, spill season is nearly completed for the 2022 juvenile out-migration and is expected to conclude the week of August 22, 2022. Bryan Nordlund asked about the triggers that end spill for the season. Curt Dotson said

that when juvenile counts go down to around 20-30 fish per day for several days at the Rock Island sampler, the outmigration is probably approaching the required 95% of the run to be passed by bypass operation and fish mode, per the SSSA. Rock Island daily counts are entered into a historical model for Rock Island Sampler, which compares current count total percentage to historic run timing percentage. Historically August 18-23 is the range of dates for fish spill to end for the season.

4. Fish counts for 2022 (April 15 – August 4)

Project/Life Stage	Spring Chinook (final)	Summer Chinook	Sockeye	Fall Chinook	Steelhead	Coho
Priest Rapids adults	21091	59893	647614		945	
Rock Island adults	22487	60802	645094		1017	
Priest Rapids jacks	3329	804				
Rock Island-jacks	3509	2220				

Note: There was an error in spring Chinook counts provided on the July PRCC meeting agenda. These were corrected in the meeting minutes.

VI. Continuing discussion - Develop PRCC operations protocols (e.g., SOA development, timing, agenda items, presentations etc.) The committee discussed SOA timeline and agreed that 10 business days should be allowed for voting on a SOA. If need be, voting on a particular SOA can be expedited either by voting at a PRCC meeting where the SOA is presented or by email vote after the meeting.

By PRCC consensus, any protocol timeline can be adjusted to allow for expanded review within an agency or tribe, or if experts need to be consulted.

Agenda items should be sent as they arise or with an official call for agenda items.

The draft meeting minutes should be sent out for PRCC review one week after the PRCC meeting with comments due in 10 business days. This will allow for final approval at the following meeting.

Survival Study Reports were discussed. Basically, these reports have three phases: 1) design/study implementation document, 2) draft study results report and 3) the final study report. These three phases would be allowed a 90/30/30 day review period. It was noted that study plan logistics may require flexibility on these dates. For example, tags for a subsequent study may need to be ordered before the final study report review period ends. The PRCC agreed that flexibility on review periods is necessary and will be allowed by consensus of the PRCC.

Committee members suggested that the strawman protocol spreadsheet had been sufficiently discussed and could be converted to a Word document. Today's updates will be added to the strawman spreadsheet, and it will be converted to a draft Word document.

Action: Bryan Nordlund will provide an updated draft Operations Protocols document in Word format for distribution at the next PRCC meeting.

VII. Continuing preliminary discussion - Survival study talking points.

Curt will distribute his updates to the working document based on previous survival study experience and the PRCC will discuss:

- timing, species, life stage(s)
- future workshops needed?
- tag type
- standard to measure (combine projects? combine adult + juvenile?)
- accuracy/precision of data analysis
- fish source
- release points
- assessing tag and tagger effects detection points
- dealing with adverse river flow conditions
- plant operations
- achieving standard or not – path forward
- factoring in avian predation
- others, per PRCC discussion?

The PRCC discussed two of these points in some level of detail. First, it was suggested that a priority be given to investigating sources of fish for future studies. Several ideas were discussed including collection of study fish from samplers at Rock Island and Rocky Reach Dams; gateway dipping at Wanapum Dam; hatchery fish raised for survival studies and collection nets in the reservoir. Gateway equipment and crews no longer are used at Grant PUD project, and it would take some level of effort to revive this program. Coordination with Chelan PUD would be required to use their facilities, and some site modifications would likely be necessary. A reservoir collection scheme was briefly discussed (nets and barges), but this concept would require considerable development. Lastly, hatchery production might be possible for study fish, but considerable care would be required to match the run of river outmigration.

Action: Curt Dotson will continue updates to his Survival Study discussion document built from the bullet list above and distribute for continuing this discussion at future PRCC meetings. He will also reach out to Chelan PUD to discuss feasibility of using their facilities as a source for study fish.

VIII. PRCC Facilitator - One year evaluation

PRCC discussion – Bryan Nordlund left the room. Committee members discussed the SOA 2021-06 Facilitator Selection and the past year with Bryan Nordlund as their current facilitator. When Bryan returned, Curt Dotson shared with him that everyone

approves Bryan Nordlund as the PRCC facilitator. Bryan Nordlund will remind absentee members of this vote and advise them to speak with other PRCC members if they do not agree with the current consensus.

UPDATES

IX. Review of Outstanding NNI Funded Projects

1. Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II. (No updates)
2. Avian Predation on ESA-listed Juvenile Salmonids on the Mid-Columbia River, 2022. (Weekly updates distributed)
3. Northern Pike Removal (2022-2024). (Program is in place)

X. Sub-Committee Updates

Bryan Nordlund has forwarded the latest subcommittee distributions he has received to date via email.

1. Priest Rapids Fish Forum – PRFF conference call occurred on August 3.
2. Habitat Subcommittee – no HabSC meeting in August.
3. Fall Chinook Work Group – no update.
4. Hatchery Subcommittee – Nordlund added that the Hatchery Sub-Committee will meet via Web-X on Aug 17,

XI. SOA documents discussed in 2022

SOA number	Key words	Last Discussed	Status
2021-06	Facilitator selection	January 25, 2022	open

XII. Next Meetings

The next PRCC meeting is scheduled for September 27 at Wanapum Hydro Office Building in conference room, HOB-107 at 1 PM, and October 25 at Douglas PUD Auditorium at 9 AM