



## Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee Meeting Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 25, 2022

1:00 pm

### PRCC Representatives

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Scott Carlon, Justin Yeager (Alt), NMFS  
Keely Murdoch, Brandon Rogers (Alt), YN  
Chad Jackson, P. Verhey (Alt) WDFW  
Curt Dotson, Tom Dresser (Alt), GPUD  
Bryan Nordlund, FPE (facilitator)

Jim Craig, USFWS  
Kirk Truscott, Casey Baldwin (alt), CCT  
Tom Skiles, CTUIR  
Erin Harris, Admin Ass't, GPUD

### PRCC Meeting Attendees

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Curt Dotson, GPUD  
Scott Carlon, NMFS  
Chad Jackson, WDFW  
Tom Skiles, CTUIR  
Kirk Truscott, CCT  
Bryan Nordlund, FPE (facilitator)

Keely Murdoch, YN  
Tom Dresser, GPUD  
Erin Harris, GPUD  
Jim Craig, USFWS

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### Decisions, Approvals and Action Items Made During Tuesday, January 25, 2022 Meeting

1. Under item III. Meeting Minutes Approval - November 16, 2021- **Approved** and December 14, 2021- **Approved**
2. Under item IV. 2021 Fish Count Discrepancies – **Action:** Tom Skiles will share a rough draft of his graphs and data on fish counts with committee members.
3. Under item VI. Discussion of tern predation NNI proposal with RTR – **Action:** Keely Murdoch will send her RTR questions to Curt Dotson and all the committee members. And Curt Dotson will send the questions to and ask RTR if they can attend the February meeting. GPUD, Curt Dotson/Bryan Nordlund will ask RTR to present on their proposal request and answer committee members questions.
4. Under VII. SOA 2021-06 – PRCC discussion - **Action:** Bryan Nordlund will call each committee member individually for their 6-month facilitation check-in.

5. Under VIII. NNI funding discussion – 2022 Northern Pike Minnow Derby. - **Approved** in the amount of \$25,000.00 from NNI 601 Fund.

## **Agenda**

### **I. Welcome, Announcement and Introductions**

Bryan Nordlund welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave an announcement that Pete Graf has accepted a new position within Grant PUD (River Coordinator) and will be leaving the PRCC as the Grant PUD alternate. Bryan Nordlund mentioned that Tom Dresser will be filling in as GPUD's alternate member.

Bryan encouraged the PRCC to start thinking about the check-in survival studies, which will commence in a few years. He reminded the PRCC that these studies form the basis for Grant's Priest Rapids Project's No Net Impact. As such, he thought it would be good to start discussion within the PRCC to:

- 1) share knowledge of successes, failures, limitations, methods and results of past studies,
- 2) bring in new technology concepts, and
- 3) start thinking about how check-in studies could be best conducted.

- II. Agenda Review** – Bryan Nordlund asked members if anyone had any additions to the agenda. No additions were made.

### **III. Meeting Minutes Approval**

**A.** November 16, 2021, PRCC meeting minutes – November minutes were distributed by Bryan Nordlund by email on Dec 3. Comments were due by January 3, 2022 and will be voted on as final at the January PRCC meeting. - **Approved**

**B.** December 14, 2021, meeting minutes were distributed Dec 27, 2021. Comments are due January 27, 2022. - **Approved**

### **IV. Status of Actions Items from December 14, 2021, Meeting**

- **2021 Fish Count Discrepancies** – Curt Dotson will bring the concerns on discrepancies in fish ladder counts between Priest Rapids and Rock Island to Grant PUD staff who operate the fish ladders and do fish counting to share ideas for solutions at the January meeting. Specifically, Curt Dotson talked about developing a specified logbook to account for dates/times the fish ladder picket leads are left open because of debris build-up. Curt also said that during the ladder outages, the count station structure will be inspected for gaps that may allow fish to slip by the count station. He also plans to discuss technical and administrative details of counting fish, comparing daily counts with previous day counts, and increase quality control evaluations with fish counting staff throughout the season. -**Ongoing**

- **Statement of Agreements** - Curt Dotson will send Bryan Nordlund SOA's 2021-01, 2021-02 and 2021-03. **-Complete**
- **Keely Murdoch will send Bryan Nordlund SOA 2021-06**, and it will be discussed and finalized as appropriate in a future PRCC meeting. **-Complete**
- **Curt Dotson will check with Dave Duvall on status** of "Barkley Irrigation Co Permanent Point of Diversion, Completing Implementation of the Permanent Solution Habitat Project". Curt Dotson shared that Dave has been trying to get in ahold of Aaron Penvose with Trout Unlimited. **-Ongoing**
- **Scott Carlon to follow up** on Corp/BOR Avian Predation Management. Scott Carlon shared communication with CSR (Lynne Krasnow - NOAA) group involved with their BiOp requirements. **-In Progress**
- **Bryan Nordlund - Email distribution** of PRFF, Habitat and Hatchery SC reports. **-Ongoing**
- **Erin Harris to accumulate and post all PRCC SOAs** on the Grant PUD website by end of 2021, at the latest. **-Complete**

#### V. 2021 Fish Passage Operations Report

##### *Final fish counts for 2021 (April 15 – November 15)*

Project/Life Stage	Spring Chinook	Summer Chinook	Sockeye	Fall Chinook	Steelhead	Coho
Priest Rapids adults	13105	49315	76855	51625	2808	47990
Rock Island adults	12332	52076	109367	16013	4558	64296
Priest Rapids jacks	1447	2298	–	2289	–	1640
Rock Island-jacks	1469	2339	–	1157	–	1878

##### **Update on investigations for fish count discrepancy:**

(also see action item IV above). The PRCC discussed potential options for filling in missing fish count data when picket leads are left open. Ideas such as comparing daily counts with previous day counts at Priest Rapids or comparing to later counts (maybe 2 days) at Rock Island may provide for a general sense of whether fish counts seem to line up as expected for accuracy. Curt Dotson also reminded that GPUD plans to increase quality control evaluations throughout the season. Bryan Nordlund asked if fish count discrepancies with Rock Island fish counts are similar at Wanapum and Priest Rapids Dams. Curt Dotson discussed factors that play a part with counts at each dam and corrective options. Tom Skiles talked about his assessment of PIT tag detections at the GPUD ladders to see if patterns with PIT tag detections mirrored ladder counts and found that PIT

data was sparse and insufficient to show any differences. Tom will share a rough draft with committee members. Bryan Nordlund asked if anyone knew what percentage of steelhead in the Upper Columbia were PIT tagged. Keely Murdoch commented that numbers of steelhead PIT tagged as juveniles should be available, and that the PIT tagging of steelhead annually at the OLAFT should provide an estimate of the proportion of the run that is PIT tagged as well as additional PIT tags that could be used to help true-up steelhead counts. Tom Dresser shared further information on routine processes/operations that Dam Operators perform based on presence of loose river vegetation, weather conditions, and season. He also discussed ladder and dam maintenance and will emphasize the importance of fish counts during operator training.

***Fish ladder inspections:***

Tom Skiles performs monthly ladder inspections at the GPUD dams for the fisheries agencies and tribes. Tom reported that this year's inspections are now complete and inspection data compiled. Inspections will start up in April of 2022.

***Fish spill updates:***

Spill season is over for 2021.

- VI. Discussion of tern predation NNI proposal** - Curt Dotson presented a proposal from RTR requesting \$293,820 for monitoring Caspian tern activity in the Goose Island/Potholes region and estimating avian predation on salmonid smolts via PIT tag detections at known bird colonies. Curt Dotson stated that the BOR tern management program (presently) is less than what was seen by RTR/OSU (prior to 2020), with less man-hours at the colony and no program presently in place to evaluate avian predation rates on salmonids at the colony. Curt Dotson mentioned that BOR has planned to increase their hazing activities at Goose Island during the peak of tern nesting season by 35 – 50% as a result of data collected by RTR in 2020. Chad Jackson inquired when RTR will release their 2021 report and Curt Dotson replied that the RTR 2021 (draft) Report will be completed and sent out in February 2022. Tom Dresser stated that Grant PUD has monthly meetings with BOR staff, and said they are aware and working to meet their requirements. Keely Murdoch inquired about when voting on this proposal will take place and Curt Dotson asked for a vote at the February meeting. Keely also made a request that two items be added to RTR's reports – 1) predation rates by origin and 2) hatchery vs. wild fish rates. **Action: Keely Murdoch will send her questions/comments regarding this proposal to the PRCC, and Curt Dotson pass these on to RTR staff. Curt will also ask RTR if they can present and answer questions about their proposal at the February PRCC meeting.**
- VII. SOA 2021-06 – PRCC discussion** - Bryan Nordlund was asked about his official start date and responded with August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. The committee members discussed that February's meeting will be his 6<sup>th</sup> meeting and they could have informal discussion regarding his performance at the February or March 2022,

PRCC meeting. Bryan Nordlund would also like to see the checklist that is mentioned in SOA 2021-06, regarding evaluation of the facilitator. **Action: Bryan Nordlund will call each committee member individually for feedback on how he can improve as the PRCC facilitator.**

**VIII. NNI funding discussion – 2022 Northern Pike Minnow Derby.** Bryan Nordlund reminded the committee that one member voted “no” on this NNI proposal at the December 2021 meeting. Grant PUD went back to Quincy Valley Tourism Committee, and they changed their proposal around regarding how the NNI funds would be used in regard to the type of prizes awarded at the derby, which were the primary concern with the “no” vote. Example being an off-road vehicle (ATV) prize was an issue because of concern for potential damage to habitat by the use of the ATV (as a won prize). In response, Quincy Valley revised their proposal to provide cash prizes instead. Scott Carlon stated his two supervisors have not been supportive of the Northern Pike Minnow Derby because they felt this should be funded by Grant PUD. **Committee members re-voted and approved the revised Northern Pike Minnow Derby for \$25,000.00 from NNI 602 Fund.**

**IX. Discussion of future in person meetings.** Bryan Nordlund raised the topic of in-person meetings of the PRCC. He prefers in-person meetings because of the increased engagement with committee members, and asked committee members about their preferences and/or constraints. Scott Carlon prefers in person meetings as well, however, they are not allowed to presently travel for work (due to COVID concerns). Jim Craig stated his preference for in-person meetings and also mentioned that travel for his office is presently not allowed (for the same reasons) from January to February. Neither Scott nor Jim was certain of when this could be revised to allow travel. Keely Murdoch said that the Yakama Nation has conditions for meeting in person, and for her it depends on how many people are in the room and if adequate spacing is provided (6 feet apart) at the meeting location. Bryan Nordlund outlined a list of in-person meeting requirements that GPUD had provided for their personnel. He also mentioned that the Chelan PUD auditorium was a potential location for meetings. Chad Jackson agreed that in person meetings would be great and he has the same requirements that Keely Murdoch mentioned and in addition the Grant PUD requirements are for wearing masks and social distancing. Kirk Truscott agrees with the general discussion and he’s trying to be careful as he does interact with a lot of his field staff and doesn’t want to take something back to his program. He would hope that fellow PRCC committee members are fully vaccinated and boosted. Bryan Nordlund said that when the times arrives to hold in-person meetings, virtual meetings could continue during the in-person meetings as needed, if some members are still restricted.

## **UPDATES**

**X. Review of Ongoing NNI Funded Projects**

- A. Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II – Bryan Nordlund will continue to pursue TU for a discussion regarding projects status.
- B. Avian Predation on ESA-listed Juvenile Salmonids on the Mid-Columbia River, 2021- See the memo titled 2021 Goose Island Caspian Tern Predation 3.9% Rate forwarded by Bryan Nordlund via email on November 30, 2021.
- C. Barkley Irrigation Co Permanent Point of Diversion, Completing Implementation of the Permanent Solution – Curt said that the contract has a balance of approximately \$600 and he has been requested by Trout Unlimited to leave the contract open, with no specific reason provided.
- D. Northern Pike Removal (2022-2024) – Curt Dotson shared that the contract is in place, waiting for signature for it to move forward.
- E. PIT-Tag Detection Barge - Curt Dotson shared that Grant contract should be ready for signature by next week.

**XIV. Committee Reports –**

Priest Rapids Fish Forum – January meeting is cancelled due to lack of agenda topics.

Habitat Subcommittee – Meeting held on Jan 13, 2022. Bryan Nordlund shared draft minutes from the January meeting were sent to him, but he would wait for the final minutes to be prepared before distribution to the PRCC.

Fall Chinook Work Group –The next meeting is scheduled for April 5, 2022.

Bryan Nordlund has provided the latest committee reports he has received to date via email on November 24. (No further updates provided)

**XVI. SOAs discussed in 2022**

Draft Table format for PRCC discussion – Bryan Nordlund proposed this table to track status of SOA's:

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

The PRCC agreed.

**XV. Next Meetings**

The next two PRCC meetings are scheduled for February 22,2022 and March 22, 2022. Meeting adjourned at 2:57 pm.