



Priest Rapids Fish Forum

Conference Call

Wednesday, 3 July 2024
 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

FINAL MINUTES

PRFF Members

RD Nelle, Emily Orling, USFWS
 Ralph Lampman, Keely Murdoch, YN
 Nathan and Clayton Buck, Wanapum
 Jason McLellan, Bret Nine, CTCR
 Mike Clement, Chris Mott, Grant PUD
 Tracy Hillman, Chair

Patrick Verhey, Benjamin Cox, WDFW
 Chad Brown, WDOE
 Aaron Jackson, Carl Merkle, CTUIR
 Steve Lewis, BIA
 N/A, CRITFC

Meeting Attendees

Mike Clement, Grant PUD
 Patrick Verhey, WDFW
 Ralph Lampman, YN
 Nathan Patterson, YN
 Tracy Hillman, Chair

RD Nelle, USFWS
 Chris Mott, Grant PUD
 Tygh Schuster, YN
 Laura Heironimus, WDFW

Action Items:

- Ralph Lampman will update the Upper Columbia Juvenile Source Lamprey Datasheet and send it to Tracy Hillman for distribution to the PRFF.
- Mike Clement will review the license agreement to determine whether a juvenile lamprey survival study is a one-time event during the life of the license.
- Mike Clement will identify which salmonid species will be used in survival studies over the next three years.
- Ralph Lampman will share the invitation for the Mainstem Columbia/Snake Regional Management Unit meeting with the PRFF.

Decision Items:

- Members present approved collecting adult Pacific Lamprey at Priest Rapids Dam beginning the week of 15 July 2024. Collections will occur over an 8-week period.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the meeting and identified all attendees.

II. Agenda Review

The PRFF reviewed and approved the July agenda.

III. Approve June Meeting Notes

The PRFF reviewed and approved the 5 June 2024 meeting minutes with edits.

IV. Review Action Items

The PRFF reviewed the following action item from the May meeting:

- Ralph Lampman will update the Upper Columbia Juvenile Source Lamprey Datasheet and send it to Tracy Hillman for distribution to the PRFF. **Ongoing.**
- Corey Wright will share Aimee Reed's publication on the effects of thiamine supplementation on the survival and condition of hatchery-reared steelhead with the PRFF. **Complete.**
- Laura Heironimus will share Aimee Reed's proposal to the Yakama Nation with the PRFF. **Complete.**

V. White Sturgeon

White Sturgeon Broodstock Collection – Nate Patterson and Tygh Schuster provided an update on the status of White Sturgeon at the Yakama Nation Sturgeon Hatchery. Tygh indicated that the adults were spawned on 4 June (spawning resulted in a 6 x 5.7 matrix or 34 families), fish hatched by 17 June, and they started feeding on 25 June. There have been no large losses of fish. Overall, the fish are doing well.

Other White Sturgeon Items – None.

VI. Pacific Lamprey

Juvenile Survival Studies – Ralph Lampman stated that he was pleased with the presentation given by Pacific Northwest Nation Laboratory (PNNL) researchers last month. He said they completed two years of juvenile lamprey survival studies in the Snake River and were able to measure year-to-year variation in survival rates. Adding receivers in the bypasses during the second year of study allowed them to better evaluate juvenile survival and behavior through various passage routes. This year, PNNL will conduct juvenile lamprey survival studies at McNary and John Day dam; next year they will conduct survival studies at The Dalles and Bonneville dams.

Ralph asked when Grant PUD will conduct their juvenile salmonid survival studies within the Priest Rapids Project Area. Mike Clement responded that Grant PUD will begin salmonid survival studies at Wanapum and Priest Rapids dams in 2025. Salmon survival studies will also occur in 2026 and 2027. The study will use acoustic telemetry. Ralph asked about the possibility of conducting a juvenile lamprey survival study at the same time. He reasoned that it would be cheaper to conduct a juvenile lamprey

study at the same time as the salmonid study. Mike indicated that they have not budgeted for or planned for a juvenile lamprey study within the project area. In addition, Mike indicated that he is concerned about not being able to collect enough juvenile lamprey to conduct a valid study. Also, Mike is not sure whether the detection equipment for salmonids would work for juvenile lamprey. Ralph indicated that the system used to detect JSATS tags placed in salmonids can detect ELATs placed in juvenile lamprey. Ralph also noted that this year WDFW was able to collect over 600 juvenile lamprey in the Methow River, and with the ongoing adult lamprey translocation efforts, there will likely be increasing numbers of juvenile lamprey available for a survival study. Ralph stated further that Pacific Lamprey within the Columbia are genetically similar; therefore, not all study fish need to be collected upstream from the project area. He added that they will also have hatchery juveniles available for survival studies. Mike commented that he is not convinced that all juvenile lamprey collected in tributaries are migrants. Some may slow their migration rate or reside for extended periods in the reservoirs. Ralph and RD Nelle noted that juveniles are actively migrating (the term “juvenile” is synonymous with the term “macrophthalmia”). Ralph noted that PNNL has been using juveniles collected with screw traps in tributaries and those fish are actively migrating.

Mike asked whether the juvenile trap being designed by PNNL is being tested at McNary Dam. Ralph responded that they will be testing the trap in the lab this year and at a mainstem dam next year. Ralph continued by stating that he does not see any issues with using juveniles collected within tributaries. Mike asked whether juvenile lamprey can be captured at upstream dams. Ralph indicated that they are captured at Rocky Reach and Rock Island dams, but not at Wells Dam. Numbers captured at the dams would likely need to be supplemented with juveniles collected in tributaries. Ralph said they would need about 400 live juveniles to conduct a study using the Virtual Release/Dead-Fish Correction (ViRDcT) Dam Passage Survival Model. Mike commented that they would likely need more than 400 juveniles to meet the precision target for a survival study. He asked when the ELATs would be commercially available. Ralph said PNNL is working on making them commercially available. The tags could be available as soon as next year. Mike noted that he would like to see tags with a longer tag life (>30 days).

RD asked Mike whether Grant PUD foresees a juvenile lamprey survival study in the future. Mike responded that Grant PUD will conduct a study in the future; however, they need to make sure there are appropriate numbers of juveniles (source fish) and tags available to conduct a valid study. They will also need a 2-3-year planning window to prepare for a survival study. Mike would like the fish to be collected directly upstream from the project area. Chris Mott added that Grant PUD sets up their budgets for a 10-year period and proposed budgets within a 1-2-year window cannot deviate more than 1-5%. RD asked whether a juvenile survival study is a one-time event under the current license. Mike said he does not believe it is defined but will look to verify. RD asked when the next juvenile salmonid survival study would occur. Mike responded that Grant PUD conducts juvenile salmon survival studies every 10 years. He noted that studies in 2025 will include Chinook Salmon and steelhead. He was not sure what fish will be studied in 2026 and 2027.

Tracy Hillman summarized the discussion as follows: (1) a juvenile lamprey survival study cannot be conducted in 2025 because more time is needed for planning and scoping, (2) a reliable source of juvenile lamprey is needed, and (3) the PRFF still needs to identify the model and what level of precision is needed in a survival study. The PRFF will continue to discuss a potential juvenile lamprey survival study in the project area.

Grant PUD Adult Trapping Efforts in 2024 – Mike Clement indicated that Grant PUD would like to begin trapping adult Pacific Lamprey at Priest Rapids dam beginning the week of 15 July. He said he has been tracking numbers of adult lamprey through the Columbia River and noted that 347 adults have passed Priest Rapids Dam and 60 have passed Wanapum Dam. Although the run started slow this year, it

appears to be picking up. As before, all fish captured during the first four weeks will be provided to Douglas PUD for translocation upstream from Wells Dam. Consistent with the SOA, fish captured during the second four-week period will be transported and released at Kirby-Billingsley Hydro Park upstream from Rock Island Dam. Trapping would end after the first week of September.

Ralph Lampman indicated that the run did start slow this year. He believes the proposed start date for the 8-week collection period is appropriate. Mike asked Ralph whether Douglas PUD intends to do any research with the adult lamprey this year. Ralph responded that Douglas PUD will translocate those fish upstream from Wells Dam. All members present approved the start date for collecting adult Pacific Lamprey at Priest Rapids Dam.

Other Pacific Lamprey Items – Ralph Lampman reported that the Mainstem Columbia/Snake Regional Management Unit will meet on 17 July from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Ralph will share the meeting invitation with those who did not receive it. Ralph also indicated that during the meeting he will propose that counts at mainstem dams be used in assessments. Currently, the Pacific Lamprey Conservation Initiative does not use counts at mainstem dams in their assessments.

VII. Adjourn

With no additional business to discuss, Tracy Hillman adjourned the meeting at 11:30 am.

VIII. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the PRFF will be on 7 August 2024.