



## Priest Rapids Fish Forum

### Conference Call

Wednesday, 7 August 2024

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

### FINAL MINUTES

#### PRFF Members

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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

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Mike Clement, Grant PUD  
Nathan Patterson, YN  
Shannon Adams, YN  
Laura Heironimus, WDFW  
Tracy Hillman, Chair

RD Nelle, USFWS  
Chris Mott, Grant PUD  
Tygh Schuster, YN  
Erin Harris, Grant PUD

#### Action Items:

- Ralph Lampman will update the Upper Columbia Juvenile Source Lamprey Datasheet and send it to Tracy Hillman for distribution to the PRFF.

#### Decision Items:

- None.

## I. Welcome and Introductions

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

## II. Agenda Review

The PRFF reviewed and approved the August agenda.

## III. Approve July Meeting Notes

The PRFF reviewed and approved the 3 July 2024 meeting minutes.

## IV. Review Action Items

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

- Ralph Lampman will update the Upper Columbia Juvenile Source Lamprey Datasheet and send it to Tracy Hillman for distribution to the PRFF. **Ongoing.**
- 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. **Complete.** Mike Clement reported that he reviewed the license agreement and found the language to be ambiguous regarding whether the juvenile survival study is a one-time event. The agreement indicates that Grant PUD must conduct juvenile lamprey studies to assess survival and project effect on juvenile passage. Mike noted that it would be up to the PRFF to decide whether one or more studies (with a high level of precision) would be needed to assess juvenile survival. The PRFF would also determine the objectives of the study and the statistical requirements.
- Mike Clement will identify which salmonid species will be used in survival studies over the next three years. **Complete.** Mike Clement reported that juvenile Chinook Salmon and steelhead survival studies will take place in 2025. If survival standards are met for these two species, juvenile Sockeye Salmon survival studies would take place in 2026. If survival standards for juvenile Chinook Salmon and steelhead are not met in 2025, those two stocks will be reassessed (a second survival study) in 2026 and juvenile Sockeye Salmon survival studies would then occur in 2027. It is unknown at this time whether other species would be added and is dependent on the results of the 2025 studies. Mike reported that if survival standards are met, the next survival studies would occur in 2035 and 2036; if survival standards are not met, studies will be conducted possibly through 2027 or 2028. The PRCC will discuss and plan the salmonid survival studies.
- Ralph Lampman will share the invitation for the Mainstem Columbia/Snake Regional Management Unit meeting with the PRFF. **Complete.**

## V. White Sturgeon

**White Sturgeon Broodstock Collection** – Nate Patterson provided an update on the status of White Sturgeon at the Yakama Nation Sturgeon Hatchery. He reported that juvenile sturgeon are doing well and have adjusted to feeding. The period of relatively high mortality has ended. Unfortunately, mortality was higher this year than in the past. Nevertheless, there are enough fish to meet stocking levels. Nate added that the juveniles will be moved to larger rearing ponds during the week of 19 August 2024. Nate shared he will report numbers and fish conditions during the September meeting, after the fish have been ponded. Mike Clement asked whether mortality was higher within certain family groups. Nate replied that mortality rates were consistent (equal) across family groups.

**Adult and Juvenile White Sturgeon Monitoring** – Mike Clement reported that the adult White Sturgeon indexing work started last Friday, 2 August 2024. He shared that WSP (Golder) is fishing over a two-week period from the Priest Rapids forebay to Vantage; Blue Leaf will then fish for two weeks from Vantage to downstream of Rock Island tailrace. Thus, adult indexing will occur over a four-week period. Mike added that during the third week of September, WSP (Golder) and Blue Leaf will fish jointly in the project area for juvenile White Sturgeon for three weeks. This represents the annual juvenile indexing work in the project area.

**Other White Sturgeon Items** – None.

## **VI. Pacific Lamprey**

**Grant PUD Trapping Efforts in 2024** – Mike Clement reported that they began trapping adult Pacific Lamprey at Priest Rapids Dam on 16 July 2024. They are nearing the end of the first four-week collection period. A total of 474 adults have been collected. Douglas PUD picked these fish up at Priest Rapids Dam and translocated them upstream from Wells Dam. Of the 474 adults transported by Douglas PUD, 72 were provided to the CTRC. Mike indicated that in fulfillment of Grant PUD's SOA, they will collect adults during the second four-week collection period and transport them to Kirby-Billingsley Hydro Park. Mike said that Grant PUD will meet Douglas PUD at the park, transfer the adults to Douglas PUD transport vehicles, and Douglas PUD will then transport the fish to locations upstream from Wells Dam. Therefore, all adult lamprey collected at Priest Rapids Dam during the eight-week collection period will be transported and released upstream from Wells Dam.

**Other Pacific Lamprey Items** – RD Nelle provided a brief update on the Pacific Lamprey Mainstem Columbia/Snake Regional Management Unit (RMU) meeting held on 17 July 2024. He noted that Sean Tackley (Army Corps of Engineers) gave a presentation on modifications to the Bonneville Dam fishway on the Washington State side of the river. The serpentine weirs near the top of the fishway will be removed to improve adult lamprey passage at the dam. Mike Clement indicated that during the meeting, the Army Corps of Engineers described their current and future plans for improving adult passage in the mainstem. Mike said he also gave a presentation to the group on Grant PUD's trap and transport program. RD stated that the Mid-Columbia RMU was represented.

## **VII. Adjourn**

With no additional business to discuss, Tracy Hillman adjourned the meeting at 10:30 am.

## **VIII. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the PRFF will be on 4 September 2024.