



Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee Meeting

Final Approved Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 25, 2020

1:00 pm

Microsoft Teams

PRCC Representatives

Scott Carlon, Justin Yeager (Alt), NMFS
Keely Murdoch, Brandon Rogers (Alt), YN
Chad Jackson, P. Verhey (Alt) WDFW
Curt Dotson, Peter Graf (Alt), GCPUD
Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc, Facilitator

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

PRCC Meeting Attendees

Curt Dotson, GPUD
Keely Murdoch, YN
Chad Jackson, WDFW
Tom Skiles, CTUIR
Scott Carlon, NMFS

Peter Graf, GPUD
Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc, Facilitator
Erin Harris, GPUD
Jim Craig, USFWS

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- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Denny Rohr welcomed everyone.
 - II. **Agenda Review (D. Rohr)** – No additions were added to the agenda.
 - III. **Meeting Minutes (D. Rohr)**
 - A. July 28, 2020 – Approved
 - IV. **Review of Actions Items from June 23, 2020 Webinar Conference (D. Rohr)**
 1. Dotson will advise RTR of the approved Contract Change Order as requested. – C. Dotson reported the change order was sent to RTR for signature. **Completed.**
 2. Rohr will keep committee members advised of status of the “Barkley Irrigation Co Permanent Point of Diversion Project”. **Completed.**

3. Rohr will follow up with Jackson and Didricksen regarding details of the UC Fish Screen Program reports. – **In progress.**
- V. UPDATE - Barkley Irrigation Co Permanent Point of Diversion, Completing Implementation of the Permanent Solution (D. Rohr)** Denny Rohr reminded committee members that the recent request for additional funding from Trout Unlimited in the amount of \$250,000 is being provided by PRCC-HabSC. He shared the PRCC-HabSC currently is continuing their review and discussion regarding the consideration of selling a piece of property purchased during the implementation of this project that is no longer needed and could possibly be used to backfill the \$250,000. Current discussions include the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation and Trout Unlimited. Trout Unlimited currently holds title to the property under discussion. Rohr will keep the PRCC advised.
- VI. UPDATE – 2020 FCRPS BiOp and Avian Predation Activities (C. Dotson, S. Carlon)** – Denny Rohr shared the Columbia River Salmon Operations planning document which was released the end of July. This document included the FCRPS Biological Opinion that addressed avian predation activities. Rohr stated he felt it important to keep the avian predation topic on the PRCC meeting agendas and in front of committee members to stay abreast of this subject including the details regarding the path forward. Rohr surfaced the question of having staff members from the USACE and the BOR attend a future PRCC meeting to discuss in detail the subject of avian predation, primarily on the Columbia Plateau, with a focus on the path forward. Rohr asked members to be thinking about this for further discussion at a future meeting.
- VII. Lower Columbia River Sea Lion Activities (D. Rohr)** - Denny Rohr reviewed recent activities related to the “take” of sea lions by certain tribes and state and federal agencies in the lower Columbia River. He commented congressional legislation was approved in December 2018 that allowed the removal of a specific number of sea lions from the I-205 bridge in Portland upriver to the McNary Dam. Moreover, NOAA last week had approved the required permit to begin the activities related to removal. Tom Skiles shared details of the permit, and he commented that no longer will it be required to identify which sea lions are causing impacts to salmon and steelhead. Instead, any sea lions found in the defined area can be trapped and removed. Sea lions can be trapped and euthanized under the new permit, plus they can also be donated to a zoo under certain circumstances. Skiles also stated that part of the purpose for this legislation is to mitigate for impacts on the Willamette River fisheries. Recent Willamette River data showed that after the removal of 8 sea lions from that area under a separate permit, negative impacts to the winter-run steelhead went from a 25% impact down to just a 2% negative impact rate. Committee members will continue to follow this on-going activity.
- VIII. 2020 Fish Spill Update (C. Dotson)** - Curt Dotson reported that juvenile fish-spill ended last week at both Wanapum and Priest Rapids dams and that adult fallback spill started immediately following the end of the juvenile out-migration

spill and will continue through November 15, 2020. Curt Dotson shared this is the standard every year.

IX. Potpourri (D. Rohr) – Rohr had nothing to report.

UPDATES

X. Avian Predation Activities (C. Dotson, T. Skiles) – Curt Dotson shared he will receive a report later this year from RTR with resulting PIT-tag data for Goose Island and the surrounding avian colonies that will be shared with committee members. Tom Skiles shared not many terns are nesting on East Sand Island in the Columbia River Estuary this year; however, there are a large group of cormorants, approximately 8,000 in number, that are now nesting on the Columbia River Metzler Bridge upriver from East Sand Island. The cormorants nesting on the bridge are causing issues with the bridge and the Oregon Department of Transportation is studying the problem.

XI. FCRPS BiOp – Corps/BOR Avian Predation Management in Columbia Plateau Region (C. Dotson, S. Carlon) – Nothing additional reported.

XII. Review of Outstanding NNI Funded Projects

A. Continued Support for UC Fish Screen Program (C. Jackson) – Jackson and Rohr are following up with Danny Didricksen on next report.

B. Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II (C. Jackson, D. Rohr) – Nothing new reported

C. **“Non-Native Predator Recruitment Reduction – Phase I” (K. Murdoch) –** Nothing new reported.

D. **“Northern Pike Removal in Lake Roosevelt” (K. Truscott) -** Kirk Truscott was not in attendance for today’s meeting but sent an email to Rohr and shared the following information: Northern Pike removal update – Northern Pike suppression project is operating at reduced capacity due to COVID-19 impacts; however, CCT suppression activities this year have removed a total of 711 northern pike, with 423 associated with the angler reward program and 288 via netting. These numbers do not include suppression efforts by the Spokane Tribe or WDFW.

E. **2020 Quincy Valley Tourism Association Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby (C. Dotson) –** Curt Dotson shared the Fishing Derby was originally moved to September. However, with Grant County being in phase 2 of the Covid-19 virus shutdown, the Derby is canceled for 2020. All the prizes had been purchased and they are being saved for next year’s Fishing Derby. Dotson also shared that approximately \$3,000 of the \$25,000 funding was spent on advertisement with the rest of the funding going toward prizes.

F. **Avian Predation on ESA-listed Juvenile Salmonids on the Mid-Columbia River, 2020, Real Time Research (C. Dotson) –** Curt Dotson shared that the completion on the final Synthesis Report document has been moved to early 2021.

- XIII. Committee Reports (D. Rohr)** – Denny Rohr shared the reports, which were distributed electronically to committee members.
- XIV. NNI and Habitat Funds Report, 2020 (D. Rohr)** – Denny Rohr shared that Q2 was distributed electronically to the committee members at the end of July 2020.
- XV. Next Meeting** – Tuesday, September 22, 2020, 1:00 pm, MS TEAMS mtg

Action Items from August 25, 2020 meeting

- 1. None

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