



Grant County
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
Excellence in Service and Leadership

**Priest Rapids Fish Forum
Meeting**

**Wednesday, 5 February 2020
10:00 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.**

MEETING MINUTES

PRFF REPRESENTATIVES

Steve Lewis, USFWS
Ralph Lampman, YN
Pat Wyena, Wanapum
Kirk Truscott, Jason McLellan, CCT
Mike Clement, Chris Mott, Grant PUD
Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

Patrick Verhey, Laura Heironimus, WDFW
Breean Zimmerman, WDOE
Aaron Jackson, Carl Merkle, CTUIR
Keith Hatch, BIA
Tom Skiles, CRITFC/CTUIR
Erin Harris, Grant PUD

ATTENDEES

RD Nelle, USFWS
Mike Clement, Grant PUD
Doris Squeochs, Wanapum (Via phone)
Chris Mott, Grant PUD
Erin Harris, Grant PUD
Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

Donella Miller, YN (Via phone)
Steve Lewis, USFWS
Ralph Lampman, YN (Via phone)
Jason McLellan, CCT (Via Phone)
Laura Heironimus WDFW (Via Phone)

Action Items:

- Tracy Hillman will speak with Cramer Fish Sciences to see if they can find the draft autoployploidy guidance document that Paul Anders was drafting for the PRFF and RFFF.
- Tracy Hillman will contact Breean Zimmerman to make sure the PRFF's decision regarding the one-year extension of the 2016 White Sturgeon Stocking SOA is consistent with the 401 Certification.
- Members will provide Mike Clement with comments on the 2019 Pacific Lamprey Management Plan Annual Report by 21 February 2020.
- Mike Clement will send the final 2019 Bull Trout M&E Plan Annual report to Tracy Hillman, who will then distribute it to the PRFF.

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** - Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone and participants introduced themselves.
- II. **Safety Briefing** – Tracy Hillman provided a safety briefing for meeting participants.
- III. **Agenda Review** - Members reviewed and approved the agenda with no additions.
- IV. **Approve December Meeting Notes** – Draft December Meeting Notes were reviewed and approved.
 - A. **Action Items from December Meeting:**
 1. **Donella Miller will check with UC Davis on their availability to screen juvenile sturgeon for 12N this spring.** Complete. Chris Mott indicated that he connected with UC Davis and they can screen the fish provided they receive blood samples early. Donella concurred.
 2. **Chris Mott and Mike Clement will let the PRFF know if they intend to purchase a Coulter Counter to determine the occurrence of white sturgeon autoploidy.** Complete. Chris Mott reported that Grant PUD intends to purchase a Coulter Counter; however, the cost of the counter is about \$42,000, not \$20,000 as previously thought. The \$20,000 model is no longer available. This is a significant expense and needs to be approved by upper management. Because of the high cost and the fact that it was not included in the 2020 budget forecast, there is a possibility the purchase may not happen this year. Chris said he completed all the necessary paperwork and is waiting on a decision, which should be made by 15 February 2020. Mike Clement said the counter will be owned and used only by Grant PUD. For lots of reasons, they cannot share the counter with others, nor do they intend to screen other groups samples, mostly due to labor limitations. Thus, other entities will need to purchase their own counter or figure out other options for screening their fish samples. Doris Squeochs voiced the need for others to own or purchase a coulter counter as it will inform fish-culture practices. Chris said they (Grant PUD) will purchase an annual maintenance contract with the manufacturer (Beckman Coulter). He said UC Davis highly recommended the purchase of a maintenance agreement. Mike said if they cannot purchase a counter this year, they will send their blood samples to UC Davis for screening.
 3. **Chad Jackson will see if Laura Heironimus is available to help write the autoploidy guidance document.** Complete. Laura Heironimus said she does not have the time, capacity, or background to write the autoploidy guidance document. However, she said she may be able to help write sections of the document. Tracy Hillman reported that prior to the passing of Paul Anders, Paul was writing the document for the PRFF and RFFF. Tracy said Paul started work on the document in December, but Tracy did not see a draft of the report before Paul passed. Tracy said he will contact Cramer Fish Sciences to see if they can find the draft report on Paul's computer. If so, members of the PRFF can help complete any missing sections of the report. Mike Clement suggested having WDFW-Fish Health help with writing the report. Jason McLellan indicated that this document is not necessarily a fish health issue but rather a genetics issue. Thus, Fish Health may not be needed; however, they could review the paper. Tracy said he will let the PRFF know if Cramer Fish Sciences finds the draft report on Paul's computer. If they cannot find the report, Tracy will work with members of the PRFF and RFFF to draft the report.
 4. **Donella Miller and Laura Heironimus will check with ODFW on collecting white sturgeon broodstock downstream from McNary Dam in 2020 and when the collection event is likely to occur.** Ongoing. Donella Miller sent an email to ODFW last week asking ODFW if they intend to do adult sturgeon work downstream from McNary Dam again this year (in 2020). She said they have not yet responded to her email. Laura

Heironimus said she spoke with ODFW about white sturgeon broodstock collection and they told her there is no funding for tagging adult sturgeon this year. However, they have left-over tags and they would like to work with the PUDs during broodstock collection to tag more fish. Chris Mott said Blue Leaf will coordinate with ODFW on broodstock collection and adult tagging. Blue Leaf will also prepare the ODFW broodstock collection permits.

5. **Chris Mott will coordinate with Jason McLellan on the use of the “new” sturgeon population model to inform future release numbers in the Priest Rapids Project Area.** Complete. Jason McLellan shared there are no new updates from LGL regarding the white sturgeon population model. He said the model will be completed and delivered to CCT by 31 July 2020. He added the model is funded by CCT and Canadian partners – BC Hydro and Fortiss BC - for use in the Upper Columbia; however, it could potentially be used to model sturgeon populations in the Priest Rapids Project Area. The model would have to be populated with project area-specific data.

V. White Sturgeon Management Plan

- A. **Update on Juvenile Rearing** – Donella Miller said her crews sampled fish on Monday and found growth is normal for this time and mortality is low. She said they are holding a few additional fish because of the low incidence of 12N. This will help ensure the number released in 2020 is close to the release target. She added that fish were split into two rearing tanks. This helps increase growth and reduces stress. Fish size is about 5 fish per pound or 90 grams per fish. Mike Clement asked Donella about preparing for marking, tagging, and autopolyploidy testing. Donella said it would be nice to have a coulter counter so samples could be screened on site. In the absence of a counter, they will collect blood samples from all fish and ship them to UC Davis for screening. Chris Mott reported that 300-500 fish can be sampled per day (based on sampling at other locations).
- B. **Guidance Document on Autopolyploidy Sturgeon** – Tracy Hillman said the schedule for receiving and reviewing the guidance document has changed with the passing of Paul Anders. As discussed earlier, Tracy will work with Cramer Fish Sciences to try and retrieve the draft document from Paul’s computer. The date the draft will be available for review will depend on whether they find Paul’s draft or have to write the report from scratch. Tracy believes we should have a report ready for review by April or May. The delay should not be an issue as the guidance document will be used to evaluate autopolyploidy in juveniles to be released in 2021 and beyond. Tracy shared the outline for the report and noted that most of the sections can be written with information contained in the 2019 CRITFC Management Plan. Sections 5 and 6 will likely be the most difficult to write. Those sections (specifically Section 5c) will require considerable thought, because those sections will identify management actions associated with different levels of autopolyploidy within maternal groups.
- C. **Update 2016 White Sturgeon Stocking SOA** – Tracy Hillman reminded the PRFF that the Priest Rapids 2016 White Sturgeon Stocking SOA is ending, meaning the collection of broodstock in 2020 is not covered under the SOA. The SOA does, however, include the release of juveniles in 2020. He added that the population model being developed by LGL and monitoring data collected last year will not be available in time to calculate 2021 juvenile release numbers. Therefore, because broodstock collection will occur before the PRFF can evaluate future juvenile release numbers, Tracy asked if the PRFF would like to extend the 2016 SOA for another year. Steve Lewis asked if there is a way to look at current monitoring data (data collected in 2019) to inform the decision of whether to extend the SOA another year. Chris Mott said those data (data collected in 2019) should be available soon. He added that sturgeon numbers look similar to the previous year. Thus, it does not appear that

anything out of the ordinary has occurred in the project area. Given that, members present (CCT, YN, USFWS, WDFW, Wanapum, and GPUD) agreed to extend the 2016 SOA one more year. Once the life cycle model is available and can be populated with project-specific monitoring data, the PRFF will reexamine future stocking levels. Tracy said he will ask Breean Zimmerman (Ecology) to make sure the decision is consistent with the 401 Certification.

DECISION: The PRFF approved to extend the 2016 White Sturgeon Stocking SOA one additional year. (Following the meeting, Ecology concluded the decision is consistent with the 401 Certification)

- D. **Other White Sturgeon Items** – Chris Mott reported that the 2019 white sturgeon report will be distributed soon to the PRFF for review and that Golder will present results to the PRFF during the March meeting. [Note, the 2019 white sturgeon report was sent to the PRFF for review on 6 February and comments are due on 7 March 2020.]

VI. Pacific Lamprey Management Plan

- A. **2019 Pacific Lamprey Management Plan Annual Report** – Mike Clement said the 2019 draft report is out for review (it was sent to the PRFF on 21 January 2020). Comments are due to Mike no later than 21 February 2020. Mike indicated the report is similar to past reports, the only difference is a table was added that addressed comments received from Ralph Lampman on the 2018 report (recall that Ralph submitted comments after the 2018 final report was submitted to FERC and therefore those comments were not addressed in the final report). Mike noted that Ralph provided a lot of information this year and last year that is included in the 2019 draft report. Mike added that Boa Le will give a presentation to the PRFF during the March meeting. His talk will focus on regional activities and provide a decade of adult passage and program information.

Adult Trapping in 2020 – Mike Clement shared that three weeks, or possibly four weeks, of trapping is currently planned for collecting adult lamprey in 2020. Collections of adult lamprey and their relocation upstream from Rock Island Dam will occur during July-August. Mike reminded members that the SOA indicates that Grant PUD will trap over a three-week period at 40 hours per week. Unfortunately, it appears Grant PUD union staff, who operate the traps, will change their work schedule from five, eight-hour days per week to four, ten-hour days per week. This means that for the Grant PUD project, Grant PUD may need to trap adults over a four-week period rather than a three-week period. Importantly, the total number of trapping hours will not change, only the number of weeks may change. Doris Squeochs asked if Grant PUD will be trapping the same number of fish. Mike responded that the number of adults trapped is correlated with adult run size. The larger the run size, the more adults trapped. Run sizes and numbers trapped in the past are identified in the Pacific lamprey annual report. Mike noted that they have a relatively high trapping efficiency. Therefore, adults should be trapped even when run sizes are low. Mike reminded members that the SOA requires a fixed amount of trapping effort each year, not a fixed number of adult lamprey collected.

- B. **Other Pacific Lamprey Items** – None.

VII. Bull Trout Management Plan

- A. **2019 Bull Trout M&E Plan Annual Report** – Mike Clement reported that the 2019 annual report was sent to the PRFF for review on 13 December 2019. Comments were due on 13 January 2020. Mike said he received comments from USFWS and those were addressed in the final report, which was submitted to FERC. Steve Lewis said he was satisfied with Grant PUD's responses to his comments. Mike said he will provide the final report to Tracy, who will then distribute it to the PRFF.

- B. **Update on Winter Bull Trout Monitoring** – Mike Clement said Grant PUD normally monitors fish passage every year between 15 April and 15 November. This year, based on a request from the USFWS, Grant PUD agreed to continue monitoring within opened (watered) fishways during the winter period. So far, based on video monitoring within the open fishways, they have observed no bull trout passing the projects. Mike added that they still have about two more months of monitoring. Chris Mott identified which fishways are currently down for maintenance and which ones are open for fish passage. Mike added that during the past 20 years, they have found only one bull trout within the fishways during dewatering.
- C. **Other Bull Trout Items** – None.

VIII. **Northern Pike**

- A. **Suppression Efforts in Lake Roosevelt** – Jason McLellan shared that the CCT project proposal for continued suppression efforts in Lake Roosevelt was submitted to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council last week for ISRP review. He added that the 2019 draft report is due to Bonneville Power Administration on 15 March 2020 and the final report should be available late spring or early summer. Jason also noted that all reports on this project can be found at cbfish.org (<https://www.cbfish.org/Project.mvc/Display/2017-004-00>).

- IX. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the PRFF will be on Wednesday, 4 March 2020 at the Grant PUD Natural Resources Office in Wenatchee. The meeting will begin at 9:00 am to accommodate two presentations.