



Grant County  
**PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT**  
*Excellence in Service and Leadership*

**Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee  
FINAL MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, September 23, 2015  
9:00 am

PRCC Representatives

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Scott Carlon, Justin Yeager (Alt), NMFS  
Bob Rose, YN  
Jeff Korth, C. Andonaegui (Alt), P. Verhey (Alt), WDFW  
Curt Dotson, Tom Dresser (Alt), GCPUD  
Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc., Facilitator

Jim Craig, USFWS  
Kirk Truscott, CCT  
Tom Skiles, CTUIR  
Orlene Hahn, GCPUD, Executive Assistant

MEETING ATTENDEES

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Scott Carlon, NMFS  
Bob Rose, YN (via phone)  
Jeff Korth, WDFW  
Curt Dotson, Tom Dresser (Alt), GCPUD  
Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc., Facilitator

Jim Craig, USFWS  
Kirk Truscott, CCT  
Tom Skiles, CTUIR  
Orlene Hahn, GCPUD, Executive Assistant (via phone)  
Ian Jones, GCPUD (Presenter)

**Decision Summary from September 23, 2015 PRCC Meeting**

1. **Draft 2016 Juvenile Steelhead Survival Evaluation Study Plan** - The Committee approved the study plan. Additional comments are included below in Section VI.
2. **Fish Ladder Maintenance Schedule** - The Committee approved early de-watering of the fish ladders at Wanapum (left-bank) and Priest Rapids (right-bank). Early outage to begin November 15, 2015.

**Action Items from August 26, 2015 PRCC Meeting**

1. Rohr will contact Tom Kahler, Douglas PUD, and discuss the HCP Committees information storage and retrieval process.
2. Rohr will draft a letter to be sent to the Fish Passage Center and others in regards to the August 4<sup>th</sup> Fish Passage Center email and attached memorandum.
3. Dotson will follow up on the status of the NNI Funded project for the "Supplementary Tags and Tagging for Assessment of predation Losses of Subyearling Chinook Salmon in the Lower Hanford Reach and Upper McNary Reservoir".

**FINAL MINUTES**

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Agenda Review (D. Rohr) – No additions were made.

- III. Meeting Minutes (D. Rohr)
  - A. Approval for August 26, 2015 (D. Rohr) – In progress.
- IV. Action Items Review from August 26, 2015 Meeting (D. Rohr) – Minutes are in progress.
- V. 9:00 a.m. – “Wanapum Fracture Engineering Fix” Presentation – Ian Hunter, GCPUD (T. Dresser)  
Ian Hunter, Engineer IV of GCPUD presented a detailed presentation regarding the 2014 Wanapum fracture and the fix.
- VI. Draft 2016 Juvenile Steelhead Survival Evaluation Study Plan (C. Dotson) – Dotson stated that this study plan (2016) does not include any aspects of: 1) Further evaluation of the WFB operations between 20 kcfs and 15 kcfs; nor 2) further evaluation of suspension of Fish Mode for the PRD turbines during the spring out-migration, as results are not available at this time. . Results will be available and presented at the October 28, 2015 meeting. Dotson also included Skalski’s “validation” of the statistical soundness of the 2015 survival study as a reference for the 2016 evaluation as it would be similar if not the same for the 2016 survival study (i.e. sample sizes, number of release sites, release locations, detection arrays, etc.). CRIFTC representative committed to send out an example of what the USCOE includes within their reports as a standard for conducting their evaluations, which also provides additional details on fish condition and fish rejections. The Committee approved this study plan but did request that additional information regarding fish conditions, fish health, length frequencies be included within the report. Further discussion needs to take place on what Skiles was talking about regarding performance standard tests and internal standards as well as what Dotson is to review in the 2014 Blue Leaf report. It was decided that at next month’s meeting we will talk about what Truscott and Skiles discussed about additional information to be added. Truscott was asking about flow conditions versus survival. It was suggested to add a discussion section. Truscott’s approval was tentative.
- VII. Fish Ladder Maintenance Schedule (C. Dotson) – Grant PUD presented a request to the PRCC to de-water the left-bank and right-bank adult fish ladders at Wanapum and Priest Rapids respectively approximately 2 weeks earlier than normal to address O&M issues (November 15, 2015). Typically, Grant PUD de-waters one fishway at each project for annual maintenance soon after the Thanksgiving Holiday. Grant PUD also reported that during this O&M work, as required the remaining fishway at each project would remain in operation to provide continued upstream passage. Grant reported that the fish pumps at the left-bank at Wanapum are in need of major repair and will take additional time to assess repair needs. Meanwhile, at the Priest Rapids right-bank fish ladder additional O&M work is necessary to the auxiliary water supply system. Grant reported that they cease fish counts on November 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. After a discussion on passage numbers at that time of the season the Committee approved the early de-watering of the left-bank fishway at Wanapum and right-bank fishway at Priest Rapids..
- VIII. SOA 2011–10, Gatewell Dipping at Priest Rapids Dam (C. Dotson) – This was just an FYI to the Committee. SOA 2011-10 was signed on January 13, 2012. The fish bypass at PR has been operational since the spring of 2014. The plan is to stop gatewell dipping at PR as a smolt salvage program. The Committee re-affirmed the stoppage of smolt salvage gatewell dipping at Priest Rapids, as the requirements (i.e. construction and operation of the fish bypass) have been met.
- IX. SOA 2015-02, Schedule for Conducting Sub-yearling Survival Evaluations (C. Dotson) – Grant PUD presented SOA 2015-02 to the PRCC for review and approval. Under this SOA, the PRCC

would agree to defer the currently scheduled 2016-2018 sub-yearling Chinook survival evaluations to years 2019-2021. As presented in SOA 2011-06 Grant PUD continues to believe that due to complex life history strategies of sub-yearlings it is impossible to conduct a valid study.

- A. Several edits were proposed and discussed by the PRCC, some of which included the term behavior evaluation specifically and whether or not there needed to be specific dates or timelines for studies included within the SOA. Grant PUD requested date/timeline certainty for budgetary planning purposes, but was open to language that could open up the possibility for evaluations to be considered prior to 2019. Proposed changes included the following; (1) remove the word *behavior* in paragraph (1) and remove all of (1)a. except for the last sentence which stated "*The PRCC will determine the feasibility (does methodology exist) for conducting subyearling by September 2018 or earlier, which would be moved to the end of paragraph (1).* In addition, the current 1(b) would become part of (1) as well. Grant PUD committed to present a revised draft SOA (2015-02) per the requested revision to the PRCC at the October 23<sup>rd</sup>. meeting.
  - B. The PRCC also requested a joint workshop (PRCC-HCP Committee's) to revisit subyearling Chinook evaluations again. D. Rohr was tasked with talking to Ferguson about doing something jointly. We will put this on the Agenda and talk about this in January. It was suggested to have a workshop with the HCP meeting in the morning and a workshop in the afternoon the same as was done in 2010 or 2011. The presentations that were done in 2010 or 2011 should be sent out for people to look at prior to the workshop.
- X. Potpourri (D. Rohr)
- A. Fish Passage letter to Michelle DeHart, Fish Passage Center – Tom S. confirmed that Michelle DeHart acknowledged receiving the PRCC letter in the last FPAC meeting.
- XI. Updates
- A. Inland Avian Predation Activities (C. Dotson) – The field season is wrapped up. Data analysis is presently taking place.
  - B. Hatchery Activities (T. Dresser)
    - 1. Carlton Acclimation Facility – Grant PUD worked with WA-DOE to get access to their water bank to use groundwater to fill the tanks. Tanks were filled on September 15, 2015.
    - 2. Nason Creek Acclimation Facility – Grant PUD is also using the well field at Nason Creek on October 1, 2015.
    - 3. Priest Rapids Hatchery Modifications – ongoing.
    - 4. Penticton Hatchery – The committee discussed a recent loss of juvenile sockeye at the hatchery due to a bio-fouling issue, and the issue had been addressed through attentiveness improvements.
  - C. Hatchery Permits (Section 10 for Summer Chinook and Section 7 Consultation for Bull Trout. (T. Dresser) – no updates.

- D. 2015 Smolt Survival Study (C. Dotson) – The raw data was sent to Skalski in the middle of September. They are still crunching the numbers. Grant is planning to present the data at the next PRCC meeting in October, 2015.
  - 1. Fish Mode Evaluation – data analysis is still in progress.
  - 2. WFB FPE Evaluation – data analysis is still in progress.
- E. NNI Funded Projects
  - 1. Supplementary Tags and Tagging for Assessment of Predation Losses of Subyearling Chinook Salmon in the Lower Hanford Reach and Upper McNary Reservoir (C. Dotson) – There was an ongoing study taking place. Dotson found an October 2014 report. Dotson emailed to get some clarification. He is hoping to hear that this has been completed and that we can close it out. Trying to get final copy of this from the FCWG.
  - 2. 2015 Real Time Research / Oregon State University – “Evaluation of Foraging Behavior, Dispersal, and Predation on ESA-listed Salmonids from the Upper Columbia River by Caspian Terns Displaced from Managed Colonies in the Columbia Plateau Region” C. Dotson) – Ongoing. We are still waiting on information. Looking towards latter part of this year for data.
  - 3. Upper Columbia Fish Screen Monitoring Program Phase I Contract Extension (J. Korth) – November presentation - Danny Didricksen, WDFW, to present.
  - 4. Upper Columbia Fish Screen Monitoring Program Phase II – (J. Korth) - November presentation – Danny Didricksen, WDFW, to present.
  - 5. Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II – (J. Korth) – no update.
  - 6. Mid-Columbia River Intake Screen and Diversion Assessment (T. Dresser) - November presentation - Danny Didricksen, WDFW, to present.
  - 7. Methow Valley Irrigation District (MVID) Instream Flow Improvement Project (T. Dresser) – November presentation – Aaron Penvose and Lisa Pelly, Trout Unlimited, to present.
- F. Committee Reports (D. Rohr) – Rohr sent by email to committee members. The PRFF report went out.
- G. Quarterly NNI and Habitat Funds Report through June 30, 2015 (D. Rohr) – the next report is expected to be in October and cover through September 30, 2015.
- XII. Next Meeting – October 28, 2015, SeaTac Radisson Hotel; discussion of November 18th and December 16th meeting schedules (moving meetings up by one week due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays) (D. Rohr) – Rohr to work on dates as there may be some conflicts with other meetings when these meetings are moved up a week.

#### **Action Items from September 23, 2015 PRCC meeting**

- 1. **Draft 2016 Juvenile Steelhead Survival Evaluation Study Plan** – Skiles is to send Rohr and Dotson an example performance standard test report and internal standards of the Corps, as they relate to criteria for rejecting a fish for not tagging it as a “study fish”. Dotson is to review the 2014 Blue Leaf report regarding the same issue – basis of rejecting or selecting a given smolt for tagging.
- 2. **November/December Meetings** - Rohr to work on dates as there may be some conflicts with other meetings when these meetings are moved up a week.

3. **SOA 2015-02, Schedule for Conducting Sub-yearling Survival Evaluations** – Dotson will have a new draft of the SOA for approval at the October meeting. Rohr is to talk to Ferguson about doing something jointly. We will put this on the Agenda and talk about this in January. It was suggested to have a sub-yearling workshop on the same day as the HCP meeting. HCP meeting in the morning and a joint sub-yearling workshop in the afternoon the same as was done in 2010 or 2011. The presentations that were done in 2010 or 2011 should be sent out for people to look at prior to the workshop.