



Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee Meeting Final Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 14, 2021

1:00 pm

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), GPUD
Bryan Nordlund, FPE (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
Scott Carlon, NMFS - Absent
Chad Jackson, WDFW
Tom Skiles, CTUIR
Kirk Truscott, CCT
Bryan Nordlund, FPE (facilitator)

Keely Murdoch, YN
Peter Graf, GPUD
Erin Harris, GPUD
Jim Craig, USFWS

Decisions, Approvals and Action Items Made During Tuesday, December 14, 2021 Meeting

1. **Audio recording of meetings for the purpose of note taking** - Recording meetings is **Not Approved**. (See discussion of action items below for further information.)
2. **2021 Fish Count Discrepancies** - Curt Dotson will bring the concerns on discrepancies in fish counts between Priest Rapids and Rock Island to Grant PUD staff who operate the fish ladders and do fish counting to share ideas for solutions at the January meeting.
3. **2022 Northern Pike Minnow Derby** – Bryan Nordlund will contact Scott Carlon to obtain his vote on funding this NNI project. His vote is needed to obtain PRCC consensus on this project.
4. **Statement of Agreements (SOA)** - Curt Dotson will send Bryan Nordlund SOA's 2021-01, 2021-02 and 2021-03. Keely Murdoch will send Bryan Nordlund SOA 2021-06, and it will be discussed and finalized as appropriate in a future PRCC meeting. Committee members **agree that all SOA's discussed in a calendar**

year will be summarized on agendas and meeting minutes to indicate status.

Agenda

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Agenda Review

III. Meeting Minutes Approval

- A. October 26, 2021, PRCC meeting minutes – October PRCC minutes were distributed via Bryan Nordlund email on November 12, 2021, and revised and re-distributed on November 24. **APPROVED**
- B. November 16, 2021, PRCC meeting minutes – November minutes were distributed by Bryan Nordlund by email on Dec 3. Comments will be due by January 3, 2022 and will be voted on for final approval at the January 25, 2022 PRCC meeting.

IV. Discussion of Actions Items from November 16, 2021, Meeting

- Approved Geoff McMichael to post “Non-Native Predator Recruitment Reduction” report to ResearchGate website. Bryan Nordlund will send Geoff McMichael an email notice of the committee’s approval and ask for a future PRCC presentation.

Per Bryan’s request, **G. McMichael will present at the February 22, 2022, meeting.**

- Curt Dotson sent two SOA 2018-01 and SOA 2019-01 to Erin Harris

Complete - these two SOA’s were posted to GPUD website.

- Erin Harris will investigate if there is a GPUD required retention for audio recording of meetings for the purpose of note taking.

Erin Harris reported on how GPUD handles audio recorded meeting records and when those are considered administrative record. Erin received an email from Beverly Peterson, GPUD Records Officer stating: “My takeaway is that if we choose to record the meetings the committee is on the hook to keep them for the appropriate retention period as part of the meeting materials. Meeting materials include, but are not limited to: - Agendas, meeting/agenda packets (briefs, reference materials, etc.); - Speaker sign-up, written testimony; Audio/visual recordings and transcripts of proceedings; Minutes. If the committee chooses NOT to record the meetings all that would be required to be kept would be the other meeting materials outlined above that are created. As far as who is responsible to retain them...that would be whoever is appointed to the duty of record keeping for the committee.”

This description follows state of Washington standards for Inter-Agency Meetings GS2011-175 Rev. 2, which states: “Retain for 6 years after calendar year or 6 years after completion of project, whichever is later.”

- Curt Dotson will check with Dave Duvall on status of “Barkley Irrigation Co Permanent Point of Diversion, Completing Implementation of the Permanent Solution Habitat Project”.

Curt Dotson shared TU (Trout Unlimited) has this contract and still has a balance of funding in amount of \$600 on this agreement and TU has requested to keep the contract open. Curt Dotson shared WDFW staff was working on other monitoring projects in the same area. Curt Dotson also shared GPUD is now putting an end date or completion date on all new NNI contracts. Bryan Nordlund suggested having a final presentation or report for the PRCC once an NNI project has been completed.

(Zoom meeting went out at this point due to unknown factors and the meeting needed to be rejoined.)

Curt Dotson will get a scope of work for the Barkley Project and follow up with David Duvall on this.

- In progress - Follow-up on Corp/BOR Avian Predation Management (Carlton)
- Complete and On-Going - Email distribution of PRFF, Habitat and Hatchery SC reports (Nordlund)
- Completed - Keely Murdoch to update committee at November meeting on YN status of audio recording the meetings. (Moot – since PRCC rejected this audio recording due to other factors.)
- Completed - Erin Harris to accumulate and post all PRCC SOA's on the Grant PUD website by end of 2021, at the latest.

V. 2021 Fish Passage Operations

Juvenile fish passage

Fish spill is over for 2021.

Curt Dotson confirmed that Smolt index counts from Rock Island will begin in April 2022, and GPUD uses this Index to trigger juvenile fish passage operations at Priest Rapids and Wanapum Dams. Bryan Nordlund asked about something he had heard regarding reduced funding for the Rock Island Smolt Index and how this might affect GPUD seasonal triggers for commencing juvenile fish passage operations. Curt Dotson replied that the Smolt Monitoring Program

(SMP) worked out of the Rock Island smolt indexing facility and was funded by BPA. This (RI) smolt monitoring site was removed from the SMP list of monitoring sites, thus the BPA funding for the RI site was cancelled, as described via a July 14, 2021, memo from Michelle Dehart (Fish Passage Center). Chelan PUD will post juvenile index fish counts on the DART website.

Adult fish passage

Fish ladder counts are complete for 2021 for GPUD projects.

Final fish counts for 2021 (April 15 – November 15)

Project/Life Stage	Spring Chinook	Summer Chinook	Sockeye	Fall Chinook	Steelhead	Coho
Priest Rapids adults	13105	49315	76855	51625	2808	47990
Rock Island adults	12332	52076	109367	16013	4558	64296
Priest Rapids jacks	1447	2298	–	2289	–	1640
Rock Island-jacks	1469	2339	–	1157	–	1878

Fish Ladder Maintenance

Curt Dotson reported that annual fish ladder maintenance commences on 11/29 at Priest Rapids and 12/2 at Wanapum, and usually takes 2 to 4 weeks to complete.

This schedule could be extended, depending on what the mechanic crews find when the ladder is de-watered. One ladder at each project will be taken down for maintenance and the other ladder will remain operating. When maintenance is complete, the other ladder is taken down and the newly maintained ladder commences operation, thus allowing for fish passage at the dams year-around.

Discussions on fish count discrepancy

Curt Dotson described a logbook being created for the operators to log periods of time when picket leads are opened because of debris build up on the picket leads, causing a flow differential within the ladder. If picket leads are open for any period of time, fish will bypass the count station leading to count discrepancies. Bryan Nordlund offered to assist GPUD staff in identifying methods or systems to facilitate debris removal or automatically remove debris from the ladder, based on his experience in fish passage facility design across the Columbia River Basin.

Curt discussed how fish counters are being trained in topics such as fish species identification and data logging.

Kirk Truscott asked if GPUD would amend some of the species counts when sources of discrepancies are found. Curt Dotson responded that he will investigate this, and if he finds a method to update fish count numbers, he will bring this to the PRCC for discussion.

Curt Dotson will bring the fish count discrepancy concerns to appropriate Grant PUD staff and share their ideas for solutions at the January meeting.

Fish ladder inspections

Tom Skiles performs monthly ladder inspections at the GPUD dams for the fisheries agencies and tribes. Tom reported that this year's inspections are now complete and inspection data is compiled and ready for the annual report for Columbia River hydro projects. He will commence monthly fish ladder inspections in April of 2022.

- VI. Continued discussion of using Zoom recording to help with note taking. – and not approved.** The PRCC discussed the requirement for retaining an audio recording as described above (see section IV - Discussion of Actions Items from November 16, 2021, Meeting). Not all committee members agreed to be audio recorded because the recordings essentially then become administrative record. Candid conversation within the PRCC might be constrained with the required long retention (license duration) of audio recording of PRCC meetings. Opinions can and do change in a collaborative discussion process. The PRCC decided to **Not Approve** audio recording of PRCC meeting minutes.

VII. SOA's – website update

SOA 2018-01 and SOA 2019-01 have been posted to the Grant PUD website <https://www.grantpud.org/fish-wildlife>

Committee members discussed four other SOA's that had been discussed in 2021. Erin Harris shared SOA 2021-06 "PRCC Facilitation" had been approved but needs to be finalized. SOA 2021-01 and SOA 2021-02 were not approved. SOA 2021-03 was rescinded. SOA 2021-06 is awaiting committee approval on the final version.

ACTION: Curt Dotson will send Bryan Nordlund SOA's 2021-01, 2021-02 and 2021-03. Keely Murdoch will send Bryan Nordlund SOA 2021-06, and it will be discussed and finalized as appropriate in a future PRCC meeting. Committee members agree that all SOA's discussed in a calendar year will be summarized on agendas and meeting minutes to indicate status

- VIII.** NNI funding discussion – 2022 Northern Pike Minnow Derby (see info from Bryan Nordlund emailed on November 24) Curt Dotson shared this agreement is an annual event and this agreement is similar with prizes and process as all the prior years. QVCC runs the NPMD every year with the goal to remove a large

portion of predators in the Columbia River. All Committee members present voted to approve \$25,000 for the 2022 Derby. **Action:** Bryan Nordlund will contact Scott Carlon (absent) for his vote.

- IX. Update on Lower Wenatchee PIT Tag Barge (Chad Jackson).** Chad Jackson reminded the PRCC that Jeremy Cram presented this proposal in the October 2021 PRCC meeting. After this presentation, the PRCC approved a one-third cost share amount of \$81,934 funded from NNI, contingent on fulfilling the remaining funds from other sources. Chad announced that funding from other funding sources has been approved (PRCC-HSC Habitat Funds, and funds from HCP committee). GPUD procurement staff is currently processing the agreement by drafting a contract with WDFW. Tom Skiles expressed his appreciation for the additional work by PRCC Committee members in creating the cost share concept and making it successful. Bryan Nordlund asked if this is the first time the PRCC has agreed to do a cost share, and the PRCC confirmed that this is the case. Bryan then congratulated the PRCC for creating this precedent, expressing that it will allow future projects greater potential for success. He also added that it was extremely satisfying to see successful collaboration across different Committees within the Upper Columbia River basin.

UPDATES

X. Review of Outstanding NNI Funded Projects

A. Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II –

Bryan will continue to pursue TU for a discussion regarding projects status.

B. Avian Predation on ESA-listed Juvenile Salmonids on the Mid-Columbia River, 2021

Curt provided an update, forwarded by Bryan Nordlund on November 30.

C. Barkley Irrigation Co Permanent Point of Diversion, Completing Implementation of the Permanent Solution

Discussed earlier in these meeting minutes.

D. Northern Pike Removal (2022-2024)

Curt Dotson informed the PRCC that GPUD and the CCT are letting the 2021 contract end and creating a new contract NTE amount of \$400,000, as agreed to by the PRCC. This will help the process to move along quickly. The new contract is in the process of GPUD internal review. December 31, 2025, will be the end date for the new contract. Curt will update the PRCC when this contract is in place.

XIV. Committee Reports– Bryan Nordlund distributed reports via email.

- Priest Rapids Fish Forum – A video meeting is planned for Dec 1. Bryan Nordlund has not received the meeting minutes yet and will distribute once received.
- Habitat Subcommittee – The Habitat sub-committee met September 9 and October 10. A meeting was held November 18. Final minute will be sent out once they are received.
- Fall Chinook Work Group – A video meeting was held October 5. The next meeting is scheduled for April 5, 2022.
- Bryan Nordlund has provided the latest committee reports he has received to date via email on November 24.

XV. Next Meetings

The PRCC will revert to its usual schedule with the next two PRCC meetings scheduled for the fourth Tuesday of the month (January 25, 2022, and February 22, 2022).