



Grant County
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
Excellence in Service and Leadership

**Priest Rapids Fish Forum
Conference Call**

**Wednesday, 3 June 2020
9:00 – 10:00 a.m.**

Call-In Number: 1-800-977-8002, Bridge: 6958211

FINAL MINUTES

PRFF REPRESENTATIVES

Steve Lewis, USFWS
Ralph Lampman, Donella Miller, 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
Tom Skiles, CRITFC/CTUIR
Chris Mott, Grant PUD
Erin Harris, Grant PUD

Laura Heironimus WDFW
Patrick Verhey, WDFW
Breean Zimmerman, WDOE
Ralph Lampman, YN
Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

Action Items:

- There were no actions items from the June meeting.

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** - Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the call and participants introduced themselves.
- II. **Agenda Review** - Members reviewed and approved the agenda with no additions.
- III. **Approve May Meeting Notes** - Draft May Meeting Notes were reviewed and approved.
 - A. **Review Action Items from May Meeting**
 1. Members will send their comments and edits on the Spontaneous Autopolyploidy Guidance document to Tracy Hillman by Friday, 22 May 2020. **Complete**
 2. Laura Heironimus will ask Phil Bates, Idaho Power Company, to provide information on the guidelines they follow to ensure only 8N sturgeon are stocked into the Snake River. **Complete**
 3. RD Nelle will provide the PRFF with the Upper Columbia Pacific Lamprey Regional Management Unit report. **Complete**
- IV. **White Sturgeon Management Plan**
 - A. **Update on Juvenile Rearing** – Chris Mott reported that all is well at the Yakama Nation Sturgeon Hatchery. He said the fish are growing and survival rates are high.
 - B. **Juvenile Marking and Tagging** – Chris Mott reported that they are still waiting to tag fish. Once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, they will tag the batch of fish to be released this year. At this time, they do not have a specific date for tagging and releasing the fish in 2020.
 - C. **Decision: Spontaneous Autopolyploidy Guidance Document** – Tracy Hillman shared the revised draft document titled, “Guidance for Evaluating Spontaneous Autopolyploidy in White Sturgeon Supplementation Programs” with the PRFF. He walked the PRFF through the comments received on the draft report. Members discussed all comments and added language to the document to address the comments or noted the comment. After addressing all comments and edits, Tracy called for a vote on acceptance of the guidance document. All members present approved the guidance document.¹ The PRFF approved the guidance document with the understanding that it is a working document, which can be updated as new information becomes available. Tracy thanked all those who helped write the guidance document.
 - D. **Preparation for Establishing Future Stocking Levels** – Tracy Hillman reported that the PRFF needs to begin thinking about what information and tools will be needed to update or revise future stocking levels. He noted that the current SOA will expire in 2021. Thus, broodstock collection in 2021 (but not juvenile releases in 2021) will not be covered under the existing SOA. Chris Mott noted that the white sturgeon life-cycle model being developed by LGL for the Upper Columbia population is not yet available. That tool may be available later this year. Tracy reminded members to review the most recent (2019) monitoring and evaluation document. Information in that report will inform discussions and modeling work later this year.
 - E. **Other White Sturgeon Items** – Chris Mott reported that Grant PUD’s Coulter Counter will be shipped in June 2020. Chris noted that the CCT may have already received their Counter. Depending on COVID-19 guidelines, other Upper Columbia sturgeon program participants and Grant PUD workers may hold a joint Coulter Counter training session.
- V. **Pacific Lamprey Management Plan**
 - A. **Adult Lamprey Trapping in 2020** – Mike Clement indicated that Grant PUD crews will trap 4 weeks for the Grant PUD lamprey program and an additional 4 weeks for the Douglas

¹ Jason McLellan (CCT), Steve Lewis (USFWS), and Donella Miller (YN) approved the guidance document following the meeting.

PUD lamprey program. Thus, they will trap for a total of 8 weeks this year (last year they trapped for 6 weeks). Because PUD trapping crews will be working 10 hours per day, 4 days per week, additional weeks of trapping are needed to maintain the fishing effort required in the SOA. In addition, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, they will need to use additional vehicles to maintain social distancing and adhere to the Grant PUD COVID-19 policy. Trapping of adult lamprey will likely begin late July or early August depending on migration timing and numbers of adults observed at Priest Rapids Dam. They can start trapping earlier or later if necessary.

- B. **Update on USFWS RMU Planning** – RD Nelle reported that they are working on the Regional Implementation Plan, which is due on 12 August 2020. There will be a Conservation Team meeting on 19 August 2020. The mainstem meeting (Columbia and Snake rivers) will be on 24 June 2020.
- C. **Other Pacific Lamprey Items** – Laura Heironimus indicated that WDFW has released a job announcement. They are looking to hire a Pacific Lamprey Biologist, who will be stationed in Vancouver, WA. She asked that PRFF members share this announcement with others.

VI. Next Meeting: 1 July 2020.