



Grant County
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
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**Priest Rapids Fish Forum
 Meeting**

**Wednesday, 6 February 2019
 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
 Call-In Number: 1-800-977-8002, Bridge: 6958211**

MEETING MINUTES

PRFF REPRESENTATIVES

Steve Lewis, USFWS
 Bob Rose, YN
 Pat Wyena, Wanapum
 Jason McLellan, CCT
 Mike Clement, Grant PUD
 Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

Patrick Verhey, Laura Heironimus, WDFW
 Breean Zimmerman, WDOE
 Aaron Jackson, Carl Merkle, CTUIR
 Keith Hatch, BIA
 Chris Mott, Grant PUD
 Erin Harris, Grant PUD

ATTENDEES

Mike Clement, Grant PUD
 Erin Harris, Grant PUD (Via Phone)
 RD Nelle, USFWS
 Patrick Verhey, WDFW
 Steve Lewis, USFWS

Chris Mott, Grant PUD
 Jason McLellan, CCT
 Ralph Lampman, YN (Via Phone)
 Doris Squeochs, Wanapm (Via Phone)
 Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

Action Items:

- Steve Lewis will provide updates to the PRFF on the status of the invasive species draft action plan.
- Chris Mott will check with Donella Miller on the testing of juvenile sturgeon at Marion Drain for white sturgeon iridovirus and autopolyploidy, and on the proposed fate of surplus production at the hatchery.
- Jason McLellan will share with the PRFF an abstract prepared by UC Davis researchers on autopolyploidy.

- PRFF will review the draft White Sturgeon 2018 Annual Report and provide comments to Chris Mott by 7 March 2019. They will also provide questions to Tracy Hillman by 1 March for the consultants to address during the March meeting.
- CCT, BIA, and CRITFC/Umatillas will identify their PRFF policy representatives.
- PRFF will review the draft Pacific Lamprey 2018 Annual Report and provide comments to Mike Clement by 11 February 2019.
- Steve Lewis will contact Tom Dresser about the possibility of monitoring bull trout passage during winter (15 November – 15 March) in the Priest Rapids and Wanapum fishways.

I. **Welcome and Introductions** - Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone and participants introduced themselves. Tracy reported that Laura Heironimus will replace Chad Jackson as the WDFW alternate on the PRFF. Laura works within WDFW's Columbia River Management Unit and has statewide responsibility for sturgeon, lamprey, and other species. Laura brings to the Forum a wealth of technical expertise on sturgeon. Patrick Verhey will remain as the primary representative for WDFW on the PRFF.

II. **Agenda Review** – Members reviewed and approved the draft agenda with the addition of “Northern Pike eDNA,” “Reporting Status,” and “Fish Ladder Tour.”

III. **Approve November Meeting Notes** – The November 2018 Meeting Minutes were reviewed and approved.

A. **Action Items from November Meeting:**

1. Steve Lewis will add Wanapum to the invasive species action plan's participation list. **Complete.** He will also provide updates to the PRFF on the status of the draft action plan. **Ongoing.**
2. Members will identify their respective policy representatives who served on the PRFF Policy Committee. **Ongoing. Need representatives for the CCT, BIA, and CRITFC/Umatilla.**
3. Patrick Verhey will identify where WDFW plans to collect northern pike eDNA samples. **Complete.** Patrick provided a short report with maps showing where northern pike eDNA samples were collected and where they detected the possible presence of northern pike (see Attachment 1 and discussion below).

IV. **White Sturgeon Management Plan**

A. **Update on Juvenile Rearing** – Chris Mott reported no new information on the rearing of juvenile sturgeon at Marion Drain. He said the fish are growing and their growth rates are comparable to previous years. When asked about testing for iridovirus and autoploidy, Chris said he will check with Donella Miller on the status of those tests. Jason McLellan indicated that he will try to provide a 2018 North American Sturgeon and Paddlefish Society meeting presentation abstract prepared by researchers at UC Davis that describes autoploidy. He will share it with Tracy, who will distribute it to the Forum. Chris was also asked about the fate of any surplus juvenile sturgeon. Chris said he will check with Donella on the fate of surplus production.

Mike Clement reported that he, Chris Mott, Chad Jackson, Laura Heironimus, and Lance Keller visited the Columbia Basin Hatchery and noted that the juvenile sturgeon rearing there are doing excellent and growing rapidly. He added these are fish for the Rocky Reach program.

B. **Population Assessments and Future Tagging** – Mike Clement indicated that Grant PUD has completed the required 10-year annual tagging of juvenile hatchery sturgeon with active tags

(acoustic tags). As directed in the White Sturgeon Management Plan, Grant PUD will now insert active tags into juvenile hatchery sturgeon every three years, with the next active tags being inserted into juvenile sturgeon in 2021. Mike reminded the Forum that all juvenile sturgeon released from the hatchery are PIT tagged. Mike also noted that the ping rate of acoustic tags is set so tags will last about three to four years.

Mike reported that the Draft White Sturgeon 2018 Annual Report was sent to Forum members on 4 February 2019 for review. Comments are due to Chris Mott by 7 March 2019. Chris Mott briefly walked members present through the draft report. He commented that the report is comprehensive, meaning the report summarizes results from all years of sampling. He added that the consultants will provide a presentation on the work during the March meeting. Tracy Hillman recommended that members send any questions they may have on the report to him by Friday, 1 March. Tracy will provide those questions to the consultants. This will give them time before the presentation to prepare responses to the questions.

Mike said WDFW is reviewing the monitoring results and will determine if they need to revise regulations on harvest of sturgeon in the project area. This could include revising the slot limit, with the continued goal of targeting CRITFC sturgeon in the project area.

- C. **Plan Three-Year Check-in with the Policy Committee** – Mike Clement said that following the presentation and finalization of the report in March, the Forum will prepare a three-year check-in report for the PRFF Policy Committee. The report will not only summarize results over the supplementation period but will provide recommendations for the future. Members are updating the list of Policy members.
- Yakama Nation: Paul Ward and Steve Parker
 - Colville Tribes: Unknown (Kirk Truscott and Jason McLellan are checking)
 - Umatilla/CRITFC: Unknown (Tom Skiles is checking)
 - Wanapum: Rex Buck, Jr. and Alyssa Buck
 - BIA: Unknown (Tracy Hillman is checking)
 - USFWS: Jeff Krupka
 - WDFW: Jim Brown
 - Grant PUD: Tom Dresser
- D. **Other White Sturgeon Items** – Mike Clement reported that ODFW is recommending that the PUDs look to collect sturgeon broodstock somewhere other than downstream from McNary Dam. ODFW is concerned with collecting broodstock downstream from McNary because this area is the least productive area in Zone 6. Removing spawners will further exacerbate recruitment limitations in the area especially during high-flow years. Members present suggested looking downstream from John Day or collecting eggs using egg mats. Egg collections occur in the Upper Columbia (Canada portion of the Columbia River) and in the Snake River by Idaho Power. The difficulty will be the need to collect thousands of eggs rather than hundreds of eggs. The Forum will continue this discussion in the future.
- V. **Pacific Lamprey Management Plan**
- A. **Pacific Lamprey Annual Report** – Mike Clement reported that the Draft Pacific Lamprey 2018 Annual Report was sent to Forum members on 10 January 2019 for review. Comments are due to Mike by 11 February 2019. He said the draft report provides a good summary on regional lamprey activities. Ralph Lampman asked about planning for the adult lamprey trap-and-haul activities in 2019. Mike replied that it will be similar to 2018 and will be further scoped in April.

- B. **Adult Lamprey Translocation and Results** – Ralph Lampman said they (Yakama Nation) are working on the translocation report, which is due mid-March. He said he will give a presentation to the PRFF on translocation efforts and results in April.
- C. **Other Pacific Lamprey Items** – None.

VI. Bull Trout Management Plan

- A. **Bull Trout Annual Report** – Mike Clement said the Draft Bull Trout 2018 Annual Report was sent to Forum members on 28 November and comments were due on 23 December 2018. The final report has been submitted to FERC. Mike indicated that a total of three bull trout were observed in the fishways in 2018 (two at Priest Rapids and one at Wanapum Dam). Steve Lewis asked if fishway monitoring could occur at all times when the fishways are open for fish passage. Currently they are not monitored for fish passage from 15 November to 15 March even though some of the fishways are open for fish passage. Steve questions if bull trout pass the projects during winter when there is no monitoring for fish passage. Mike recommended that Steve discuss this issue with Tom Dresser.

- VII. Northern Pike eDNA** – Patrick Verhey reviewed the results from northern pike eDNA sampling conducted by WDFW in the Columbia River and tributaries between Grand Coulee Dam and Wells Dam, Banks Lake, and in the Snake River and tributaries between Clarkston and Pasco (see Attachment 1). He reported that no northern pike DNA was detected in samples from the Columbia River and its tributaries or in Banks Lake. Northern pike DNA was detected in a single sample from the Snake River near Little Goose Dam Boat Launch. While the sample tested positive for northern pike, the detection was low-level, suggesting that pike density is low. Patrick said it is possible to detect DNA transported via watercraft if boats have recently been in waters where pike are present. Nevertheless, WDFW takes the detection seriously. Patrick also noted that just because no northern pike DNA was detected at other locations, it does not necessarily mean there are no pike there. However, if they are there, they are present in very low numbers.

Mike Clement indicated that Grant PUD is helping fund northern pike suppression in Lake Roosevelt. Funding for suppression over a three-year period comes from PRCC NNI funds.

Mike Clement and Jason McLellan stated that the Upper Columbia Northern Pike Forum will be held in Spokane, WA, on 19 February 2019. Those interested in attending are to contact Bret Nine (CCT) for more information.

- VIII. Fish Ladder Tour** – Mike Clement indicated that the fishway tour will be on Friday, 22 February 2019. Participants will meet at the HOB at 10:00 am. Mike will send out additional information as we get closer to the tour date. Mike was asked if Douglas PUD representatives will join the tour. Mike said he reached out to Douglas PUD and they plan to join the tour.

- IX. Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the PRFF will be on Wednesday, 6 March 2019 at the Grant PUD Natural Resources Office in Wenatchee, WA.