



Grant County
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
Excellence in Service and Leadership

Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee

Wednesday, January 25, 2017
Wanapum Dam HOB-Conference Room 107
9:00 am

PRCC Meeting Representatives

Scott Carlon, Justin Yeager (Alt), NMFS	Jim Craig, USFWS
Bob Rose, YN	Kirk Truscott, Casey Baldwin (Alt) CCT
Jeff Korth, C. Andonaegui (Alt), P. Verhey (Alt) WDFW	Tom Skiles, CTUIR
Curt Dotson, Tom Dresser (Alt), GCPUD	Erin McIntyre, GCPUD, Admin Assistant
Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc, Facilitator	

PRCC Meeting Attendees

Jim Craig, USFWS	Tom Skiles, CTUIR
Curt Dotson, GCPUD	Scott Carlon, NMFS
Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc., Facilitator	Erin McIntyre, GCPUD
Tom Dresser, GCPUD	Casey Baldwin, CCT
Bob Rose, YN	Andrew Murdoch, WDFW
Leah Sullivan, Blue Leaf Environmental	Michelle Rub, NOAA
	Geoff McMichael, Mainstem Fish Research

Final Approved Meeting Minutes

- I. **Welcome and Introductions**
- II. **Agenda Review** (D. Rohr)
- III. **Meeting Minutes Approval:** (D. Rohr)
 - A. Request for approval of October 12, 2016 conference call; November 16, 2016 meeting; December 7, 2016 conference call; December 13-14 meetings – Meeting minutes are under review by committee members.
- IV. **Action Items Review from December 13-14, 2016 meeting** (D. Rohr) – Action items were completed or addressed during today’s meeting.
- V. **ACTION ITEM: 2016 Avian Predation Presentation – Allen Evans, Real Time Research; Dan Roby, OSU** (C. Dotson)
 - A. UPDATE -- Draft 2016 Avian Report - Report is forthcoming
 - B. ACTION ITEM: Request for NNI Funding (See distributed proposal)
For the past four years the PRCC has funded the OSU/RTR/USGS team to evaluate the efficacy of management actions to reduce predation by Caspian terns on juvenile salmonids in the Columbia Plateau region that are listed under the Endangered

Species Act. Specifically, they have taken a four-pronged approach to providing the PRCC and its member agencies with the information necessary to adaptively manage avian predation on ESA-listed salmonids, with a focus on the Wanapum-Priest Rapids Project. These four tasks have included: (1) assisting with implementation and monitoring the outcomes of management to eliminate the two largest Caspian tern colonies in the region (Goose Island in Potholes Reservoir and Crescent Island in McNary Reservoir); (2) assessing the effects of management on dispersal of terns from the two managed colonies, and identifying where displaced terns subsequently foraged and nested; (3) measuring the changes in Caspian tern predation rates on ESA-listed salmonid populations as a consequence of management; and (4) monitoring other populations of fish-eating colonial waterbirds in the region to detect potential changes in colony size and predation rates on salmonid smolts that could compensate for the managed reduction in Caspian terns predation rates. In 2017, they propose a much reduced effort in order to complete work in progress and provide the PRCC with a synopsis that will assist managers in solidifying and perpetuating the management accomplishments of the last three years into the future. As in the previous three years, they propose a four-pronged approach.

Dotson reviewed the proposal of Evaluation of Caspian Tern Management to Reduce Predation on ESA-listed Salmonids in the Columbia Plateau Region -2017 Research Proposal to PRCC, including the 4 tasks involved and the related funding for each. Committee discussed in depth. Committee approved tasks 1,2,&4, subject to Jeff Korth's approval. Curt will tell the OSU what is approved.

- VI. **2016 Survival Study Report – “Survival of Acoustic Tagged Steelhead Smolts through the Priest Rapids Project in 2016” – (C. Dotson)**
 - A. Skalski Report – Comment Period Closed – Rohr affirmed.
 - B. Blue Leaf Report – Begin 30 Day Comment Period – Rohr emailed a copy to members and today begins the 30 day comment period.

- VII. **Discussion: Sub-yearling and NNI Funding Calculations (All) – Dresser shared NNI Calculation spreadsheet with discussion. ACTION: Dresser will update NNI Calculation spreadsheet and send to committee members. The discussion of sub-yearling and NNI Funding calculations was deferred until the special PRCC meeting scheduled for 1/31/17.**

- VIII. **ACTION ITEM: SOA 2016-05, Schedule for Conducting Sub-Yearling Summer Chinook Survival Evaluations (C. Dotson, D. Rohr) – Subject was deferred to the special PRCC meeting scheduled for 1/31/2017.**

- IX. **Review/Discussion of Revised Proposal – Andrew Murdoch, WDFW: NNI Funding Proposal – “Factors Influencing the Survival of Juvenile Spring Chinook Salmon in Lake Wenatchee, WA” (J. Korth) –A new revised proposal, dated January 11, 2017, was received and Rohr emailed copies to PRCC members for their review. The requested funding amount from the PRCC NNI Fund was \$789,882. Andrew Murdoch, WDFW, attended the meeting and reviewed the revised proposal. The proposal was described to estimate the survival of juvenile spring Chinook Salmon that rear in or migrate through Lake Wenatchee. After extensive committee discussion, the proposal was not approved. Several members commented on possible alternative approaches that may be pursued, and all agreed to give further review and focus on addressing this subject again in 2017.**

Committee members stated they are not against collecting data that may inform further decisions, but they felt that alternative approaches should be researched.

Tom Dresser offered to lead a subcommittee, which would include a PRCC representative and a couple of HSC members, to develop a proposal/RFP to be reviewed by the PRCC. Dresser will set up a meeting of the subcommittee in the first quarter of 2017 for further discussion and review and report back to the PRCC.

- X. **Grant PUD Coho Mitigation** (T. Dresser, C. Dotson) – No updates
- XI. **ACTION ITEM: SOA 2017-01, Designation of Coho Salmon Survival Surrogate** (C. Dotson) – Subject was deferred to the special PRCC meeting scheduled for 1/31/2017.
- XII. **Presentation of NNI Funding Proposal – “Feasibility of Collecting Adult Spring Chinook Salmon Using a Fish Wheel or Trap in the Estuary and Lower Columbia River, Michelle Rub/NOAA; Leah Sullivan/Blue Leaf Environmental** (S. Carlon)

Pinniped Proposal Presentation was given by Michelle Rub.

The purpose of the proposed project is to support current research and increase regional knowledge and awareness of adult spring-run Upper Columbia River (UCR) Chinook salmon survival and the impact of pinniped predation in the lower Columbia River (LCR) and estuary. Since 2011, National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has been collaborating with local fisherman to collect adult spring-run Chinook salmon in the estuary and LCR to implant returning fish with PIT tags, and at times radio transmitters, and to extract genetic information for parent-based mapping. Early results from this study indicate that mortality varies spatially and temporally for salmon returning to the LCR, is steadily increasing, and is correlated with an increase in number of LCR pinnipeds. More worrisome, adult spring-run Chinook salmon arriving during the early spring (e.g., March and including UCR spring Chinook salmon) are experiencing significantly higher mortality rates than those sampled during late spring and summer (e.g., May).

Declining returns have made the collection of returning adults a challenge and nearly impossible to make Evolutionarily Significant Units (ESU, i.e., Wenatchee Basin), or Distinct Population Segments (DPS, i.e., White River) conclusions. Parental based genetic information has recently become available for hatchery origin spring Chinook salmon of the UCR. Increasing the number of fish sampled and tagged each year will allow NOAA to study fish behavior and survival at the population level. Furthermore, knowing when UCR spring Chinook salmon return to the estuary will allow for a more robust understanding of the factors affecting their survival.

NOAA is proposing a phased approach to identify additional methods of fish collection in the lower CR and estuary that would serve both to augment the current tagging effort as well as to validate sampling and handling methodologies. During year one (2017), we propose on-site investigations of locations where two types of alternative fish collection methods might be feasible, a fish wheel and/or trap. If suitable site(s) are identified, we propose to test the operation of the most appropriate of these methods (based on information gained during Phase I) during year two (2018).

After committee discussion, the proposal was approved subject to approval of Jeff Korth.

- XIII. **Quincy Valley Chamber of Commerce / Tourism Association -- 2017 Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby** (T. Dresser) Dresser discussed the proposal with the committee wherein the committee approved the NNI Funding request of \$25,000.
- XIV. **Potpourri: "The Blob" Presentation/Schedule** – (B. Rose) Committee decided to delay this discussion for several months.
- XV. **Updates**
- A. Avian Predation Activities (C. Dotson) – End of year meeting bumped to 2/11. It will be an all-day meeting. Location TBD
 - B. Hatchery Activities (T. Dresser)
 - 1. Carlton Acclimation Facility – Water now at 100%.
 - 2. Nason Creek Acclimation Facility – Everything working great, fish healthy, and full water rights are being used.
 - 3. Priest Rapids Hatchery Modifications –Nothing new
 - 4. Penticton Hatchery –Nothing new
 - C. Hatchery Permits: Sec 10 Consultation/Summer Chinook, Sec 7 Consultation/Bull Trout. (T. Dresser) Should receive by May, 2017
 - D. Review of NNI Funded Projects
 - 1. 2016 Real Time Research / Oregon State university – “Evaluation of Caspian Tern Management to Reduce Predation on ESA-Listed Salmonids in the Columbia Plateau Region” - (C. Dotson) – Report will be forthcoming.
 - 2. Upper Columbia Fish Screen Monitoring Program Phase I - II Contract Extension – (J. Korth) –Nothing new to report
 - 3. Mid-Columbia River Intake Screen and Diversion Assessment (2016-17) – (T. Dresser) –Nothing new to report
 - 4. Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II – (J. Korth) – Nothing new to report
 - 5. Methow Valley Irrigation District (MVID) Instream Flow Improvement Project (T. Dresser) –Nothing new to report
 - 6. Predator Fish Recruitment Reduction (Report in Spring, 2017) (B. Rose) – Rohr reminded Rose of this action item and to begin thinking about when the appropriate time might be to get a report from McMichael.
- XVI. **Committee Reports** (D. Rohr) – No meetings held.
- XVII. **Qtrly NNI and Habitat Funds Report (placeholder/when available)** (D. Rohr) – under development.
- XVIII. **Next Meeting** – Wed, Jan 31, 2017, Wanapum HOB Conf. Rm 107; the February 22nd meeting was changed to Monday Feb 27, 2017, 1 pm, at the Wanapum HOB due to scheduling conflicts. The March meeting was changed to the 29th at the Wanapum HOB, 9:00 am. Committee members will be notified of specific meeting rooms for Feb 27th and March 29th.