



Grant County
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
Excellence in Service and Leadership

Priest Rapids Fish Forum
Meeting

Wednesday, 1 April 2015
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Grant PUD, 11 Spokane St., Suite 205B, Wenatchee, WA
Call-In Number: 1-800-977-8002, Bridge: 7422882

AGENDA

- I. Welcome and Introductions (9:00 to 9:05)
- II. Agenda Review (9:05 to 9:10)
- III. Approve March Meeting Notes (9:10 to 9:20)
 - A. Review Action Items from March meeting (All)
- IV. Update on Wanapum Dam (9:20-9:30)
- V. Update on WSMP (9:30-10:30)
 - A. Update on Juvenile Rearing (Rose and Miller)
 - B. Update on Plans for Broodstock Collection (Mott, Clement)
 - C. Phase 2 Sturgeon Conservation Program (Ecopath/Ecosim) (Mott)
 - D. Decision: Release Strategy for 2015 (Jackson, Mott)
 - E. Other White Sturgeon Items (All)
- VI. Update on PLMP (10:30-11:30)
 - A. NNI Update (Hillman)
 - B. Update on Monitoring (Clement)
 - C. Update on Gaps under Picketed Gates at OLAFT (Clement)
 - D. Other Lamprey Items (All)
- VII. Next Meeting: 6 May 2015 – Grant PUD Natural Resources Wenatchee Office



Grant County **PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT**

Priest Rapids Fish Forum

Wednesday, 1 April 2015
Grant PUD Wenatchee Office

PRFF Representatives

Stephen Lewis, USFWS
Bob Rose, YN
Doris Squeochs, Wanapum
Jason McLellan, CCT
Mike Clement, GCPUD
Debbie Williams, GCPUD

Patrick Verhey, Chad Jackson, WDFW
Pat McGuire, WDOE
Aaron Jackson, Carl Merkle, CTUIR
Keith Hatch, BIA
Chris Mott, GCPUD
Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

Attendees

Patrick Verhey, WDFW
Pat McGuire, WDOE
Jason McLellan, CCT (Via phone)
Mike Clement, Grant PUD
Debbie Williams, GCPUD

Tom Skiles, CRITFC (Via phone)
RD Nelle, USFWS
Donella Miller, YN (joined via phone @ 9:55 am)
Chris Mott, Grant PUD
Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

Distributed Items:

1. April 01, 2015 Meeting Agenda
2. Wanapum Refill Status Update email

Action Items:

1. Chris Mott or Blue Leaf will send an email inviting PRFF members to participate in Grant PUD's sturgeon broodstock fishing.
2. Tracy Hillman will review PRFF Protocols regarding participation and voting.
3. Tracy Hillman will poll PRFF members for agenda items for a May meeting.

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Agenda Review – The agenda was approved with no additions.

- A. Meeting Minute approval – 04 March 2014 – Approved.
- B. Action Items from March Meeting:

1. Tracy Hillman will try to secure a vote from the Yakama Nation on the juvenile sturgeon SOA. **Ongoing.**
2. PRFF will provide comments on the White Sturgeon Management Plan Annual Report to Chris Mott by Friday, 20 March 2015. **Complete.**
3. The Pacific Lamprey Subgroup will meet on Thursday, 19 March from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm at Grant PUD in Ephrata, WA. **Complete.**

III. Update on Wanapum Dam and Fish Passage – Mike Clement reported that Grant PUD began refilling Wanapum Reservoir on 16 March at a rate of about three feet per day. Full pool, 571.1 feet, was reached on 21 March 2015. Construction activities continue on the downstream side of the dam and those should be completed by the end of May. Trash rack modifications were removed two weeks ago.

IV. Update on White Sturgeon Management Plan (WSMP)

- A. **Update on Juvenile Rearing** – Donella Miller reported that the last sampling for length, weight, and condition occurred in March. The next sampling event will take place during marking. Chris Mott said that fish weighing 250 grams or more will be tagged the week of 12 April.
- B. **Update on Broodstock Collection** – Mike Clement noted that permits have been obtained for three fishing boats in week one and two boats in week two. Collection will occur downstream from McNary Dam. A definitive date to start fishing for broodstock has not been determined. Efforts will be shared jointly by Grant PUD and Chelan PUD, with coordination by Blue Leaf Environmental, Golder, and the Yakama Nation. Two trailers will be used to transport broodstock to Marion Drain. Current river temperatures are about two weeks ahead of normal (average) temperatures and could cause broodstock fishing to start the first of May. **Chris Mott or Blue Leaf will send an email or Doodle Poll inviting PRFF members to participate in brood collection activities.**
- C. **Phase 2 Sturgeon Conservation Program (Ecopath/Ecosim)** – Tracy Hillman reported that Dave Marmorek, ESSA Technologies, was not aware of Ecopath with Ecosim (EwE) models being used for sturgeon, but suggested that Villy Christensen, University of British Columbia, may be of help. Tracy contacted Villy, who said that of the roughly 500 published EwE models, none of them modeled sturgeon. He explained that Steve McAdam and Bret van Poorten from the British Columbia Environmental Ministry are discussing a project that has sturgeon as the key species and modeling the ecosystem. They are interested in examining what effects about 100,000 hatchery sturgeon in the trans-boundary area of the Columbia River will have on the ecosystem once these hatchery fish become piscivorous. The work is likely to proceed and be conducted by Patricia Woodruff, a joint Ph.D. student shared by Steve and Bret. It might be possible to expand Patricia's work to include the Priest Rapids and Rocky Reach Project Areas. It would be cost effective and would provide options for comparisons. Chris Mott said that he will be attending the Upper Columbia Sturgeon meeting at the end of April and he will discuss an expansion of Patricia's study with other attendees at that time.

Chris Mott noted that he discussed this topic with Corey Wright at Blue Leaf Environmental. Cory contacted Nobel Hendricks, QEDA Consulting in Seattle, to discuss with him how best to model sturgeon within the Project Area. Nobel thought a species-specific model might be a better fit than an ecosystem-based model. Noble stressed that EwE and other ecosystem-based models weight all parts of the ecosystem equally, and it may prove difficult to tease out optimal stocking levels for one species when working with ecosystem-wide inputs. He clarified that a species-specific model could still bring in multiple inputs from across the ecosystem, but would be designed to best answer questions related to the one species of interest. Nobel is willing to review the White

Sturgeon Management Plan and other relevant documents in order to produce a 2-4 page response on the modeling options (species vs. ecosystem) and how he would address the objectives of interest.

Tracy Hillman questioned if all PRFF members are defining carrying capacity the same way, and if the carrying capacity of Priest Rapids and Wanapum reservoirs need to be determined independently. For example, is the Forum defining capacity based on the entire life-cycle of the fish, or is the Forum defining capacity only for a specific life stage? Jason McLellan said that he defines the capacity as the total biomass the project area can support based on available food and space. Thus, under this definition, species interactions can have an important effect on biomass and therefore community/ecosystem structure should be considered in the model. Jason stressed that we don't want to populate the reservoir with more fish than the project area can support. He also pointed out that supplementation is used to account for the lack of natural recruitment. Jason stressed that in order to stock responsibly, we need to have abundance targets and that's where we should focus our efforts, not on stocking targets.

Mike Clement said that egg-matt studies and larval collections show that natural spawning is occurring in both reservoirs, but there appears to be a survival bottleneck in the larval or age-0 to age-1 period.

- D. **SOA on Juvenile White Sturgeon Release Strategy for 2016** – The SOA has been approved by all voting members of the PRFF except the Yakama Nation (YN). Tracy Hillman said that he talked with Bob Rose and at this time the YN is inclined to vote NO on the SOA. They believe the Forum is placing too much emphasis on genetics and that genetics is trumping the number of fish to be released per the White Sturgeon Management Plan. Members present asked how long the Forum should wait on an official vote. Tracy indicated that voting members are allowed to delay their votes if they notify the Chair in advance of the vote on the decision item. However, they are only allowed to do that once per decision item. In this case, the Forum has been lenient, because, at this time, the SOA is not time sensitive and there is optimism among the members that the YN will either support the SOA or abstain. Nevertheless, **Tracy Hillman will review PRFF Protocols regarding voting.** Patrick Verhey noted that WDFW would like to work through this issue as much as possible at the technical level.
- E. **WSMP Annual Report** – Chris Mott indicated that the final report was distributed to PRFF members by Debbie Williams on 27 March 2015.
- F. **Other White Sturgeon Items** – None

V. Update on PLMP

NNI (No Net Impact) Update from Pacific Lamprey Subgroup – Tracy Hillman reported that the Pacific Lamprey Subgroup met on 19 March at Grant PUD in Ephrata, WA. Grant PUD laid out their draft proposal on how to address Lamprey NNI. The draft proposal includes: (1) deposit of money annually into a Lamprey NNI Account, (2) adult trapping and transportation, and (3) ten-year biological check-ins. The duration of the proposed NNI agreement would be for the life of the license (39 years). In addition, the proposed NNI actions would be in fulfillment of juvenile survival studies if agreed to by the Forum. Grant PUD agreed to make changes (in track changes) to the Pacific Lamprey Management Plan. The Subgroup also discussed possible studies and actions that would fall under the proposed draft recommendations. Once the Subgroup reaches agreement, the draft proposal will be elevated to the PRFF for their review and approval. If approved by the PRFF, Grant PUD will initiate the recommended NNI proposal.

- A. **Update on Monitoring** – Mike Clement reported that Rod O'Connor with Blue Leaf will provide a white paper and maybe a presentation at the May or June meeting outlining the 2015 Pacific lamprey study plan. The plan will include direct release of 100 tagged adult lamprey in the lower Priest Rapids Left Bank Ladder to try and determine why it takes lamprey so long to move through that section of the ladder. All detection locations at the Priest Rapids Left Bank Ladder and Wanapum Ladders will remain the same. Only the entrance and exit at the Priest Rapids Right Bank Ladder will be monitored.
 - B. **Update on Gaps under Picketed Gates at the OLAFT** – Mike Clement said that Grant PUD engineers are working to modify the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) that WDFW and the YN use when operating the OLAFT. SOPs will be implemented and adopted as a normal operating procedure during the lamprey season. Modifications to the OLAFT are all being conducted outside of the OLAFT, so it will not interfere with the PIT-tag study. Grant PUD has conducted four years of studies and will continue to monitor lamprey passage after required studies are complete.
 - C. **Other Lamprey Items** – None
- VI. Next Meeting** – 6 May 2015 at Grant PUD in Wenatchee, WA, unless it is determined that a meeting is not needed. **Tracy Hillman will poll PRFF members for agenda items about two weeks before the scheduled meeting.**