



Grant County  
**PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT**  
*Excellence in Service and Leadership*

## Priest Rapids Fish Forum

Wednesday, 6 April 2016

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

### MEETING MINUTES

#### PRFF REPRESENTATIVES

---

Stephen Lewis, USFWS

Bob Rose, YN

Doris Squeochs, Wanapum

Jason McLellan, CCT

Mike Clement, Grant PUD

Orlene Hahn, Grant PUD

Patrick Verhey, Chad Jackson, WDFW

Pat McGuire, WDOE

Aaron Jackson, Carl Merkle, CTUIR

Keith Hatch, BIA

Chris Mott, Grant PUD

Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

#### ATTENDEES

---

RD Nelle, USFWS

Pat Wyena, Wanapum

Mike Clement, Grant PUD

Bob Rose, YN (via phone)

Jim Powell, BCAHS (via phone)

Tracy Hillman, Facilitator

Chad Jackson, WDFW (via phone)

Doris Squeochs, Wanapum

Pat McGuire, WDOE

Patrick Verhey, WDFW

Kirk Truscott, CCT

#### Action Items:

1. Chris Mott will distribute the 2016 Draft Sturgeon Monitoring Plan to the PRFF.
2. The Pacific Lamprey Subgroup will meet on 12 April 2016 at 9:00 am in the Grant PUD Wenatchee office to address all comments and edits in the draft proposed NNI document.

#### I. Welcome and Introductions

#### II. Agenda Review

- A. **Additional Agenda Items** – No new agenda items were provided.

#### III. Approve February Meeting Notes – 2 March 2016 Meeting Minutes were reviewed and approved.

#### A. Review Action Items from February Meeting

1. Tracy Hillman will distribute side-scan pictures to the PRFF. **Complete**
2. Chris Mott will distribute the 2016 Draft Sturgeon Monitoring Plan to the PRFF. **Ongoing**

3. The PRFF will send comments/edits to Tracy Hillman on the Draft Proposed Pacific Lamprey NNI Actions by 29 March 2016. **Complete**

#### IV. Update on White Sturgeon Management Plan (WSMP)

- A. **Update on Juvenile Rearing** – Mike Clement reported that the fish are doing well at Marion Drain.
- B. **Update on Juvenile Tagging/Marking** – Mike Clement indicated that 3,250 juvenile sturgeon were recently PIT tagged and scute marked. Some of the fish will receive acoustic tags on 18 April. Extra fish will be released into John Day Reservoir. Grant PUD provided PIT tags for the fish that will be released into John Day Reservoir.

Juvenile sturgeon will be released into the Priest Rapids Project Area in about two weeks. A total of 1,250 will be released into Priest Rapids Reservoir (in the Wanapum Tailrace) and 2,000 will be released into Wanapum Reservoir (at Frenchman Coulee).

- C. **Diet Sampling** – Mike Clement said beginning next week they will use hook-and-line to capture CRITFC fish for diet analyses. They will fish for a minimum of one week. CRITFC fish will be euthanized, stomach contents extracted, and biological information collected (e.g., size, weight, etc.). Biological information will be collected from all incidental catches. These fish will be released back to the river.
- D. **PRFF Policy Decision** – Tracy Hillman reviewed the decision from the Priest Rapids Policy Committee. Tracy summarized the following decisions/terms contained in the approved SOA:
  - A total of 1,250 juvenile sturgeon will be released into Priest Rapids Reservoir and 2,000 juvenile sturgeon will be released into Wanapum Reservoir.
  - These numbers will be released annually for a five-year period (2016 through 2020).
  - Yearlings from wild sturgeon larvae collections will be used first towards the release target. Yearlings from broodstock will be used to backfill the program balance if necessary.
  - Broodstock crosses will maximum family (cross) equalization to the extent possible.
  - Entities will fish the entire contracted length of time to collect as many broodstock as possible.
  - Grant PUD will continue to monitor the program as described in the Management Plan, 401 Certification, annual study plans, and according to the modifications approved by the Policy Committee in November 2015.
  - There will be a three-year check-in during the five-year period. The three-year check-in will evaluate the performance of the stocking program, and, if necessary, the agreement may be amended or replaced.

Tracy indicated that the Yakama Nation and Colville Tribes provided “Letters for the Record.” Tracy summarized the letters.

Highlights from the Yakama Nation Letter:

- The location of larval collection is not specified in the SOA.
- Grant PUD will continue to fund broodstock collection at an adequate level to ensure more than 18 unique crosses are produced.
- Grant PUD will ensure that M&E will produce the information needed to determine population status and condition in 2020.

- The three-year check-in is advisory only and does not alter the terms of the SOA unless agreed to by all members.

Highlights from the Colville Tribes Letter:

- Most of the information contained in the approved SOA is not necessary to describe the terms of the agreement.
- The approach section of the SOA does not reflect the rationale for approving the SOA.
- Reservoir area should have been used instead of reservoir length to calculate the target density of adult white sturgeon.
- The SOA lacks a description of the defining characteristics of an adult white sturgeon (e.g., size).
- The use of mean adult abundance between 2035 and 2065 under the model assumptions of consistent annual stocking for 25 years following program inception and no natural recruitment results in inflated annual release numbers.
- Yearly cumulative adult abundance values are not normally distributed and no statistical justification is provided for the use of arithmetic mean adult abundance.
- The assumption that the proposed stocking will result in long-term average adult abundances falling around the Bonneville Reservoir-based adult abundance target will only happen if stocking is discontinued within 25 years of the program's start and natural recruitment is not restored.
- CRITFC fish in the Project Areas were not accounted for in the model runs. There is considerable uncertainty associated with efforts to remove CRITFC fish.
- The size of fish at release and release timing should have been specified as well as noting that the survival rate modeled was associated with 200 g fish size at release.

Tracy noted that the information contained in the SOA and Letters for the Record will need to be reviewed and addressed during the three-year check-in and near the end of the five-year agreement.

#### **E. Monitoring Updates**

Mike Clement reported that the final annual white sturgeon monitoring report was submitted to FERC last week. He also noted that Grant PUD is completing the sturgeon monitoring plan for 2016. He will discuss this with Chris Mott and send the draft study plan to the PRFF as soon as possible.

#### **F. Other White Sturgeon Items**

Mike Clement said that Blue Leaf Environmental will begin broodstock collection around mid-May depending on river conditions (e.g., water temperatures and flows).

Chad Jackson said they (WDFW) will try to collect sturgeon larvae downstream from The Dalles Dam around late May. They are currently working on contracts with the PUDs.

## V. Update on PLMP

### A. NNI Update

- **Proposed Draft Recommendations from Pacific Lamprey Subgroup** – Tracy Hillman reported that he received comments from WDFW, USFWS, Wanapum, Colville Tribes, Yakama Nation, Grant PUD, and Chelan PUD on the draft proposed Pacific lamprey NNI recommendations document. He said he compiled all the comments and edits into one document, which was distributed to the PRFF on 30 March.

Members of the Forum described briefly some of the major points in the draft document. There was discussion about the desire to keep the Entiat as a control watershed for a larger Columbia Basin-wide study. Members seemed to think holding the Entiat as a control area was reasonable; although, there was some concern about the integrity of the control, given that adults heading to the Entiat may be intercepted downstream and translocated into other subbasins. In addition, there was discussion about the need to include artificial propagation as a possible action to address adult NNI. Although artificial propagation may not be the best tool to address adult NNI, members thought it was important to keep it as a possible action in the toolbox. It may also help with adult translocation efforts. Members talked about conducting feasibility and desirability experiments in the Yakima River. Although some members saw value in conducting studies in the Yakima River, others thought it would be more appropriate to conduct those studies in the upper subbasins either in or upstream of the Priest Rapids Project. Other items discussed included juvenile monitoring within tributaries, evaluation of fish passage within tributaries, and monitoring adult lamprey within the reservoirs.

Tracy said the Pacific Lamprey Subgroup will meet on 12 April 2016 at 9:00 am in the Grant PUD Wenatchee office to address all comments and edits.

### B. Other Pacific Lamprey Items

- Bob Rose said the Regional Pacific Lamprey Conservation team will be reviewing tributary plans on 14 April. He will provide additional details on the meeting and conference call, which will occur tomorrow (7 April). The purpose of the conference call is to flesh out the objectives for the meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup>.
- Bob Rose said that the Yakama Nation translocated about 230 adult lamprey into the Wenatchee River in March. Bob said the fish were PIT tagged and he will provide the PIT-tag codes for the fish.

## VI. Next Meeting: 4 May 2016 – Grant PUD Natural Resources Wenatchee Office