



Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee Meeting

FINAL APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, December 17, 2019

1:00 pm

Grant PUD Wenatchee Office

PRCC Representatives

Scott Carlon, Justin Yeager (Alt), NMFS
Keely Murdoch, Brandon Rogers, (Alt), YN
Chad Jackson, P. Verhey (Alt) WDFW
Curt Dotson, Peter Graf (Alt), GCPUD
Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc, Facilitator

Jim Craig, USFWS
Kirk Truscott, Casey Baldwin (alt), CCT
Tom Skiles, CTUIR
Erin Harris, Admin Ass't, GPUD

PRCC Meeting Attendees

Curt Dotson, GPUD
Keely Murdoch, YN
Scott Carlon, NMFS (Via Phone)
Kirk Truscott, CCT
Chad Jackson, WDFW

Jim Craig, USFWS
Tom Skiles, CTUIR (Via Phone)
Peter Graf, GPUD
Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc, Facilitator
Erin Harris, GPUD

Decision made during December 17, 2019 meeting

1. Approved NNI Funding of the RTR 2020 Proposal for up to \$382,987.
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MEETING MINUTES

- I. Safety Briefing** – Curt Dotson completed the safety brief.
- II. Welcome and Introductions (D. Rohr)**

- III. **Agenda Review (D. Rohr)** – Additions included Barkley Irrigation Co Permanent Point of Diversion Project, and discussion of Meeting Location(s) for 2020.
- IV. **Meeting Minutes (D. Rohr)**
 - A. **September 25, 2019 Meeting** – Approved
 - B. **October 23, 2019 Conference Call** – Under development
 - C. **November 19, 2019 Meeting** – Under development
- V. **Review of Actions Items from November 19, 2019 Conference Call/Meeting (D. Rohr)**
 - A. Rohr will follow up with PRCC Habitat SC regarding UCSRB Science Conference sponsorship funding. - **Completed**
 - B. Rohr will discuss status of the Stemilt Screen Project Land-Owner Agreement with C. Jackson and seek concurrence of approval. - **Completed**
 - C. Murdoch will follow up with “path forward” information regarding Lake Wenatchee activities. – **Completed**
- VI. **UPDATE - UCSRB Science Conference Sponsorship (D. Rohr)**

Request is \$2500 with a proposal for a 50/50 cost share with PRCC Habitat SC. **After further discussion, Habitat Subcommittee decided to fund 100% from habitat funds.**
- VII. **(DECISION ITEM) Proposal: Avian Predation on ESA-listed Juvenile Salmonids on the Mid-Columbia River, 2020, Real Time Research (C. Dotson)** – Rohr reminded members that this proposal was discussed last month at the November 19th PRCC meeting with the agreement to review and be prepared to consider for approval at today’s meeting. Accordingly, Dotson and Skiles provided some additional review, including the current relationship with the federal parties funding of avian predation in the Columbia Basin. Dotson presented a colored chart that outlined the areas of avian predation M&E programs within the Columbia and Snake River basins that will be funded in 2020 by BPA and USACE and how the several different plans all fit together for a regional approach. Dotson mentioned that there wasn’t a USBOR (BOR) component on this chart.

Murdoch commented on the current RTR Program Proposal and possible future proposals. She stated this is important work that has been funded by NNI for many years, but at what point does Grant conclude it is important to their normal operations and therefore a transition made to treat this as a Grant responsibility.

Dotson commented that Goose Island is BOR property and therefore under their management. Accordingly, Grants hands are tied for doing any avian dissuasion work unless permission is granted by BOR, which they refused to do for the 2020 season. He pointed out that the 2019 FCRPS Interim BiOP does address Goose Island avian predation, and the BOR has stated they are going to do the least possible to meet their Goose Island dissuasion responsibilities. Dotson

commented that survival studies were successful in 2017 with the dissuasion activities at that time, but because Goose Island is owned by a federal agency who has stated they are going to do the least they have to do, this becomes a difficult problem. Dotson commented that he has been working with BOR regarding different possible dissuasion activities, but BOR is taking the position of “proof of concept” that dissuasion activities 1 to 2 days per week is adequate and M&E work regarding avian predation in the Potholes area isn’t required. Dotson commented that he disagrees with the BOR’s approach. The BOR has commented they plan to spend up to \$150,000 a year max, working 2 days per week, and one of the two days will be to look for avian activity. Dotson also stated the 2021 FCRPS BiOp is currently being drafted by NOAA and hopefully BOR responsibilities are to be included and enforced, regarding BOR being held accountable for their BiOp requirements and obligations. Dotson stated that this RTR proposal provides an independent evaluation of whether the BOR’s 2020 “proof of concept” plan was a success or not. Furthermore, without M&E work being conducted by BOR, how would it be known if their plan was successful or not. With a lack of data, BOR can assume “success” wherein further avian management work will be lacking and avian predation on out-migrating steelhead smolts could easily increase in intensity.

Graf shared that perhaps a short-term goal, a pressure campaign while the BiOp is being drafted, might help to expose what’s happening in hopes NOAA and others address the issue.

Murdoch stated she doesn’t feel using NNI funds is appropriate. If the work is needed for Grant to meet their survival requirements, then Grant should cover the cost with their own staff. She stated that as PRCC addresses the moving pieces, we need a long-term plan. She commented this issue would work best as a program rather than a funded project.

Rohr suggested members address the RTR 2020 Proposal today and continue this discussion at a future meeting. **Accordingly, committee members approved NNI Funding of the RTR 2020 Proposal for up to \$382,987.**

VIII. Review and Discussion of Lake Wenatchee Activities Regarding White River Spring Chinook Juvenile Migration (D. Rohr)

A. Co-Managers Proposed Path Forward (Murdoch, Truscott, Jackson) –

Rohr opened the discussion with a reminder that the discussion last month during the November 19th meeting concluded with the co-managers agreeing to distribute their proposal in writing to the committee for review and discussion at the next meeting, including a list of draft questions to be considered for distribution to Jeff Jorgenson. Accordingly, the following information was received from Murdoch by email dated December 3, 2019 on behalf of the co-managers.

Proposed path forward discussed in November 2019 (PRCC meeting):

- 1) *The PRCC develop a list of questions related to data gaps identified by the HSC that need to be filled prior to assembling the expert panel and 2026 decision.*
- 2) *We present the questions to Jeff Jorgenson and ask if he would be able to use the Life Cycle Model to address the gaps and what outstanding data would be needed to do so.*
- 3) *Dependent on Jeff's response we develop an RFP to directly address the data needed to answer our questions. (NOTE: See Attachment A, "Draft Questions for the Life Cycle Model", which were included in the December 3, 2019 Murdoch email)*

Committee discussion continued with a review of the co-manager's proposed path forward and the included draft questions. The continuing committee member's discussion covered a broad spectrum of questions and comments, including the question that if the Life Cycle Model (LCM) is completed, can it answer the co-manager's draft questions. If the answer is yes, should we move forward with an RFP to complete the LCM work. What existing data gaps need to be reviewed. It was noted that Mike Ford (NOAA) is working on the Wenatchee River 5-year status review and may have information to share. The 5-year status review is expected to be completed in 2021 and will it provide clarity on the White River hatchery supplementation issue. Will identification of limiting life stages come from the LCM work. If this is the data the co-managers want, should they perhaps craft a proposal to achieve it. It was noted that the sub-group established to develop an RFP could not come to agreement. Should there be development of an RFP or should there be a co-manager's stand-alone proposal to consider. At the end of the day, we need to find the best answers in order to make the best decisions ---- AND SO ON.

Accordingly, the suggestion was made to move forward with items #1 and #2 of the proposed path-forward listed above using the draft questions included in the December 3rd email received from the co-managers. Furthermore, it was suggested to also include the questions previously developed by the PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee that were submitted to Jorgensen prior to his presentation to the PRCC. Next, it was suggested that after receiving answers to all of the questions from Jeff Jorgenson, the committee would continue with a discussion of to how to address item #3 above. **Accordingly, committee members agreed to the suggestions identified and asked Rohr to deliver all questions to Jorgenson for him to address. Committee members will next continue the discussion after receiving answers to the questions from Jorgenson.**

- IX. **Affirm Final Approval of Landowner Agreement for Stemilt Screen Project (D. Rohr)**
 - A. C. Jackson concurrence with PRCC members approval of November 19, 2019 (HFA 601-28). **Rohr received Jackson's concurrence to approve.**

X. **(DECISION ITEM) - Request for No-cost Time Extension with Additional Scope (for “Non-Native Predator Recruitment Reduction – Phase 1) (K. Murdoch)** - Murdoch shared draft report is due by 12/31 and final due end of February. Murdoch review details of the no-cost time extension to do extra sampling this spring. McMichael is available to attend a PRCC meeting for further discussion and explanation if desired. **Rohr will list this as a Decision Item for the January meeting.**

XI. **(Agenda addition) Barkley Irrigation Co Permanent Point of Diversion Project** – Justin Yeager, NMFS PRCC Habitat Subcommittee representative conferenced into the meeting by telephone to discuss this project and a Habitat SC funding request. This project is 80% complete and is experiencing a funding shortfall to complete Phase 7, the final phase leading to completion. The project has been in progress for several years during which time costs have increased primarily due to inflationary reasons. Trout Unlimited (TU), project manager, is requesting \$500,000 from the Habitat SC to assist with the shortfall and funding for final pump and pipeline installation for phase 7. TU is also working with the Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) with a \$200,000 request and the Washington State Department of Ecology with a \$400,000 request for Phase 7. The SRFB request is expected to be delivered, but the Ecology request is questionable. Accordingly, the Habitat SC is proposing the PRCC use NNI Funds for the \$500,000 TU request to the Habitat SC and the Habitat SC will cover the \$400,000 Ecology request if Ecology does not honor the request.

Truscott commented that he had spent time with Colville Habitat SC representative Chris Fisher reviewing the requested funding amounts, and Truscott was in favor of approving the \$500,000 from NNI Funds as requested by the Habitat SC. However, after extended review and discussion, **the final decision of other committee members was to not approve using \$500,000 worth of NNI funds to complete the Barkley Project, and conversely, the PRCC recommends that the PRCC Habitat SC cover the aforementioned \$500,000 with habitat funds and then come back to the PRCC to consider covering any deficiencies in the requested Washington Department of Ecology funding for this project.**

Additional discussion occurred regarding the process for the Habitat SC to request NNI funding. Dotson commented on the 2013 PRCC NNI Funding Guidance Document, and he will send a copy to Rohr for distribution. Additionally, Graf and Rohr will follow up with additional review of process details.

XII. **(Agenda Addition) 2020 Meeting Logistics** – Subject to be discussed at January meeting.

XIII. **Potpourri (D. Rohr)**

A. UPDATE - 2019 AFEP Conference, December 3 - 4, 2019, PNNL Labs, Richland (C. Dotson) – Dotson briefly reported on the conference.

GENERAL UPDATES

- XIV. Avian Predation Activities (C. Dotson) – no update information**
- XV. FCRPS BiOp – Corps/BOR Avian Predation Management in Columbia Plateau Region (C. Dotson) – no update information**
- XVI. Update and Review of the White River Spring Chinook Mitigation 2026 Decision Framework (D. Rohr) – see discussion above**
- XVII. Review of Outstanding NNI Funded Projects**
 - A. Continued Support for UC Fish Screen Program (C. Jackson) – no update
 - B. Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II (C. Jackson, D. Rohr) no update
 - C. “Non-Native Predator Recruitment Reduction – Phase I” (K. Murdoch) –
See discussion above
 - D. “Northern Pike Removal in Lake Roosevelt” (K. Truscott) – no update
 - E. 2020 Quincy Valley Tourism Association Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby (C. Dotson) – no update
- XVIII. Committee Reports (D. Rohr) - distributed**
- XIX. NNI and Habitat Funds Report for Q3 (D. Rohr)**
- XX. Next Meeting:** Wednesday, January 29, 2020, Wanapum Dam HOB, Room 107

Action Items from December 17, 2019 Meeting

1. Rohr will follow up with PRCC Habitat Subcommittee of PRCC discussion of Barkley Irrigation Company Activities.
2. Rohr will distribute Lake Wenatchee / White river questions to Jeff Jorgenson.
3. Murdoch and Rohr will communicate with G. McMichael regarding status of Request for No-Cost Extension.
4. Rohr will follow up with Graf and with Dotson regarding NNI Funding details.
5. Dotson will distribute copy of NNI Funding Guidance Document dated 2013.

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