



Grant County
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
Excellence in Service and Leadership

Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee Meeting

Final Approved Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

1:00 pm

Microsoft Teams

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
Chad Jackson, WDFW
Tom Skiles, CTUIR
Scott Carlon, NMFS
Todd Pearsons, GPUD
Geoff McMichael, Mainstem Fish Research
Daniel Didricksen, WDFW

Peter Graf, GPUD
Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc, Facilitator
Erin Harris, GPUD
Jim Craig, USFWS
Kirk Truscott, CCT
Rebecca Buchanan, Buchanan Statistical Consulting
Jennifer Novak, WDFW

Decisions made during January 26, 2021 meeting:

1. December 15, 2020 meeting minutes approved.
2. The proposal for "Estimating the Survival of juvenile Spring Chinook Salmon in Lake Wenatchee, WA" was not approved.

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** - Rohr welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- II. **Agenda Review (D. Rohr)** - No additions were made.
- III. **Meeting Minutes (D. Rohr)**
 - A. December 15, 2020 – **Approved.**

B. Affirm for the record that Rohr talked with Carlon and he approved RTR funding to attend PRCC-BOR meetings.

IV. Review of Actions Items from December 15, 2020 Webinar Conference (D. Rohr) –

1. Graf will distribute slides of data on wild/hatchery adult salmonid conversion rates and passage to committee members for their review. **-Completed.**
2. Rohr will contact Carlon regarding committee vote to approve RTR attending PRCC-BOR meetings **-Completed.**
3. Murdoch edit to November 24, 2020 meeting minutes will be incorporated by Harris and Rohr. – **Completed.**

V. Review of January 13, 2021 PRCC-BOR Meeting - (D. Rohr) – Rohr updated the committee on the January 13th meeting with BOR and shared that the next meeting would take place, Friday, January 29, 2021 starting at 12:30pm. Rohr has distributed to meeting participants a task matrix of potential dissuasion activities developed during the “brainstorming meeting” which are to be reviewed and rated, and he is waiting for participants to return their rating results. Craig noted that the meeting resulted in a lot of good ideas and he suggests that the PRCC keep hosting the meetings to keep the work going. Craig also shared the BOR is very conscious of their budget. Jackson shared he talked with Matt Monda, WDFW, after the meeting and Monda said a lot of the ideas that were discussed had also been suggested during the Inland Avian Predation Management Plan (IAPMP) creation. Rohr reported there was discussion to invite NOAA staff and Michelle McDowell, USFWS, to attend the next meeting, but consensus was that they not be invited to attend until sometime after the next meeting on January 29th. Dotson shared the same comments that Jackson mentioned regarding development of the IAPMP. Dotson also commented that in 2020 the BOR, via Department of Agriculture staff, were permitted to go onto Goose Island and collect tern eggs while the gulls on the island were sitting on nests. Dotson stated he asked Michelle McDowell, USFWS, why this was now the allowed practice under the collection permit when RTR was not allowed to disturb the nesting gulls in previous years to collect tern eggs. Dotson stated that McDowell responded to the question by stating “the understanding of “take” has recently been re-interpreted and walking between the nesting gulls was now allowed”. Graf asked what is the PRCC responsibility regarding the terns on Goose Island/Potholes area, and he agrees with Jim Craig to continue meeting with BOR to keep them involved with dissuasion review and activities. Carlon commented that NOAA should become more active in keeping the BOR involved and focused in the dissuasion activities required of the BOR as outlined in the FCRPS BiOp. Dotson suggested sending the task matrix information to Michelle McDowell and ask her to identify those items listed on the task matrix which are not allowed, based on the present collection permit that has been issued. Dotson asked why spend time and effort on an item of possible tern dissuasion that would not be permitted by USFWS to take place on Goose Island/Potholes area. Rohr commented that is a topic we can discuss during the next meeting on Friday, January 29th. Dotson also discussed involving a third party to keep the

BOR on task. **ACTION: Carlon will discuss this subject further within NOAA, and Rohr will stay in touch with BOR regarding path forward.**

VI. 91% Combined Survival Estimates for Covered Species. (D. Rohr)

A. Update of YN, WDFW legal review - Murdoch stated she has heard back from their legal office and shared that both standards (juvenile 93%, and combined adult/juvenile 91%) are requirements for meeting NNI. Jackson commented WDFW heard back from their AG office and he reported the position of the state, as outlined in the Salmon and Steelhead Settlement Agreement (SSSA), is a 93% juvenile survival rate at the project level is a requirement of the combined adult/juvenile survival standard. Rohr commented this may need to be elevated to the Policy Committee for their review and discussion. Jackson shared he is not certain we need to go to the Policy Committee because there is not a formal disagreement or dispute. Jackson believes that after the technical review and legal review by some that the PUD is still discussing what to do with the proposed adult survival estimates. Is Grant PUD requesting a vote on these new adult survival estimates and what is the PRCC's roles for adopting them? Is it the same standard for adopting juvenile survival estimates? Next steps are up to Grant PUD in this case. The State is not looking to initiate a Policy Committee review. The State simply requested clarification on what Grant PUD's survival standards are exactly. Truscott stated he agrees with the State's opinion. Rohr stated that no action with the NNI Fund will occur until February 15th, and Murdoch asked what February 15th date is? Rohr shared it is the date when Grant PUD would make the annual funding deposits into the Habitat and NNI Funding accounts. Murdoch commented the committee has been presented with a Grant position and there is nothing to do until a decision is made, and then if warranted it could go to the Policy Committee for dispute. Graf shared there is a fundamental disagreement of the opinion of a major portion of the SSSA. He asked why does a vote or decision need to be made to elevate and issue to the Policy Committee? Graf also said that if the discussion cannot happen here because of legal issues with lawyers, we would need to ask the Policy Committee for help. Rohr suggested consideration be given to elevating to the Policy Committee and have them discuss it. Carlon shared it is clear to him and agrees that it is appropriate to send this to the Policy Committee.

VII. Estimating the Survival of Juvenile Spring Chinook Salmon in Lake

Wenatchee, WA – Geoff McMichael Presentation (K. Murdoch) -Murdoch introduced Geoff McMichael and Rebecca Buchanan and stated she worked with Jackson, McMichael, and Buchanan on this project. McMichael next reviewed his power point presentation with committee members in describing the project proposal. Graf asked about standard error and consequences if you fall below 100 smolts. McMichael said he looked at a few reports and felt it safe to assume they get 100 fish, but no guarantee. WDFW has conducted electrofishing in the Lake and was able to capture a significant number of Chinook. Rebecca Buchanan shared information on sample size and standard error. Graf asked about tag burden, tagging size, and tagging fish less than 95mm, with most sub-yearlings being less than that size. McMichael shared that the Army Corps of

Engineers has not reduced their study size criteria to less than 95mm, or 6.7% tag-burden. Murdoch discussed that acoustic tagged fish will be released differently than the PIT-tagged fish, and this means they will be only handled once. Skiles asked about the survival model and details related to the timing of lake entry for juveniles and the subsequent two lake sampling events with a composite sample. McMichael shared they are assuming the movement and behavior will be the same for each tagging group, and that they will get a representative sample. Committee members discussed the timing distribution of sub-yearlings and yearlings passing the screw traps. McMichael agreed to report back on how many sub-yearlings he would expect to tag that would be over the 6.7% tag-burden and would send this data to Rohr for distribution. McMichael and Buchanan exited the meeting, and the committee members continued their discussion. After additional review and discussion, Murdoch asked for a vote on the proposal. Rohr called for a vote and the proposal was not approved, with Craig abstaining from the vote.

VIII. Update of Upper Columbia Fish Screen Program, Danny Didricksen and Jenni Novak, WDFW – (C. Jackson) – Danny Didricksen and Jenni Novak shared the 601-28H contract wrap up presentation, stating that the contract ended on Dec. 31, 2020. Tandy, Twisp Power, Stemilt Creek, Icicle Fish Screens, and the Wenatchee River Pump Screen were reviewed and discussed with committee members.

IX. Potpourri (D. Rohr) -Nothing to report.

UPDATES

X. Avian Predation Activities (C. Dotson, T. Skiles) -Curt Dotson shared RTR is working on completing their report.

XI. FCRPS BiOp – Corps/BOR Avian Predation Management in Columbia Plateau Region (S. Carlon) – Nothing new to report.

XII. Review of Outstanding NNI Funded Projects

- A. Continued Support for UC Fish Screen Program (C. Jackson, D. Rohr) – See agenda item VIII above.
- B. Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II (C. Jackson, D. Rohr) – Nothing new to report.
- C. “Non-Native Predator Recruitment Reduction – Phase I” (K. Murdoch) - Placeholder until Spring 2021. No new information to report.
- D. “Northern Pike Removal in Lake Roosevelt” (K. Truscott) – Action item: Truscott will have information to discuss with committee members at the next meeting.
- E. **(Placeholder)** 2020 Quincy Valley Tourism Association Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby (moved to 2021 due to Covid-19) - Dotson shared he has talked to the Quincy Valley Representative who told him the Derby is now planned to take place May 14th – 16th at Crescent Bar, following Grant PUD

- and Washington State Covid guidelines, but depending upon the conditions at that time, it may have to be re-scheduled or possibly cancelled again.
- F. Avian Predation on ESA-listed Juvenile Salmonids on the Mid-Columbia River, 2020, Real Time Research (C. Dotson) -Nothing additional to report.
 - G. **(Placeholder)** Barkley Irrigation Co Permanent Point of Diversion, Completing Implementation of the Permanent Solution (D. Rohr) – Nothing to report.

XIII. Committee Reports (D. Rohr) – No meetings in January

XIV. NNI and Habitat Funds Report, Q4, 2020 (D. Rohr) – Q4 report expected in February 2021.

XV. Next Meeting – March 23, 2021, 1:00, TEAMS Webinar Meeting

Action Items from January 21, 2021 meeting

1. Carlon will discuss Goose Island and Potholes area avian dissuasion activities within NOAA.
2. Rohr will stay in touch with BOR regarding path forward for Goose Island and Potholes area avian dissuasion activities.
3. Murdoch will notify G. McMichael and R. Buchanan of committee decision regarding NNI Funding project proposal.