



Grant County
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
Excellence in Service and Leadership

Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee Meeting
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 26, 2021

1:00 pm

ZOOM Webinar Conference

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), GPUD

Jim Craig, USFWS
Kirk Truscott, Casey Baldwin (alt), CCT
Tom Skiles, CTUIR

PRCC Meeting Attendees

Curt Dotson, GPUD
Scott Carlon, NMFS
Chad Jackson, WDFW
Tom Skiles, CTUIR
Kirk Truscott, CCT
Bryan Nordlund, PRCC Facilitator

Keely Murdoch, YN
Peter Graf, GPUD
Erin Harris, GPUD
Jim Craig, USFWS
Jeremy Cram, WDFW (Presenter)

Decisions Made During Tuesday, October 26, 2021 Meeting

1. NNI Fund proposal – Northern Pike Removal 2022 to 2025 (CCT) – **Approved** for \$100,000 per year
2. NNI proposal – PIT Tag Barge (WDFW) – **Approved** 1/3 of a cost share, no more than \$81,934.00.
3. Non-Native Predator Recruitment Reduction NNI report – **Approved** Geoff McMichael to post report to ResearchGate website.
4. September 28, 2021, PRCC meeting minutes were **approved**.
5. The PRCC meeting dates for November and December **were revised** to November 16 and December 14.

Meeting Minutes

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – B. Nordlund welcomed everyone and noted that the full committee was present at the meeting.

II. Agenda Review – K. Murdock added a housekeeping agenda item. She mentioned that the Grant PUD website has good records of meeting minutes, and agendas. However, Keely pointed out that the website has an incomplete record of Statement of Agreements (SOA) in particular those that occurred beyond 2017.

III. Meeting Minutes Approval

A. September 28, 2021, PRCC meeting minutes – T. Skiles, C. Dotson, and K. Truscott all provided verbal approval for these minutes at today's PRCC meeting. All other PRCC members attending the September 28th meeting had previously approved the minutes, so the minutes were approved as final.

IV. Review of Actions Items from September 28, 2021, Meeting

- **In progress** - Follow-up on Corp/BOR Avian Predation Management (Carlton)
- **Complete** - Email distribution of Sub-yearling workshop notes (Nordlund)
- **Complete** - Email distribution of Northern Pike Removal PowerPoint (Nordlund)
- **Complete** - Email distribution of Fund Reports (Nordlund)
- **Complete and On-Going** - Email distribution of PRFF, Habitat and Hatchery SC reports (Nordlund)

V. Vote on NNI Fund proposal – Northern Pike Removal - B. Nordlund reviewed that this NNI Fund request is for \$100K a year, for each year from 2022 to 2025. As presented by CCT at last month's meeting, this would fund a portion of the CCT Northern Pike Removal Program from Lake Roosevelt. This fund request would provide a continuation of funding from an earlier NNI funded project. The PRCC members all agreed to fund this NNI fund request, except for K. Murdoch who abstained from voting. As such, the NNI funds were **approved** for this proposal.

VI. 2021 Fish Passage Operations Report (C. Dotson, B. Nordlund and T. Skiles) – B. Nordlund provided fish counts for Priest Rapids Dam through October 21, 2021:

Spring Chinook – 13,105 adults, 1,447 jacks (complete)
Summer Chinook – 49,315 adults, 2,298 jacks (complete)
Sockeye – 76,854 (complete)
Fall Chinook – 43,869 adults, 1,778 jacks (few 100/day still passing)
Steelhead – 2,773 adults (a few per day still trickling in)
Coho – 47,073 (corrected - number reported at PRCC was in error)

The PRCC held a discussion on why fish counts for some species were higher at Rock Island dam than downstream at the GPUD projects. K. Truscott noted that about 109,000 sockeye were counted at Rock Island, but only about 76,000 at Priest Rapids. B. Nordlund asked for an update on use of the fish trap (OLAFT) at Priest Rapids Dam, and whether fish removed could affect upstream fish

counts. K. Murdoch replied that the Yakama Tribe collected sockeye at Priest Rapids and transported these fish to the Wenatchee and Methow basins for ongoing programs in the Upper Columbia, but these fish would not be counted at any upstream count stations. Nothing was resolved, but questions remain.

T. Skiles performs monthly ladder inspections at the GPUD dams for the fisheries agencies and tribes. He reported that this year's inspections are now complete. Because of pandemic constraints, he has been doing remote fishway inspections by interfacing with powerhouse personnel and automated readout equipment. He reported that in general, the components of the fish ladders were kept within allowable operational ranges.

C. Dotson reported that juvenile bypass systems are using modified operations for downstream kelt passage. He mentioned that several issues affected normal bypass operations in the past month, including a horse rescue (requiring lowering of the Wanapum pool), issues with the Wanapum boat barrier, commencement of Hanford Reach spawning flows, and conducting full open gate tests at Priest Rapids dam (see below).

The PRCC held a discussion on why fish counts for some species were higher at Rock Island dam than downstream at the GPUD projects. Nothing was resolved, but questions remain.

VII. NNI proposal – Wenatchee River PIT Tag Barge (WDFW) Jeremy Cram presented a WDFW proposal for a PIT Detection Barge, to be located near the mouth of the Wenatchee River. The main goal for this project is to investigate fish survival and passage in the Wenatchee River and to identify over-winter migration patterns. The PRCC had several questions for Jeremy and discussed this NNI funding proposal. The PRCC concluded that this proposal is more of a habitat related project and discussed how this should be funded with Habitat Funds or possibly be a cost share request using both Habitat and NNI Funds. In addition, the PRCC discussed a cost share with Chelan PUD. The PRCC decided that they would only approve funding for one-third of the project (\$81,934) and the full proposal would need to be cost shared with other funding sources.

VIII. Full-Open gate test at Priest Rapids. C. Dotson reported about a FERC required test of spillway gates at Priest Rapids dam that limited bypass operations for downstream migrating kelts. The gate undergoing testing required that bypass operations be temporarily shut down due to safety concerns with flow into the bypass. The PRCC Spill Committee (S. Carlon, J. Craig and C. Dotson) was consulted regarding limiting adverse effects on adult fish passage. Per C. Dotson, Grant PUD is in the fall-back spill mode with the lowest level gate opening (Spillgate #22) for the sluiceway. The fall-back spill mode occurs after juvenile spill ends. K. Truscott asked about the level of fall-back spill at Priest Rapids. C. Dotson replied that about 2 KCFS is going through, and it varies a little with forebay elevation. T. Skiles asked if that is 2 KCFS over the Wanapum juvenile pass? C. Dotson answered that Wanapum bypass was designed to

operate with slide gates in place to provide between 2 to 2.5 when fall-back spill is taking place. FERC requires full open gate tests every 5-10 years to ensure the equipment works as designed. Grant PUD had asked FERC for an extension until after fall-back spill ends, but FERC said it had to be done this year before it got too cold and risk increased. FERC's deadline is 10/30/2021. C. Dotson stated that the original plan was to keep the bypass sluiceway closed. He worked with the Grant PUD safety department to have the fall-back spill take place He shared Grant PUD staff have weekly updates with the Spill Committee plus B. Nordlund to update the schedule of upcoming work. B. Nordlund described how the caisson operates. The caisson is floated horizontally in the forebay and pushed into position, then filled with water to tilt vertically and seal against the spillway bulkheads. It is emptied and moved from gate to gate as needed. J. Craig and S. Carlon shared the notifications this season where very efficient and frequent (and almost annoying).

IX. Non-Native Predator Recruitment Reduction NNI report

The PRCC discussed authorizing Geoff McMichael to release his NNI funded research report to the ResearchGate website. B. Nordlund asked if the PRCC desires a presentation from Geoff McMichael. The PRCC **approved the release of the report.**

- X. Discussion of using Zoom recording to help with note taking.** The PRCC discussed recording PRCC meetings for the purpose of providing more accurate meeting minutes. These recordings would only be retained for a short period of time until the meeting minutes were finalized, expected to be less than one month. K. Murdoch voted "no" but will reconsider after in-house discussion and will provide an update at the November meeting. S. Carlon asked for PRCC notification that the meetings recordings had been destroyed. More discussion will follow.

XI. Other

K. Murdoch asked why there were only PRCC generated SOA's on the Grant PUD website through 2017. The PRCC seemed surprised by this and stressed the importance of the SOA's to document decision making within the PRCC. E. Harris explained that an internal communication issue within Grant PUD was responsible for the gap in the SOA record, and it has since been rectified. Erin explained that the missing SOA's are being collected and will be posted no later than 12/31/2021.

UPDATES

- XII. Avian Predation Activities** – (To be combined with XIII(b) below)

XIII. Review of Outstanding NNI Funded Projects

A. Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II – Per some research he did on this project on correspondence from Trout Unlimited, B. Nordlund learned the project is on hold due to dividing the work into two

phases and the permitting requirements for the second phase of project. B. Nordlund will ask Aaron Penvose (Trout Unlimited) to update the PRCC at a future meeting.

B. Avian Predation on ESA-listed Juvenile Salmonids on the Mid-Columbia River, 2021 – C. Dotson stated that Real Time Research is in the process of writing their report. He also noted that Grant PUD and the USBR is meeting to discuss work at Potholes, and he hopes to see the BOR draft report soon.

C. Barkley Irrigation Co Permanent Point of Diversion, Completing Implementation of the Permanent Solution – no update

XIV. Committee Reports–

No PRFF or PRFC meetings were conducted in September. The next meetings are scheduled for October 6 (PRFF) and October 5 (PRFC). B. Nordlund shared he's sent all the reports out via email.

XV. NNI and Habitat Funds Report 2021 Q1 / Q2 (B. Nordlund) –

For Fund Reports, see Oct 4 email distribution from B. Nordlund. B. Nordlund asked for clarification on the NNI and Habitat Funds spreadsheets. C. Dotson shared on all future agreements Grant PUD will be adding an end date to all funding agreements.

XVI. Next Meetings

The next PRCC meetings will take place on Tuesday, November 16th and December 14th to correspond to previously arranged HCP meeting dates.

Action Items from October 26, 2021 meeting

- K. Murdoch to update committee at November meeting on status of Yakama discussions regarding recording the meetings for accurate minutes.
- E. Harris to accumulate and post all PRCC SOA's on the Grant PUD website by the end of CY 2021.