



**Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee Meeting
 Final Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, February 22, 2022

1:00 pm

PRCC Representatives

Scott Carlon, Justin Yeager (Alt), NMFS	Jim Craig, USFWS
Keely Murdoch, Brandon Rogers (Alt), YN	Kirk Truscott, Casey Baldwin (alt), CCT
Chad Jackson, P. Verhey (Alt) WDFW	Tom Skiles, CTUIR
Curt Dotson, Tom Dresser (Alt), GPUD	Erin Harris, Admin Ass't, GPUD
Bryan Nordlund, FPE (facilitator)	

PRCC Meeting Attendees

Curt Dotson, GPUD	Keely Murdoch, YN
Scott Carlon, NMFS	Tom Dresser, GPUD
Chad Jackson, WDFW	Erin Harris, GPUD
Tom Skiles, CTUIR	Jim Craig, USFWS
Kirk Truscott, CCT	Geoff McMichael (presenter)
Bryan Nordlund, FPE (facilitator)	

**Decisions, Approvals and Action Items Made During
 Tuesday, February 22, 2022, Meeting**

1. **ACTION:** SOA 2021-06 –Keely Murdoch will send Bryan Nordlund an example facilitator evaluation performance she distributed last summer to the PRCC. Committee members will work together outside of the monthly meetings to put together the evaluation needed for SOA 2021-06.
2. **APPROVED:** RTR Caspian tern predation NNI proposal in the amount of \$293,820.
3. **ACTION:** Fish Ladder Water Temperature report – DOE 401 Compliance - Tom Dresser will send out the report to committee members.
4. **ACTION:** SOA 2021-06 – PRCC discussion - Bryan Nordlund will call each committee member individually for their 6-month facilitation check-in.

5. **ACTION:** Keely Murdoch will check with her managers to determine whether the YN letter sent to NOAA request clarifying survival performance standards can be distributed to the PRCC. If they approve, she will distribute.
6. **ACTION:** January PRCC meeting minutes - Keely Murdoch to provide edits to Bryan Nordlund. Nordlund will follow up with Tom Skiles to verify his approval.

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome, Announcements and Introductions

Remembering Rex Buck – Bryan Nordlund shared fond memories of the grace, calmness and dedication Rex Buck shared through his work. Rex Buck will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by many committee members throughout our work.

II. Agenda Review – Bryan Nordlund reviewed the agenda, and no additions were made.

III. Meeting Minutes Approval January 25, 2022, PRCC meeting minutes – January meeting minutes were distributed by Bryan Nordlund by email on February 3. Comments will be due by March 3, 2022. Keely will send her edits to Bryan Nordlund and Bryan will follow up with Tom Skiles for approval on the January meeting minutes.

IV. Status of Actions Items from January 25, 2022, Meeting

- A. **2021 Fish Count Discrepancies** - Curt Dotson will bring the concerns on discrepancies in fish counts between Priest Rapids and Rock Island to Grant PUD staff who operate the fish ladders and do fish counting to share ideas for solutions at the January meeting (*continuing*).
- B. **SOA 2021-06** – New facilitator performance evaluation was discussed, and specific performance metrics are in development(?). Future PRCC meeting may include discussion of these metrics. In the interim, Bryan Nordlund intends to call individual members to receive feedback on how his performance might be improved or if adequate facilitation is being provided. Keely Murdoch will send Bryan Nordlund the example of performance evaluation she shared last summer with PRCC committee members to help create a new PRCC facilitator performance evaluation. Keely discussed the need for the PRCC committee members to work together outside of the monthly meetings to put together the evaluation needed for SOA 2021-06.
- C. **Curt Dotson will check with Dave Duvall on status** of “Barkley Irrigation Co Permanent Point of Diversion, Completing Implementation of the Permanent Solution Habitat Project” (*continuing*).

- D. **In progress** - Follow-up on Corp/BOR Avian Predation Management (Carlton and Dotson).
- E. **Complete and On-Going** - Email distribution of PRFF, Habitat and Hatchery sub-committee materials (Nordlund).

V. 2021 Fish Passage Operations Report

A. Update on investigations for fish count discrepancy:

Updates from Curt and PRCC discussion. Curt Dotson provided no updates since the January 2022 PRCC meeting. Internal GPUD discussions are taking place to implement fish count quality assurance measures presented last month.

B. Fish ladder inspections:

Tom Skiles performs monthly ladder inspections at the GPUD dams for the fisheries agencies and tribes. Tom reported that this year’s inspections are now complete and inspection data compiled. Inspections should start up again in April of 2022.

C. Fish spill updates:

Spill season is over for 2021.

Final fish counts for 2021 (April 15 – November 15)

Project/Life Stage	Spring Chinook	Summer Chinook	Sockeye	Fall Chinook	Steelhead	Coho
Priest Rapids adults	13105	49315	76855	51625	2808	47990
Rock Island adults	12332	52076	109367	16013	4558	64296
Priest Rapids jacks	1447	2298	–	2289	–	1640
Rock Island-jacks	1469	2339	–	1157	–	1878

VI. Continued discussion and vote on RTR Caspian tern predation NNI proposal (see Jan 22 email distribution).

Scott Carlton said Lynn Krasnow (NMFS) had questions regarding the modeling work in the NNI funding proposal from RTR. In response, Curt Dotson asked if RTR had addressed Lynne’s questions and he said that they did. Dotson also thanked Keely Murdoch for her questions/comments regarding RTR’s 2022 proposal and asked if they (RTR) had fully addressed her questions/concerns. Keely said that they did. Dotson further mentioned to the PRCC that RTR has amended their proposal to incorporate those items/comments Keely brought forward. Committee members all voted and **APPROVED the RTR tern predation NNI proposal** in the amount of \$293,820.

- VII. Geoff McMichael presentation (1:30) – Non-Native Predator Recruitment** (NNI funded – see report Bryan Nordlund forwarded on October 4, 2021) Geoff McMichael joined the PRCC meeting and provided an update on Non-Native Predator Recruitment Study. Geoff and committee members discussed the study results regarding his field work collecting walleye fry to assess walleye spawning locations. From $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$ ratios analyzed from otolith samples, Geoff determined that most of the walleye fry he collected from two of his sample sites (Wallula Mill on the Columbia River and at the mouth of the Palouse River in the Snake River basin) likely originated from the Snake River basin. These two sites were the only sampling sites where walleye fry showed up in his capture nets. One of his primary conclusions demonstrated evidence of Snake Basin walleye populating the Columbia River.

The link below is provided for access to the adult walleye report Geoff referenced in his work.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352381459_Geochemical_Assessment_of_Walleye_and_Smallmouth_Bass_Origin_in_the_Columbia_River_between_McNary_and_Priest_Rapids_Dams

Geoff's presentation will be distributed by email to the PRCC (done February 24 - see email from Bryan Nordlund).

- VIII. SOA 2021-06 – No additional discussion.**
- IX. 2022 PRCC field trip –** Bryan Nordlund and committee members discussed the potential of a PRCC field trip, sometime in summer or fall of 2022. The PRCC discussed several different options for destinations including Priest Rapids Dam fish ladders (when de-watered for annual maintenance), Goose Island, irrigation diversion juvenile fish screens and/or habitat improvement projects funded through NNI, and the GPUD fish ladder count stations. Some PRCC members are constrained from any travel at this time, but this could change as COVID imposed conditions ease. Tom Skiles would like to tour the fish ladders when de-watered to increase his understanding of how the ladders operate, because of his role as the fishway inspector. Bryan Nordlund agreed that this was really the best way to understand the complexity of how a mainstem dam's fish ladder operates. Tom Dresser stated that on April 1, 2022, Grant PUD will likely ease current (COVID) constraints for onsite meetings and tours. The PRCC will continue this discussion at future meetings.
- X. Fish Ladder Water Temperature report – DOE 401 Compliance –** Tom Dresser reported on the FERC license requirement for temperature monitoring in the project fish ladders. Department of Ecology required GPUD to develop and implement a fish ladder water temperature monitoring plan, in coordination with PRFF and PRCC. A plan was filed with FERC in 2011 with the objective to gather water temperatures above, below and within the fish ladders at Wanapum Dam and Priest Rapids Dam. GPUD is required to collect data to determine any temperature differences with reports completed every 5 years (2011, 2016 and

2021). Grant PUD has not exceeded any of the developed metrics for ladder temperatures. ACTION: Tom Dresser will send out the report to committee members.

XI. GPUD letter to NOAA – request clarifying survival performance standards (91% combined vs. 93% juvenile) – In an email dated February 9, 2022, Bryan Nordlund distributed GPUD’s letter to NOAA to committee members. Tom Dresser explained that GPUD sent this letter to NOAA to clarify Project survival standard requirements. Tom also stated that GPUD has reached out to FERC on this matter. GPUD is waiting for NOAA’s response. Scott Carlon stated that NOAA has drafted letters to YN, WDFW and GPUD that are waiting for signature. Keely Murdoch discussed the importance of committee function and disputed GPUD’s claim in the letter that newer committee members have a new interpretation of survival standards. She added that because she is a relatively new committee member, she spoke with Bob Rose and Steve Parker (past YN PRCC Committee members) to ensure that YN’s current interpretation of survival rates were consistent with previous members interpretation. This was confirmed by Parker and Rose. Keely added that statements contained in the GPUD letter hurt the relationship of the PRCC committee members. Tom Dresser thanked Keely for sharing her thoughts. Tom Dresser pointed out that YN also wrote a letter to NOAA on this topic and failed to route courtesy copies to PRCC committee members. Keely replied that this letter was sent from higher level managers of the YN, and she hadn’t had a chance to review the letter before it was sent but did not receive a final copy to distribute. Dresser stated that GPUD intends to use NOAA’s biological opinion as guidance on survival standards, and that Grant PUD’s legal and policy departments are working together to resolve this issue. Bryan Nordlund asked confirmation that GPUD had made the 2022 NNI Fund contribution, and Tom Dresser replied this was correct. Keely Murdoch confirmed that YN did send a letter to NOAA, and she will work to distribute this to the PRCC. Bryan Nordlund expressed his hope that the PRCC could collaborate to find a solution and not have to elevate to management and legal counsel that do not have the same level of expertise on this topic as the PRCC members. Action: Keely Murdoch to send the final YN letter to committee members.

XII. 2022 NNI Fund contribution – Tom Dresser stated that Grant PUD made a 2022 NNI Funds contribution in the amount of \$626,092.79 on February 15, 2022. Curt Dotson stated that the other two Habitat Funds (602 & 603) received deposits on February 15, 2022. Fund 602 received: \$1,231,529.18, Fund 603 received: \$439,929.84 for a total of all three received: \$2,297,551.81. Bryan Nordlund will distribute an updated Fund accounting report.

UPDATES

XIII. Review of Outstanding NNI Funded Projects

- A. *Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II* – no update.

- B. *Avian Predation on ESA-listed Juvenile Salmonids on the Mid-Columbia River, 2021* – Scott Carlon did not have any new updates. Curt Dotson stated that discussions are taking place with Federal agencies and GPUD regarding Avian predator requirements in the FCRPS Biological Opinion. Tom Skiles shared that a Regional Avian Predation Forum has recently been formed and are starting to get organized. The plan is for this Forum to meet quarterly.

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

- D. *Northern Pike Removal (2022-2024)* – Currently, the CCT is preparing for the upcoming field season.

XIII. Committee Reports–

- A. Priest Rapids Fish Forum – The PRFF planned to hold a conference call/web-share on Wednesday, February 2, 2022, from 9:00-11:30 am PST.

- B. Habitat Subcommittee – A meeting of the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee was held February 10, 2022.

- C. Fall Chinook Work Group –The next meeting is scheduled for April 5, 2022.

- D. Bryan Nordlund has provided the latest sub-committee reports etc. he has received to date via email on February 10th and February 17th and will continue to route this info to PRCC members.

XIV. SOA(s) discussed in 2022

SOA number	Key words	Date Discussed	Status
2021-06	Facilitator selection	January 25, 2022	open

XV. Next Meetings

The next PRCC meetings are scheduled for March 22,2022 and April 26, 2022.