



Grant County
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
Excellence in Service and Leadership

Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee

Final Approved Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 16, 2016

9:00 am

Wanapum Dam HOB, Conference Room 107

PRCC Representatives

Scott Carlon, Justin Yeager (Alt), NMFS

Bob Rose, YN

Jeff Korth, C. Andonaegui (Alt), P. Verhey (Alt) WDFW

Curt Dotson, Tom Dresser (Alt), GCPUD

Denny Rohr, D. Rohr & Assoc, Facilitator

Jim Craig, USFWS

Kirk Truscott, CCT

Tom Skiles, CTUIR

Erin McIntyre, GCPUD

Meeting Attendees

Rich Townsend/Columbia Basin Research, Leah Sullivan/BLE, Mark Timko/BLE, Kyle Hatch/BLE, Tom Dresser, Curt Dotson, Bob Rose, Tom Skiles, Scott Carlon, Erin McIntyre, Denny Rohr, Austin Rohr (conference phone); ABSENT: Jim Craig, Kirk Truscott, Jeff Korth.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Rohr will schedule a PRCC Webinar Conference prior to the next PRCC meeting on December 13th/14th to continue the review and discussion of the Draft 2016 Survival Study Report.
2. Rohr will schedule a special PRCC meeting for December 13th for the purpose of continued discussion of subyearling Chinook survival studies and NNI funding.
3. Rohr will continue discussion with Korth seeking approval of the Draft 2015 Steelhead / Sockeye Survival Study Report.

Meeting Minutes

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Rohr opened the meeting and self-introductions were made.
- II. **Agenda Review** – No additions were made to the agenda.
- III. **Meeting Minutes Approval** –
 - a. September 28, 2016 meeting – approval received from all members except Korth; Rohr contacting Korth.

- b. October 12, 2016 conference call – in progress.
 - c. October 26, 2016 meeting – approval received by Dotson, Skiles, Carlton; Craig approval not yet received; others were absent from this meeting.
- IV. Action Items Review from October 26, 2016 Meeting** – Action items were reviewed. Rohr noted that approval was received from Rose and Truscott for the “Draft 2015 Steelhead / Sockeye Survival Study Report”, and he is in contact with Korth regarding his approval. There was no additional discussion of Action Items.
- V. 2016 Survival Studies Reports – Blue Leaf Environmental; John Skalski / Rich Townsend, Columbia Basin Research** – Rohr commented that an electronic copy of the information being presented today had been emailed to committee members prior to today’s meeting. Rohr also commented that today would be the beginning of the 30 day comment period for this draft report. Rich Townsend, Columbia Basin Research, next provided a review of the draft 2016 survival study report. Townsend began with an explanation of the assessment of assumptions. Included in the assessment is a review of tagger distribution, performance, and involvement. The conclusion was no tagger effect involved. Also included was an assessment of acoustic tag quality. Townsend explained that the tag failure rate was higher than any previously conducted studies, and this caused the precision of tag-life probabilities to be low resulting in applicable tag-life corrections for 2016 being made. Townsend continued with a discussion of survival trends for 2016, including trends spread over the study period, reach survivals over eight reaches, and cumulative survivals. Townsend continued with a discussion of the Project passage 2016 survival estimate (0.8657) and the related standard error (0.0317) involved. He also reviewed 2014 – 2016 survival summary information for both Wanapum and Priest Rapids Dams, plus a summary for both projects combined, which included survival estimates and related standard errors. Townsend concluded with a discussion of passage efficiency and relative route survival information. This included information of proportional passage for Wanapum and Priest Rapids Dams through the fish bypass, spill, and the powerhouse. Also discussed was the fish passage efficiency for each project, and the estimated relative survival based on the different passage routes. Committee members asked several questions throughout Townsend’s presentation, and Townsend provided answers accordingly. There was extended discussion regarding comparison and review of survival numbers and activities regarding the 2014, 2015, and 2016 studies. The discussion concluded that a webinar conference prior to the next PRCC meeting of December 14th would be valuable to allow for additional discussion, explanation, Q&A, and the like. Accordingly, Rohr was directed to schedule a webinar conference as soon as possible. Rohr also reminded everyone that this would be an agenda item for the December 14th meeting as that date was also the Close of Comment for this draft report.

Kyle Hatch, Blue Leaf Environmental, gave the next presentation regarding the 2016 draft report with a focus on the 2016 study objectives. Hatch stated the primary objective was a focus upon the “survival estimation through the Priest Rapids Project”, and secondary objectives being “behavioral metrics

such as migration rates and fish passage efficiencies” and “comparison of results and variables across previous studies where applicable and to achieve a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of the 2016 results”. Hatch explained the methods that were followed and stated the fish collection, JSATs arrays/tags, handling and release methods all remained identical to the 2014 and 2015 survival study protocols. The 2016 modifications were steelhead only being studied, plus some array locations modified as well as no releases at Wanapum Dam. Hatch responded to a committee member question by pointing out the fish were being double-tagged with both a JSAT tag and a PIT tag. Hatch continued with an explanation of the results of the study. He reviewed the exclusion of some fish and the tagging involved, pointing out that tag failures in 2016 were higher than experienced in 2014 and 2015. The high failure rate was due to a manufacturing issue. Hatch also explained JSATs battery life results. Hatch discussed cumulative migration rates, reach migration rates, passage data, reach survival, and the impacts of Columbia Plateau and mid-river avian predation. Hatch further explained the logistic regression multivariable analysis used which allows a deeper more comprehensive understanding of the results and the variables that drive those results. Hatch further commented that 2016 was an early steelhead run and explained the resulting timing of the releases, including a comparison to 2014 and 2015 releases. He stated the 2016 smolt index numbers were similar to the 10 year average, and the 2016 flow levels were generally below average. Committee members asked questions during the presentation, and Hatch provided answers accordingly. The committee was also informed that Real Time Research will attend the December 14th meeting to report upon the avian predation work being done in 2016. Rohr noted the information provided by Hatch will also be part of the continued discussion to take place during the webinar conference to be scheduled prior to the December 14th PRCC meeting.

- VI. ACTION ITEM: SOA 2016-04, Decoupling Sub-yearling Chinook from Steelhead Performance Standard and Linking to yearling Chinook for Purpose of Calculating NNI Funding** – Rohr introduced this subject by giving some history of the review and discussions that have occurred starting in 2015 regarding sub-yearling survival study questions and activities. Rohr also commented SOA 2016-04 was voted upon during a PRCC conference call on October 12th and it was not approved. The subject of sub-yearling survival study activities has been discussed during many of the monthly PRCC meetings, plus conference calls and individual discussions have taken place outside the monthly PRCC meetings by and between committee members. The JFP have had discussions as well. Rohr asked if the JFP members had any additional information or recommendations regarding this subject to provide today. No new information was provided. Rohr asked how the committee members would like to proceed. Dotson next provided some information regarding possible options of how to proceed with estimating a sub-yearling performance for the purpose of calculating NNI funding. The committee members continued with an extended discussion with the conclusion to have a special PRCC meeting that focused entirely on the

question of how to proceed with summer sub-yearling Chinook survival studies and the determination of NNI funding. Accordingly, all agreed to hold a special meeting for this purpose on December 13th, the day before the next regularly scheduled PRCC meeting on December 14th. Rohr was directed to follow up with scheduling the meeting.

- VII. ACTION ITEM: SOA 2016-05, Schedule for Conducting Sub-yearling Summer Chinook Survival Evaluations** – Rohr commented that this SOA was handed out to committee members at the September 28th PRCC meeting, and emailed to committee members on October 5th. Discussion was held by committee members at the October 26th PRCC meeting wherein committee members requested some edits to the document. Dotson made the requested edits and the document was next distributed by Rohr to committee members for review and discussion during today's meeting. Rohr commented that he had discussed the document off line with Truscott, including the recent edits provided, and Truscott gave his verbal approval to Rohr. Accordingly, discussion continued during today's meeting with a focus primarily upon language that outlines a better understanding of wording regarding "...future project wide survival study feasibility after 2020 and possibly before". Dotson mentioned that Grant took the same language referencing this issue from the SOA that was approved in HCP committee and incorporated it into this SOA
. Accordingly, committee members requested additional time.
- VIII. ACTION ITEM: Affirm Final Approval of Draft 2015 Steelhead / Sockeye Survival Study Report** – Previous approval has been received from all committee members except for Rose, Truscott, and Korth. Rohr commented that he has received verbal approval from Rose and Truscott, and he will continue discussion with Korth to seek his approval as well.
- IX. ACTION ITEM: NNI Funding Proposal – “Factors Influencing the Survival of Juvenile Spring Chinook Salmon in Lake Wenatchee, WA”** – Korth is the project liaison and he was not present to participate in the discussion and/or any action that might take place today. Therefore, action on this agenda item was postponed until the next PRCC meeting when Korth could be present. Committee members did have some discussion regarding the proposal with questions about the amount of the NNI funding involved, details of the specifics of the proposal, interface with USFWS regarding Bull Trout activities, and the like. There was discussion about predation within the lake the question posed about just having a predator study conducted in Lake Wenatchee and cost of this “reduced” study. This will be an agenda for discussion at the December 14th meeting.
- X. Grant PUD Coho Mitigation** – Dresser had a scheduling problem and was unable to stay for the balance of today's meeting. Further discussion will take place at the next meeting.
- XI. Potpourri** –

- a. “The Blob” – Presentation / Schedule: Rose had requested this be added to agenda for discussion. However, discussion will be delayed until the next meeting.
- b. Predation Metrics Report: Craig not present to discuss.
- c. GCPUD’s Draft 2017 Total Dissolved Gas Abatement Plan for PRP: Rohr reminded committee members the close of comment is December 31st.
- d. PRP Policy Committee Meeting: Rohr reported the Policy Committee met on November 8th at the request of Policy Committee Member Grizzel (Grant PUD) to discuss SOA 2016-03, Schedule for Conducting Survival Evaluations – Yearling Chinook, Sockeye and Steelhead: The Policy Committee discussion resulted in a possible option to consider regarding the question of moving from a 5 year to a 10 year check in for yearling spring Chinook and juvenile sockeye salmon. However, they questioned how the change in the check-in schedule would relate to coho mitigation activities. Accordingly, the Policy Committee asked the PRCC to address the Coho mitigation activities, keep the Policy Committee apprised of those activities, and after that time the Policy Committee members will give consideration to the possible option that was discussed.

XII. Updates -

- a. Avian Predation Activities: Dotson reported the AFEP Conference would be taking place November 29, 30, Dec 1 in Portland; also an Avian Workshop of Inland Avian Predation Workgroup is currently scheduled for Walla Walla, December 6th.
- b. Hatchery Activities: no report
- c. Hatchery Permits: Sec 10 Consultation/Summer Chinook, Sec 7 Consultation/Bull Trout: no report
- d. Review of NNI Funded Projects
 - i. 2016 Real Time Research / Oregon State University – “Evaluation of Caspian Tern management to Reduce Predation on ESA-Listed Salmonids in the Columbia Plateau Region: Will receive presentation at the December 14th meeting.
 - ii. Upper Columbia Fish Screen Monitoring Program Phase I and II Contract Extension: no report
 - iii. Mid-Columbia River Intake Screen and Diversion Assessment (2016-17): no report
 - iv. Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project Phase II: no report
 - v. Methow Valley Irrigation District (MVID) Instream Flow Improvement Project: no report
 - vi. Predator Fish Recruitment Reduction (Placeholder for McMichael Report in Spring, 2017): no report

XIII. Committee Reports – distributed by email to committee members.

XIV. Quarterly NNI and Habitat Funds Report (placeholder for information when available) – no report

XV. Next Meeting – December 13, Grant Wenatchee Office, 1:00 pm; December 14th, Wanapum HOB, 9:00 am.