

Rocky Reach Fish Forum

Wednesday, 3 April 2013

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Chelan PUD First Floor Large Conference Room

Wenatchee, WA



Meeting called by Steve Hemstrom

Chairperson, Tracy Hillman

Notes taken by Suzanne Hodgson

Attending Representatives:

Hemstrom, Steve	Chelan PUD	(509) 661-4281	steven.hemstrom@chelanpud.org
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Attending Participants:

Frantz, Waikele	Chelan PUD	(509)661-4627	Waikele.hampton@chelanpud.org
Hillman, Tracy	BioAnalysts	(208) 321-0363	tracy.hillman@bioanalysts.net
Hodgson, Suzanne	Chelan PUD	(509) 661-4758	suzanne.hodgson@chelanpud.org
Jackson, Chad	WDFW	(509) 754-4624 x250	chad.jackson@dfw.wa.gov
Keller, Lance	Chelan PUD	(509) 661-4299	lance.keller@chelanpud.org
Murauskas, Josh	Chelan PUD	(509) 661-4181	Josh.murauskas@chelanpud.org
Nelle, RD	USFWS	(509) 548-7573	RD_Nelle@fws.gov

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome and Introductions

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the Rocky Reach Fish Forum (RRFF) meeting and made known that voice recording of the meeting was initiated for note-taking purposes.

II. Review of Agenda

The agenda was approved as written. Tracy Hillman noted that water quality will be one of the first items on future agendas to better accommodate the schedule of Steve Hays and Waikele Frantz.

III. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the 6 March 2013 meeting were approved with edits. Tracy Hillman stated that he made an effort to spell out acronyms in the minutes.

IV. Water Quality

Update on Water Quality Reports

Waikele Frantz reported that the Aquatic Invasive Species Monitoring report has been finalized and was sent to FERC on Monday. She said that she responded to comments submitted by Patrick Verhey, Pat Irle, Charlie McKinney, and Jennifer Parsons. She added that Steve Hays is working on the macrophyte bed report (DO-pH), and that he has not given her an estimated completion date. Tracy Hillman noted that during the last meeting Pat Irle asked about the total dissolved gas (TDG) test from spill. Waikele replied that she is working with a consultant, who is evaluating the test data.

V. Pacific Lamprey

Rocky Reach Project Effects Analysis

Tracy Hillman reported that Bob Rose was planning to meet with RD Nelle, Steve Lewis, and Patrick Verhey to identify potential actions that may address No Net Impact (NNI) at the Rocky Reach project. At this time, however, no report has been provided for review. Tracy added that it will be on the agenda for next month. RD Nelle said that he expects to link the Forum's lamprey effects spreadsheet to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) template, which will focus on regional recommendation plans. A copy of the Forum's juvenile lamprey effects spreadsheet was distributed to participants. Tracy noted that last October the RRF worked on a more recent effects table that included low, medium, and high rankings for each identified issues, and he will send it to Steve Hemstrom. Tracy added that he thought that Bob Rose wanted PUD staff to update the table and submit it to the RRF for review and final acceptance. He stated that based on RRF comments in October, the highest priority issues appear to be fish and bird predation. Discussion took place about possible offsite mitigation. Tracy asked about upcoming deliverables to FERC. Steve Hemstrom replied that reports on juvenile downstream passage and NNI would be due in February 2014. Tracy stated that any offsite mitigation work would have to be agreed upon by the RRF and reported to FERC. Steve Hemstrom noted that all work needs to be linked to the license, and that FERC wants to know that all the parties are in agreement.

Action Items:

- Tracy Hillman will send the most recent effects table to Steve Hemstrom.
- Chelan PUD staff will work on the priorities in the table and provide a draft to the RRF before the May meeting.

- Tracy Hillman will check with Bob Rose on the status of his work on NNI.

Future Planning: Potential Juvenile Lamprey Measures, Timeframe, and Budgeting

Steve Hemstrom had no additional items to report.

Impingement Monitoring

Steve Hemstrom reported that he and Thad Mosey are planning to monitor lamprey impingement at Rocky Reach Dam from mid-May to early June. Discussion took place around the timing and duration of monitoring. After discussion, the RRF agreed that impingement monitoring would take place between 15 May and 15 June, unless a large number of lamprey are captured earlier at the USFWS Entiat smolt trap indicating downstream movement of juvenile lamprey.

Action item:

- Chelan PUD staff will monitor impingement of lamprey between 15 May and 15 June, unless a large number of lamprey are captured earlier at the Entiat smolt trap.

Adult HD PIT Monitoring

Steve Hemstrom reported that all PIT-tag interrogation systems are working, but so far there have been no detections of adult lamprey passing Rocky Reach Dam. Josh Murauskas said that adult lamprey will not start moving until July or August. RD Nelle asked about the time period for HD monitoring. Steve Hemstrom replied that monitoring will take place as long as the ladders are running – from the end of March through December.

Steve Hemstrom pointed out that the USFWS Conservation Agreement includes a task for an ocean life history review, and asked whether Josh's recent lamprey paper would apply to that task. RD stated that he thought it would. Tracy Hillman reported that Josh will present his work at the Lamprey Symposium at the Western Division American Fisheries Society meeting in Boise, ID, on 16 April.

VI. Resident Fish

Tracy Hillman reported that Dave Burgess received comments on the draft report. Dave has since sent a revised report to Tracy and Steve Hemstrom. Tracy asked if the group wanted to finalize the report or wait for additional comments. **After discussion, the RRF agreed that the revised document will be the final version.**¹ Discussion took place regarding the question of whether or not a predation problem exists in Rocky Reach reservoir. Based on the resident fish report, Tracy noted that the most abundant predators in the project area are northern pikeminnow and sculpins. Lance Keller stated that the PUD has a program in place to manage northern pikeminnow and that the cost of that program is about

¹ Following the meeting, Jeff Korth, WDFW, asked Chelan PUD if WDFW could do some additional editing. Editing would improve readability and presentation, but would not change the conclusions or recommendations. The PUD agreed that WDFW could further edit the report.

\$500,000 per year. Steve Hemstrom reviewed the Settlement Agreement and read that if Chelan PUD determines, in consultation with the RRF, that no predator fish problem exists after the initial comprehensive study, then Chelan PUD will conduct three additional studies in consultation with the RRF. Steve also noted that the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) survival standards have been achieved for spring migrating species. Tracy asked if the RRF agreed that no predator fish problem currently exists. Those present agreed that there was no predator fish problem in the reservoir. Chad Jackson said that he agreed that there is no predator fish problem in the project area, but he would like the report to FERC to state that the initial study was not designed to assess predation directly (i.e., predation was assessed indirectly through species composition data and survival estimates through the reservoir). Discussion took place around the specifics of future studies. **After discussion, the RRF agreed that three, equally spaced in time predation studies would be conducted.**

Action Item:

- Tracy Hillman will send the Resident Fish Report to all RRF parties as a final document.²
- Steve Hemstrom will present a proposed timeline for the remaining predation studies.

VII. White Sturgeon

Juvenile Rearing and Release (SOA)

Josh Murauskas described the juvenile white sturgeon stocking statement of agreement (SOA), which is to maintain current white sturgeon stocking levels (up to 6,500 yearlings as determined by availability) in the Rocky Reach Reservoir for an additional year (2014) (See Attachment 1). Josh indicated that the white sturgeon management plan calls for the release of up to 6,500 yearlings for three years. However, there was a limited release in 2012 because of health concerns associated with iridovirus. Therefore, Chelan PUD proposes to continue stocking the same number (up to 6,500) for at least an additional year to make up for the low 2012 stocking effort. This will also increase the number of fish available for survival estimates and other monitoring and evaluation activities. Tracy Hillman asked if the RRF approved the PUD's proposed SOA. Those present approved the SOA. Tracy asked if he should seek approval from representatives not at the meeting. Those present agreed that absent representatives should provide their input on the SOA.

Action Item:

- Tracy Hillman will seek input on the juvenile white sturgeon stocking SOA from RRF representatives not present at the meeting.

² Tracy Hillman will send the final to the RRF after WDFW completes their review of the document.

Update on Juvenile Monitoring

Josh Murauskas indicated that the 2012 draft annual report on Rocky Reach Reservoir White Sturgeon Indexing and Monitoring was provided to the RRF on 25 March. The RRF has 30 days to review and comment on the draft report. Comments should be sent to Tracy Hillman by 25 April. Tracy will compile the comments and forward them to Corey Wright, Blue Leaf Environmental, and Josh Murauskas. Josh indicated that the final would be available shortly after Blue Leaf addresses comments.

Josh Murauskas also stated that all juvenile white sturgeon in the hatcheries have been scute marked and PIT tagged. Acoustic tags will be implanted into fish in mid-April. Discussion took place regarding survival rates of recently tagged fish.

Action Item:

- RRF will review the draft annual report on Rocky Reach Reservoir White Sturgeon Indexing and Monitoring and provide their comments to Tracy Hillman by 25 April.

Broodstock Collection and Coordination

Josh Murauskas said that broodstock collection work will begin during the last two weeks in May at McNary, and that a sign-up schedule will be available for those who are interested in participating.

VIII. Next Steps

The RRF will meet at 1:00 p.m. at Tumwater Dam for a tour of Tumwater and Dryden facilities. The next regular meeting will be on Wednesday, 1 May 2013 at 1:00 p.m. in the Chelan PUD 2nd Floor Conference Room.

IX. Field Trip

During the afternoon, the RRF toured both Tumwater and Dryden dam facilities. The purpose of the tour was to visit the fishways at both facilities. Discussions focused on current fishway operations and possible effects of operations on adult lamprey passage. Participants who attended the tour included:

Hemstrom, Steve	Chelan PUD	Luke, Patrick	YN
Hillman, Tracy	BioAnalysts	Miller, Todd	WDFW
Hodgson, Suzanne	Chelan PUD	Mosey, Thad	Chelan PUD
Hughes, Mike	WDFW	Murauskas, Josh	Chelan PUD
Irle, Pat	Ecology	Nelle, RD	USFWS
Jackson, Chad	WDFW	Nelson, Mark	USFWS
Johnsen, Andy	USFWS	Turcotte, Sharon	Chelan PUD
Lampman, Ralph	YN	Underwood, Alene	Chelan PUD

Attachment 1: Juvenile White Sturgeon SOA

Rocky Reach Fish Forum

Statement of Agreement

Juvenile stocking under the White Sturgeon Management Plan

Final Approved April 3, 2013

Statement

The Rocky Reach Fish Forum (RRFF) agrees to an additional year (2014) of white sturgeon stocking in the Rocky Reach Reservoir. The number of fish to be stocked will be determined in consultation with the RRFF and will be based on success of the 2013 brood stock collection and rearing of white sturgeon. The up to 6,500 fish language that is memorialized in the Rocky Reach White Sturgeon Management Plan (WSMP) will be used as a guideline for the fourth stocking event (2014).

Background

The WSMP states that *“Chelan PUD shall begin releasing up to 6,500 yearling white sturgeon in the [Rocky Reach] Reservoir annually for three years.”* The WSMP further states that, *“The number of yearlings released in subsequent years (after the initial three year stocking period) will range from 0 – 6,500, based on the results of the indexing program and/or the evaluation of spawning potential and could be adjusted after the evaluation period, in consultation with the RRFF.”*

The three-year stocking period required by the WSMP was initiated in 2011, when over 6,500 juveniles were released into the reservoir. Fish health concerns arose during the second year (2012) when white sturgeon iridovirus was identified in hatchery juveniles. The RRFF therefore decided to not stock these fish (less than 200 juveniles were released). The third year (2013) will include yearlings produced from two egg takes of wild-origin brood collected in the Columbia River and is expected to meet or exceed the targeted 6,500 level.

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) program in the WSMP was implemented in 2012. Since the 2012 stocking was negligible and only one year of monitoring had elapsed since the 2011 stocking, the ability to make inferences from M&E results is limited to date. An additional year (2014) of supplementation in combination with continued M&E strengthens the ability to make future decisions on stocking efforts based on known information.