

Rocky Reach Fish Forum

Tuesday, 10 December 2013

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Chelan PUD Second Floor Conference Room

Wenatchee, WA



Meeting called by Steve Hemstrom

Notes taken by Suzanne Hodgson

RRFF Chair, Tracy Hillman

Attending Representatives:

Hemstrom, Steve	Chelan PUD	(509) 661-4281	steven.hemstrom@chelanpud.org
Huber, Bob	Alcoa	(509) 421-5159	bob.huber@alcoa.com
Irle, Pat (phone)	Ecology	(509) 454-7864p	pir461@ecy.wa.gov
Lewis, Steve	USFWS	(509) 665-3508 x14	stephen_lewis@fws.gov
Rose, Bob	YN	(509) 865-5121	rosb@yakamafish-nsn.gov
Verhey, Patrick	WDFW	(509) 754-4624	patrick.verhey@dfw.wa.gov

Attending Participants:

Hillman, Tracy	BioAnalysts	(208) 321-0363	tracy.hillman@bioanalysts.net
Hodgson, Suzanne	Chelan PUD	(509) 661-4758	suzanne.hodgson@chelanpud.org
Keller, Lance	Chelan PUD	(509) 661-4299	lance.keller@chelanpud.org
Kerec, Matt	Alcoa	(412) 553-4361	matthew.kerec@alcoa.com
McLellan, Jason (phone)	CCT	(509) 263-1082	jason.mclellan@colvilletribes.com
Miller, Donella	YN	(509) 945-0132	mild@yakamafish-nsn.gov
Nelle, RD	USFWS	(509) 548-7573	RD_Nelle@fws.gov
Nine, Brett	CCT		brett.nine@colvilletribes.com
Skiles, Tom	CRITFC	(503) 238-0667	skit@critfc.org

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 with Pat Irle's addition of a Total Dissolved Gas (TDG) report summary, which will be added after the white sturgeon discussion. Patrick Verhey noted that two people on the participant list are no longer with the organizations listed – Jim Blanchard and Catherine Willard.

III. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Draft minutes from the 2 October 2013 meeting were reviewed with their additional footnotes regarding larval mussels and a quote attributed to Chris Peery regarding Pacific Lamprey. The minutes were approved with the footnotes.

Draft minutes from the 6 November 2013 meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved with edits provided by Pat Irle.

IV. Pacific Lamprey

Rocky Reach Project Effects (No Net Impact)

Bob Rose spoke about the NNI document that he is drafting and his analysis of the management plans, 401s, and FERC licenses for the three Mid-C PUDs. He said that he is looking for consensus among the fishery parties, due to some vagueness in the plans that will require interpretation. He reported that the Yakama Nation will be meeting with Chelan PUD officials soon to discuss these and other issues. He stated that for now, he would like to focus on actions for adult lamprey, not all of the ten objectives outlined in the November Power Point presentation, because the work for juveniles is more difficult and the Army Corp of Engineers can lead the way on that front for a couple of years.

Bob Rose indicated that more than 99% of adult lamprey are unaccounted for between Rocky Reach and Wells dams, and that he believes that Chelan PUD is responsible for finding out where they go. He referred to language in the Pacific Lamprey Management Plan on this issue. He also suggested putting about 100 tagged lamprey from the lower Columbia into the reservoir annually and wiring up the reservoir appropriately to better understand adult lamprey movements. He stated that finding out what happens to lamprey is a basic need, and that this translocation research fits into the ideas of NNI and adaptive management. Bob added that there could be cost sharing on this with the Yakama Nation and that the cost of genetic testing should drop dramatically in the next two to three years. Bob stated that he does not believe that the measurement standards will need to be as rigorous as stated in the FERC license. Bob Huber asked about the budget for this proposal. Bob Rose noted that the PUDs would be responsible for funding several of the objectives, but there would also be cost shares, such as those from the Yakama Nation. Steve Hemstrom asked about the lamprey tagging study underway at Wells Dam and how this study could inform work in the Rocky Reach reservoir on where lamprey are going.

Bob Rose replied that Douglas PUD hasn't provided much detail on the study yet. Steve Hemstrom stated that it's unclear whether the problem is with Rocky Reach reservoir or Wells Dam.

Bob Huber recalled a decision during the Settlement Agreement discussion rejecting the idea of more studies after introducing sturgeon because too many variables existed. Bob Rose agreed on the issue of studies involving sturgeon in the reservoir, adding that he advocates initial first steps to see if additional lamprey in the reservoir can be useful for analysis. Steve Hemstrom noted that mainstem tagging doesn't provide much information on the fate of fish last detected within the reservoir, and that research in the Entiat River might make more sense. He recommended looking more closely at the Wells project. Discussion took place around genetics and translocation of lamprey.

Tracy Hillman summarized the work being done in the Wells study, which involves 125 PIT and radio-tagged lamprey placed downstream of Wells Dam. The RRF discussed the kinds of tags used throughout the region and whether or not existing arrays will detect them. Bob Huber brought up Bob Rose's earlier comment on lamprey studies and asked if the group had answered Bob Rose's question. Steve Hemstrom stated that we don't have the ability currently to say whether or not there is a project effect in terms of adult lamprey. Bob Huber asked if WDFW had funding available for this work and Patrick Verhey replied that they did not. Patrick noted that WDFW is interested in this work. Discussion took place regarding baseline lamprey research and its funding. Bob Rose stated that the goal of the management plan is to measure any impacts on upstream and downstream passage of pacific lamprey, making this research the responsibility of Chelan PUD. Bob Rose noted that the RRF has spent approximately \$90,000 on a document and a speaker (Dr. Beamish) on the subject of juvenile lamprey propagation. Pat Irle asked if there would be a ballpark figure available soon for work proposed in the NNI document. Bob Rose noted that there was no policy guidance yet available to put the technical plans together, and that this would be discussed in the upcoming meeting between the Yakama Nation and the PUDs.

Action item:

- **Bob Rose will finish the NNI draft document and send it to the RRF. Bob will also report on the meeting with the Yakama Nation and Chelan PUD.**

Adult HD PIT Monitoring

Steve Hemstrom stated that of the 19 detections at Rocky Reach Dam, 11 HD-tagged fish had passed the project. He noted that six of those fish were first detected in 2012, and that they had exited at the uppermost antenna. He added that during the Yakama Nation's adult lamprey propagation research, 50% of the fish had overwintered. Bob Rose noted that it was a lot more than expected.

Regarding juvenile monitoring, Steve Hemstrom reported that Thad Mosey, PUD Biologist, had observed what may have been two juvenile lamprey impinged on Rocky Reach turbine 1 and 2 intake screens. However, Thad could not confirm that these were juvenile lamprey. Thad will provide his findings in

writing at the next RRF meeting. Pat Irle requested that Steve Hemstrom provide his table on fish passage to the RRF, and Steve agreed. Steve Lewis asked about passage issues and future relicensing at Rock Island Dam. A short discussion took place on this topic.

Action items:

- **Thad Mosey will provide a short report or memo to the RRF regarding impingement monitoring at Rocky Reach Dam.**
- **Steve Hemstrom will provide his HD PIT tag detection results table to Tracy Hillman for distribution to the RRF.**

Regional Implementation Planning Process

RD Nelle presented two spreadsheets, a PDF, and a Word document that were distributed to the RRF prior to the meeting. RD stated that this work represents the USFWS Lamprey Conservation Initiative, which started in 2007. He added that the spreadsheets are a product of a meeting held in Walla Walla in August 2013. He noted that the spreadsheet is a template that will be used to identify and describe threats, limiting factors, concerns, possible funding sources and responsibilities within different geographic areas. RD added that this will result in 12 spreadsheets or templates. RD asked for help in filling out the spreadsheets from members of the RRF, noting that the Word document provides definitions for the columns in the spreadsheet. He stated that meetings will take place in January or February with the purpose of populating the spreadsheets. Tracy Hillman noted that anyone willing to help should contact RD.

Future Planning, Potential Juvenile Lamprey Measures, Timeframe and Budgeting

There was nothing to report.

V. Resident Fish

Bull Trout and Tumwater Dam

Steve Lewis stated that NOAA had issued a biological opinion on the issue of the Section 10 Permit for Wenatchee Hatchery Genetics Management Plans, and that the USFWS noted some inconsistencies with how NOAA had handled bull trout. He added that the USFWS is now working on their biological opinion with NOAA. Steve reported that NOAA and the USFWS agree that a process is needed for Tumwater on an annual basis. He added that the USFWS will coordinate with the PUDs on this.

Resident Fish Report Questions

Pat Irle stated that she had received satisfactory answers to her questions on the Resident Fish Report

from Chad Jackson. The Forum agreed that there were no more questions on the report.

VI. White Sturgeon

Juvenile Rearing

Lance Keller reported that there are enough juvenile white sturgeon at both hatcheries (Marion Drain and Chelan Falls) to stock 6,500 fish in 2014. He added that Douglas PUD's larval fish tested positive for white sturgeon iridovirus (WSIV) even though these fish show no symptoms of the disease. Based on these results, Chelan PUD will pay to have fish from both Marion Drain and Chelan Falls tested for the virus. He noted that Chad Jackson was going to collect samples last week. Results should be available soon. Discussion took place around testing for WSIV. Jason McLellan explained that there are three different testing methods, two of which are not very reliable (cell culture and polymerase chain reaction tests), resulting in the possibility that over time some juveniles with the virus have been released with false negative results. The Wells fish were tested using a histological method, which is the most reliable method. He added that WSIV is ubiquitous throughout wild populations of white sturgeon. Discussion took place around which regulatory body has authority to recommend the release of infected fish. Patrick Verhey indicated that WDFW pathologists will likely provide a recommendation on whether infected fish should be released into the Columbia River.

Action item:

- **Chad Jackson will provide results of health tests on juvenile sturgeon held at Marion Drain and Chelan Falls Hatcheries.**

Juvenile Monitoring

Lance Keller had no updates at this time on juvenile monitoring. He added that Corey Wright with Blue Leaf Environmental is developing a draft report that may be available before the next RRFF meeting.

Action item:

- **Lance Keller will provide the draft juvenile monitoring report to the RRFF when it is available.**

Juvenile Release Number for 2014

Tracy Hillman noted that based on last month's meeting, entities were going to work on an agreed upon number of juvenile sturgeon to release in Rocky Reach reservoir. Lance Keller stated that the Colville Tribes calculation of releasing 4,332 fish based on the idea of a six by six family group size was appropriate and aligns with the direction of the agencies throughout the region (save the Yakama Nation). He added that the Upper Columbia Technical Work Group also decided on a smaller number, which was about 75% of what the maximum stocking number would be. Donella Miller stated that the

Yakama Nation is still recommending the release of 6,500 juveniles. She indicated that she will provide a proposal and rationale to the RRFF for the release of 6,500 fish before the January meeting. Lance stated that Chelan PUD proposes to release 65 fish with acoustic tags regardless of the total number of fish released. Proposing to purchase 65 tagged fish regardless of the total number released will avoid delays in the tag order. Recall that the PUD is required to tag 1% of the fish released with acoustic tags.

The Forum approved the release of 65 tagged fish by Chelan PUD, regardless of the final stocking number.

Lance requested that Corey Wright with Blue Leaf Environmental be added to the distribution list as a participant. The Forum agreed to include Corey as a participant. Bob Huber stated that Matt Kerec will represent Alcoa on the RRFF. Bob asked that he be removed from the list because he will no longer be representing Alcoa on the RRFF. Everyone wished Bob Huber the best in his retirement.

Action items:

- **Before the next RRFF meeting, Donella Miller will provide a proposed juvenile sturgeon stocking number and rationale for 2014.**
- **Tracy Hillman will add Corey Wright to the distribution list, along with Matt Kerec from Alcoa, and will remove Bob Huber. Bob Huber will send a letter to Keith Truscott explaining the change in representation for Alcoa.**

VII. TDG Monthly Report

Pat Irlle stated that Waikele Frantz had provided an annual gas abatement report that was very good and thorough. Pat added that Chelan PUD also provided a draft spillway study report that included details about TDG generated under different spill configurations. Tracy Hillman asked if those reports are available on the web. Steve Hemstrom agreed to check with Waikele on that.

Action Item:

- **Steve Hemstrom will check with Waikele Frantz to see if the TDG and Spillway study reports are available on the website.**

VIII. Next Steps

The next regular meeting of the RRFF will be Wednesday, 8 January 2014 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. in the Chelan PUD Second Floor Conference Room.