

Rocky Reach Wildlife Forum (RRWF) Meeting Minutes

Date: November 8, 2016

Time: 9:00 pm – 12:00 pm

**Location: Chelan PUD Headquarters, Wenatchee, WA
1st Floor Conference Room**

Meeting called by: Von Pope, Chelan PUD

Type of meeting: RRWF Meeting

Note taker: Deb Bitterman

Attending Representatives

Ellis, Erik*	BLM	(509) 665-2100	edellis@blm.gov
Pope, Von	Chelan PUD	(509) 661-4625	von.pope@chelanpud.org

Attending Participants

Cordell, Kelly	Chelan PUD	(509) 661-4762	kelly.cordell@chelanpud.org
Brigitte, Ranne	USDA-FS	(509) 784-1511	branne@fs.fed.us

*Joined via phone

Welcome and Introductions

Von Pope, Chelan PUD, welcomed everyone to the Rocky Reach Wildlife Forum (RRWF) meeting and made known that voice recording of the meeting was initiated for note-taking purposes. Participants introduced themselves.

Agenda Review

Von indicated that Chelan PUD is in the process of filing a correction (errata) to the 17 September 2015 filed Wildlife Habitat Management Plan (2016-2020) with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). It was discovered that the fire response section was missing in the US-Forest Service section. The request will ask FERC to include a fire response section in the 17 September 2015 filing noting that funding for fire response was included in the 2016-2020 budget.

Review 17 November 2015 Meeting Minutes

Von reviewed the 17 November 2015 meeting minutes. No comments had been received; therefore, the meeting minutes were published 2 December 2016.

Review 2016 Integrated Noxious Weed Plan

As requested by the RRWF, Washington State University (WSU) collected and distributed biological control agents for Dalmatian toadflax and diffuse knapweed on public lands within the Chelan Complex and Mills Canyon burn scars within the Rocky Reach Wildlife Area (RRWA). Multiple locations within the RRWA between Burch Mountain and Entiat River on the Chelan County side of Rocky Reach Reservoir were identified from the project that could benefit from biological control insects. WSU collected and distributed 19,726 biological control insects including: 2,100 seedhead weevils (*Larinus minutus*) and 166 root weevils (*Cyphocleonus achetes*) to control diffuse and spotted knapweed; 10,500 stem-mining weevils (*Mecinus janthinus*) to control Dalmatian toadflax, and 6,960 gall midge (*Jaapiella invonikovi*), a new biological control for Russian knapweed. GIS points and additional data were collected for each individual release, wood stakes were used to field-mark release sites, and digital photos were taken of each release. In the 2016 report, WSU also included before/after pictures from previous release sites to show the reduction of weed densities by biological controls. The total invoice for weed control conducted by WSU as directed by the RRWF in 2016 is \$19,000.

After discussion, the attending RRWF members approved payment of the 2016 invoice as submitted, \$19,000.

For 2017, the RRWF will have approximately \$13,000 available for continued implementation for the Rocky Reach Integrated Terrestrial Invasive Plant Control Plan. Von indicated that work for 2017 should be proposed by late 2016 for consideration in the first quarter of 2017.

The RRWF recommended continuing to focus on 2015 fire scar areas for the 2017 work effort. The focus for the 2017 effort will be on sites within the 2015 burn scars not previously covered. If agencies have specific areas

within the burn scars they would like to have treated, they need to provide that information in the draft 2017 Weed Control Project Plan. The BLM suggested some areas on the Douglas County side of Rocky Reach Reservoir and the USFS suggested the Chelan River Area below Chelan Falls Dam.

Erik Ellis, BLM, inquired if private land could be treated. Von will contact WSU and review the contract to see if distribution of biological controls on private lands could be an option.

The following schedule was recommended for the 2017 Weed Control Project Plan:

- 30 November 2016: Von will forward the Draft 2017 Weed Control Project Plan to the RRWF for comments/edits
- 30 December 2016: RRWF comments due to Kelly Cordell
- 15 January 2017: Final 2017 Project Plan forward to RRWF
- Von plans to finalize the WSU contract by mid April 2017

2016 Wildlife Monitoring Summary

Kelly Cordell, Chelan PUD, provided a 2016 Rocky Reach Wildlife Monitoring Summary, handout provided, to the RRWF.

Summary highlights:

- **Winter bald eagle (cost \$3,377.84):** December and January surveys completed with a total of 87 eagles observed. Peak numbers were observed on the January 2016 survey with 48 bald eagles observed (24 adults and 24 subadults). On average, eagles were more frequently observed in the area between Spencer Canyon, Knapp Tunnel, and Howard Flats vicinity. Observation of bald eagles in the Rocky Reach Reservoir has increased from 16.1 bald eagles (survey 1988-89) to 38.5 bald eagles (survey 2015-16). The 2016 Winter Bald Eagle Report was sent the RRWF on January 27, 2016.
- **Nesting bald eagle (cost \$1,161.91):** 7 nest territories were monitored and classified as occupied. 4 territories were classified as breeding successful, producing 6 fledglings.
- **Canada goose nesting (\$4,224.55):** 4 surveys were conducted in 2016. There were 63 Canada goose nests that contained 339 eggs total. This is higher than the long-term average of 55 nests. Success was greater in man-made structures (82%) compared to success at natural sites (73%).

The total cost for the 2016 Rocky Reach Wildlife Monitoring for 2016 was \$8,764.30

2017 Wildlife Monitoring Effort

For the 2017 Wildlife monitoring efforts, RRWF recommended to maintain Canada goose nesting platforms, conduct bald eagle nest monitoring, and 1 wintering bald eagle survey in January 2017. Golden eagle nest monitoring was also suggested for the 2017 monitoring efforts. Due to fewer winter bald eagle surveys, funds could be available for consideration for other wildlife monitoring within the Rocky Reach Wildlife area. If no other wildlife surveys are proposed, Bridgette suggested continuing with the Canada goose nest monitoring effort on Rocky Reach.

The following schedule was recommended for the 2017 Wildlife Survey Monitoring Proposal:

- 30 November 2016: Von will forward the Draft 2017 Wildlife Survey Monitoring Proposal to the RRWF for comments/edits
- 30 December 2016: RRWF comments due to Kelly Cordell
- 15 January 2017: Final 2017 Wildlife Survey Monitoring Proposal forward to RRWF

Action Items:

- Von Pope, Chelan PUD, will check with Dale Whaley, WSU, if the biological insect control release site data collected by WSU can be shared with the RRWF electronically.
- Von Pope, Chelan PUD, will check with Dale Whaley, WSU, regarding the opportunity for biological insect control release on private lands.

Next Steps:

The next regular annual RRWF meeting will be 8 November 2017 from 9:00a.m. – 12:00 noon in the Chelan PUD Headquarters. Noxious weed invoice for 2017 will be reviewed, wildlife work for 2018 will be proposed, and proposals for noxious weed control in 2018 will be considered.