

Rocky Reach Wildlife Forum (RRWF) Meeting Minutes

Date: November 8, 2017
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
Zimmerman, Breean*	Ecology	(509) 575-2808	Bzim461@ecy.wa.gov

Attending Participants

Cordell, Kelly	Chelan PUD	(509) 661-4762	kelly.cordell@chelanpud.org
Ranne, Brigitte	USDA-FS	(509) 784-1511	branne@fs.fed.us
Cerro-Timpone, Ana	USDA-FS	(509) 784-4630	acerrotimpone@DFW.wa.gov

*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 (attendees shown above).

Review 8 November 2016 Meeting Minutes

Von reviewed the 8 November 2016 meeting minutes. No comments had been received; therefore, the meeting minutes were published 30 December 2016.

Review 2017 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, and Russian knapweed on public lands within the Chelan Complex and Mills Canyon burn scars within the Rocky Reach Wildlife Area (RRWA). WSU collected and distributed 17,750 biological control insects including: 7,250 seedhead weevils (*Larinus minutus*) to control diffuse knapweed, and 6,500 stem-mining weevils (*Mecinus janthinus*) to control Dalmatian toadflax, and 4,000 gall midge (*Jaapiella invannikovi*), to control Russian knapweed. Total number of biological control insects released was 17,750. 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. The total invoice for weed control conducted by WSU as directed by the RRWF in 2017 is \$13,000.

After discussion, the attending RRWF members approved payment of the 2017 invoice as submitted, \$13,000.

For 2018, 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 2018 should be proposed by late 2017 for consideration in the first quarter of 2018. Discussion ensued regarding lack of biocontrol releases within the Mills Canyon burn scar in 2017 and whether access precluded releases, and if access from the Swakane area to the head of Tenas George canyon and surrounding areas was needed from USFS. Rush skeleton weed has been documented on BLM lands within the Chelan Complex burn scar, and biocontrol may be available. Brigitte Ranne suggested a contact (Jennifer Andreas) that may assist in locating biocontrol agents for rush skeleton weed. It was agreed that biocontrol releases should continue to focus on areas of high density within recent burn scars,

either in untreated areas or areas where previous releases occurred but additional biocontrol agents would be beneficial. Also, other locations within the Rocky Reach Wildlife Area between Burch Mountain and the Entiat River on the Chelan County side of Rocky Reach Reservoir were identified that could benefit from biological control insects. Another potential property for biocontrol was the PUD property in Douglas County below Wells Dam. This property may be adjacent to BLM properties where rush skeleton weed has been observed. Erik Ellis will provide location data for known rush skeleton weed locations below Wells Dam on the Douglas County side of the Columbia River.

The following schedule was recommended for the 2018 Weed Control Project Plan:

- 20 November 2017: Agencies provide proposed budgets/projects for 2018 weed control plan to Kelly Cordell
- 4 December 2017: Kelly Cordell will forward the Draft 2018 Weed Control Project Plan to the RRWF for comments/edits
- 15 December 2017: RRWF comments due to Kelly Cordell
- 5 January 2018: Final 2018 Project Plan forward to RRWF

2017 Wildlife Monitoring Summary

Kelly Cordell, Chelan PUD, provided a 2017 Rocky Reach Wildlife Monitoring Summary:

Summary highlights:

- **Winter bald eagle (cost \$1,834.92):** 4 January – 18 January surveys completed with a total of 67 eagles observed (62 bald and 5 golden). 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).
- **Nesting bald and golden eagles (cost \$5,717.68):** 9 bald eagle nest territories were monitored; 8 were classified as occupied and of these, 7 were considered successful with at least one young fledgling from each nest producing. Seven golden eagle nest territories were monitored with 5 successfully producing young. A total of 6 golden eagle fledglings were produced in 2017.
- **Canada goose nesting (\$4,715.71):** Five surveys were conducted in 2017. There were 58 Canada goose nests observed that contained a total of 334 eggs. The number of nests during 2017 was higher than the long-term average of 55 nests. Success was greater in man-made structures (92%) compared to success at natural sites (70%), which is typical.

The total cost for the 2017 Rocky Reach Wildlife Monitoring was \$12,268.31.

2018 Wildlife Monitoring Effort

For the 2018 Wildlife monitoring efforts, RRWF discussed the potential for owl monitoring surveys. Ana Cerro-Timpone, USDA-FS, will draft survey techniques and schedule for the proposed owl survey. The RRWF suggested a contingency order of addition surveys beyond the owl monitoring: 1) wintering bald eagle survey in January 2) bald and golden eagle nesting survey and 3) Canada goose nest monitoring.

The following schedule was recommended for the 2018 Wildlife Survey Monitoring Proposal:

- 20 November 2017: Ana Cerro-Timpone will provide owl survey proposal to Kelly Cordell
- 15 December 2017: Kelly Cordell will forward the Draft 2018 Wildlife Survey Monitoring Proposal to the RRWF for comments/edits
- 29 December 2017: RRWF comments due to Kelly Cordell
- 12 January 2018: Final 2018 Wildlife Survey Monitoring Proposal forward to RRWF

Action Items:

- Erik Ellis, BLM, will provide a location information for the rush skeleton weed patch in Douglas County.

- Brigitte Ranne, USDA-FS, will contact Jennifer Andreas, WSU, regarding rush skeleton weed biological control agents.
- Ana Cerro-Timpone, USDA-FS, will draft survey technique, a budget, and schedule for owl survey proposal.
- Von Pope, Chelan PUD, will contact known owl survey contractors once he receives Ana's owl proposal.
- Von Pope, Chelan PUD, will check with Dale Whaley, WSU, regarding the Mills Canyon biological insect control release recommendations.
- Kelly Cordell, Chelan PUD, will provide eagle nesting locations to Ana Cerro-Timpone.
- Von Pope, Chelan PUD, will determine the payment agreement regarding the not-make-available funding.

Next Steps:

The next regular annual RRWF meeting will be 7 November 2018 from 9:00a.m. – 12:00 noon in the Chelan PUD Headquarters. Noxious weed invoice for 2018 will be reviewed, wildlife work for 2019 will be proposed, and proposals for noxious weed control in 2019 will be considered.