

Rocky Reach Wildlife Forum Meeting Minutes

Date: October 1, 2014
Time: 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Location: Chelan PUD Headquarters, Wenatchee, WA
2nd Floor Conference Room

Call in number: (509)661-4844, Password is 4000.

Meeting called by: Von Pope, Chelan PUD Type of meeting: RRWF Meeting
Note taker: Deb Bitterman

Representatives

<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
Ellis, Erik	BLM	(509) 665-2100	edellis@blm.gov
Pope, Von	Chelan PUD	(509) 661-4625	von.pope@chelanpud.org

Participants

<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
McCarty, Jesse	USDA-FS	(509) 784-4630	jmccarty@fs.fed.us
Cordell-Stine, Kelly	Chelan PUD	(509) 661-4762	kelly.cordell-stine@chelanpud.org
Fox, Ron	WDFW	(509) 665-3383	ron.fox@dfw.wa.gov

Meeting Purpose: Meeting of the Rocky Reach Wildlife Forum to continue Rocky Reach license implementation

Minutes

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 only.

Von noted a correction to the agenda: bullet under Integrated Noxious Weed Plan, “Discuss 2014 weed control options” should read “Discuss 2015 weed control options”.

No members called in via the conference line.

Von quickly reviewed the March 5, 2014 approved meeting minutes.

Integrated Noxious Weed Plan Invoice

After discussion, Von called for a vote regarding payment for the 2014 weed control work performed, biological control of insects on public lands between the Burch Mountain and the Entiat River and within the Rocky Reach Wildlife Area. Work was conducted by Washington State University Extension. **The Rocky Reach Wildlife Forum Members present unanimously approved payment for the work performed by Washington State University Extension.**

2015 Weed Control Options

Von confirmed that there is \$20,000 available for the 2015 Weed Control Plan. The RRWF discussed what projects they would like to submit. The RRWF agreed that the 2014 biological control by insects was a success and would like to repeat this biological weed control method in 2015. The RRWF also discussed different options such as, reseeding some of the severe burn sites with native grass seed to compete with weeds within the Rocky Reach Wildlife Area that will likely be an issue after this year’s Mills Canyon Fire. The seeding would actually take place in 2014 followed by release of biological controls in the spring and summer of 2015 in the post fire areas. After discussion, the RRWF agreed that it would be a good idea to focus on the Mills Canyon fire area for weed control.

Von stated that the RRWF needs to move forward and complete the 2015 Weed Control Plan quickly if early implementation in 2014 (grass seeding) is going to occur. The project cannot occur without a 2015 proposal that is approved by the Rocky Reach Wildlife Forum. In addition, obtaining a signed contract with WSU Extension office may be more challenging in 2015 due to a change in their contract process and requirements.

Review Rocky Reach Wildlife Habitat Management Plan (RRWMP) 5-Year Summary (2010-2014)

Von gave a quick overview of the accomplishments completed by the agencies. Von asked for the Members to send any pictures that relevant to the current 5-year plan that demonstrate projects in progress or completed to him that might be included in the appendix of the 5-year summary.

Von advised the RRWF that Chelan PUD is recommending revision to the bald eagle winter monitoring effort and potentially the Canada goose nest surveys. Bald eagle wintering data collected in the shoulder months (particularly November, December and March) are always much lower than high counts in January. The reduced winter monitoring effort would be offset with the increased bald eagle nest monitoring effort, which has increased significantly over the past 5 years. This will be discussed in more detail in the future.

Discuss New RRWMP 5-Year Plan

Von noted that the agencies need to submit a draft of potential projects for the new 5-Year Plan to him. So far, only the USFS has provided a draft 5-year proposal. The RRWF discussed the importance of building flexibility in their projects in the event of a fire or other disaster; an option could be to build “contingency tasks” for response to fire or other disaster. Von stated that there is flexibility for contingency plans as long as the plans are within the guidelines and scope of the License Order and Settlement Agreement. Von reminded RRWF that the Noxious Weed Control funds were also available to respond to events on an annual basis through the Integrated Terrestrial Invasive Plant Control.

There was some discussion about the actual end date for the 2010- 2015 RR Wildlife Habitat Plan. Since the current plan goes through September 22, 2015, should the new 5-year plans consider starting in September of 2015 or December of 2016? Von stated that the RRWF could choose to go either way. He suggested that the RRWF could request that the current Plan go through December of 2015, concurrent with the existing Payment Agreements, or it could expire with the approval of a new plan. Prior to making any decisions, the RRWF needs to have a draft copy of the next 5-year plan ready for RRWF approval.

Action Items:

- October 15, 2014: Jesse McCarty, USDA-FS, will draft a 2015 weed control proposal and send to Von.
- October 22, 2014: Von will send the 2015 weed control proposal to the RRWF for their approval via Email.
- October 31, 2014: The agencies will provide pictures (before and after) that will be included in the 5-Year Summary.
- October 31, 2014: agencies provide comments/edits of the draft RRWMP 5-Year Summary (2010-2014) to Von.
- October 31, 2014: agencies provide comments/edits of the draft new RRWMP 5-Year Plan (2015-2019) to Von
- November 14, 2014: Von will send to the agencies the final draft of the RRWMP 5-Year Summary and the 5-Year Plan for their final review to be approved at the next meeting.
- Von will investigate the best option for the purchase of seed and the billing process.
- Von will call Dave Volsen, WDFW, to discuss the wildlife monitoring process.

Next Steps:

The next RRWF meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2014, 9:00 am – noon, to finalize/approve the RRWMP 5-Year summary and 5-Year Plan.