

**North Umpqua Hydroelectric Project
(FERC Project No. P-1927)****Resource Coordination Committee (RCC)
May 18, 2016 Meeting Summary****FINAL (7/1/16)**RCC Members or Alternates Present

Steve Albertelli (PacifiCorp)
Rich Grost (PacifiCorp)
Ed Meyer (NOAA Fisheries)
Chris Stine (ODEQ)
Dave Harris (ODFW)
Mary Grainey (OWRD)
Pam Sichtung (USDA-FS)
Paul Bridges (USFWS; via phone)

Other Attendees

Beth Bendickson (PacifiCorp; via phone)
Mike Blum (PacifiCorp)
Jeff Brown (PacifiCorp)
Patrick Barry (USDA-FS)

RCC Members Absent

Jim Muck (NOAA Fisheries)
Anne Shirley (USDI-BLM)
Jim Thrailkill (USFWS)

INTRODUCTIONS, AGENDA, OLD BUSINESSMember Updates/Organization News

USDA-FS – With Jason Wilcox’s departure to the Deschutes National Forest, Bob Nichols is now the acting Fisheries Program Manager. Cara Farr, Soils Program Manager, is now working in the Portland office. No one is acting in her position yet.

ODEQ – Pete Shepard is now the Interim Director; they are currently recruiting for this permanent position.

NOAA – Will Stell, political appointee, is transitioning to a focus on the California district). The position has been reclassified to a permanent staff position. If they hire internally, it may have a cascading effect on personnel.

ODFW - Rick Kepler (head of water quality/water policies) has retired. His replacement, Anna Pakenham Stevenson, starts on June 1. Fisheries engineer, Jeanne Castillo, is leaving ODFW. There is no replacement for her position at this time.

Public Outreach

Rich and Mark Sommer, USDA-FS hydrologist, gave a Soda Springs fish passage tour to the local Boy Scout Troop at the end of March. They toured the fish screen, fish habitat area, and the evaluation building.

2016 Public Tour:

Communication ideas were discussed. Pam said they use Facebook and Twitter, and Chris reported they could do similar outreach. He said it would be good to try different means to get new audiences.

Steve said the group press release could perhaps be released a month earlier. He and Rich will draft it, and then the agencies can add to it and distribute as needed. It was suggested to approach KPIC to re-air footage from last year's news piece in conjunction with the tour announcement.

Everyone agreed that being pro-active on advertising was the way to go instead of relying on our own media and communication departments. Local groups like Umpqua Watershed have established networks of communication among large local audiences which we should take advantage of.

Friday, October 7, 2016 was chosen as the tour date, partly because it is adjacent to the Umpqua Watersheds brew fest event with the slogan of "It's the Water", and to see whether Friday attendance is better than other mid-weekdays. The October RCC meeting will also occur on October 7 from 8:00 AM to 9:30 AM, followed by a public/RCC greeting period until 10 when the public tour presentation begins. The tour will conclude by 3 PM.

It was suggested that future tours perhaps be scheduled for May as an alternate time of year. In the past, the fall date was chosen due to the busy construction schedule, but with the major projects almost complete, a different time of year might work better.

It was also suggested that more information could be added to the North Umpqua webpage (fish footage, etc.).

CURRENT PROJECT UPDATES

Soda Springs Fish Passage

Status/Update: Both the fish screen and ladder are operating normally. The fish screen will be shut down in mid-July for several weeks of annual maintenance and continued upgrades to submerged components.

Hydraulic and Biological Evaluations Update:

The evaluations are 100% complete and went very well. The biological evaluation of the screen was completed in late March and indicated very low rates of injury and delayed mortality among test fry and smolts. The technical working group has seen the preliminary results, and the final report is expected out in early June.

During the evaluation, it was encouraging to also see approximately 1,500 wild Chinook fry, 10 wild coho smolts, and 30 wild steelhead juveniles incidentally captured and also with very low rates of injury.

Rich noted that Meridian performed the fish window counting for a year, but now it's back in ODFW's court. Dave agreed that the larger window and FishTick software combination make it much more efficient to review video and document fish passage.

Tailrace Barriers – The evaluations were completed last fall. The current standard operating procedure is to reduce generation to keep the blowout panels closed during debris-laden, high flows. There are some upgrades proposed, including installation of a new set of cameras so operators can see the position of the blowout panels. The other is to experiment with wider spacing (two inch from one inch) on some of the panels to see if it helps with debris plugging, which leads to the panels opening.

Fish Creek Projects

Fiber and Power Update: This project is complete. The final canal shut-off and drainage system test will be conducted for RCC review following this meeting.

Fish Creek Diversion Sediment Removal Update: There was an emergency sediment removal within the settling pond during March to restore flow capacity into the fish screen area. The remaining sediment in the pond and all of it within the impoundment will be monitored during low flow conditions to see whether it affects the diversion and/or the fish passage facilities. PacifiCorp is also working on automation of the sluice gate to respond to high flow events, which may also ameliorate the sedimentation upstream of the dam.

Diversion capacity is better this year than last summer. Rich has a Corps permit for this work, but he hasn't applied to DSL for a permit yet. Further permitting will be pending identification of needs.

Mary asked if PacifiCorp was again going to request non-generation diversions of water from Fish Creek for this year's summer fire season. PacifiCorp staff indicated that it would not be proposed. Pam noted that although USDA-FS likes as many water sources as possible, they are not planning to request specific use of Fish Creek forebay.

Wetlands Update

Fireswamp: Steve visited this last week and said he observed thousands of tadpoles. It's retaining water very well. There is not a lot of flow in the gully running through the site, but the tadpoles should have metamorphosed by the time the ponds dry-up. There was a blowout in the corner of the lowest weir, but it will be fixed.

Lake Creek: This wetland is still on schedule for construction this year. USDA-FS has made a No Effect Determination on this project for spotted owls. Consultation is not required with USFWS. PacifiCorp is currently waiting on permits and a vegetation management financial plan from USDA-FS.

Ranawapiti Landslide Update: At the request of USDA-FS, Steve presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding the recent Ranawapiti Pond slope failure and current condition of the adjacent wetland enhancement. A slope failure adjacent to pre-existing, sub-surface seepage and saturated soils on the south end of the pond resulted in a large slump and head-cut that was lower than the embankment dam and therefore draining the pond. PacifiCorp aided USDA-FS in notching the dam to reduce the water surface elevation and temporarily alleviate the flow over the sump and into the Clearwater River. The wetland enhancement area is still functioning as still-water breeding amphibian habitat and meets the jurisdictional definitions of wetland.

Steve noted that because of the sub-surface and spring flows to the north of the wetland enhancement area, PacifiCorp could hydrologically-disconnect the enhancement area from the pond through use of a berm and still maintain the wetland enhancement area. The designed “micro-depressions” are approximately two feet above the previous water surface elevation and are still watered up with eggs and tadpoles present. Considering that the pond failure does not compromise the wetland, the question is “Who is responsible to pay for the erosion remediation and pond restoration repairs?”

Mary asked about acreage. Steve said that in 2009 the wetland project was designed and approved at approximately one-half acre. The design goals included identifying an area where we could find existing hydrology and adjacent to an area that was already disturbed and easily accessed.

Pam said a lot of thought went into choosing the wetland areas. USDA-FS believes that the enhancement area includes the pond and the PacifiCorp-constructed wetland/stillwater enhancement area, functioning as a whole. PacifiCorp changed the water level and therefore, USDA-FS interpretation of the Settlement Agreement is that PacifiCorp should be responsible to pay for the erosion remediation to restore the entire area to a pre-failure functioning wetland. The water level has dropped approximately 18 to 24 inches.

Steve suggested that since this pond slope failure was an unforeseen impact, that it would be an ideal project for the 19.3 mitigation funds. Pam said that while it does mention that funds can be used for wetlands, in accordance with the Settlement Agreement, the funds weren’t supposed to be used for anything that PacifiCorp is already responsible for. Steve noted that the mitigation fund has already been used to fund wetland projects, and reiterated that at no point prior to today’s discussion did PacifiCorp ever receive credit for the acreage of the pond in discussions of wetland enhancement area sizes. Pam said that additional wetlands acreage is needed to mitigate the loss of wetlands since the wetlands being constructed are so small. Steve reiterated that the Settlement Agreement does not dictate the size of the enhancement sites and that USDA-FS and ODFW approved all of the site locations and designs, including size, prior to construction.

The design concepts and sizes of the seven other wetland projects (Lemolo Lake, Stump Lake below the dam, Ranawapiti, Lemolo 1 Forebay, Stinkhole, Fireswamp, and Lake Creek) were discussed.

Pam reiterated USDA-FS believes the Ranawapiti area is the whole wetland/stillwater area and therefore is PacifiCorp’s responsibility.

Ed asked if anything would threaten the wetland enhancement if a berm were installed between the historic extent of the pond and the enhancement area, and Steve said no, the water would be contained by the berm. He said the enhancement area is adjacent to other functioning wetlands with hydrologic connections distinct from the stream that feeds the pond. The enhancement site was previously an upland waste disposal area that we excavated and enhanced. Repair is still needed to restore the pond, but that's not part of the wetland enhancement area from PacifiCorp's perspective. The pond is open-water habitat with only fringing wetland habitats around the edges, whereas the enhancement area provides consistent emergent wetlands for still-water breeding amphibians with or without the pond.

USDA-FS and PacifiCorp are looking for input from the RCC members.

Steve said that PacifiCorp does not consider itself responsible for the pond (which was built by USDA-FS in the 1980s), but would support the use of the 19.3 mitigation fund for the repairs.

Chris asked what structural changes would have to be made to maintain the enhancement area. Steve said the micro-depressions would continue to fill up with the seep inflows, but that approximately six feet of fill could be used to create a berm that would impound seep flows for the main channel and shallow, inundated area. Chris also asked the difference was between labor cost verses doing structural repairs to repair the pond? Steve noted there is no easy access to the erosion site and significant fill volumes would be required to repair the pond, but the amount of fill required for a small berm for the enhancement could be mobilized to the site using wheelbarrows.

Pam noted that USDA-FS's estimate of fill for the pond repair was 4,000 to 6,000 yards of material because the area would have to be raised up. She said tracked dump trucks could minimize the impact on the existing wetlands.

Dave said he remembered it being difficult to come up with the number of wetland areas needed to function for the life of the license, but he believed that the intent of the wetland projects were connectivity with existing aquatic sites, if available. He also mentioned that the plans he has indicate that the dam that helps create Ranawapiti would be raised slightly to "back water up into the wetland." Rich noted that the berm could isolate the wetland from fish and hence predation on amphibians. Dave noted that ODFW has recently documented unanticipated fish reproduction in Ranawapiti, and said that meant that physical isolation may be desirable to improve amphibian survival.

Paul talked to Craig Tuss (retired) who remembered it was viewed as one project. He didn't see it as being split out with separate responsibilities.

Chris noted the threat of seasonal rains, and that from a water quality perspective, the area is unstable. From a water control perspective, in the future, it would be good to try to prevent any big volumes of water and sediment going into the Clearwater River. Chris provided questions for the group to ponder including:

- How much area do we want to protect?
- How much water are we dealing with?
- Is the concern about the water or the habitat?

Steve reiterated the ecological and regulatory differences between open water and wetland and pointed out that wetland enhancement site selection specifically considered ways to isolate enhancement sites from open waters with fish that would prey on amphibians and their egg masses.

Jeff noted that PacifiCorp crews assisted in notching the dam and constructing the berm at the slump. USDA-FS appreciates the quick reaction/assistance from PacifiCorp with lowering the pond level to save it.

The RCC decided they wanted to view the site as part of the afternoon's project tour.

No repair or funding consensus was reached.

Aquatic Reconnects Update

There is an outage scheduled for early June through August on Lemolo 2 canal to complete the remaining aquatic reconnects.

Rich asked whether there was concern about Lemolo 2 forebay being without canal flow virtually all summer, questioning whether Fallen Mountain Creek would provide enough inflow to keep the forebay cold and full enough for trout to persist. No specific concerns were voiced but it was agreed to visually monitor the forebay as the outage progresses.

Other Projects Requiring Notice to Proceeds or Other Coordination

Pam said that we should shortly be receiving Notice to Proceeds for the aquatic reconnects, right-of-way vegetation maintenance, and the follow-up on use of pumice spoils for sand bags at the Toketee rockfall remediation project.

Toketee Dam Retrofit – The plan is still in development. The probable maximum flood analysis suggested we need more spillway area, so the intake tower may have to be moved closer to the spillway. A solution is being developed, but it could be several years' worth of work. Pam said they are hoping to be able to do the boat launch ramp project while this project is going on.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP UPDATES

Fish Habitat Studies (Monitoring and Maintenance Schedules)

There is a technical working group (TWG) meeting scheduled for June 8, 10 AM – 3PM, at the UNF Supervisor's Office. The final Soda Springs fish passage evaluation report will be distributed before the meeting. NHC and Meridian will present by conference call the final summary results from the evaluation. The 19.2 findings from last year will also be reviewed at this meeting.

6.2 Slide Creek Full-Flow Reach: *nothing new to report at this time.*

7.2 Gravel Augmentation: Monitoring below the Soda Springs powerhouse will happen during the fall spawning surveys.

8.2 Slide Creek Bypass Reach Habitat: This monitoring will take place in 2017.

8.3 Soda Springs Habitat: The annual report was distributed in January 2016. If the RCC gets down there to view the area today, we can consider whether maintenance is needed. If we don't make it, Rich will schedule a later visit with the TWG.

19.2 Long-Term Monitoring/Predator Control Study: ODFW is currently incorporating TWG revisions to the draft version of the 2015 annual report.

Ed inquired about the plan for SA 19.2 monitoring. Dave noted that the protocol needs to be developed and would need to be timed to the migration. Rich indicated that the study plan assumed a monitoring effort equivalent to one day per week for most weeks from Feb through October, and that the facility will require continuous and active minute-by-minute oversight when operating to manage debris and fish. Dave said monitoring was planned to begin in spring 2017. Two biologists are needed to run the smolt traps. ODFW needs to retrofit the available smolt traps for OSHA compliance and develop a standard operating procedure.

Rich is still waiting for Stillwater to provide cost estimates from their last field visit regarding PIT-tag antennae site feasibility and costs to incorporate into predator/prey program costs.

Flume 12: Monitoring of habitat conditions will happen in November 2016, to compare the results with the 2010 and 2011 monitoring. Before then, there is a rainbow trout survey scheduled for May 27, 2016.

Flows & Ramping

The Water Year 2014 records and analyses should come out later this year.

Pam said that the USGS invoiced them for \$97,000 for gage monitoring, which was \$40,000 over last year's amount, and the group briefly discussed USGS gage monitoring and maintenance fees. PacifiCorp will confer with DEQ regarding logical modifications to the 401 water quality monitoring plan to reduce costs for their USGS services, in light of the established record of compliance with DEQ criterion.

OTHER ITEMS

Operational Updates

Powerhouse/Canal Outages: Lemolo 1 is currently shut down and will be back online about May 26, 2016. The Lemolo 2 canal outage in early June follows for the reconnect projects. When the facility is watered back up, the canal refill operating plan will be followed as usual.

Reservoir Management (Toketee Reservoir Water Surface Elevation): The Lemolo reservoir is currently at 4,147 feet and is within the summer operating range. Pam asked if we could not begin the draw down until after Labor Day, if possible, as that weekend is one of the biggest camping weekends of the year. Steve said operations and supply management will wait if at all possible, but the draw down schedule depends on the availability of inflow to the reservoir to meet minimum flows below the dam. Rich and Dave said the fall drawdown plan will be made available to USDA-FS as always during August for their input, and said recent drawdowns have all been

within the ranges specified in the Lemolo Lake Management Plan. Rich asked whether USDA-FS had received public complaints about last fall's water levels, but Pam did not have any details.

SA 19.1 Tributary Enhancement Project Updates (Dave Harris): Sam Moyers and Chris Sheely completed a 10-day survey in Rock Creek and are finalizing the annual report for 2015. Kirk Haskett has overseen the movement of 800 boulders for use in Rock Creek. A lot of boulders were moved in the winter. Installation of the habitat elements will start on July 5. They plan to take next year off at Rock Creek to focus on Prospect. At the Rock Creek diversion dam, fish ladder video counts may not be occurring, and two of the three fish screens are out of service due to wear of the moving screen components.

SA 19.3 Federal Mitigation Fund Project Updates (Pam Sichting): USDA-FS is still working on developing the strategic plan to select restoration projects. A draft should come out soon. \$350,000 to \$400,000 will be spent this year. The call for projects went out recently. \$1.3 million of project proposals were received. The project proposals are now in Alice Carlton's hands for final decisions. At the top of the list are the logs for Fish Creek that will capture spawning gravel removed from the pond and replaced into the river below the diversion. Other projects include: gravel augmentation below Soda Springs dam, decommissioning roads and culverts (this had a grant too), and invasive species outreach and education. Last year they funded lamprey surveys, which were assigned a high priority by the decision makers. The Rock Creek/Canton Creek project (with BLM) was partially funded for design.

The balance in the account is roughly \$2.9M because USDA-FS didn't want to spend funds until the strategic plan was in place.

Next RCC Meetings:

- August 17, 2016 (Conference call), 10AM - Noon
- October 7, 2016 (Face-to-face, at Toketee), 8:00-9:30AM; 10AM – 3:00PM (public tour)

Public Comments – *none at this time.*

Meeting adjourned at 12:10 PM.