

9-17-08 Meeting Summary * *Approved 10-15-08* *
RESOURCE COORDINATION COMMITTEE (RCC)
NORTH UMPQUA HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT- FERC #1927-008

RCC Members or Alternates Present

Craig Kohanek (OWRD) - phone
Stephanie Burchfield (NMFS)
Chris Stine (ODEQ)
Pam Sighting (USDA-FS)
Monte Garrett (PacifiCorp Energy)
Ariel Hiller (BLM)
Rob Burns (USFWS)
Dave Harris (ODFW)

Also Present

Rich Grost (PacifiCorp Energy)
Diana Wales (Audubon) - phone
Francis Eatherington (Umpqua Watersheds)

INTRODUCTIONS, AGENDA, OLD BUSINESS

Member Updates

USDA-FS: Pam Sighting indicated that Bill Gamble will assume the position of Diamond Lake District Ranger on October 5.

ODEQ: With the retirement of John Blanchard, Zach Loboy will become the Western Region Basin Coordinator on October 1. It will later be determined if Zach will also become the Policy Group representative. Sally Puent is no longer the Policy representative.

USFWS: John Johnson has joined the Service (from NMFS) and will become the agency's contact for engineering review, assuming the role previously held by Jim Stow.

USFS/PacifiCorp: The Rattle fire has grown to more than 8,000 acres, and Highway 138 remains closed between Copeland Creek and Soda Springs. Access is available by permit from the USFS to provide essential travel for local individuals on the project. Residents near Slide Creek have been evacuated and Toketee Village is at Level 2.

Public Information Opportunities – We are at the time of year again to plan the annual public tour, which in the past has highlighted current and planned implementation projects. Assuming the fire does not prevent access, the tour needs to take place before late November. Pam will notify the RCC by phone as soon as the highway is open and the fire is more contained, in the hopes that an announcement for the public tour may be issued within the next month. If the current fire condition continues until the next RCC meeting, the group will discuss plans for either having the tour next spring, or just foregoing the event until next fall.

RCC Action: The August 20 meeting summary was finalized and tentatively approved, pending review by NMFS. PacifiCorp will be contacted by NMFS before next meeting if there are additional comments.

September 8, 2008, RCC/TWG Meeting Discussion

Monte summarized PacifiCorp's conclusions from the September 8, 2008, RCC/TWG Meeting. PacifiCorp listened carefully to the feelings of the RCC representatives at the meeting, and has given the issue careful consideration since. All the RCC representatives of the settlement agreement had indicated that the information presented by Stillwater Sciences did not present a sufficiently compelling case to move forward with an evaluation by a separate panel of expert scientists. While PacifiCorp does not agree with this conclusion, the company has decided not to further pursue an evaluation of this information. PacifiCorp will continue with the FPD TWG the design process that was begun in early 2007 for fish passage facilities at Soda Springs Dam. Throughout the process proposed for evaluating the habitat enhancement alternative, the schedule for designing and constructing a fish screen and ladder at Soda Springs dam has continued uninterrupted. Barring any unforeseen future difficulties in the design process, construction of the facilities is expected to commence in 2009 and will be fully functional in 2012, as specifically required by the settlement agreement. The FERC issued an Order on September 17, 2008, supporting the TWG's request for an extension of time for filing the final designs, in order to provide additional time to solve hydraulic issues related to the fish screen.

Several RCC members reiterated their concern with the communication process during this year's discussions. PacifiCorp's communications with the Policy Group prior to discussing with the RCC was felt to be inappropriate. Monte again explained that an issue with the potential to result in modification of the settlement agreement was thought by the company to deserve immediate input from the Policy Group. Pam distributed excerpted copies from the Resource Coordination Plan indicating that the RCC does indeed have decision-making authority. Monte agreed with this as it pertains to implementing actions specifically called for in the settlement agreement, but in order to deviate from these requirements, decision by the Policy Group would be necessary. Examples of this are present in the record for both the 2002 and 2005 Amendments.

The group further discussed communication issues. Diana Wales indicated that she felt the communication protocol had been breached by PacifiCorp's actions. Monte disagreed with this interpretation and indicated that the company had carefully followed guidelines set up in the settlement agreement and subsequent guidance documents.

Francis Eatherington requested additional clarification on use of the 19.2 funding, which she raised at the September 8 meeting, with respect to decreasing the potential impact of predation on young salmonids after fish passage was accomplished. She felt that the table in the Annual Report that summarizes use of the fund could be presented more clearly, so that a reader unfamiliar with the year's activities could more clearly understand how funds were expended. This clarification could be added to the table in the Annual Report. Monte indicated that more attention to this will be included in the next Annual Report preparation process. Stephanie also added that she felt more future emphasis should be placed on the long-term monitoring aspects of this funding requirement, and less on the predator control component.

CURRENT PROJECT UPDATES

Fish Creek (Screens and Canal Shutoff & Drainage)

Testing of canal shutoff and drainage system is still planned for November, following the return of higher flows and diversion of Fish Creek flows in the waterway. In addition, previous comments from the agencies on the "operations strategy" document will be addressed in a revision. There have been issues with radio communication that the company is addressing at this time, but the facility will hopefully be ready for testing in November.

CW2 CSD

Construction of the Clearwater 2 canal shutoff and drainage is proceeding on schedule, despite ongoing fire issues. To accomplish this, much work is being done at night.

LM2 CSD

The 30% design meeting was conducted in September 16 (see below). In order to refine ongoing modeling for facility design, a rapid shut-down is proposed for October 8. This was a test that had been previously postponed due to concerns regarding impacts to fish during the summer months. On October 8, rapid shutdown would result in increased river flows to about 500 cfs (stage increase of 1.5 ft) over a 2-3 hour period. After the test, flow in the river would downramp at 0.2 ft/hr as water refilled the waterway. There may be some turbidity in the Wild and Scenic Reach.

RCC Action: The plan and ramping modification for the rapid shutdown test was approved by the RCC.

Macro-invert Ladder

This project is complete. Plans are ongoing to assure that power failures will not interrupt the operation of this facility.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) PROJECT UPDATES

FHS (Fish Habitat Studies)

No additional meetings have been conducted since the last RCC meeting. The next meeting will address budget and funding needs for 2009. The smolt traps have been pulled out at Copeland Creek and Soda bypass (slight damage has occurred to the Soda trap). Rich noted that some redds have been seen near the tailrace barrier. A contract has been established to address the issue of gravel accumulation along the picket panels, which could inhibit complete seating of the panels along the floor.

FPD (Fish Passage Design)

Soda Springs Fish Passage Design

ENSR is continuing to modify the screen fish return model. Based on input from the TWG, additional adjustments need to be made in the design to benefit returning juvenile fish. The TWG conferred again after the August 13 trip to ENSR's office in Redmond. Following further model adjustments,

another viewing of the model is expected on September 22. For those unable to attend, a video will be prepared.

F&R (Flows & Ramping) - *nothing new to report at this time.*

CSD (Canal Shut off & Drainage)

14.2 Lemolo 2 Canal Shutoff and Drainage System

In the September 16 meeting, the 30% design materials were reviewed. The group felt that a design that only included gates (similar to the Clearwater 2 CSD) would be preferred for the Lemolo 2 waterway. This approach was felt to be most beneficial for both fish that are present in the waterway, as well as for potential effects on water quality and public safety. The design consultant (R2 Resources) had modeled a number of different alternatives, and a conceptual design that included five 8-foot gates was felt to be the preferred approach. However, some additional modeling will be conducted to include one additional drain to further reduce the total volume of water at the most downstream breach site. Monte will consult with Gordon Hanek and Mikeal Jones on this further modeling effort for a decision on the accepted design.

Lemolo Reservoir

Since the August 12 TWG meeting, the Water Quality Advisory was lifted, thus clearing the reservoir for recreational contact. Scott Lamb has been working with ODFW to remove approximately 75,000 tui chub, which are now believed to possibly contribute to the BGA blooms. To address this concern in the future, the TWG is considering experimenting with deeper winter drawdowns, and PacifiCorp has indicated a willingness to mitigate for entrainment of brown trout due to this operational scenario. The current operational regime that went into effect in July required a lower operating level during the recreation season (4143.5 MSL) and allowed for a deeper drawdown during the winter of 2008-2009 (4114 MSL). The next TWG meeting is tentatively set for November 4 to discuss information from the summer monitoring efforts, consider further options for addressing blooms, and discuss ways of funding future work.

Public Comments – *none at this time.*

The next RCC Conference Call is scheduled for October 15, 10:00 AM

Meeting adjourned.