

FINAL Meeting Notes
Lewis River License Implementation
Aquatic Coordination Committee (ACC) Meeting
February 9, 2012
Meeting at Merwin

ACC Participants Present (12)

Todd Olson, PacifiCorp Energy
 Erik Lesko, PacifiCorp Energy
 Jeremiah Doyle, PacifiCorp Energy
 Beth Bendickson, PacifiCorp Energy
 Jim Malinowski, Fish First (via teleconference)
 Adam Haspiel, USDA Forest Service
 Peggy Miller, WDFW
 Kate Miller, Trout Unlimited (via teleconference)
 Diana MacDonald (via teleconference)
 David Hu, USFS
 Eric Kinne, WDFW
 Jessica Walz, Gifford Pinchot Task Force

Calendar:

March 8, 2012	ACC Meeting	Merwin Hydro
April 12, 2012	ACC Meeting	Merwin Hydro

Assignments from December 8, 2011 meeting	Status
Bull Trout Annual Planning meeting scheduled for February 17, 2012.	2/17/12 Complete
Set up meeting to discuss the ozone system at Merwin.	Ongoing
Assignments from January 12, 2012 meeting	
Coordinate a spring tour of the Swift Downstream Collector Construction for the Cowlitz tribal council.	Pending
Assignments from February 9, 2012 meeting	
Set up meeting to discuss what to do with the fish from the Upper Release Pond.	Complete – meeting set for 3/30/12 at WDFW, Vanc.
Send out Elimination Proposal for the Crab Creek Acclimation Pond.	Pending

Merwin Trap: Review Settlement Agreement for clarification on Coho production, to get to the required 1.9 million.	Pending
<u>2012 Aquatic Fund Proposals: Next Steps</u> - Utilities will get comments out to agencies by midFebruary for review. There will be another review at the March meeting, with funding decisions at the April meeting. They will file with FERC after that.	Complete 3/8/12

Opening, Review of Agenda and Meeting Notes

Eric Lesko called the meeting to order @ 9:15 a.m. The team reviewed the agenda, and added two new topics: Merwin Trap and USFS Unused ACC funds return. The agenda was then accepted at 9:17 a.m.

The meeting notes from last month were reviewed and accepted at 9:20 a.m.

Study Updates

Woodland Release Ponds – No update provided this month.

Acclimation Ponds – USFS has reviewed the specialists’ reports for Acclimation Ponds and has expressed that they do not want to see the Crab Creek pond move forward. Recall the backup is to direct release 15,000 spring Chinook at the Crab Creek site each fall.

David Hu, USFS, provided some additional information about the three sites and evaluating them. He said the NEPA part was contracted out review/compliance/consistency, etc. Everyone has been working hard on logistical issues. The Muddy and Clear sites are okay, but the Crab Creek site they are not sure how to implement it. The instream water flow is a concern. He said he and Frank Shrier, PacifiCorp, discussed this. The ACC had previously brainstormed and they identified a temporary pool design in the Lewis River. As part of process, Hu has been facilitating the USFS needs. Their hydrologist expressed concerns with the Crab Creek site. This area is within a proposed Wild and Scenic River area. USFS is looking to maintain the areas Outstanding and Remarkable Values. To achieve this, they are looking for no lasting visual effects. Hu now feels the Crab Creek site might not be a good site for an acclimation facility. As an ACC member, he’s proposing to drop this site. Logistically, efforts to maintain the facility may be greater than the benefit. It’s a big deal and he wants to make sure we all evaluate and make sure everyone is onboard; also due to hydrological and Wild & Scenic issues.

Adam Haspiel, USFS, said USFS tried to drop it; though the WDFW and Yakama Tribe still wanted it. Eric Kinne, WDFW, believes it will be a hard site, but they thought perhaps it could be done above the falls. He would still like to see acclimation in the Mainstem Lewis. Todd Olson, PacifiCorp, said it has been discussed internally and we could still put fish to the two other ponds and a direct release into Lewis River at this site and have some of those tagged as well. We would watch it and get results back to see if we need to pursue something else on the Mainstem Lewis, three or four years down the road. If it’s obvious that we need another acclimation pond, then we’ll revisit. Option 2 is to drop it altogether. Eric didn’t like this option and will talk to Pat Fraizer and others at WDFW. He realizes the issues with Crab Creek, but still believes something is needed in the long term.

Olson then asked what everyone thought about the direct release. Jim Malinowski's, Fish First, thoughts were that he'll go along with what everyone else says. Kate Miller, Trout Unlimited, expressed this same thought. Hu said he wants closure and asked if it could be done within a week - a proposal for two ponds, plus the direct release experiment, and getting the current Crab Creek site off the construction table for this year. Olson said PacifiCorp was okay with this proposal and mentioned having people not at this meeting notified and responding to this issue by February 17, 2012. Hu said Crab Creek can be kept on the table, but wants to facilitate a conclusion. Again, he talked about access to maintain structure/visibility from bridge. Hu reiterated that he is open to what is in everyone's best interest.

Hatchery and Supplementation Program – The final 2012 AOP will be sent out on Friday, February 10, 2012. Trapping of steelhead is ongoing (when Merwin dam discharge of 5,500 cfs is possible). Steelhead tangle netting efforts are set to begin on March 1. Coho surveys were completed on January 26.

Eric Kinne added that he wants interpretation from the ACC on what the numbers mean (coho) and asked if smolt production means do we release in year one or generate fish from eggs? 2012 will be the third year. When do we start producing more coho to get to 1.9 million? This fall, should we be taking extra coho? The hatchery staff is trying to plan ahead.

Speelyai Pond 14 – Final designs to be available Friday, February 10, 2012. Project will then be put out to bid. Project completion scheduled for 2012 (May 1 – Aug 15).

Speelyai Intake – 90 percent designs to be available Friday, February 10, 2012. Project will then be finalized after comments and put out to bid. Work window is June 1 – August 15.

Speelyai Kokanee Weir – Due to issues related to soil compaction at the site, this project was delayed until the Cowlitz County engineer approves measures to prevent erosion at the site. We expect the project to be functional prior to kokanee collection activities in 2012 and as part of the work order for Pond 14.

Merwin Rearing Ponds – Remaining two ponds scheduled for completion after the fishing derby is completed at the hatchery.

Lewis River Upstream and Downstream Intakes – Permitting is moving forward along with the Biological Assessment for Eulachon. Screen design for the lower intake (DSI) has been submitted to Bryan Nordlund (NMFS) and we are awaiting feedback/approval on the design. Completion dates are dependent on permitting along with dredging of the LRH ladder entrance.

2012 Bull Trout Plan – The bull trout subgroup meeting is scheduled for February 17, 2012, at the WDFW Region 5 offices. The meeting will go over the Utilities' proposed 2012 bull trout annual operating plan.

Merwin Upstream Construction Status – This project is delayed for up to a year for the reasons we provided at the last ACC meeting (rock void problem and Eulachon consultation).

Swift Downstream Collector Construction Status – This project is on schedule and we are confident about the December 26, 2012 completion date.

Future Fish Passage Facilities – PacifiCorp has made a selection on contractor, but cannot share that information at this time until a contract is tendered. We will provide a study plan to the ACC so that everyone is aware of the work being performed. We anticipate data collection to begin late spring or early this summer.

Yale Spillway Barrier Net – This project is progressing. Permits have been submitted but we are not sure the counties will be timely enough for us to meet the construction window this summer. We will keep the ACC informed but may need to request an extended construction window if permitting is delayed.

Lewis River Release Pond – This project is also delayed one year because of Eulachon consultation. We will need to discuss options with the ACC and have an alternate plan in place, which could be direct release, prior to the juvenile outmigration in 2013.

The floating surface collector will be able to collect fish, but what do we do with them until the pond is ready?

Merwin Trap – Eric Kinne is concerned as the Settlement Agreement calls for daily operation. WDFW does not understand why PacifiCorp is running discharge below generation for such long periods of time. Why not run at 11,500 cfs and then do a river drawdown? Olson said PacifiCorp has been running close to three units for the whole time period. There has been a lot of water. PacifiCorp is trying to draft Swift reservoir at a rate of a foot per day so that we can complete FERC required spill gate work at Swift dam. To do so, Swift Reservoir needs to be down 50 feet from full pool. PacifiCorp is working with operations to schedule WDFW access into the Merwin trap over the coming weeks. The first access is now scheduled for Monday, February 13, 2012. Olson said we will see the number of fish in there next week. PacifiCorp recognizes it has been over a month since WDFW has been in the trap. Peggy Miller, WDFW, asked when we could get in again. Olson said consideration of how many fish are in the trap, the river inflow, and the need to draft Swift, will all factor into how often we can get into the trap.

Unspent USFS ACC Funds Returned to ACC

Adam Haspiel, USDA Forest Service reported that not all the ACC funding was used and some will be returned.

Clear Creek, \$2,575 - They were going to use in conjunction with other funds. The bids came in really inexpensively, so will refund \$34,000 back to the ACC. They ended up using other funds.

Clear Creek instream restoration cost savings of \$2,500.

\$2,200 -

He also noted that the Collection Agreement expired at the end of 2011.

ACC Fund Proposals Presentations

2012 Rush Creek Channel Restoration Pilot Project Grant Proposal (Adam Haspiel, USFS / Jessica Walz, GPTF)

Adam Haspiel and Jessica Walz presented a PowerPoint illustrating project location, detailing project description, target species, and project length. Adam discussed in detail the methods for timber harvest, tree transport, log movement and using volunteer labor. He also provided a typical structure drawing and a detailed project budget. Jessica gave an overview of the Gifford Pinchot Task Force. **Fund request is \$31,720.**

ACC Discussion:

Olson asked about the timeframe for monitoring. Adam spoke about laser level/cross sections, and said there would be a pebble count before the project started. They would take underwater photos of the substrate for the pre-proposal. From a biological standpoint, they would do some snorkeling to see what the use is in the pools, and look for redds. They could do some electrofishing, but would need permit for it. Jeremiah Doyle, PacifiCorp, asked if there were any concerns about creating coho or steelhead habitat. Adam said they will monitor for these fish. Jeremiah mentioned that coho are currently using the side channels. Adam said coho usage information will definitely come out in the pre-monitoring phase. Hu said he likes the project aligning something to do with bull trout. It has a lot of momentum, is a good fit, and also aligns the agencies through the ACC. He would like to see everyone being recognized. Adam said they could do this in the annual report. Hu said it would be good to highlight the project as a cooperative project. Jessica said they would be willing to highlight project and partners, etc. They do it with other projects. Erik Lesko, PacifiCorp, asked how the gravel mix was determined. Adam said they did it similarly to how they did the gravel augmentation on the East Fork Lewis River; they used the gravel sizes that the steelhead were using. They went with a company - Groat Brothers. They are local and are one of the few gravel type quarries that do not crush gravel. This company was paying off a fine for muddying up creek and ended up providing the gravel and mixing for no charge. Adam said he would research and make sure to get the right gravel for this project.

2012 Clearwater Creek Habitat Restoration (Adam Haspiel, USFS)

Adam presented a PowerPoint illustrating project location, detailing project description, target species, and project length. Adam discussed in detail the methods for timber harvest, tree transport, and log movement. He also provided a typical structure drawing and a detailed project budget. **Fund request is \$128,000.**

He also mentioned ECO Trust and they have asked for another \$22K from other funding. If received, they will put another ten structures above the site.

There were no ACC comments on this proposal.

2012 Lewis River Side Channel 3 Habitat Restoration (Adam Haspiel, USFS)

Adam presented a PowerPoint illustrating project location, detailing project description, target species, and project length. Adam discussed in detail the methods for timber harvest, tree transport, and log movement. He also provided a typical structure drawing and a detailed project budget. **Fund request is \$50,000**

There were no ACC comments on this proposal.

2012 Upper Lewis River Spawning Grounds and Habitat Restoration Inventory (Jim Byrne, WDFW)

While there was no formal presentation for this proposal, PacifiCorp requested that the ACC still comment on it.

*All of the above 2012 funding proposal presentations may be viewed on the Lewis River website:
<http://www.pacifiCorp.com/es/hydro/hl/lr.html>*

Lastly, it was noted that for the Swift Reservoir Trout Season, WDFW should take steps to protect any adult steelhead transported upstream from the Merwin or Lewis River Hatchery traps. The public should be prohibited from harvesting or targeting them. WDFW will be interested in the radio tagging results from any tagged steelhead; where do they go - are they hanging out or leaving immediately?

<12:33 p.m. meeting adjourned >

Agenda items for March 8, 2012

- Review February 9, 2012 Meeting Notes
- Study/Work Product Updates

Public Comment

None

Next Scheduled Meetings

March 8, 2012	April 12, 2012
Merwin Hydro Control Center	Merwin Hydro Control Center
Ariel, WA	Ariel, WA
9:00 a.m. – Noon	9:00 a.m. – Noon

Meeting Handouts & Attachments (e-mailed)

- Notes from 1/12/12
- Agenda for 2/9/12