

**FINAL Meeting Notes
Lewis River License Implementation
Aquatic Coordination Committee (ACC) Meeting
May 12, 2011
Merwin Hydro Control Center, Ariel, WA**

ACC Participants Present (18)

Adam Haspiel, USDA Forest Service
Dave Hu, USDA Forest Service
Diana Gritten-MacDonald, Cowlitz PUD
LouEllyn Jones, USFWS - phone
Eric Kinne, WDFW
Pat Frazier, WDFW
Frank Shrier, PacifiCorp Energy
Sabrina Hickerson, PacifiCorp Energy
Jeremiah Doyle, PacifiCorp Energy
Erik Lesko, PacifiCorp Energy
Kirk Naylor, PacifiCorp Energy
Eli Asher, Fish Recovery Board (teleconference)
Shannon Wills, Cowlitz Indian Tribe (teleconference)
Kate Miller, Trout Unlimited (teleconference)
Michelle Day, NMFS (teleconference)
Jim Malinowski, Fish First (teleconference)
Brett Raunig, WDOE
Chad Brown, WDOE

Calendar:

June 9, 2011	ACC Meeting	Merwin Hydro
July 14, 2011	ACC Meeting	Merwin Hydro

Assignments from March 10, 2011 meeting:	Status:
Bull Trout Subgroup – Todd Olson (PacifiCorp) will draft a schedule and bring to June's meeting for discussion.	Pending

Opening, Review of Agenda and Meeting Notes

9:20 a.m. – Meeting began

Frank Shrier (PacifiCorp) called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m. The agenda was reviewed and several items were added as follows:

- BPA Transmission Line Mitigation
- Aquatic funds

- Sunrise / sunset ramping at Merwin
- Canal Bridge repaving

With no further additions, the agenda was accepted at 9:25 a.m.

The meeting notes were also reviewed. Diana Gritten-MacDonald (Cowlitz PUD) submitted some edits to Sabrina Hickerson (PacifiCorp), which were reviewed and accepted at 9:30 a.m.

Aquatic Funds

The Aquatic Fund Annual Report 2011 was submitted to FERC and the ACC on April 12, 2011. No comments have been received back from either party, and the 30-day comment period is now closed. Agencies whose proposals were accepted should now submit invoices and begin implementing their respective projects. The following projects were approved for funding:

- Eagle Island Habitat Enhancement: Sites B & C, Cowlitz Indian Tribe
- Lewis River Side Channel Near Muddy River Instream Habitat Restoration, USDA Forest Service
- Muddy River Side Channel Restoration, USDA Forest Service

<Kirk Naylor (PacifiCorp Energy) teleconferenced in at 9:45 a.m.>

BPA Transmission Line Mitigation (Confidential)

<Kirk Naylor (PacifiCorp Energy) departed at 10:05 a.m.>

Discussion PIT Tagging Salmon and Steelhead Smolts with Full-Duplex or Half-Duplex Tags

Originally, when the M&E plan was written, PacifiCorp agreed to tag salmon and steelhead smolts with full-duplex (FDX) PIT-tags. After the plan was approved and the Utility began to move forward with implementation, it appeared that half-duplex (HDX) PIT-tags would better suit the Utility's needs for data collection and reporting. The decision was made by PacifiCorp to change to HDX tags without consultation with the ACC.

Shannon Wills (Cowlitz Indian Tribe) expressed opposition over the decision, and was concerned that such a decision had been made without discussion with the ACC. She reminded the ACC that the FDX tags would be compatible with what is being used on the Columbia River.

Shrier passed out a monitoring summary (See [Attachment A](#)) for the group to review. He stated that the intent for the change was to be able to read all the PIT-tagged fish entering the collector for the purpose of monitoring. He stated the following in support of HDXtags:

- HDX tags are the same size as FDX tags, yet are not constrained by FDX antenna configurations (FDX require a small detection window) and thus allow for a larger detector opening on the collector;
- They work with a larger network that will not collect as much debris;
- Small number of fish (996) being tagged should not necessitate compatibility with the Columbia River;

- PacifiCorp already has HDX detectors in some of the tributary mouths and may install more in the future;
- HDXtags are much less expensive and are likely to be used more frequently by other entities in the future; and

Michelle Day (NMFS) advised that normally her group would request acoustic tags associated with the collectors, and wondered why the decision was made not to go with acoustic tags here. Hickerson was tasked with researching the ACC meeting notes for 2008 to review the conversation and determine the reasoning behind the original decision.

It was pointed out that WDFW has been using full-duplex tags on the bull trout but PacifiCorp started using HDX tags last year.

NMFS does not support going to half-duplex for collection facilities. Day requested a discussion in a dedicated meeting to pursue the issue further. Bryan Nordlund (NMFS) and Eric White (Cowlitz Indian Tribe) should be invited to the meeting.

LouEllyn Jones (USFWS) mentioned that bull trout are a separate issue, and that USFWS is recommending half-duplex tags for bull trout based on the circumstances on the Lewis River.

Eric Kinne (WDFW) stated disapproval of the current switch to half-duplex tags. He agreed that further discussion to review the objectives of the M&E plan is needed.

Kate Miller (Trout Unlimited) requested a short description as to why the switch was made in order to properly review the rationale. Shrier agreed.

Shrier also agreed that PacifiCorp should have been more upfront and come to the ACC ahead of time before making the decision. This will be an agenda item for next month.

< Shannon Wills departed 9:57 a.m. >

Lewis River Acclimation Pond 60% Design Package

Adam Haspiel (USDA Forest Service) submitted comments on the Lewis River Acclimation Pond Design Packages. In his comments, he indicated the Forest Wild and Scenic specialist had concerns about the Crab Creek site not looking natural enough and suggested moving the pond underneath the bridge so that it was not visible from the road. Because the river is a visual special emphasis area, there is a requirement that it be kept looking as wild and scenic as possible.

Shrier agree that the pond needs to look natural, and that this will be accomplished with native materials and root wads which will soften the appearance and provide fish cover. He agreed that the current McMillen design has edges that are too defined and they could be more blended with the natural background.

Shrier pointed out drawbacks to moving the pond:

- Putting the pond underneath the bridge would require significant amounts of excavation, while the current spot is already in a natural bowl.
- Changing the location would also mean re-designing the pond and restarting the NEPA process.

Bryan Nordlund (NMFS) is reviewing the designs and has noticed some yellow flags. He will be providing comments soon. Mostly he has noticed some velocity issues and potential issues with debris taking out the facility.

In regards to moving the pond under the bridge, Day expressed concern over the amount of shade this would be subjecting the fish to. Additionally, the flows under the bridge may be of higher velocity than the Crab Creek location.

Dave Hu (USDA Forest Service) pointed out that the original suggested site is a natural feature that would be preserved. While he understands the Specialist's concerns, he would feel hesitant about having an acclimation pond under the bridge because of the velocities and instability of flows. He would encourage the ACC to stick to the original recommended location and strive to make it as natural as possible.

Kinne reiterated that excessive shade is not healthy for the fish.

Haspiel asked that PacifiCorp incorporate his comments with the FERC filing, along with a response explaining the argument against moving the pond under the bridge. He also asked that the group work with a recreation specialist to use native materials to build the pond. Shrier said this would all be addressed in the 90% drawing and would be filed with FERC.

No additional comments were received on the Lewis River Acclimation Ponds Design Package.

Study Updates

Release Pond Site – The Pacific eulachon (smelt) was listed as threatened under the ESA last year. This year, NMFS has proposed the Lewis River as critical habitat for the eulachon. This change could impact the Lewis River release pond and is something of which the ACC should be aware.

Mark Romano (NMFS) is the specialist overseeing the listing. There will need to be a discussion with him and Michelle Day to address these concerns. Shrier anticipates that construction for the release pond will not be a problem because it will occur in low-flow periods, when the adults and larvae are gone.

Lewis River Fish Hatchery Fish Ladder – The issue of the eulachon will also impact the dredging of the Lewis River for the hatchery's fish ladder.

Right now, PacifiCorp is pursuing the nationwide permit that says the gravel must be removed from the river. Day is going to talk to the Corps of Engineers to determine if the nationwide permit can be expanded to cover returning the gravel to the river.

Kinne states that he spoke with the Corps early on in the process and it was expressed that returning the gravel to the river was their preference, but that this would not be covered by the nationwide permit. A different permit to cover returning the gravel would not fit PacifiCorp's time frame.

Another significant hang-up in the process is the shoreline permit from the county. However, if the Corps can issue their permits quickly then the delay in the county's permit would not put the project behind schedule.

Shrier added that there are other lower river projects that could use the gravel from the Lewis River fish ladder, so if it cannot be returned to the river then it could be stockpiled and used elsewhere.

Lewis River Hatchery Upgrades Pond 16 – Work has begun. The schedule is tight because of rearing space needed in the fall for spring Chinook.

Lewis River Pipe Inspection – Lesko is working with Pond 16 contractor to gain access to the pipe for the camera survey to take place. The pipe inspection needs to be done this month.

Lewis River Hatchery Upgrades Pond 13 & 14 – These upgrades have been completed already, but there are some issues with the concrete and alignments. The contractors are working with PacifiCorp engineer Nathan Higa to complete a punch list of items.

There also remains the issue of the pumps at the hatchery not working properly. Kinne has been aware of this issue and Erik Lesko (PacifiCorp) is also aware of it. No new updates at this time, but it is being addressed between WDFW and PacifiCorp

Speelyai Kokanee Weir – Project is out for bids now. This project is currently on schedule to be completed this summer.

Upper Intake at Lewis River Hatchery – This work has been scheduled to be done with the dredging for the fish ladder because of the drawdown. If the dredging does not happen, then it would impact the schedule for this project as well. There is a proposal for underwater diving to complete the welding, but this would obviously be easier if it could be done during the drawdown. It was suggested that the drawdown could possibly be scheduled anyways to allow this work to be completed, but it would require going to 600 cfs, which would take some time.

Hatchery & Supplementation Plan – Some fall monitoring work for adult Coho is being redrafted to include more details based on discussions with the state of Washington. Lesko needs to meet with state representatives regarding 2012 plans to discuss changes to the steelhead program. This is the third year of implementation and there have been issues regarding fecundity, egg size, and holding fish at the hatchery. A number of lessons are emerging as time goes on and it is necessary to adapt and adjust in order to maximize the efficacy of the program. Data is coming in and will be made available to the ACC and H&S subgroup.

Habitat Preparation Plan – This plan was sent out to the ACC on April 27, 2011 for 30-day comment period. Please return comments to Sabrina Hickerson (PacifiCorp) by May 25, 2011. Updates from last year include table data and the transportation of spring Chinook to the Lewis River basin. The spring Chinook were removed from the plan because the return in previous years has been poor. The broodstock collection goal has been 800 – 850 and that has not been met in the last five years. The ACC needs to discuss how beneficial this aspect of the plan is to the overall system.

Kinne would add that the additional production goals did not become effective until approximately one year ago. He felt that there should be an increase in the coming years with the new upgrades and remodels.

Day observed that next year is when the transported fish will start being put into the watershed, which will complete the Habitat Preparation Plan (HPP) for the lower river. The next step per the Settlement Agreement is to implement an HPP for Yale.

Kinne noticed that in the HPP there is a comment that states WDFW was consulted in the development of the plan, which is not accurate. Lesko agreed and stated he would remove the comment.

Bull Trout Monitoring – Jeremiah Doyle (PacifiCorp) advised that field work will begin tomorrow at Eagle Cliff. In June he will begin to collect bull trout from Yale and Merwin as well. Captured bull trout from Yale and Merwin will be held while awaiting genetic assignment. After genetic analysis has been completed individual fish will be transported to their reservoir of origin per their genetic assignment.

Swift Fish Collector – Shrier shared some photographs of the collector as it is being assembled at Swift Forest Camp. The belly tanks have been completely assembled and work is progressing well.

WDOE asked if the pile driving had begun yet, and Shrier advised that it had not. There are some issues with getting the crane out to the location needed to complete this work due to the size of the crane and the load rating of the bridges across which the crane would have to travel.

Camping at Swift has not been affected. There might be days that the boat ramps and swim areas will be difficult to access because of temporary work, but overall they will be available and open. The swim area is not open right now but will be open by Memorial Day.

Because of some delays on the pile driving project, there is concern that work may not be completed by the end of September. This is something of which the ACC should be aware of right now, and will have to reassess further down the line.

Ramping Sunset / Sunrise

Shrier discovered that the ramping rates were not happening properly at sunrise and sunset at Merwin. He spoke with the operators and since then there have been no issues. He brought this

issue before the ACC to see if there was any further feedback or discussion to be had and there was none.

Canal Bridge

Hu and Haspiel have been coordinating with the Forest Service's engineers and Cowlitz PUD to address the maintenance work needed on the Canal Bridge. The project was almost delayed a year, but as of today the delays have been resolved and the project is a "go" for this year.

The contract for work will go out to bid on Friday, May 13, 2011. The environmental issues have been addressed by the Forest Service's existing Biological Opinion. This project is being considered road maintenance as opposed to new construction, which allows for looser requirements for work. Work

Hu wanted some clarity regarding the role he and Haspiel are playing in this process in regards to their positions on the ACC and as employees of the Forest Service. He felt that their responsibility mainly lay in interfacing between the ACC and the rest of the Forest Service to provide updates and address concerns.

Gritten-MacDonald stated that the ACC would need regular updates because this is a construction project occurring inside a FERC project boundary with FERC money. Although the bridge was not originally engineered for the projects, it is part of the project and FERC needs to be notified. She requested a schedule, contract and bid/contract specs in order to provide that information to FERC.

Site Visit

The ACC departed for the constructed channel off the Swift Canal at 11:00 a.m. Those in attendance were:

Frank Shrier, PacifiCorp Energy
Erik Lesko, PacifiCorp Energy
Sabrina Hickerson, PacifiCorp Energy
Diana Gritten-MacDonald, Cowlitz PUD
Chad Brown, WDOE
Brent Raunig, WDOE

The group reviewed the constructed channel flows and saw no need for immediate change. In order to best determine the overall efficacy of the channel, it was decided that spawning and fish-use surveys should be conducted and reviewed in the coming season and that the flow issue should be revisited after that.

Agenda items for June 9, 2011

- Review May 12, 2011 Meeting Notes
- Discussion PIT Tagging Salmon and Steelhead Smolts with Full-Duplex or Half-Duplex Tags
- Study/Work Product Updates

Public Comment

None

Next Scheduled Meetings

June 9, 2011	July 14, 2011
Merwin Hydro Control Center	Merwin Hydro Control Center
Ariel, WA	Ariel, WA
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	9:00 a.m. – Noon

Meeting Adjourned at 2:00pm.

Meeting Handouts & Attachments

- Draft Meeting Agenda 5/12/11
- Draft Meeting Notes 4/14/11
- **Attachment A:** Monitoring Study

Lewis River M&E Tagging Summary					
Species	Tag/Mark Type	No. of Fish	Purpose	Time of year	Duration
SpCh, StHd, Coho	HDXPIT	996 of each	Objective 1. Evaluate ODS	Spring	4 years or until 80% ODS
SpCh, StHd, Coho	RT	55 of each	Objective 2. Evaluate SDF Collection efficiency	Spring	4 years or until CE met
SpCh, StHd, Coho	HDXPIT	Same fish as Obj. 1	Objective 4. Estimate adult and Juv. Collection Survival and juv. Transport Survival.	Spring	4 years or until CS met
SpCh, StHd, Coho, Bull, CUTT	RT		Objective 10. Evaluate ATE	Year-round	Until ATE met
SpCh, StHd, Coho	CWT	10% of each	Objective 12. Evaluate Ocean Recruits	Year-round	Term of License
SpCh	AD intact, blank wire tag in adipose fin	100%	Objective 12.Subtask - Evaluate Supplementation fish (WWStHd program fish will have 100% blank wire nose tag)	Spring and Fall	15 years unless extended
SpCh	HDXPIT/external clip?	10% from each pond	Objective 12.Subtask - Evaluate Acclimation pond fish at the SDF	Spring and Fall	15 years unless extended

Lewis River H&S Tagging Summary					
Species	Tag/Mark Type	No. of Fish	Purpose	Time of year	Duration
SpCh, StHd, Coho	AD	All hatchery(except DIG)	To identify HOR for selective fisheries	Spring	Term of License
SpCh, Coho	AD+CWT	Subset of all HOR	To determine overall survival of release groups	Spring	Term of License
SpCh, Coho	CWT/no AD	Subset of all HOR	Double indexing (DIG) to estimate the impact mark-selective fish have on NORs	Spring	Term of License
SpCh, StHd, Coho, Bull, CUTT	CWT/unique external mark	All Yale origin NOR from YDF*	To sort out Yale origin fish at the Merwin Upstream facility for transport to Yale	Spring	Term of License

*Yale Downstream Facility