

LEWIS RIVER AQUATIC COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Facilitator: ERIK LESKO
503-412-8401

Location: TEAMS MEETING ONLY

Date: October 13, 2022

Time: 9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

AGENDA ITEMS

- 9:30 AM Welcome
- Review and Accept 9/8/2022 Agenda
 - Review and Accept 8/11/2022 & 9/8/2022 Meeting Notes
- 9:45 AM Public Comment Opportunity
- 9:50 AM Study/Work Product Updates
- Flows/Reservoir Conditions Update
 - Reservoir Shoreline Development Projects
 - ATS Update
 - FPS Update
 - *30% Yale downstream design meeting invite*
 - *Draft Lewis River Future Fish Passage Elements Document*
 - Fish Passage/Operations Update
 - Swift Reservoir Stranding Surveys
 - Yale HPP spawning survey schedule
 - Swift No. 1 maintenance
- 10:50 AM Next Meeting's Agenda
- Study/Work Product Updates
 - Aquatic Fund Presentations
- Public Comment Opportunity
- 11:00 AM Meeting Adjourn
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Note: all meeting notes and the meeting schedule can be located at:
<https://www.pacificorp.com/energy/hydro/lewis-river/acc-tcc.html>

Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only)

[+1 563-275-5003,,644857650#](#) United States, Davenport

Phone Conference ID: 644 857 650#

**FINAL Meeting Notes
Lewis River License Implementation
Aquatic Coordination Committee (ACC) Meeting
October 13, 2022
TEAMS Meeting Only**

ACC Representatives and Affiliates Present (15)

Sarah Montgomery, Anchor QEA
Christina E. Donehower, Cowlitz Indian Tribe
Amanda Froberg, Cowlitz PUD
Steve West, LCFRB
Chris Karchesky, PacifiCorp
Erik Lesko, PacifiCorp
Mark Ferraiolo, PacifiCorp
Todd Olson, PacifiCorp
Bryce Glaser, WDFW
Josua Holowatz, WDFW
Sam Gibbons, WDFW
Jim Byrne, Trout Unlimited
Nick Grant, USFS
Bill Sharp, Yakama Nation
Keely Murdoch, Yakama Nation

Guests (0)

Calendar:

October 13, 2022	ACC Meeting	TEAMS Meeting
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Assignments from September 8, 2022	Status
Nick Grant: Coordinate with USFS staff and Lesko regarding next steps for the Clear and Clearwater Creek projects and Aquatic Fund proposals.	Ongoing.

Assignments from July 14, 2022	Status
Erik Lesko: Update Teams meeting invitation to add and remove staff as needed. (Full update planned for 2023 meeting invitations.)	Ongoing.

Assignments from April 14, 2022	Status
Erik Lesko: Coordinate with the TCC regarding the timing for WSDOT's Cougar Creek culvert project.	Ongoing. (Currently planned for 2023.)

Opening, Review of Agenda and Meeting Notes

Erik Lesko (PacifiCorp) called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. and reviewed the agenda.

Bill Sharp introduced Keely Murdoch. Elaine Harvey has taken a new role, and Murdoch is the new Hydro Systems Oversight Coordinator. Murdoch has extensive experience in the mid- and upper Columbia basin, working with the public utility districts and state and federal agencies to implement Habitat Conservation Plans, Settlement Agreements, and associated hatchery and reintroduction programs. The ACC representatives present introduced themselves and welcomed Murdoch to the group. Sarah Montgomery will work with Beth Bendickson to add Murdoch to the appropriate distribution lists.

Lesko reviewed the August 11, 2022, and September 8, 2022 meeting notes. No edits were provided to the August 11, 2022 notes, and WDFW staff confirmed internally that no edits are needed. WDFW staff provided edits to the September 8, 2022, which Lesko reviewed during the meeting. All edits were accepted. Both the August and September 2022 meeting notes were approved by the ACC.

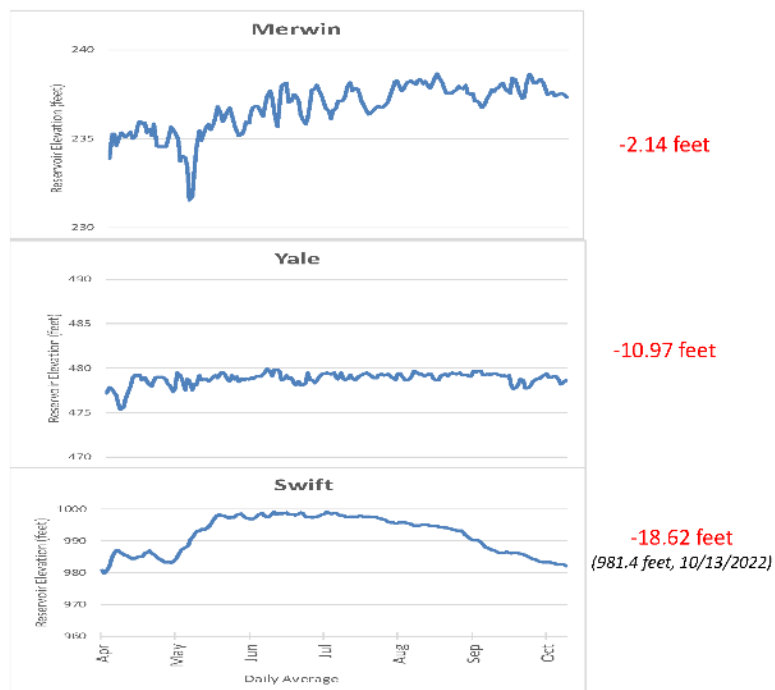
Public Comment Opportunity
None.

Flows/Reservoir Conditions Update

Erik Lesko shared the flows and reservoir conditions update:

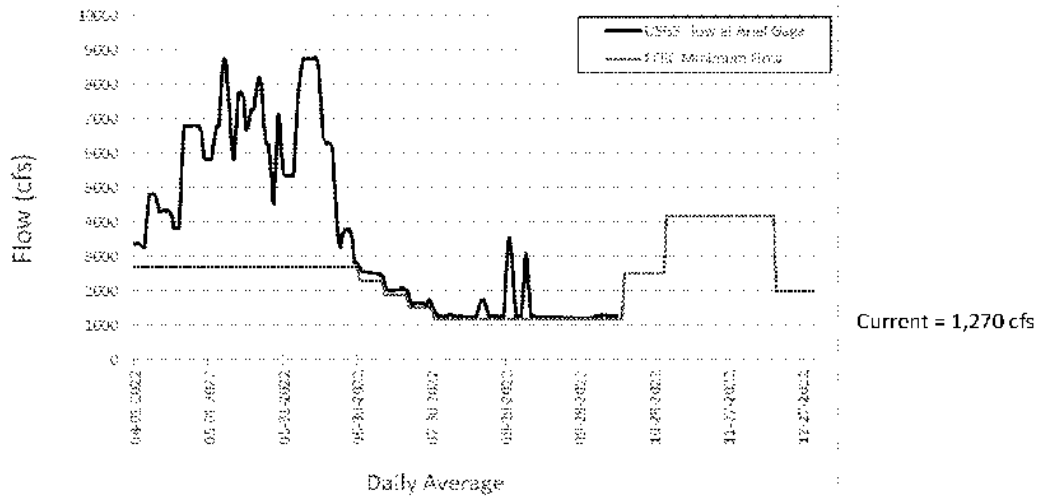
Daily Average Reservoir Elevations – April 1 to October 12, 2022

Total Draft: -31.72 feet
(-21.72 with Yale restriction)



Merwin Dam – Discharge Flow (cfs)

April 1 – October 13, 2022



Lesko noted the total draft is about 31 feet, or 21 feet considering the Yale restriction. He said Swift Reservoir is starting to draft down and has been for the last month. The current elevation is 981.4 feet, which he is closely tracking in relation to field work for the Swift Reservoir stranding surveys. Downstream of Merwin Dam, flows are currently at 1,270 cfs. The graph shows the FERC minimum flow as well as the current flow. He said he extended the chart out through the end of the year to demonstrate the change in FERC minimum flows. He mentioned flows will increase by October 16 to meet the FERC minimum requirement.

Study/Work Product Updates

Shoreline Development Update

Lesko said he has no updates on shoreline development projects. Olson confirmed he also has not seen any new applications come through the Shoreline Management Plan process.

ATS Update

Erik Lesko said the Aquatic Technical Subgroup (ATS) is working to finalize the Annual Operating Plan. The ATS has also recently revisited their priority items and upcoming deliverables, and are working to reorganize their work plan so that priorities and ongoing work can be tracked well.

FPS Update

Todd Olson reminded the ACC that the Fish Passage Subgroup (FPS) is a subgroup of the ACC for parties interested in the development of fish passage facilities and the fish passage program. The FPS has a number of milestones and actions they are working towards and welcome engagement from ACC representatives. The next FPS meeting is this afternoon.

Olson said the FPS has revising the draft document, “Elements of future fish passage.” The Utilities provided a revised draft for the FPS to review and received comments from Christina Donehower, Steve West, Nick Grant, and the WDFW team. the Utilities are developing a

comment-response matrix and will continue reviewing and addressing comments, some of which can be discussed during the FPS meeting this afternoon.

For December's FPS meeting (afternoon of December 14), Olson said the Utilities are planning to introduce 30% designs for Yale downstream passage, Yale upstream passage, and Swift upstream passage. During the meeting, PacifiCorp will review the 30% design packets and share much of the information the design teams have been working through. If anyone not already on the FPS would like an invitation to this meeting, please email Beth Bendickson.

Bryce Glaser thanked Olson for the update. He noted that he heard from Jeff Garnett that USFWS may also be providing comments on the "Elements of future fish passage" document. Additional goals for this afternoon's FPS meeting are to review outstanding notes, though this item may be delayed. He summarized that the FPS' primary focus right now is to continue getting updates from the design teams and work to finalize the "Elements of future fish passage" document.

Swift Reservoir Stranding Survey Schedule

Erik Lesko shared photos from the September 9, 2022 field survey. In the Northwoods area, some isolated pools were observed. The river channel was still connected, so fish were not yet stranded. In the isolated pools, bull trout, coho and sticklebacks were observed.



Lesko shared aerial imagery taken by drone on September 19, 2022. Drone surveys were conducted throughout the drawdown period so that potential stranding locations can be compared at different pool elevations.



The above photo shows the “old channel” still connected to the reservoir. Other side channels have become isolated and there are areas of wetted sand visible. No isolated pools are immediately visible but it is expected that some will be observed in later field visits.



The above photo shows a lower pool elevation taken on October 3, 2022. The “old channel” is now isolated, and this area will be surveyed in upcoming site visits.



The above photo is looking further upstream, where hyporheic flows feed the 'old channel'. A water level and temperature monitor is currently installed and will remain in place to determine whether the channel goes dry.



The above two photos show the swimming area at Swift Camp. On September 9, 2022, these areas were not isolated, but they were on October 1, 2022. This area is still too large and deep to effectively sample. It will continue to be monitored and sampled when possible.

Bryce Glaser noted that water temperature measurements are being taken in the channel. Lesko said PacifiCorp also has temperature monitors deployed, and those data will be reported on in January. Glaser suggested adding a monitor to the swimming area. If temperatures are cool, fish stranding is less of a risk than if the fish are stranded in a pool of warm water. Lesko said he will incorporate temperature monitoring in the pool.

Merwin Fish Passage Update (see also Attachment A)

Karchesky said fish passage at Merwin Dam has been busy due to significant numbers of coho. He said the program is still on schedule for transporting early and late coho upstream (there is a 9,000 fish target for fish transported upstream of Swift Dam). He said it has been challenging given the numbers of fish that need to be transported to Lewis River Hatchery and surplused. Most of the issues have been worked through at this point and the team is working conservatively in regards to fish health – monitoring dissolved oxygen conditions and trying to keep fish moving through the system. Early coho are about in the middle of their run, and late coho are expected to start returning soon.

Karchesky informed the ACC that he would be bringing forward information regarding a potential construction project schedule for next summer (2023) to upgrade the Merwin Trap fish crowder mechanism at the next (November) ACC meeting. Karchesky was bringing this up to that ACC as this project will require the Merwin Fish Trap to be shut down for a 2-to-3-month period. Karchesky reminded the ACC that this work as identified during the previous Merwin Trap Adult Fish Collection Efficiency Studies that identified the reliability of the crowing mechanism as a source of delay for upstream passage. He said he is currently planning construction from the end of June through August because it is generally a lower period for fish passage (except for summer steelhead). He welcomes feedback on fish passage concerns and timelines for this work and will be looking for a consensus soon.

Swift Floating Surface Collector (see also Attachment B)

Chris Karchesky reported that the Swift Reservoir FSC will be back in service early next week. He said the reservoir is still stratified as warm water temperatures have persisted later than usual.

As a reminder, he noted the FSC collects juveniles from the upper basin and it is essentially a floating barge that provides a false attraction flow. Then the fish are released below Merwin Dam. The FSC is generally operational except in summer when temperatures exceed 18 degrees Celsius, and fish are not out-migrating.

Karchesky also noted the collection of a very large fall Chinook salmon at the Merwin Trap in September, which is shown in the monthly report.

Lewis River Fish Passage

See Attachment C.

Yale Habitat Preparation Plan

Erik Lesko said as part of the implementation of the Yale Habitat Preparation Plan, a field survey has been scheduled for November 4 to look for redds, live fish, and dead fish at mouths of rivers throughout the Yale reservoir. Another survey will also be planned in late November. Those interested in joining the field visit should email Lesko so he can coordinate the group, and plan on a full field day.

Swift 1 Maintenance

Erik Lesko reminded the ACC that Swift 1 will be undergoing maintenance later this month. An email describing the maintenance was previously sent to the ACC by Beth Bendickson. He noted that flows will be reduced in the siphon that feeds the bypass reach, but there will be no interruptions in flow in the bypass reach (the flow minimum is around 60 cfs). This work is planned for October 23 to 29 and could potentially finish early.

Fisheries Update

Josua Holowatz provided a fisheries update to the ACC. Typical fall fisheries are underway in the Lewis River basin, open from the mouth of the river to the powerlines below Merwin Dam. The upper reach (from Colvin Creek to the dam) will be closing on October 31st for all fisheries to protect spawning fall Chinook salmon. WDFW is working internally to potentially implement a rule change for the lower river (from the mouth to Colvin Creek) to increase the coho limit from three to four adults. Limits for other species would not change. The goal of this rule change would be to provide more fishery opportunities for constituents. Holowatz noted that brood year collection is also on track this fall. Lesko and Holowatz both noted many fishers have been enjoying the fisheries opportunities on the Lewis River this fall, and access points, parking lots, and boat ramps have been very busy.

Administrative Updates

At the beginning of the meeting the ACC welcomed Keely Murdoch, who is now the Yakama Nation's secondary representative, replacing Elaine Harvey.

Bill Sharp noted that the Yakama Nation recently had an opportunity to discuss fish passage work in the Lewis River basin with NOAA Fisheries staff Scott Rumsey (Acting Regional Administrator, West Coast Region) and Janet Coit (Assistant Administrator) during a site visit to the Klickitat River. He said he communicated the Yakama Nation's excitement regarding future fish passage in the Lewis River basin and that they are looking forward to more direct participation from NMFS on this topic.

Erik Lesko noted that Aquatic Fund proposals are due to PacifiCorp on October 23, and presentations from the applicants are planned for the November 10 ACC meeting. He said he is currently aware of two proposals that could be submitted. He reminded the ACC that it is important to engage with the applicants on potential concerns during the meeting. He asked that ACC representatives please look for the applications in their inboxes later this month and review the materials prior to the meeting.

Public Comment Opportunity

None present.

Agenda Items for November 10, 2022

- Review October 13, 2022 Meeting Notes
- Merwin Trap Collector Design and Construction
- Aquatic Fund Presentations
- Study/Work Product Updates

Adjourn 10:32 am

Next Scheduled Meeting

November 10, 2022
Teams Call
9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Meeting Handouts & Attachments

- Meeting Notes from 9/8/2022
- Agenda from 10/13/2022

- **Attachment A** – Merwin Adult Trap Collection Report (September 2022)
- **Attachment B** – Swift FSC Facility Collection Report (September 2022)
- **Attachment C** – Lewis River Fish Passage Report (September 2022)

Lewis River Fish Passage Report

September 2022

Merwin Fish Collection Facility and General Operations

During the month of September, a total of 11,301 fish were captured at the Merwin Dam Adult Fish Collection Facility (MFCF), which is a significant increase from the August total of 1,530. The majority of the adult fish collected in September were early coho (n= 10,309), followed by summer steelhead (n= 647), fall Chinook (n= 245), spring Chinook (n= 95), cutthroat trout (n= 4), and sockeye (n= 1). Of particular interest was the large (37.3 lb) wild Fall Chinook collected on September 12 (Figure 1). This fish was subsequently returned back to the Lewis River below Merwin Dam.



Figure 1. Fall Chinook collected at the Merwin Fish Collection Facility on September 12, 2022.

PacifiCorp began seven day per week operation of the Merwin Fish Collection Facility starting September 6, 2022, due to the increase in fish collection numbers. Flows below Merwin Dam remained near the required minimum flow (1,250 cubic feet per second) for the majority of the month (Figure 2).

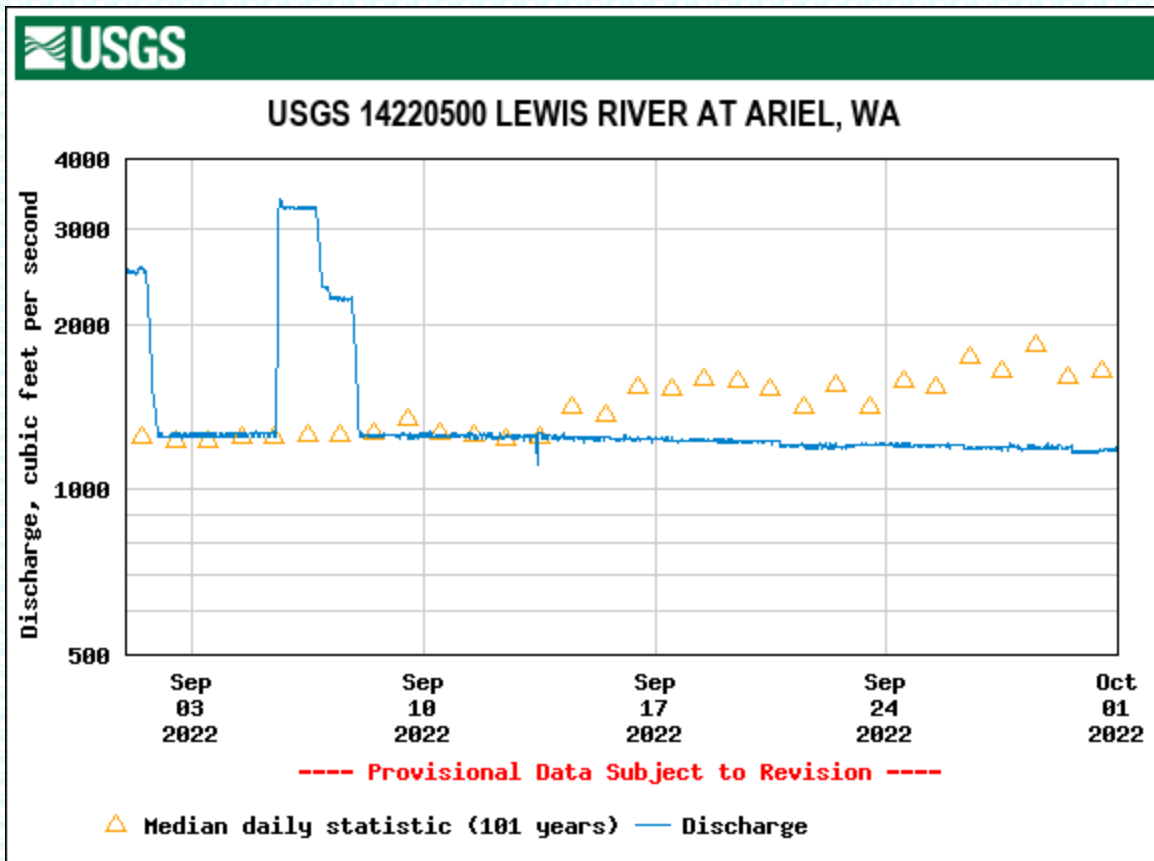


Figure 2. Discharge in cubic feet per second recorded at the USGS Ariel, WA gauge (14220500) located immediately downstream of Merwin Dam.

Twenty eight coho salmon, two spring Chinook smolts, and one cutthroat trout collected at the MFCF in September had been previously PIT tagged. All of the coho had been previously tagged at the Swift FSC in 2021. Interestingly, both of the spring Chinook were tagged at the on the SF Salmon River earlier this year. The cutthroat trout was tagged at the MFCF in August 2021. Since January 1, 2022, a total of thirty coho, sixteen spring Chinook, nine wild winter steelhead, seven cutthroat trout, and one summer steelhead captured at the Merwin Trap had been previously PIT tagged.

Upstream Transport

Upstream transport increased considerably in September, when compared to the previous month. A total of 2,526 adult fish were transported above Swift Dam in September. Similar to August, early coho composed the majority of the transported fish (n= 2,429) followed by spring Chinook (n= 93), and cutthroat trout (n= 4). For calendar year 2022 to-date, 3,598 spring Chinook (3,045 HOR/ 553 NOR), 2,625 coho (1,490 HOR/ 1,135 NOR), 577 winter steelhead (449 BWT/ 128 NOR), and 27 cutthroat trout have been transported upstream of Swift Dam.

Floating Surface Collector (FSC)

The Swift Reservoir Floating Surface Collector (FSC) was taken out of operation in July 18th for the scheduled summer maintenance period. It is anticipated that it will be returned to service the week of October 17th.

Fish Facility Report
Swift Floating Surface Collector
September 2022

Day	Coho			Chinook			Steelhead				Cutthroat		Bull Trout	Planted Rainbow	Total	
	fry	parr	smolt	fry	parr	smolt	fry	parr	smolt	kelt	fry	<13 in				> 13 in
1																
2																
3																
4																
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Monthly Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	653	14180	45740	60	229	2023	5	22	5432	27	2	731	117	15	4333	73569