FINAL Meeting Notes
Lewis River License Implementation
Aquatic Coordination Committee (ACC) Meeting
December 8, 2011
Meeting at Merwin

ACC Participants Present (11)

Todd Olson, PacifiCorp Energy
Frank Shrier, PacifiCorp Energy
Beth Bendickson, PacifiCorp Energy
Adam Haspiel, USDA Forest Service
Peggy Miller, WDFW
Diana MacDonald, Cowlitz PUD (via teleconference)
Eli Asher, Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board
Pat Frazier, WDFW
Eric Kinne, WDFW
Chris Maynard, WA Dept of Ecology (via teleconference)
Shannon Wills, Cowlitz Indian Tribe

Calendar:

January 12, 2012	ACC Meeting	Merwin Hydro
February 9, 2012	ACC Meeting	Merwin Hydro

Assignments from November 10, 2011 meeting:	**Status:**
Aquatic Fund 2012 Proposals – ACC comments on pre-proposals due *(Use Excel spreadsheet that Frank Shrier sent out)*	**Due 12/5/11**
Assignments from December 8, 2011 meeting:	
Bull Trout Annual Planning meeting	**Pending**
Ozone system at Merwin	**Pending**

Opening, Review of Agenda and Meeting Notes

Frank Shrier called the meeting to order @ 9:10 a.m. The team reviewed the agenda, and added three additional topics (Eulachon smelt consultation, Swift Bypass reach snorkels, and large woody debris/moving logs). The agenda was then accepted at 9:14 a.m.

The meeting notes from last month were reviewed at 9:15 a.m. and accepted without any comments or changes.

Aquatic Fund Pre-proposals Review

The pre-proposals were reviewed. Each attending ACC representative was given the opportunity to comment on each proposal. Specific comments follow.

#1 Clearwater Creek Instream Habitat Restoration

The ACC reviewed this pre-proposal and had no further comments than what was shown on the *ACC Lewis River AQ Fund evaluation (2011-2012) MASTER COMMENTS-with Utilities' comments* document.

#2 Muddy River Floodplain Culver Cleanup

The ACC reviewed this pre-proposal and had no further comments than what was shown on the *ACC Lewis River AQ Fund evaluation (2011-2012) MASTER COMMENTS-with Utilities' comments* document.

#3 Lewis River Side Channel III Habitat Restoration

The ACC reviewed this pre-proposal and had no further comments than what was shown on the *ACC Lewis River AQ Fund evaluation (2011-2012) MASTER COMMENTS-with Utilities' comments* document.

#4 Upper Lewis River Bull Trout Spawning Habitat Inventory

Pat Frazier, WDFW, mentioned that it's been a struggle for bull trout recovery. They haven't done a good job on where the bull trout assessment would fit and are stalled on how to collection information. They commented as neutral on this pre-proposal because it is challenging to fit the aquatic fund objectives; maybe this is not the right venue. They would be willing to modify/re-write it if it would fit within the aquatic funding parameters.

Eli Asher, LCFRB, commented that we can't hold the bull trout money hostage and keep telling people it won't be funded. At a future ACC meeting, perhaps we could develop guidance and actions to spend money to help bull trout. He doesn't feel the pre-proposal is a good aquatic fund project and his vote is "no."

Shannon Wills, CIT, asked if it would be available to everyone, or just WDFW? Pat said they could work with others on a joint project. It could be for everyone in the basin. Shannon asked why the USFWS isn't funding this project, or at a minimum, why aren't they providing matching funds?

Todd Olson replied that he and Pat have been working to set up bull trout meetings to meet biological opinion requirements and review overall bull trout recovery. We need to step back and look at a recovery plan within the basin. Pat has been trying to engage with LouEllyn. There is a meeting scheduled for December on bull trout recovery. Out of that meeting hopefully we will see where we could get funding. Perhaps as a group we could go to the USFWS to fund as a minimum. He appreciated WDFW for coming to the table with a study proposal but it doesn't meet the Aquatic Fund objectives.

Frank added that they should come to the table with a project proposal, not with a study proposal. The project proposal could have a study component, but in the end would lead to specific habitat actions.

Pat's vision for this is to have another ACC subgroup develop an H&S plan. They would like to craft another subgroup for bull trout, to get synergy/energy for bull trout.

WDFW, Cowlitz, USDA-FS and Utilities were all in agreement for a full proposal. However, Eli said he doesn't see a way it could be re-written so it would fit for aquatic funding. While he thinks it's a good effort, he's not sure a full proposal is best.

Frank and Todd said it could be reworded so it could be a benefit, whether it fits in the funding avenue or not. Although it is unlikely to get funded through Aquatic Fund, a peer review could help strengthen and support the study as WDFW seeks funding opportunities.

Pat said he is okay with moving it forward knowing it might not get funded. It may be more sellable in other avenues and he's willing to spend more time on it.

#5 – Rush Creek Side Channel Restoration Pilot Project

Pat talked about gravel augmentation and the shortage of juvenile rearing habitat. They think spawning habitat is limited. If only logs go in, would it naturally create habitat? They're wondering if the project is paired down to just log placement, if it would make a better project. A gravel project would be very expensive and blow the roof off the proposed project budget of $24K.

Eli said he was happy to see the task force come in with the application. He would like to see it get sponsored, as he feels it's a valuable project to support. Comments need to be passed on to the sponsor. The proposal would require a lot of work.

Todd said when utilities send out the request for full proposal, the project owner will be provided ACC comments - what requests there are and what full proposals should have in them.

Adam Haspiel, USDA-FS, said he would like to see a full proposal.

Shannon is okay with moving forward, but said that serious thought should be given as to why and where they are doing it.

Both Todd and Frank believe there is a need to address juvenile rearing and would like more thought to be put into the full proposal, especially because the pre-proposal states it would enhance steelhead habitat. It didn't seem like a good fit, but want to know thoughts. It needs more detail and justification, including what is the potential benefits and biological costs. They propose a full proposal for this project.

ACC representatives agreed to solicit a full proposal.

Study Updates

Woodland Release Ponds –

PacifiCorp is working on Biological Assessment documents now that eulachon are ESA listed and the Lewis River in this area is Critical Habitat for this species (Designated as such on October 2011). Project consultation with NMFS will likely extend the permitting period putting the construction of the ponds in 2012 at risk.

There is a plan to evaluate the Acclimation Pond effectiveness by site using PIT-tags. Originally, Clifford (Yakama Nation) requested that the acclimation fish have a unique tag (M&E Plan suggests a blank wire tag) so that those fish would not be subject to additional tagging at the Swift Collector for the Ocean Recruit metric. Clifford was mostly concerned with handling fish as little as possible. By not putting unique tags in the Chinook and allowing them to be randomly tagged at the Swift Collector (up to 10%) actually results in less marking so PacifiCorp recommended to Shannon that she discuss that concept with Bob Rose. Shannon did that sail Bob was okay with not uniquely tagging the acclimation fish. In addition, WDFW intends to continue double-indexing for harvest impacts to natural fish which could potentially direct all uniquely-marked acclimation fish into the hatchery. PacifiCorp also needs to tag steelhead entering the Swift Collector. Frank wanted the ACC to know that PacifiCorp is talking about these kinds of issues and that they will be further discussed at the Hatchery Subgroup.

Hatchery and Supplementation Program – PacifiCorp is working on finalizing the 2012 AOP. We hope to distribute this for final review by the end of December. There are a number of pending tasks to be completed prior to finalizing this document including site selection for a potential screw trap in the lower Lewis River; marking options, if any, for acclimation fish and monitoring protocols for both juvenile and adult fish downstream of Merwin dam.

Lewis River Upstream and Downstream Intakes – Permitting is moving forward along with the Biological Assessment for Eulachon. Screen design for the lower intake (DSI) will need approval of NMFS and we will be submitting that to NMFS approval by the end of the year. Both projects are scheduled for completion in 2012 along with dredging of the LRH ladder entrance.

Merwin Rearing Ponds – The remaining two ponds are scheduled for completion in 2012.

Speelyai Kokanee Weir – Placement of the weir box is completed. Configuration or modification of the stop logs within the weir box will be made by WDFW hatchery staff to suit their needs. Stairs and Gator® access will be made prior to the 2012 kokanee trapping season.

Speelyai Pond 14 – The 90 percent design was submitted to the Hatchery and Engineering subgroup on November 14. Comments are requested by December 16 to Nathan Higa and Erik Lesko. Project completion is scheduled for 2012 (May 1 – Aug 15)

Speelyai Intake – The 60 percent design was submitted to the Hatchery and Engineering subgroup on November 22. Comments are requested by December 16 to Nathan Higa and Erik Lesko. The work window is June 1 – August 15.

Eric Kinne, WDFW, was concerned with the ozone system at Merwin. It is currently inoperable due to a leak. He is also concerned about it meeting the Settlement Agreement condition because it is supposed to be in operation 24 hours a day. There has been a change from original operation (from .17 down to .04 -.09, about a year ago), and they would like to know why. They just want to understand.

Bull Trout Monitoring Plan – still working on data.

Merwin Upstream Construction status – This project is on schedule.

Swift Downstream Collector Construction Status – This project is on schedule. The trestle platform is being installed and the pilings are being drilled and anchored. The post tension system is also going in. In-water project actions need to be complete by December 31st, which is the end of the allowed in-water work window for this year.

Eulachon ESA

Frank mentioned the memo from Craig Olds (CIT) to Steve West at WDFW and that the state was considering CIT's concerns. Frank mentioned that he had not had a chance to have any conversation with CIT or WDFW on the issues related to hatchery pump upgrades. Frank expressed concern that there were not any good options for Lewis River Hatchery pumps other than upgrades. Todd also expressed concern to Shannon that, unless there can be some discussion and solutions for the Woodland Release Ponds and Lewis River Hatchery Intakes then the construction could be delayed into 2013. PacifiCorp is trying to get the permit documents in order and may have to go back to the drawing board because it appears there is no way to meet the screening criteria for eulachon at the river intakes as identified in Craig's memo. Shannon replied that Craig believed there were alternative approaches and recommended that Frank speak to Craig about his ideas. Shannon noted that while CIT is concerned for these ESA listed fish they also want to see the upriver reintroduction program continue to move forward. Shannon requested Frank send her some information that she can take to Craig; then they will meet with NMFS and PacifiCorp to discuss moving forward.

September 23 Snorkel (Bypass Reach)

Chris Maynard, WDOE, said they surveyed downstream from the upper discharge below Swift 1 powerhouse, to the pool below the Constructed Channel inflow. Gravel was placed in the Upper Release during construction and there was still a fair amount of it left. But above the Constructed Channel inflow, there was hardly any gravel starting one-tenth of a mile from put-in. There were tiny patches six-inch gravel behind boulders, here and there. It was poor quality and looked like decomposing granite; it was breaking up in spots and didn't appear to be good for spawning.

Frank said the Water Quality Certificate has conditions (not in the Settlement Agreement) that require, when there is a 5,000 CFS spill or more at Swift dam, PacifiCorp to survey the gravel situation and meet with Ecology to discuss. At that time, there could be an opportunity to place

more gravel in potentially more suitable/stable areas. Shannon asked about gravel placement and if wood structures were also added in the Bypass Reach to which Frank replied, "yes, in March 2010. Chris said there was concern about gravel blowing out in a big spill. Chris had talked with Lou Ellyn about any concerns for bull trout in the bypass reach. She said that the study by Karen Pratt indicated that temperatures in the bypass reach are probably not cold enough for successful bull trout spawning, so USFWS doesn't necessarily advocate gravel placement for that purpose. However, additional gravel would support spawning for anadromous fish, which are bull trout prey. Gravel placement would probably benefit bull trout from the standpoint of increasing the forage base. Chris also expressed concerns about the results of temperature monitoring and the discrepancies that occurred between the Swift forebay and the Swift No. 1 tailrace**.** Chris said there was 10 ºC (50 ºF) water temperature difference from forebay to tailrace. It still would be great spawning for other fish. He asked if the ACC wanted PacifiCorp to do anything about the gravel. Frank said that when the gravel was placed, they consulted with DOE about where to place it. After a spill of greater than 5,000 cfs, PacifiCorp will determine the fate of the current gravels but a spill of that magnitude has yet to occur. Frank added that gravel was placed in the channel below the Upper Release, downstream of the spawning channel in two different locations in the mainstem above the constructed channel. These areas haven't had a high enough flow to move the placed gravel. Chris said he was surprised not to see gravel just above the last stretch. Frank was surprised too. He needs more information from Will Shallenberger on where it was placed.

Chris asked if the ACC wanted to propose an Aquatics Fund project or leave it with his agency. Frank asked for ACC thoughts. He said there is a mechanism and money in place other than the Aquatic Fund but it is triggered by spill events that damage the Upper Release and the Constructed Channel.

Eric asked if Chris had any authority until the 5,000 CFS event occurred. Chris replied, "No."

Frank said there is a quarterly bypass survey for fish use and a biweekly survey for spawning in the fall/Feb-May time period. They began this fall and 2011 information will be in PacifiCorp's annual ACC/TCC report.

There was mention of an SS Temperature model but that was not the driver for the Bypass Reach. Instead a Baysean Belief Model was used by Karen Pratt to determine whether or not Bypass Reach temperatures (which were assumed to be the same as the Swift Canal temperatures) were suitable for bull trout to complete their life cycle. Frank said if you're going to consider temperatures, it makes the most sense to use Swift No.1 tailrace (Swift Canal) because that is the input flow for both the Upper Release and the Constructed Channel. Frank said temperature probes have been placed in the reservoir but were not a good correlation to what's coming out at the tailrace because of the location chosen. Chris mentioned that the profile monitors were not correct when they went into the turbines. Frank said they have been moved around to find an instantaneous match but the probes were attached to the log boom which underwent considerable movement during the monitoring time. Frank suggested going back to look at the gravel placement during construction and then talk with DOE about next steps.

Future Fish Passage Facilities

Frank reported that the Request for Proposal was sent out to a lot of universities, but that no one has submitted a proposal. The general response was that work loads are high right now, and not enough time was given for proposal. Frank said it will go back out with more time given for responding. Hopefully we'll get some responses.

The intent is that the university would represent a third party view. The last resort would be to go with consultants if we don't get any proposals back.

Large Woody Debris

Frank said large woody debris was pulled out at Yale reservoir and stored at the Yale warehouse. PacifiCorp policy is that anyone who comes onto our property to provide services has to have a $5M liability insurance policy. When it comes to having the USDA-FS or CIT take and use the LWD, the transport is much too expensive because of this policy. PacifiCorp is looking to move the debris because it's a fire hazard, and would like to see it used in aquatic or terrestrial habitat projects. How could we manage it? One idea was PacifiCorp would pay for a contractor to haul it and unload it where an entity would want it. The cost estimate is about $7,500 but could be as much as $10k. In the settlement agreement, there is a Large Wood Debris fund ($10K) that is added each year to the Aquatics fund. It gets allocated for large woody debris projects. Frank suggested PacifiCorp could be reimbursed through this fund to have a contractor haul it to the appropriate USDA-FS or CIT site. He asked what the ACC thought. This is a somewhat unique situation as normally LWD is taken off Swift reservoir and stocked at Swift, which is different as it's a public access area.

Todd mentioned that per the USDA-FS, it would be about $20K to haul it because of the high insurance requirement. An entity could sub to PacifiCorp, who would provide the hauling. Do we want to spend $10K more in having the USDA-FS contractor haul the LWD? Or save money by having PacifiCorp's contractor do it?

Frank said that the debris can't be stored for much longer. If we don't use it, we'll have to chip it. These are 50 foot logs. If they are too big for Rudy (CIT), then it would fall to Adam (USDA-FS). These would have to be used for aquatic projects. He asked for ACC thoughts.

Everyone was okay with using the Large Woody Debris fund and have PacifiCorp's contractor haul the LWD on a one-time basis.

This could be done this year; PacifiCorp will check to see if Rudy needs it; if not, it could go to Adam for his Pine Creek Aquatic Fund project.

< 11:30 a.m. meeting adjourned >

Agenda items for January 12, 2012

- Review December 8, 2011 Meeting Notes
- Follow up on Eulachon; etc.
- Study/Work Product Updates

Public Comment

None

Next Scheduled Meetings

January 12, 2012	February 9, 2012
Merwin Hydro Control Center	Merwin Hydro Control Center
Ariel, WA	Ariel, WA
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Meeting Handouts & Attachments (e-mailed)

- ACC Evaluation of 2011/2012 Project Proposals (for comments)
- Notes from 11/10/11
- Agenda for 12/8/11

Lewis River Aquatic Fund - ACC Evaluation of 2011/2012 Project Proposals

ACC Decision		Applicant	Project Title	WDFW	Fish First	LCFRB	Yakama Nation	USFS	Cowlitz Indian Tribe	USFWS	Utilities	Next Step
	1	USDA Forest Service	Clearwater Creek Instream Habitat Restoration			The LCFRB supports soliciting a full proposal for this project. The project site is located in Clearwater Creek, identified in the LCFRB Habitat Strategy as a tier 2 (medium) priority reach. EDT modeling indicates that the reach has high potential for coho production, and medium potential for winter steelhead and spring Chinook. In-stream habitat enhancement is a high multi-species priority for the reach. Wood placement seems to be an appropriate approach to increase habitat complexity in the stream, but the application does not explain the reason for the lack of wood structure. Was Clearwater Creek affected by lahars? What is the longterm potential for natural wood recruitment after the project is implemented? Is any riparian enhancement planned (including invasive species management)? Has other habitat work been implemented in the creek? Additional information on current and historic fish use in the reach would be helpful to support the relatively large scope and request, and its location in a tier-2 reach. Clarification of the number and type and layout of structures being proposed would be helpful. The application materials indicate that additional funding may be sought from the Whole Watershed Joint Venture Fund, but it is unclear how the additional grant monies would be used.		Good fit. *Request full proposal.*				
	2	USDA Forest Service	Muddy River floodplain culvert cleanup			The LCFRB does not support soliciting a full proposal for this project. The project site is located in Muddy River reaches 1A and 2, identified in the LCFRB Habitat Strategy as tier 2 (medium priority) and 3 (relatively low priority), respectively. The actions outlined in the proposal (scattered debris clean-up) do not appear to directly benefit anadromous fish, and therefore does not address any of the three Aquatic Fund priorities. While culverts resting in the floodplain are unsightly, they do not appear to be adversely impacting habitat conditions in the reach. The sponsor should consider partnering with community or conservation groups to undertake the debris cleanup. Heavy equipment, while efficient, may not be necessary to achieve the goals of the project, and may have greater impacts than the existing culverts.		Would like proponent to have option to respond to pre-proposal comments if they elect to do so. *Request full proposal.*				
	3	USDA Forest Service	Lewis River Side Channel III Habitat Restoration			The LCFRB supports soliciting a full proposal for this project. The project site is located in Lewis 20, identified in the LCFRB Habitat Strategy as a tier-1 (highest priority) reach. Off-channel and sidechannel habitat enhancement is identified as a high priority multi-species project type. EDT modeling indicates that the reach has high production potential for spring Chinook and medium potential for coho and winter steelhead. This appears to be a good opportunity to improve sidechannel spawning and rearing habitat in a high priority reach of the upper Lewis. The full proposal would benefit from concept-level designs and layout.		Good fit. *Request full proposal.*				
	4	Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife	Upper Lewis River Bull Trout Spawning Habitat Inventory			The LCFRB does not support soliciting a full proposal for this project. The project area encompasses several reaches of Pine Creek, P8, and Rush Creek. The LCFRB Habitat Strategy's EDT modeling does not account for bull trout production potential. While information gathered as part of the proposed survey activities could potentially be used to target future habitat enhancement actions, this project does not directly address any of the three Aquatic Fund objectives. The proposal would be more compelling if it included restoration designs, at a minimum, The lands being surveyed are already well protected by existing regulations, so identifying reaches for protection is not worthwhile. Additionally, coordination with USFWS and PacifiCorp would be helpful to capitalize on work completed to date and to avoid duplication of effort.		Would like proponent to have option to respond to pre-proposal comments if they elect to do so. *Request full proposal.*				
	5	Gifford Pinchot Task Force	Rush Creek Side Channel Restoration Pilot Project			The LCFRB is neutral on the decision to solicit a full proposal for this project. The project site is located on a sidechannel of Rush Creek, identified in the LCFRB Habitat Strategy as a tier-3 reach (relatively low priority), but the Habitat Strategy's EDT modeling does not account for bull trout production potential. The sidechannel appears to be a distributary channel to the Lewis River at dividing line between reaches 20 and 21, which are tier-1 and -2, respectively. The LCFRB supports the GPTF's effort to secure habitat restoration funding from the Aquatic Fund, and encourages the Task Force to work with PacifiCorp and the ACC on future project proposals. Overall, however, this proposal lacks clarity of purpose, and would need substantial revision and additional information to be favorably considered for funding. The project is identified as a pilot, but it fails to adequately identify the problem it would address or the hypothesis it is attempting to test. The project objective appears to focus on the creation of a habitat type rather than restoring natural processes that create and sustain habitat. According to the pre-proposal information supplied, the sidechannel currently provides bull trout rearing habitat for Rush Creek, but is not a primary spawning area. If the sidechannel is currently functional as rearing habitat, and spawning habitat is limited in mainstem Rush Creek, attempting to create unsustainable spawning habitat in the sidechannel seems ill-advised. A project proposal that attempts to restore natural processes (e.g., sediment transport and wood recruitment) would be more likely to be successful than temporary spawning habitat creation. If a full proposal is solicited, the sponsor should provide additional current and proposed habitat information, photos of the site(s), and rationale for the habitat-creation approach over process-based actions. This includes an evaluation of why gravel recruitment to the sidechannel is currently poor, a justification for the spawning pad approach, and an explanation how this new habitat would be maintained over time. The sponsor should also include an explanation of how the project would be implemented without detrimental effects on currently functional rearing habitat.		*Request full proposal.*				