

LEWIS RIVER AQUATIC COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Facilitator: ERIK LESKO
503-412-8401

Location: TEAMS MEETING ONLY

Date: October 14, 2021

Time: 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

AGENDA ITEMS

9:30 AM	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Review Agenda, ACC 8/12/21 Meeting Notes➤ Comment & Accept Agenda, 9/9/21 Meeting Notes
10:00 AM	Public Comment Opportunity
10:15 AM	Discussion and decision on creation of an ACC fish passage subcommittee
10:45 AM	Study/Work Product Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Flows/Reservoir Conditions Update○ ATS Update○ Fish Passage Update○ Update on triploid plants into Swift Reservoir○ USFWS update on fish stranding above Swift (tentative)
11:15 AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Next Meeting's Agenda➤ Public Comment Opportunity
11:30 AM	Meeting Adjourn

Note: all meeting notes and the meeting schedule can be located at:
<https://www.pacificorp.com/energy/hydro/lewis-river/acc-tcc.html>

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[+1 563-275-5003](tel:+15632755003),86743835# United States, Davenport

Phone Conference ID: 867 438 35#

**FINAL Meeting Notes
Lewis River License Implementation
Aquatic Coordination Committee (ACC) Meeting
October 14, 2021
TEAMS Meeting Only**

ACC Representatives and Affiliates Present (19)

Bridget Moran, American Rivers
Sarah Montgomery Anchor QEA
Eli Asher, Cowlitz Indian Tribe
Amanda Froberg, Cowlitz PUD
Steve West, LCFRB
Scott Anderson, NMFS
Logan Negherbon, NMFS
Chris Karchesky, PacifiCorp
Erik Lesko, PacifiCorp
Jeremiah Doyle, PacifiCorp
Mark Ferraiolo, PacifiCorp
Jim Byrne, Trout Unlimited
Kate Day, USFS
Jeff Garnett, USFWS
Peggy Miller, WDFW
Josua Holowatz, WDFW
Bryce Glaser, WDFW
Aaron Roberts, WDFW
Bill Sharp, Yakama Nation

Guest (0)

None

Calendar:

November 11, 2021	ACC Meeting	TEAMS Meeting
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Assignments from October 14, 2021	Status
Erik Lesko: Provide the decision to extend the submittal date for the ACC/TCC Annual Report to June 30 for the life of the license, which is June 2058, for a 7-day ACC review and submit to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.	Completed 10/14/2021
Erik Lesko: Provide the decision to form an ACC Fish Passage Subcommittee for a 7-day ACC review.	Completed 10/14/21
Bill Sharp: Draft a Decision Document for the formation of the ACC Fish Passage Subcommittee for review at the ACC November 16, 2021, meeting.	Completed 11/15/2021
All ACC Representatives: Work internally to assign representatives for the ACC Fish Passage Subcommittee.	Completed 11/16/2021

Peggy Miller: Provide an example of a subcommittee charter that could be helpful for the ACC Fish Passage Subcommittee to consider during its first meeting.	Completed 10/14/2021
Eli Asher: Work with Cowlitz Tribe staff to organize an initial meeting for the anticipated ACC Fish Passage Subcommittee, to occur after the November 16, 2021, ACC Meeting.	Completed 11/5/2021

Assignments from July 8, 2021	Status
Jeff Garnett: Look into if the Washington State Department of Transportation project is on the radar of another U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) staff member and what consultation it did or did not go through and report back to the ACC.	Completed 11/16/2021

Assignments from August 13, 2020	Status
Jeff Garnett: Jim Byrne (Trout Unlimited) requested that Tim Romanski (USFWS, retired) investigate why it was decided in 2005 and out how and why the Merwin trap design was settled on and specified.	Ongoing.

Opening, Review of Agenda and Meeting Notes

Erik Lesko (PacifiCorp) called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. and reviewed the agenda. There were no additions. Lesko noted that Sarah Montgomery (Anchor QEA, LLC) will be note-taking and providing some administrative support for the next few months. Lesko reviewed the September 9, 2021, meeting notes. The meeting notes were approved at 10:00 a.m., with clarifying edits from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

Public Comment Opportunity

None

Discussion and Decision on creating an ACC Fish Passage Subcommittee

The ACC continued discussions from prior meetings about whether to form a subcommittee of the ACC dedicated to fish passage topics. Lesko confirmed that the decision to form a subcommittee is within the ACC's decision-making authority under Section 14.2.3 of the Settlement Agreement and asked for input on this topic from ACC Representatives present.

Bill Sharp (Yakama Nation) said Yakama Nation is in favor of forming a subcommittee for fish passage. One reason he cited is that it does not appear that the ATS has the capacity to take on fish passage topics in addition to their other responsibilities. The first steps to forming a subcommittee would be to draft a list of representatives and form a charter, which he has already been thinking about.

Eli Asher (Cowlitz Tribe) voiced strong support for formation of a fish passage subcommittee at a previous ACC meeting and this ACC meeting. He asked whether there are any dissenting opinions because it appears that most representatives are in favor of forming a subcommittee.

Lesko said PacifiCorp does not oppose forming a subcommittee dedicated to fish passage issues; however, PacifiCorp believes it is appropriate to defer their participation in the subcommittee until the Services provide a final in lieu determination.

Asher noted that the final in lieu decision may be appealed in courts, so waiting for a final determination may take a lot longer than a few months. In the meantime, the license terms are still in effect, and he is in favor of making progress on fish passage topics collaboratively in the subcommittee setting. Lesko responded that PacifiCorp looks forward to participating in the subcommittee once the final determination is made. Other Representatives present provided input from their agencies on the timeline for the in lieu decision, noting that the timeline is uncertain.

Bryce Glaser (WDFW) said WDFW supports formation of a fish passage subcommittee. He identified two important components of the group's purpose. First, what are new technologies, techniques, or methods that should be considered, and what is the best method to move forward with fish passage? And second, how would fish passage be implemented? Would it be phased and what are the conditions? He asked whether PacifiCorp would engage in developing the charter and scope of the group. Lesko said PacifiCorp can participate in the formation of the group and drafting of the charter. However, their participation regarding decisions on strategies and methods should wait until after the final determination is made.

Sharp, Steve West, and Glaser also stated their endorsement for forming a fish passage subcommittee.

Lesko called the item to a vote and Representatives present voted as follows: Asher (yes), Glaser (yes), Byrne (yes), Sharp (yes), Anderson (yes), Garnett (yes), West (yes), Lesko (yes), Day (yes), Moran (yes).

The ACC Representatives in attendance all approved the creation of an ACC Fish Passage Subcommittee.

Representatives present discussed the next steps for formation of the Fish Passage Subcommittee, which include determining participation and procedures. First, Lesko will provide the decision to form a subcommittee for a 7-day ACC review. Then, the ACC will formalize the decision using the decision document template, which Sharp volunteered to start drafting. The decision document will help scope the purpose of the subcommittee and provide background information on why it is being formed. Asher will work with Cowlitz Tribe staff to get the first subcommittee meeting scheduled prior to the November 16, 2021, ACC meeting. In the meantime, ACC Representatives will work internally to determine who from their organization should participate in the subcommittee. At the first subcommittee meeting, representatives will discuss a charter. Peggy Miller will send an example from another subcommittee to help with this step.

<Break from 10:38 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.>

Study/Work Product Updates

Flows/Reservoir Conditions Update

Merwin Reservoir – currently down 3.27 feet

Yale Reservoir – currently down 12.6 feet

Swift Reservoir – currently down 26.6 feet

Total current hole – 42.48 feet (32.5 feet when Yale limitation is included)

There is approximately 1,559 cubic feet per second natural inflow at Merwin Dam and the current natural outflow from Merwin is 1,280 cubic feet per second.

Josua Holowatz (WDFW) asked whether the flows need to be increased in order to meet the November 1 flood control target. Lesko (PacifiCorp) said the projects are operating in compliance with their respective licenses and that he has not heard of any need to increase flows at this time. PacifiCorp is also aware of WDFW's request for weekly flow reductions in November and December to conduct fall Chinook salmon surveys and will incorporate this request into hydro operations to the extent possible.

ATS Update

Hatchery and Supplementation – The ATS is currently working on completing the 2022 Annual Operation Plan by December 31, 2021. Lesko (PacifiCorp) noted that the Annual Operating Plan has more changes this year because sections are being rewritten in accordance with the newly revised 2020 Hatchery and Supplementation Plan.

Monitoring and Evaluation – Chris Karchesky (PacifiCorp) provided a brief update on the ongoing 5-year update to the Lewis River Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. He stated that the group is still working toward providing a draft of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan for review by early November 2021. PacifiCorp received initial input from the ATS in July on overarching direction for revisions. Over the last few months, PacifiCorp, along with their contractor, has revised objectives and conducted workshop meetings with the ATS to review specific components of the plan. Next week, the ATS will be provided a review draft of the completed and revised M&E Plan. Following those revisions, a full draft plan will be provided to the ACC by the November meeting. During the November ACC meeting, PacifiCorp, along with their contractor will provide background information on changes that the ATS will propose to the M&E Plan. Once the revised draft of the plan has been submitted, the ACC will have 90 days to review and make revisions.

Merwin Fish Passage Update (see also Attachment A for the August Fish Passage Report)

Karchesky informed the ACC that the Merwin Adult Collection Facility has been running as intended. A number of early-run coho salmon have already been collected so far this year and are still coming in. Upstream transport of coho salmon into the upper basin is on schedule with about 4,000 fish taken upstream to date. Late-run coho salmon will begin arriving later this month and will also be taken upstream.

Swift Floating Surface Collector (see also Attachment A the August Fish Passage Report)

Karchesky said the Swift Floating Surface Collector (FSC) is still in a scheduled outage to complete maintenance and a number of construction projects designed to improve debris management. The FSC will be reballasted and new equipment commissioned during the last few weeks in October, and it is expected to be back in service by the end of the month. Karchesky shared photos of the FSC, that were taken by drone while it was deballasted (Photographs 1 and 2), and described the maintenance process.

Photograph 1: Swift FSC deballasted



Photograph 2: Swift FSC



Triploids Plant Update

Jeremiah Doyle (PacifiCorp) provided an update on the Lewis River Bull Trout Recovery Team (LRBTRT) meeting that was conducted at the ACC's request to discuss the potential use of triploid trout. Doyle said staff from PacifiCorp, Cowlitz PUD, U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, WDFW, USFWS, U.S. Geological Survey, and Trout Unlimited were present. Information provided by Holowatz on the difference between triploid and diploid trout was discussed in regards to behavior and possible effects on Bull Trout. Based on some of the potential unknown effects of switching from diploid to triploid trout, the LRBTRT was not able to recommend switching to triploid trout plants at this time.

Glaser requested that if there is any record of a decision or recommendation, to please provide it to the ACC for record-keeping purposes. Doyle confirmed that no formal or written

recommendation was recorded during the meeting; however, during the LRBTRT meeting, a vote was called on whether to support triploid rainbow trout plants into Swift Reservoir in 2022. The vote was unanimous in not supporting triploid plants in 2022 based on the available information. Lesko used information from the LRBTRT meeting, in part, to withdraw PacifiCorp's initial support on the use of triploid plants in 2022. As requested at the September ATS meeting, Lesko provided an email to the ATS describing the reasons why PacifiCorp was no longer supportive of the change to triploids in 2022.

Glaser reminded the ACC that the ACC's request was for the LRBTRT to review information presented and to produce or provide any new information or literature that indicated predation or competition effects to Bull Trout that might be a problem for implementing triploid plants. Lesko noted that limited new information is available to review and consider; however, the group did review available published and unpublished literature, including a published report by Gary Winans suggesting that genetic introgression from Goldendale trout with steelhead was not a significant concern upstream of Swift Dam. Byrne said the LRBTRT was under the impression that they should discuss the decision of whether to use triploid plants, not just the available information, and the group was unanimous in not being able to provide a recommendation to switch to triploid plants at this time.

Glaser's concern is about the communication of the request from the ACC to the LRBTRT and what the group was asked to provide input on, which should have been focused on the predation risks and other potential concerns about competition that were brought by members of the LRBTRT at the last ACC meeting with the purpose of helping the ACC make a more informed decision. Regardless of the decision that was made by PacifiCorp for 2022 plants, Glaser said it is important to be clear about how decisions are made related to ACC topics. The ACC reviewed Lesko's email sent to the ATS describing PacifiCorp's decision not to move forward with triploid plants in 2022. PacifiCorp noted in that email that they are supportive of working with the ATS to find alternatives that reduce the number of rainbow trout entering the FSC and ultimately being transported downstream of Merwin Dam. Glaser noted that while the Settlement Agreement determines the stocking amount and species (20,000 pounds of rainbow trout), WDFW has the authority to determine which fish are stocked into state waters. WDFW often seeks input on stocking decisions before they are made, such as from the ACC and ATS (especially when it relates to ecological interactions, genetic introgression, or monitoring). WDFW deferred the decision this year to PacifiCorp regarding their interest in using the excess triploids instead of the current diploid program.

Karchesky reminded the ACC that there is currently a process in place that was approved by the ACC that included temporarily reducing the number of trout planted into Swift Reservoir by planting a portion of the available rainbow trout into the Swift Power Canal, extending the planting window from one plant into four smaller plants over the course of several weeks and a request to the ATS to come up with a more permanent strategy for this program.

USFWS Update on Fish Stranding Above Swift Dam

Garnett (USFWS) continues to work with utilities staff and Scott Anderson (NMFS) to discuss next steps for obtaining Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 coverage (for incidental take of ESA-listed species under NMFS jurisdiction) for fish stranding above Swift Dam. Next steps include working with PacifiCorp staff to understand the plan to minimize stranding and drafting an addendum to the existing Incidental Take Statement.

Lewis River Aquatic Funds Process

Lesko reminded the ACC that full proposal drafts for the Lewis River Aquatic Funds are due to PacifiCorp by October 25, 2021. Applicants will present proposals at the next ACC Meeting on November 16, 2021. To date, PacifiCorp has not received any proposals.

Other

Lesko noted that ACC meetings have been scheduled through the end of 2022. Until decided otherwise, meetings will continue to be held virtually.

Agenda Items for November 16, 2021

- Review October 14, 2021, Meeting Notes (**ACC COMMENTS DUE November 8, 2021**)
- Decision Document: Fish Passage Subgroup
- Lewis River Aquatic Fund Applicant Presentations
- Revised Aquatic Monitoring and Evaluation Plan ACC Review Kickoff
- USFWS Update on Fish Stranding above Swift (Tentative)
- Study/Work Product Updates

Adjourn 11:28 a.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting

November 16, 2021 – <i>Note: this is a Tuesday</i>
Teams Call Only
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Meeting Handouts & Attachments

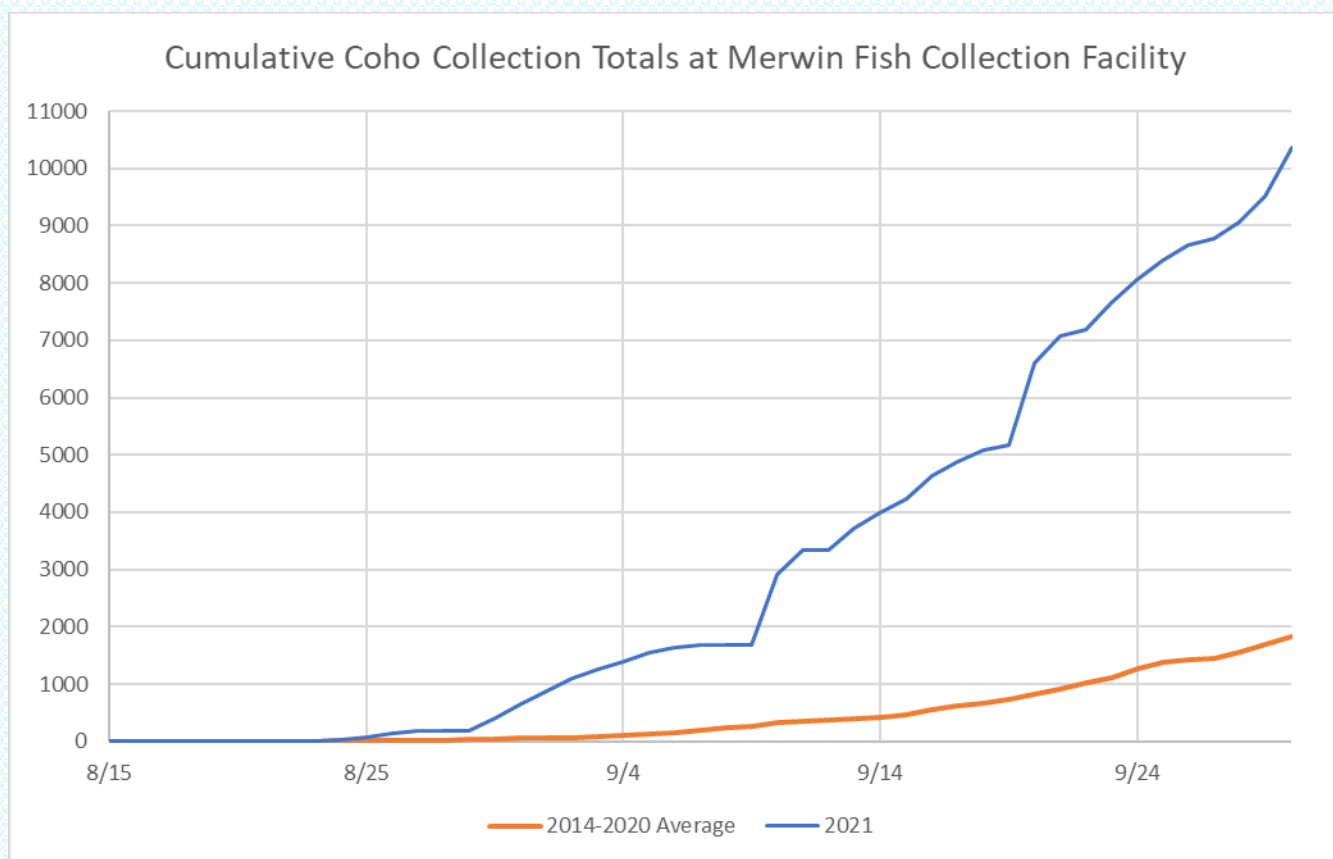
- Meeting Notes from 9/9/2021
- Agenda from 10/14/2021
- **Attachment A** – Lewis River Fish Passage Report (September 2021)
- **Attachment B** – Merwin Adult Trap Collection Report (September 2021)
- **Attachment C** – Swift FSC Facility Collection Report (September 2021)

Lewis River Fish Passage Report

September 2021

Merwin Fish Collection Facility and General Operations

During the month of September, a total of 10,440 fish were captured at the Merwin Dam Adult Fish Collection Facility (MFCF), representing nearly a nine-fold increase over the August total of 1,150. Early run coho were the most prevalent species collected this month (n= 9,709), followed by fall Chinook (n= 502), hatchery summer steelhead (n= 115), and spring Chinook (n= 113). Year-to-date coho collection totals remain substantially higher than the 2014-2020 average (Figure 1). Excess HOR coho have been transported to Lewis River Hatchery to be surplus.



The MFCF ran continuously throughout the month of September, with the exception of September 7 – 9 when it was taken offline for scheduled quarterly maintenance. Flows below Merwin Dam were consistent and remained near the minimum flow requirement of 1,200 cfs. throughout the month of September (Figure 2).

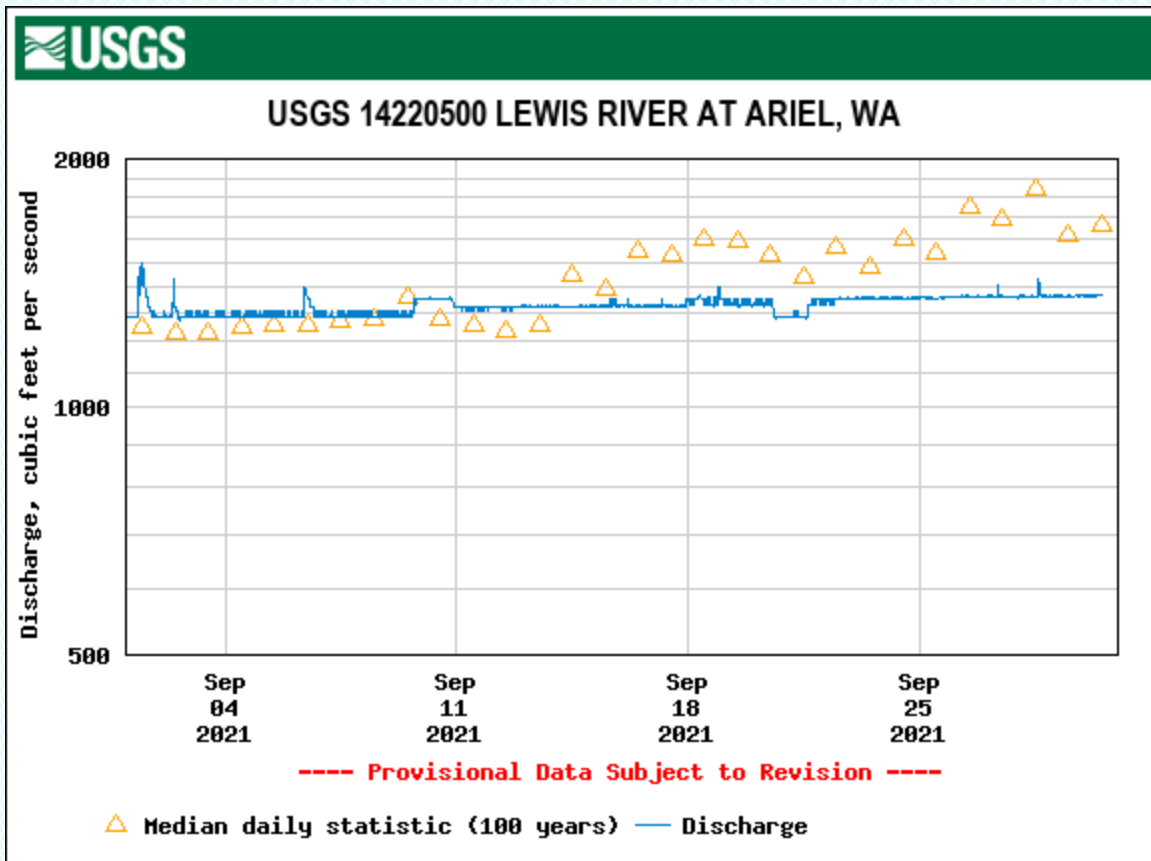


Figure 2. Discharge in cubic feet per second recorded at the USGS Ariel, WA gauge (14220500) located immediately downstream of Merwin Dam.

Upstream Transport

A total of total of 2,393 adult fish were transported upstream in September, the majority of which were early run coho (n=2,288). Most of the coho transported upstream in September were collected at the MFCF (n=2,061), while a smaller number were supplied by Lewis River Hatchery (n=227). In addition to coho, a total of 113 sexually mature spring Chinook, and one coastal cutthroat were transported upstream in September.

As of September 30th, 1,184 spring Chinook (897 HOR/ 287 NOR), 2,621 early-run coho (1,640 HOR/981 NOR), 311 winter steelhead (207 BWT/104 NOR), 83 late run coho (2020 run year), and 54 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 on Monday, July 12th for the facility’s summer maintenance period. It is tentatively scheduled to return to service in mid-October, following the completion of various construction upgrades and maintenance projects ongoing this summer.

Fish Facility Report
Swift Floating Surface Collector
September 2021

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
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Monthly Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	400	4201	39736	27	512	1936	23	146	5390	34	3	645	17	6	4130	57206