

1-21-15 Meeting (Conference Call) Summary * Approved 3/31/15 *
RESOURCE COORDINATION COMMITTEE (RCC)
North Umpqua Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. P-1927)

RCC Members or Alternates Present

Steve Albertelli (PacifiCorp Energy)
Rich Grost (PacifiCorp Energy)
Anne Shirley (BLM)
Jim B. Muck (NOAA)
Dave Harris (ODFW)
Steve Marchi (USDA-FS)

Also Present

Beth Bendickson (PacifiCorp Energy)
Scott Schevenius (PacifiCorp Energy)
Mike Blum (PacifiCorp Energy)
Pete Sukraw (PacifiCorp Energy)

Not Present

Chris Stine (ODEQ) – proxy to ODFW
Pam Sichtung (USDA-FS)
Craig Kohanek (OWRD)
Ed Meyer (NFMS)
Jim Thrailkill (USFWS)

INTRODUCTIONS, AGENDA, OLD BUSINESS

Member Updates/Organization News

NOAA – Jim Muck mentioned they are focusing on a Coho recovery plan, which has a planned September 2015 completion date, and also on completing business plans with watershed council coordination.

PacifiCorp Energy – Steve Albertelli is now the North Umpqua Program Manager.

USDA-FS – Jimmy Tyree will be the new Diamond Lake District Ranger (end of February). Carl Bauer will continue for another week as the acting Ranger; another staff member will fill-in temporarily until Jimmy arrives.

USFWS – Jim Thrailkill is the assumed temporary RCC member now that Rob Burns has retired. *[Jim contacted the RCC on January 29, 2015 and identified Paul Bridges as the new USFWS representative to the RCC.]*

ODFW/OWRD – Dave Harris noted that Craig Kohanek accepted a new position within OWRD and would no longer be the OWRD representative to the RCC. *[Mary Grainey confirmed via email after the meeting on January 21, 2015 that she would be the new RCC representative.]*

Meeting Summary Approvals

The October summary was approved via e-mail on 12/29/14.

Public Outreach

November 17, 2014 – Rich Grost gave a tour to three members of the Native Fish Society who wanted a Soda Springs Fish Passage project tour. He basically repeated the October 2014 public tour and slide show. Mark Sommer, USFS hydrologist, also attended.

January 7, 2015 – Rich gave an informal presentation to the Hydrology Breakfast Group. He showed photos from December, including of the winter solstice high flow event and recent fish facility evaluation work. Several RCC members were aware of the presentation.

CURRENT PROJECT UPDATES

Soda Springs Fish Passage

Status/Update: There were some challenges with the December 21, 2014 high flow event. As flows rapidly increased, the north in-take was opened during the evening of December 20 as per procedure. Despite it being open, the fish screen still plugged with debris rapidly in the early morning of December 21 which caused one of pressure relief panels to open, which, in turn, prevented further damage to the facility as planned. The fish screen area was dewatered January 6-12 for cleaning and maintenance and is now ready for service when the powerhouse comes back on line. The powerhouse was shut down for annual maintenance on January 12 and will come back online January 30. All flow to the river is now passing through the spillway, log chute, and sluice gate. Upgrades and maintenance are ongoing on the screen and its cleaning systems. The fish ladder was dewatered on January 5 for expansion of the fish counting window and other construction modifications. It will be dewatered until at least mid-February, and possibly into March to allow for design and installation of AWS baffles. As far as other modifications, the fish ladder exit platform is in the process of being installed. The stairways and platforms in the evaluation building, along with the AWS dewatering system, will soon be installed.

Hydraulic and Biological Evaluations Update: The hydraulic evaluation is three-fourths complete, and the biological evaluation is just beginning. Pilot studies are underway with FishTick software to expedite the fish counting in the window.

Tailrace Barriers

Status/Update: Two blowout panels were damaged at each tailrace barrier during the December 21 high flows, but they have already been replaced.

Biological Evaluations Update: The evaluation of fish at tailrace barriers is about halfway completed. Preliminary reports from the fall and winter periods have been supplied to the TWG, and will be presented at tomorrow's TWG meeting. To date there has been no sign of fish being injured at the face of the pickets.

Fish Passing Through TRBs: - In early December it was discovered that a group of about 20 adult coho salmon had gotten inside the Slide Creek tailrace barrier. Jim asked how we can prevent this from happening again. It is presumed the fish swam in through the blowout panels when they were forced open briefly during a late November high flow event that may have coincided with a group of coho migrating along the barrier. Another possibility is that they squeezed under a picket that was elevated off the foundation about three inches by gravel deposited on the foundation. In the past, divers have been down several times to clean material off the foundation to keep the pickets sitting flush as they are intended. Jim suggested marking them with an arrow. The Soda Springs tailrace barrier may be more difficult, but perhaps putting a register mark could help. Currently there is a pole to measure.

Jim suggests we watch for mortalities and keep track of how many we didn't get out, and propose an evaluation of alternatives on how to keep them out in heavy duty storm events.

Rich noted that the encroachment of substantial numbers of fish into the tailrace seems to be an uncommon occurrence, since it has not occurred before within the seven and three years of experience with the Soda Springs and Slide Creek barriers, respectively.

Rich reported that of the fish seen inside of the Slide Creek tailrace barrier in mid-December, we got 15 out. Three fish, which had been trapped between the panels, were found dead on the pickets as we were cleaning them. It was suggested that the fish were swimming between the blow-out panels, and in the course of swimming through, were trapped in the submerged panels. Rich said this issue will be discussed in additional detail at tomorrow's on-site TWG meeting.

Fish Creek Projects

Fiber and Power Upgrade: The fiber and power cable installation is scheduled for May 1, 2015. PacifiCorp has received the notice to proceed (NTP) from the USDA-FS, but SHPO must concur with the cultural resource report before installation can proceed.

Wetlands Update

Stump Lake Pothole Wetland: This project was constructed and planted in October 2014. Supplemental planting will be performed by the USDA-FS in the spring.

There are two remaining wetlands to be constructed: Fireswamp and Lake Creek

Fire Swamp Wetland: This project will be constructed in late summer or early fall. We have the NTP in hand. Terri Stone, USDA-FS biologist and representative to the ESA Level 1 team, questioned whether survey and manage species surveys had been completed. Steve Marchi will follow-up and confirm with Pam and Jeff Bohler. *[Confirmation of completed surveys was provided via email from Pam on January 26, 2015.]*

Lake Creek Wetland: PacifiCorp will submit an NTP request for this project this year. The design work and construction are planned for 2015 and 2016, respectively.

Aquatic Reconnects Update

Five sites on Fish Creek and two sites on Lemolo 2 are planned for construction in 2015. Steve has been working with Jason Wilcox to provide the required information for USDA-FS' regional general permits with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Oregon Department of State Lands. The final ten sites will be constructed in 2016.

Other Projects Requiring NTPs or Other Coordination

PacifiCorp has submitted NTP requests and is awaiting NTPs on transmission right-of-way hazard trees and the remaining third round of NERC transmission line underclearance projects. PacifiCorp is under a USDA-FS stop work order until the weather gets better. Steve Albertelli has pending NTP requests for aquatic connectivity sites to send to Pam Sighting.

Agenda Additions

Medicine Creek Recreation Site: At the Recreation Resources Management Plan Meeting, there was a proposal to decommission the non-functional, existing facilities at Medicine Creek, but leave the trail open for access. The hope is to remove the vault toilet and signage and use the funding dedicated to that site for other areas.

Steve Marchi will find out if there have been any public comments and if so, get them to Steve Albertelli in the next few days. The toilet is not functional, so removal sounds like a good plan. The turnout site is known to be used by elk hunters. Steve Marchi will follow-up on that as well. It will require a letter to FERC confirming that the site will be removed from PacifiCorp's recreation plan, and PacifiCorp would like to include RCC input on the proposal to remove the facilities in the FERC filing.

Dave Harris added that ODFW has no use for the parking area at Medicine Creek. Rich said it was a good access point for monitoring studies as well as public use, so he wouldn't recommend removing the trail.

2015 Rolling Action Plans: In the past, these plans have been normally been signed at the annual planning meetings. The question was posed if they should be sent around electronically now or would the RCC mind waiting until the May 2015 face-to-face meeting to sign them in person. **RCC Action: Waiting until the May face-to-face meeting is fine.**

Soda Springs Fish Passage Annual Operations & Maintenance Report: Rich asked the RCC if they felt a signature page needed to be included in these annual reports to FERC, similar to what we did for the 30%, 60%, 90% and final approvals on past construction projects. **RCC Action: It was decided that no signature page was needed for annual reports to FERC.**

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) UPDATES

Fish Habitat Studies

6.2 Slide Creek Full-Flow Reach: *nothing new to report.*

7.2 Gravel Augmentation: Since the last RCC meeting, 1,000 cubic yards of gravel was added. Monitoring is scheduled for October 2016.

8.2 Slide Creek Bypass Reach Habitat: This project is on a five-year schedule. Do we want to pull the trigger on monitoring or wait another two years? It will be discussed at the pending TWG meeting.

8.3 Soda Springs Habitat: The draft annual report is routing. It will be finalized at the TWG meeting, and then go to the RCC.

19.2 Long-Term Monitoring/Predator Control Study: There is approximately \$492K in this dedicated fund. There will be a discussion at the TWG meeting regarding the schedule and staffing needs.

Fish Passage Design

Rich suggested that, during tomorrow's TWG meeting, the TWG members observe a range of flow conditions into fish return hopper to determine the best operating range relative to turbulence in the pipe and flume vs. the need for additional flow trimming at the evaluation building.

Flows & Ramping - *Nothing new to report.*

OTHER ITEMS

Operational Updates

Powerhouse/Canal Outages: Rich recently emailed the agencies a schedule of planned outages for the year. One recent change is that Lemolo 2 canal outage is now scheduled for June rather than November.

Reservoir Management (Toketee Reservoir WSEs): Scott reported that with the recent natural high flow events, the reservoir has filled up and gone into spill. The water rose to a "higher than our precautionary target level" during this event and was returned to the precautionary level as soon as flows dropped off. The Reservoir will be kept down at the lower level until the seismic evaluation is completed.

SA 19.1 Tributary Enhancement Project Updates (Dave Harris)

Sam Moyers and Kirk Haskett are evaluating the fish habitat enhancements in the Rock Creek basin. As the flows come down, they are re-walking areas they have treated over the past four to five years to see what has moved and what hasn't. They continue to assess fish usage of these treatment areas. There could be some steelhead up there, so they are also doing spawning ground surveys. They are also pre-planning for 2015 projects at Harrington Creek and the mainstem Rock Creek below Harrington and working with landowner access issues and decisions on materials. They have checked the Rock Creek fish ladder to determine if there was any damage due to recent high water events. Spawning surveys will begin in the spring at Rock Creek. They will also finish reviewing 2014 Soda Springs fish passage tapes. They are splitting the review duties and each taking a section.

SA 19.3 Federal Mitigation Fund Project Updates (Steve Marchi)

2014 Project Selection/Strategic Restoration Plan: Steve said there is a small work group working on Strategic Plan impact statements and on the work completed to date. They have met several times. The group members include Richard Helliwell, Jason Wilcox, Jeff Bohler, and Pam Sighting. The group is making great strides on getting a draft report out. There will be a meeting in April. At the same time, they are refining a proposal for selection criteria and hope to have an initial draft done soon. They are making good progress and hope to have the whole process done by the end of this year.

Additional Agenda Item

What to do with the steep fish chute that was removed when the Soda Springs tailrace barrier was built? Rich said that this Alaskan Steep-Pass style chute, originally put in to allow salmon to come up to the fish trap at the base of the powerhouse, is now sitting near the penstock and the USDA-FS requested it be moved. He asked Dave if he knew whether it was ODFW property and if so, did they want it back. Dave said he is currently trying to find out the answer to that question. His assumption is they don't want it, but they may want to offer it up to other districts. He will get back to Rich tomorrow. Rich said he will have it put in the maintenance yard for now.

Next RCC Meeting: May 20, 2015 – Face-to-face/Conference call at Toketee with project tour to follow.

Public Comments – *none at this time.*

Meeting Adjourned.