

**North Umpqua Hydroelectric Project
(FERC No. P-1927)**

**Resource Coordination Committee (RCC)
January 18, 2017 Conference Call Summary**

FINAL (3/13/17)

RCC Members or Alternates Present

Steve Albertelli (PacifiCorp)
Jim B. Muck (NOAA Fisheries)
Chris Stine (ODEQ)
Dave Harris (ODFW)
Mary Graineny (OWRD)
Pam Sichting (USDA-FS)
Amy Stevenson (USDI-BLM)
Paul Bridges (USFWS)

Other Attendees

Beth Bendickson (PacifiCorp)
Mike Blum (PacifiCorp)
Rich Grost (PacifiCorp)
Scott Schevenius (PacifiCorp)
Travis Mackey (Cow Creek)

RCC Members Absent

Ed Meyer (NOAA Fisheries)

INTRODUCTIONS, AGENDA, OLD BUSINESS

Member Updates/Organization News

USDA-FS: They have hired two new archaeologists, Amber Nelson and Mike Bolero and also a new Forest hydrologist, Joe Blanchard, formerly of BLM. Joe is the hydrology program manager in the Supervisor's office. Mark Sommers will remain the Diamond Lake/North Umpqua zone hydrologist and will work under Joe. There may be a hiring freeze after January 20, 2017. Tiffany Young, wildlife program manager, is leaving. Justin Hadwen will take over as acting Forest wildlife biologist until they can permanently fill the position. Jerry Wright is retiring in April. They also have a new Special Use Permit specialist, Jessica Brewen, formerly of BLM, who will start January 30, 2017. Robin Duarte will still assist with SUPs in the interim.

NOAA: No organizational changes. The Oregon Coast Coho Recovery plan came out in December.

USFWS: Two new biologists have been hired at the Roseburg office. One is replacing Rob Burns but the position has changed. Rob's replacement will not be the RCC representative. Paul Bridges will continue on in this capacity. Cindy Donnegan is retiring at the end of February.

BLM: Heather Whitman will be the District Manager as of Monday, January 23, 2017.

ODEQ: No staff changes. They are still recruiting for a new director.

OWRD: Craig Kohanek is returning to the hydroelectric program, effective immediately. He will resume his old role as the RCC representative.

PacifiCorp: With Louie Collier's retirement last year, Ken Witcher is now the maintenance manager for the North Umpqua hydroelectric project.

Public Outreach

There was a November article in the News Review on the Lemolo 1 dam inspections.

There may be a tour opportunity arranged in January or February for the members of the Roseburg High School Science Club. Cynita Jones has been talking to Pam about it as they are very interested in the hydroelectric project.

As part of a USDA-FS initiative, Pam said she will spend one day per month working on public outreach.

CURRENT PROJECT UPDATES

Soda Springs Fish Passage

Status/Update: Several recent high flow events have been managed per procedure. PacifiCorp has been successful in keeping the facility protected and at least partially operational throughout most of the winter season. Flow predictions show high flows for tonight and tomorrow at Steamboat. The north intake and spillway are partly open to pass debris. An extra step was taken to lower the reservoir to purposely scour debris on the leading edge of the storm and while the spillgate is open. Monitoring of adult fish passage through the ladder is ongoing.

Hydraulic and Biological Evaluations Update: The final *Soda Springs Fish Passage Facilities Hydraulic and Biological Evaluation Report* was submitted to FERC in November 2016. The facilities are operating as per procedure. The annual operations and maintenance report was reviewed and approved by the RCC and will soon be submitted to FERC.

Wetlands Update

Ranawapiti Update: The USDA-FS is in the monitoring stage. Steve will inspect prior to the May RCC meeting to determine whether modifications are required for the adjacent SA wetland enhancement project.

Lake Creek Wetland: Steve reported that the contour work has been completed. PacifiCorp ran into some unanticipated issues with soil permeability at the site. USDA-FS staff will begin planting in the spring. Steve will continue to provide progress updates.

Aquatic Reconnects Update

Scott reported that the cleanup of spoils material went very well. 4,000 cubic yards of spoils were hauled from Burma Road to the Lemolo quarry. PacifiCorp added rock to the quarry access to maintain wet weather access. In the spring, the quarry site will be ready for grass seed. He is working with Wendy Coleman on seeding turnouts along the canal. They will monitor germination to see if more seeding is needed.

Other Projects Requiring NTPs or Other Coordination

PacifiCorp does not have any outstanding NTP requests at this time.

Project	Status
n/a	

Other/Upcoming Projects

Toketee Dam Rehabilitation: PacifiCorp is waiting for a response from FERC on the flood and spillway calculations. This project is scheduled for 2019 – 2021. Quarry plans for drilling will be submitted to the USDA-FS.

Soda Springs Bypass Spawning Habitat Maintenance: This in-water work project is anticipated for August 2017 at the lower pool tailout. It will probably include patching small undercuts at one log weir and adding boulders and gravel. Because this area has already been cleared so many times, the NTP should be simple and quick. There will be a need for equipment in the river to install these features.

Vegetation Management: FERC has increased scrutiny of vegetation management around project features. They want a large (15 feet) buffer zone to prevent damage from roots and/or trees falling on/in canals. Greg Glaze (PacifiCorp engineer) is working on a proposal and will soon set up a meeting with the USDA-FS in the first quarter to see if there is interest in a timber sale associated with the vegetation removal. Pam asked that Greg allow at least a month out for scheduling. Will Shallenberger is currently reviewing the preliminary draft proposal.

Fish Creek Diversion: Some sediment removal occurred in March and October 2016 to restore diversion capacity immediately near the intake and within the settling pond. There are no plans for additional dredging of the sediment accumulations upstream of the dam at this time. What has been removed is currently staged in upland locations but will be moved back into the Fish Creek bypassed reach at the earliest opportunity, when the snow leaves and the ground dries out enough to work up there.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) UPDATES

Fish Habitat Studies (Monitoring and Maintenance Schedules)

The next TWG meeting will be planned in February and will be focused mostly on two items: 1) to design and plan for spawning habitat maintenance work, and 2) planning for the SA 19.2 Long Term Monitoring/Predator Control Study work.

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

7.2 Gravel Augmentation: *nothing new to report at this time.*

8.2 Slide Creek Bypass Reach Habitat: Habitat monitoring will occur this year as described in the Monitoring Plan.

8.3 Soda Springs Habitat: The annual monitoring report has been completed and distributed to the RCC. The TWG is proposing in-water work this summer to fix a log weir and also to add gravel to the downstream pool tailout by the evaluation building. Rich sent out the monitoring report, along with a request for everyone to check their calendars for a TWG meeting sometime in February.

Rich and Steve asked Chris about the status of ODEQ certification of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) nationwide permits. Chris said the procedure hasn't been finalized yet. Nationwide permits will be renewed in March. This time around ODEQ will handle 401 certifications a little differently than they have in the past. In the past, ACOE would apply for certification of a whole class of projects under a general activity nationwide permit. Most of the nationwide permits were pre-certified by ODEQ. Now applicants will have to request 401 certification from ODEQ for each nationwide permit. Chris is not sure how the process will play out in practice. ODEQ will commit to 30 days turnaround (informal commitment) for permits. It's still a work in progress. Public comment period closes this Friday. It will go live in March when ACOE issues new nationwide permits. The intent of the program is to streamline activity for repetitive well-understood small projects where characteristics are minor. He is hoping the certifications will be smooth.

Steve mentioned that many of PacifiCorp's nationwide permit projects are non-notifying projects (emergencies or small). We will now need to plan more time for an increased wait time for permits.

Chris has a call in to ODEQ's 401 Coordinator to get more details. But the way he understands it is the applicant will notify ACOE, ACOE would notify ODEQ, and then ODEQ would issue a certification according to how ACOE wants to process it. ODEQ anticipates the majority of certifications will be issued with boilerplate conditions and that it will not create a lot of extra work, but rather be in parallel with the ACOE permit.

This is the fundamental change that ACOE has applied to ODEQ 401 certifications. There used to be a fee exchange for that one-time coverage. Chris' guess is there was reluctance to continue with that arrangement and now it's pushed back on the applicant to get the appropriate coverage.

Steve will call some of his ACOE contacts and provide an update at the next RCC meeting. Chris said a lot of work is planned work and can be planned in a schedule, but for emergencies we will need to figure out how it will all work.

19.2 Long-Term Monitoring/Predator Control Study: This year will be busy for both initiating some new long-term monitoring work at the fish evaluation building and also implementing a major predator control study. Preparations include several small projects which the RCC has recently supported via email, including:

- Adding a rotary fish screen to the evaluation building capture tank;
- Installing anchors for smolt traps in Slide and Soda Springs bypass reaches;
- Installing a PIT tag antennae on the streambed of Soda Springs bypass reach; and
- Staffing up with personnel (via ODFW).

This work will be occurring mostly in February and March 2017. Regarding the PIT tag antennae, there will be a series of wire antennas installed in plastic pipes by hand. To allow this work to be safe and practical, the consultants have requested to have flow in the Soda Springs bypass reach reduced from the usual 300 cfs to 100 cfs during the time of installation, which is expected to be up to three days. Rich will send out a proposal to the RCC for approval of this flow change for that purpose. One of the first two weeks in March is the target date. **[Note: The RCC approved the proposed minimum flow reduction on January 20, 2017.]**

Dave said from ODFW's end they've got two smolt traps updated to ODFW standards and are working to get the other two updated. They will end up with three 5-ft and one 8-ft smolt traps available. Traps are planned to be in place by the time they begin sampling fish in early March.

Personnel wise, Chris Sheely has been onboard for a while and ODFW is going to hire an additional eight-month Experimental Biology Aide (March through October) to assist him in running the three smolt traps, work in the evaluation building, and also on other predator/prey work. Dave has worked out a budget for the two positions and is waiting on permission to hire starting in March. If it doesn't happen, they will be looking for extra bodies to help out with smolt trapping and pit tagging. They are also awaiting internal funding approval.

Lemolo 2 Flume 12: Rich provided some background for the new RCC attendees. In 2011, there was a canal overflow which caused extensive erosion around and in the Lemolo 2 Flume 12 spillway. PacifiCorp immediately initiated a remediation, mitigation, and monitoring process with the RCC agencies. The final step in that process was to repeat/complete river habitat monitoring in fall 2016 to see what happened to the rock that had washed into river over the past five years. New aerial photography and field surveys were done by Meridian Environmental. The final report was submitted to the RCC on December 16, 2016. Although this report is not a deliverable to FERC, Rich said he is still interested in receiving comments and feedback. Dave said he had reviewed the report and it was interesting to look at the immediate after effects and then waiting a few years. The report concluded that the mass is slowly moving down river and settling. A couple of species of trout are spawning within and near the new gravel patches. His take is that material will continue to work its way down the system with future high flow events. Some vegetation is starting to recolonize the gravel patches and stream bed. He said it was a good report and did not need any further information. Chris indicated that ODEQ was still reviewing the report and would reply later with any questions or comments.

Flows & Ramping

The Lemolo Reservoir drawdown went mostly as planned both in the reservoir and with flows in the wild and scenic part of the river. The drawdown was suspended for a few days during the special dive inspection in early November but it didn't have any negative impact on overall targets.

OTHER ITEMS

Operational Updates

Powerhouse/Canal Outages: Rich distributed the advance schedule of planned outages. The Soda Springs maintenance outage is planned for February, Slide Creek in April, Clearwater 1 in May, and Soda Springs fish screen maintenance in July. The fish screen maintenance will include upgrades to the finishing screen cleaning system and the trashrack modifications in front of the fish screen.

Reservoir Management: Still waiting on FERC review for Toketee Dam. Lemolo was mentioned above.

SA 19.1 Tributary Enhancement Project Updates (Dave Harris)

Enhancement: Sam Moyers and Kirk Haskett have been busy. The rotary screen for the Soda Springs fish passage capture tank is being fabricated by the ODFW screen shop. The intent is that any floating material will rotate above and over the screen. PacifiCorp will contract out for the needed electrical connections. Sam and Kirk have monitored the Rock Creek and upper Canton Creek work following high flows to document the changes. They performed coho surveys last fall and have just started doing some winter coho surveys that will take place over the next few months. They then will gear up for the 2017 instream work in the Rock Creek basin. There is an upcoming meeting to discuss juvenile and predator/prey work planned for this summer. Chris Sheely is working on reviewing fish ladder video tapes. He is doing winter steelhead surveys today before it gets too high to walk. It was mentioned that the otter is revisiting the Soda Springs fish ladder area.

Jim Muck said he had a chance to visit the Rock Creek area with Sam and was really pleased with the work that has been done in the basin. He expressed his compliments to ODFW for all the good work they have been doing with the Tributary Enhancement Program.

SA 19.3 Federal Mitigation Fund Project Updates (Pam Sichting)

Pam said that Strategic Planning efforts came to screeching halt when they lost personnel. It's been very slow transferring funds to other agencies. They weren't able to disburse funds to Cow Creek because of in-kind services. Proposals must contain at least 20% of in-kind services. BLM should have their funding shortly. Cow Creek will be getting funding through USGS. She said it will go year to year until the Strategic Plan gets finalized.

Rich asked whether the gravel placement in Soda Springs bypass reach, which USDA-FS began in December 2016, will continue this year. Pam said she hadn't heard anything but said that Adam Raymond is coordinating it locally.

Other: Scott said there has been an increase in visitors to Toketee Falls lately and with that people have been parking everywhere including in spots blocking equipment access across the bridge. The parking lot fills up quickly and so they park on the road. He asked Pam about perhaps building an additional overflow parking area to the east to allow vehicles, including motorhomes, to park off of the road. Steve said this was recently discussed at both the Recreation and Transportation RAP meetings.

Pam said that USDA-FS has also been talking about it internally. She noted it is in a riparian area between the road and river but is on their radar and their engineers are working on designs. They are also thinking another access could be down by the transmission lines around the curve in the road on the way back to the highway. It would be more of a walk but it could be a potential option. Steve said RVs could then potentially have pull-through parking at Scott's proposed location. Scott said he would like to do a walkthrough of the area with Pam and USDA-FS engineers and said that PacifiCorp will provide any assistance they can.

The 2017 RAPs are being finalized for signature at the May RCC meeting.

Jim Muck noted that the Toketee Falls parking proposal should include stormwater management. He also said that regarding joint permitting with the ACOE, ODEQ and DSL, as far as license-required in-water work activities, he considers the 2002 NMFS Biological Opinion to still be a valid record of consultation.

This goes for any issues on SA 19.3 as well. He told Pam they would also cover the USDA-FS for consultation.

Next RCC Meeting: May 18, 2017, 10:00AM – Noon with project tour following.

Public Comments – *none at this time.*

Meeting adjourned at 11:18 AM.