

**North Umpqua Hydroelectric Project
(FERC No. P-1927)****Resource Coordination Committee (RCC)
October 4, 2017 Meeting Summary****FINAL (12/28/17)**RCC Members or Alternates Present

Steve Albertelli (PacifiCorp)
Rich Grost (PacifiCorp)
Ed Meyer (NOAA Fisheries)
Jim B. Muck (NOAA Fisheries)
Chris Stine (ODEQ)
Dave Harris (ODFW)
Craig Kohanek (OWRD)
Amy Stevenson (USDI-BLM)
Paul Bridges (USFWS)

Other Attendees

Beth Bendickson (PacifiCorp)
Mike Blum (PacifiCorp)
Pete Sukraw (PacifiCorp)
Kelly Coates (Cow Creek)

RCC Members or Alternates Absent

Pam Sichtung (USDA-FS)

INTRODUCTIONS, AGENDA, OLD BUSINESSMember Updates/Organization News

NMFS – *no updates at this time.*

NOAA – Jim Muck will be serving as Branch Chief in Lacey, WA from February – May 2018. Ed Meyer will be the RCC representative during that time.

ODEQ, ODFW, OWRD, USDI-BLM, USFWS, PacifiCorp, & Cow Creek – *no updates at this time.*

PUBLIC OUTREACH

9/25/17 – Source One Serenity: This non-profit organization for veterans held their first fly fishing wellness retreat at the Lemolo Resort. A fisheries component, including how fisheries are managed and potential opportunities for volunteering, was built into the program. Rich gave the five veterans in attendance a tour of the Soda Springs fish passage facilities and the spawning salmon.

Below is a link to a write-up on their retreat and tour:

<https://sourceoneserenity.wordpress.com/2017/09/25/our-first-fly-fishing-school/>

10/6/17 – South Umpqua High School: At the request of teacher Dennis Feero, Rich will give a presentation and tour to a science class similar to what was done last October and May. The class will arrive at 10AM.

10/7/17 – RCC Annual Public Tour: This year’s tour was well advertised by RCC agencies, conservation groups, PacifiCorp outlets, and was also covered on social media as well by local print and radio media. Steve will follow through with Pam and Steve Marchi about using USDA-FS buses.

Chris mentioned that we need to be mindful of the other successful outreach opportunities occurring in addition to the public tour, such as the smaller groups that come for private facility tours. There seems to be an average of six to eight of these happening each year. For the public tour, we can review the tour successes, but then we should compare them to other tours to assess whether the RCC feels a need to continue with these official annual public tours. Rich said that we don’t advertise for the private tours, rather they have been set up by request. Pete offered that the facility gets indirect exposure to professional engineers and through career fairs. He has shown the project video and talked with a few people about the North Umpqua projects. Rich also mentioned the award PacifiCorp/RCC won this year on the Soda Springs fish passage program and the fact that it was based partially on successful and favorable community outreach such as we have been doing.

A recent News Review feature article about electrofishing Soda Springs reservoir also gave information on this year’s tour.

http://www.nrtoday.com/news/environment/biologists-use-electricity-to-catch-fish-for-counting-study/article_adee6291-eb97-5ac7-bb18-b5f14a9e4ab0.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=email&utm_campaign=user-share

WILDFIRE UPDATE

Mike reported that due to the fires, PacifiCorp’s North Umpqua Project facilities were offline for almost four weeks. They basically pulled out of doing outdoor work (e.g., brushing, etc.) and concentrated on interior work (e.g., buildings). Transmission lines were threatened at various stages of the fires and were used as fire breaks. Scott said that to his knowledge the firefighters did not end up using Fish Creek forebay water, nor other impoundment facilities as firefighting water sources, as most days the helicopters were grounded due to the air being too heavy with smoke. They did reconnaissance from other areas. He kept in touch with the flight wing commander daily. Towards the latter part of the fire they used water from Soda Springs Reservoir.

Rich said that the diversion from Fish Creek to fill the forebay with firewater started at about 10 cfs for a couple of days and then was backed down to less than one cfs during the temporary fire season diversion. It’s now back to normal which is “no diversion” until the bypass reach exceeds 130 cfs. Highway 138 was shut down for about three weeks which delayed the Slide Creek bypass monitoring (Stillwater Sciences) and the Soda Springs spawning habitat improvements. Both of these projects started mid-September and are now complete. There was a bit of extra work in getting a fire waiver for the Soda Springs fish habitat work in September. Sam (ODFW) and Weekly Bros. completed the in-water work in one day. The Slide Creek bypass reach monitoring took Sam and Abel (Stillwater Sciences) working a couple weeks of 12-hour days to complete. The last round of

predator control study electrofishing on the Soda Springs Reservoir was also completed in mid-September.

Rich also mentioned that the downed, burned trees and logs now spanning the channel in the North Umpqua wild and scenic reach are dangerous for rafting over and around, causing a closure of the river to floating. This resulted in a delay of the normal SA 19.2 redd surveys in this reach. With prior RCC approval, a helicopter flight was made with Sam counting redds and Rich checking logs and taking photos. The helicopter was already in the area for powerline surveys. Following that, ODFW requested two more flights for the sole purpose of counting redds and fish, which the RCC also approved for funding. The first flight is scheduled for next week and the second flight will be done towards the end of October.

Rich said that the flight company (Timberland) also flies drones but that for this type of work drones would be more expensive than a regular helicopter flight because you would have to be constantly stopping and starting to stay within line-of-sight and to change batteries. Drone products would also be less reliable because redd and fish counts would be limited by the quality of the image capture, and glare/shadow/canopy issues often obscure views into the water. Thus, he said that drones would not be as practical for this purpose as with regular helicopter flights.

Jim mentioned that ODFW has been doing a lot of drone work. If you do end up getting quality photos, the benefit is that you could have a long-term visual record.

Jim also talked about the Fish Creek firewater diversion. He asked whether USDA-FS actually used the forebay as a source of water and was concerned about the USDA-FS calling at the last minute (i.e., during an emergency) and requesting emergency diversion during any fire. He said that NOAA gave approval reluctantly this time because they thought there was an emergency need, but in practice there didn't seem to be a need.

Scott said they wanted to use it and would have, but due to the smoke and weather not cooperating, they were grounded. Jim wondered if Fish Creek really needed to be available to use. There will always be fires. He would just like to work with the USDA-FS to determine criteria (e.g., fire distance, availability of other water sources, et al.) that may trigger the need for emergency diversions from Fish Creek to the forebay. Chris added that often times, just watering up the forebay during low flows is a significant hit.

Rich talked about the USGS gage rating. The new rating is reflected on the USGS website.

Steve said he will get more information from the USDA-FS to inform development of criteria for proposing to fill Fish Creek forebay for firewater. Jim said he just wants to plan ahead for decision making instead of only responding to an emergency.

Steve said there is still vegetation management left to clean up post fire. With all the work the firefighters did, there are significant impacts to resources, including cultural resources that will have to be reviewed.

Jim added that he's seen some of the channel-spanning logs in the river. They are good for habitat, and Jim would like to see large woody debris left in-situ, but he agrees they are dangerous for rafters.

FACILITY AND PROJECT UPDATES

Fish Protection and Passage Facilities

Rich said there have been a few struggles with the FishTick software, but it appears to be running well again now. The Soda Springs fish screen maintenance (including the backwash oscillators) and upgrade outage was completed in mid-September, and the screen is now back in service. Upgrades included a re-build of the finishing screen cleaning system and hinging of one panel of the trashrack so that it can be opened periodically for kelt passage downstream.

Ed inquired about the pressure relief panels opening at Slide Creek tailrace barrier last spring. Rich explained that, with the smolt traps in the river just upstream of the tailrace, the flow through the powerhouse could not be reduced as much as usual without risking the traps, so flows were balanced to allow for a compromise between having some panels open and still reducing the damage to the traps and rigging. This was during a period of high spring snow melt combined with rain, which does not occur every year.

Wetlands Update

Steve reported that the Ranawapiti berm structure has been installed at the former pond edge and the repair has been completed. He said there has been successful breeding at the Lake Creek wetland.

Jim suggested a tour of the wetland projects would be good, and Steve said that perhaps the May 2018 face-to-face RCC meeting might be a good time to tour them. Chris seconded the motion and added that it would be good to also tour other projects (terrestrial, along with some of the other upstream projects).

Other Projects Requiring NTPs or Other Coordination

Project	Status
<i>Below ground/liquefaction inspection at Lemolo Reservoir</i>	Awaiting USDA-FS NTP

Other/Upcoming Projects

Fish Creek Settling Pond Sediment Management (Permits/Plans): The plan is to finish this project later this fall or in the winter when drier conditions are present.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) UPDATES AND ISSUES

Fish Habitat Studies (FHS): Monitoring and Maintenance Schedules

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

SA 7.2 Gravel Augmentation: No on-the-ground maintenance work is planned. The monitoring was done as part of the helicopter flights.

SA 8.2 Habitat Monitoring: Stillwater completed their monitoring of habitat features. A draft report is expected for TWG review sometime in November.

SA 8.3 Soda Springs Habitat Modification: Improvements were completed on September 15, 2017. ODFW has been keeping up with redd surveys in this reach.

SA 19.2 Long-term Monitoring/Predator Control Study: A TWG meeting will be scheduled sometime this winter to review schedules, plans, and budgets. The estimated fund balance is currently \$338K.

Long-term Monitoring – In the evaluation building, we are trying to manage debris so the building doesn't need to be manned around the clock. ODFW is operating the building periodically for several hours one night per week since manning it for real-time cleaning may be important when leaves are falling. Dave said they will regroup and take a look at the next several years with respect to staffing and equipment. This was a tough year with high flows and working out the details of smolt trap rigging and operations, but we are working to figure out how to increase reliability and efficiency in future years.

Predator Control – The field work is essentially complete, and Stillwater is working on the analysis. They have good information on brown trout populations. As far as trapping upstream and downstream, there have been problems with the pit tag antenna, high flows, smolt traps, etc. which may not yield the best data quality. However, this work is a great start and will inform future efforts.

Flows & Ramping (F&R): Flows, Ramping, Gaging, Monitoring, Plan & Reports

Roger Reynolds is working on the WY15 data. He is still hoping to get it out this year, but it's dependent on USGS delivering the data.

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

Powerhouse/Canal Outages

Toketee #3: The unit is offline for maintenance and is expected to be back online by the beginning of November.

Reservoir Management

The Lemolo Reservoir drawdown is a bit behind schedule due to rains. Diamond Lake flash boards are scheduled to be removed, thereby providing additional flow into the reservoir and putting the drawdown schedule further behind. A drawdown plan was submitted to ODFW and USDA-FS on August 15, 2017.

SA 19.1 TRIBUTARY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

Dave reported that Kirk Haskett and Sam Moyers completed their enhancement projects for the year and, as always, did an excellent job on their work, contracts, and getting it all done throughout the wildfires. Kirk worked on the mainstem Rock Creek this year, while Sam primarily worked in the Prospect area. They used blow down material received from the USDA-FS in their habitat projects, both of which went well. They are already gearing up for next spring and have their eyes on log decks near Dry Creek. ODFW will pay to have them stored for next year and will coordinate this with the USDA-FS.

Regarding fish surveys, they are seeing a lot of redds and dead fish. The surveys are continuing. The plan is to run the evaluation building tonight. Sam is going to electro-fish one last time in Lemolo, and then the electrofishing boat will be shut down for the year. Then he'll shift into report writing.

Jim asked if the channel-spanning logs could be left in-situ and/or maintained by ODFW. Dave said the USDA-FS usually cuts them up and then lets them break down naturally. ODFW does not have control over what USDA-FS does with the in-river, large woody debris.

Jim said the tributary enhancements look great. He can see significant benefit to the implementation projects completed by ODFW in East Fork Rock Creek. Jim noted that these projects are a good demonstration of what can be done with coordinated planning and effort, and he suggested that ODFW's projects could be a pilot project and baseline for quantifying enhancement cost/benefit analyses. Dave said they did a drone flight over the mainstem in coordination with Sydney at BLM, and they are still planning on doing some more flights in the future in coordination with BLM. With increased use of available drones, it's hard to get one in the time you need it.

SA 19.3 FEDERAL MITIGATION FUND PROGRAM UPDATE

Soda Springs Gravel Augmentation: In the absence of USDA-FS on the call, Rich explained that Jeff Bohler is spearheading the SA 19.3 gravel augmentation project at Soda Springs bypass reach. One thousand cubic yards of gravel has recently been staged there. The plan is for USDA-FS personnel to distribute it in the river. Rich is trying to get them to use the sluice pipe that the RCC had approved and used years ago, so that the gravel is placed over riprap and not on top of the active spawning area. It can also be done during high flows such as the November 2014 RCC project. Rich suggested that the RCC consider whether to use some of the SA7.2 funds to support the use of the sluice pipe to deliver the SA 19.3 gravel (if the USDA-FS lacks the funds to do it).

Slide Creek/Fish Creek Bypass Reach Spawning Habitat Monitoring: Stillwater is doing this monitoring project concurrent with work in the adjacent reaches for PacifiCorp. The field work is now complete. A November draft report is expected.

Lastly, Jim mentioned that he appreciated all the e-mail correspondence (e.g., updates, funding requests, etc.) Rich sends throughout the year, particularly during a busy, chaotic summer. This appreciation was echoed by several others.

NEXT RCC MEETING: January 17, 2018 (Conference Call)

Beth will set up the 2018 meeting schedule as follows:

January 17 (Conference Call)	August 15 (Conference Call)
May 16 (Face-to-face with project tour)	October (Conference Call TBD) Public Tour (TBD)

PUBLIC COMMENTS: *None at this time.*

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.