

**North Umpqua Hydroelectric Project  
(FERC No. P-1927)****Resource Coordination Committee (RCC)  
August 19, 2020 Meeting Summary****FINAL 10/2/2020**RCC Members or Alternates Present

Steve Albertelli (PacifiCorp)  
Rich Grost (PacifiCorp)  
Pam Sichting (USDA-FS)  
Mike Korn (USDI-BLM)  
Amy Golladay (USDI-BLM)  
Paul Bridges (USFWS)  
Jim Muck (NOAA Fisheries)  
Ed Meyer (NMFS)  
Jason Brandt (ODFW)  
Craig Kohanek (OWRD)  
Chris Stine (ODEQ)

Other Attendees

Beth Bendickson (PacifiCorp)  
Jon McSmith (PacifiCorp)  
Scott Schevenius (PacifiCorp)  
Kelly Coates (Cow Creek)

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**INTRODUCTIONS, AGENDA, OLD BUSINESS**Introductions/Member Updates/Organization News

**USDA-FS:** Kelsha Anderson is the new acting Diamond Lake District Ranger. She is on a 120-day detail and has been there for one month.

In cooperation with the National Forest Foundation, Audrey Squires (from the Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Coordination Group out of Oakridge/Eugene) was hired as the Umpqua Restoration Project Coordinator and will be located at the Supervisor's office in Roseburg. She will work on the Federal Mitigation Fund/Strategic Plan and help to leverage funds from large corporations (e.g., Facebook and Coca Cola). Pam will meet with her today to get her up to speed. Audrey will be in contact with the RCC members. The Roseburg office remains closed to public, but the fire staff is working in the office. They can now have two people in vehicles although one person must wear a mask. Staff has been going out into the field for two months now.

**BLM:** Barry Bushue is the new State Director. There are no new major announcements for the Roseburg Office. The Office is fully operational but still closed to the public. Staff is working intermittently in the office.

**NOAA:** Terry O'Rourke is the new Oregon Coast Branch Chief. She's been on duty for 120 days. Staff is still restricted to teleworking and no field work can be done until the office goes into Phase 2. They aren't even in Phase 1 yet.

**USFWS:** Nothing new to report. They are in the same boat as NOAA. All travel must be approved by the District Supervisor. Pauly is still on track for retirement on November 30, 2020.

**ODFW:** Nothing new to report. Ken Homolka remains as the state hydropower coordinator. At the Roseburg office, folks are getting out into the field and are following safety protocols, which are in place through at least the end of October.

**OWRD:** Their office is closed to the public. Eighty-five percent of employees are working remotely. They are looking to do some field work.

**Cow Creek:** Their office is closed to the public. Some staff are working in the field, some are in the office, and some are teleworking. Conference calls are held via Zoom. The office closed down at the end of March, and staff was furloughed. They are currently working but playing catch-up. Some projects will push into 2021 due to safety reasons.

**PacifiCorp:** Nothing new to report. The company is subject to State OSHA requirements to keep everyone safe during the pandemic. Lory Dudley has moved into the official general foreman position at Toketee.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

In light of COVID restrictions, there haven't been any public presentations or tours. It was noted that in general, people are outside a lot more than normal and recreation sites are seeing historic levels of use. The public has been making their own campsites, anywhere and everywhere. At the USDA-FS, Pam said this is being discussed and regulations will be enforced any day now. There has been a lot of resource damage (vegetation, compaction, etc.). Sanitation is also a really big issue. A lot of folks are pitching tents in the road, and kids are playing in the road. On the federal side, the wheels are turning. Incidents are getting documented and there is monitoring going on. People are out in record numbers. You have to go through reservations to get campgrounds and that's been "a nightmare." People are using dispersed camping areas. The fire restriction is at a Level 5 and fire activity is huge. A lot of folks are having fires everywhere. Steve said he was concerned about Project safety in light of increased and/or unauthorized use, and Pam said to report any concerns (fires outside of camp rings, etc.) to the Ranger District, as they can send resources to assist. Being the eyes and ears is a big help to USDA-FS.

At the BLM, Mike said that private industry has closed all of its land to the public. They are keeping their gates closed. The public is being pushed out of those areas, and more accessible public lands, such as USFS lands, are the only place they have to go locally.

As far as the annual public tour, Steve suggested we cancel it for this year. An in-person tour would be difficult as it violates PacifiCorp's current COVID-related policy of no public guests at the project facilities. We could perhaps do some project videos and issue a press release promoting them and notifying the public that the tour won't happen this year. The release could highlight projects completed as well as future projects going on. A website link could be included to the Annual Report.

## FACILITY AND PROJECT UPDATES

### Fish Protection and Passage Facilities

All fish passage facilities are working well, with a few minor issues being addressed. The crane at the Slide Creek tailrace barrier is being repaired and should be complete by the end of the year. Currently the facility is being maintained with the manual cleaning system.

Fine tuning of the programming for Soda Springs fish ladder exit gates continues. We are finding that making the exit easier for steelhead to get through is also making it easier for otter to get through. Recently an otter is appearing from upstream, chasing fish back and forth, and then exiting downstream (previously the otter always appeared from downstream and also exited downstream). He has been observed catching a few fish, mostly trout and has had close encounters with summer Steelhead and spring Chinook, although it's hard to confirm whether he's actually caught one. The fish screens are operating normally, with a maintenance outage scheduled for mid-October. It may or may not warrant dewatering.

### Projects Requiring NTPs or Other Coordination

Project	Status
<i>Toketee Flowline Isolation Valve</i>	Pending

### Other/Upcoming Projects

**Toketee Dam Rehabilitation:** We are still awaiting word from FERC on the seismic calculations. There are delays due to COVID-19 and the fact that FERC is not working in their office. We do expect the 30% design by the end of year. The seismic calculation is needed for the final design. We are working on obtaining the DOGAMI permit for Slide Creek as well as a contract to develop the rock. The project start date is estimated to be 2022-2023.

## TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) UPDATES AND ISSUES

### Fish Habitat Studies (FHS): Monitoring and Maintenance Schedules

**SA 6.2 Slide Creek Full-Flow Reach:** In November 2010 we signed a study plan, which FERC subsequently approved. Per the plan, the studies would begin in 2013 and a final report would be submitted to the RCC by the end of 2020. The FERC approval also required that report to be submitted to them by March 1, 2021.

The Plan required actions to reduce impacts, two of which have been completed to date: 1) construction of the flow release gate on Slide Creek Canal, and 2) reshaping of the river channel to eliminate the biggest stranding area. The gate responds so that when the plant trips offline the gate will open and maintain the flow in the full flow reach. The infrastructure exists, but the gate is awaiting a new actuator. When it's repaired this fall we will do the required test (one-time trip of plant) and monitor the water levels, as was done in 2006. This test monitoring will include the areas of the river reshaped during tailrace barrier construction to verify they no longer strand fish.

The rest of the Plan relates to monitoring the impacts of ramping caused by daily load shaping, but such operations have not occurred since the Plan was signed. Stillwater Sciences performed an initial pilot study in 2013 to verify field methods and monitoring locations. The resulting Technical Memo was prepared pursuant to requirements of the Plan.

Rich will send the study plan and supporting material to the TWG as a refresher and draft a report for review this fall. An alternative would be to consider requesting a FERC/RCC extension of the reporting schedule, but load shaping operation won't resume until the Toketee Rehabilitation project is completed and maybe not even after that.

Chris asked about the actuator project, and Rich replied that the repair is planned for October 2020.

**SA 7.2 Gravel Augmentation/SA 8.3 Soda Springs Habitat Maintenance Project:** Field repairs and maintenance of the fish habitat were completed last week. On-site boulders were shifted around to places that will better help the integrity of the log weirs and will also improve passage and spawning hydraulics. As a plus, some ancient floodplain boulders that had fallen into Lemolo 2 canal were hauled to Soda Springs to be utilized for habitat. The 400-500 cubic yards of staged spawning gravel is now in the river and available for spring Chinook and other fish to use for spawning habitat. The project was completed on time and on budget. This work will zero out the gravel augmentation fund and leave a small amount in the SA 8.3 fund.

**SA 8.2 Slide Creek Bypass Reach Habitat Monitoring:** *Nothing new to report.*

**SA 19.2 Long-term Monitoring/Predator Control Study:** Rich reported that the annual report revisions are nearing completion, with attempts to make it more concise and user friendly. The monitoring work is going really well this year. The fish evaluation building (FEB) has been operating three days/nights per week. The plan revisions are also in progress and will incorporate some changes being piloted this year such as tagging fish from the FEB to recycle upstream for survival monitoring. The predator control work also began this summer but COVID restrictions limited us to socially-distanced angling methods to avoid crowds on the electrofishing boat. During several evenings in June we removed 55 brown trout, and during two evenings last week we removed another 30 brown trout from Soda Springs. There were a few mortalities but the vast majority were safely liberated to Lemolo Reservoir. Some of the fish had been tagged three to four years ago. Jason reported that some interesting migration information is coming out of the tagging efforts. He thanked everyone for the flexibility on how to perform the predator removal this year. Electrofishing is more efficient but not feasible at this point. He said he heard about water quality issues at Lemolo Reservoir and said that Tui Chub may be an issue again. Liberating predators (Brown Trout) from Soda Springs into Lemolo Reservoir may, in addition to improving the Brown Trout fishery, help to control Tui Chub in Lemolo Reservoir.

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

Rich said he now has the complete 2018 water year records, and the 2018 annual report is on the horizon.

The USGS is planning to measure Soda Springs bypass reach flows and adjust the rating to reflect the habitat work that was just completed and its effect on the gage. Rich expects a shift of about one-tenth of a foot. It's not an extreme shift but one that is needed to keep up with flow monitoring requirements.

## **OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE UPDATES**

### Powerhouse/Canal Outages

Jon reported the Lemolo 2 plant/canal outage was recently wrapped up. There was a lot of activity on joint-use roads. The six-week outage was successful. The congestion is now cleared. The next outage is Fish Creek (September 7-23, 2020), followed by the Soda Springs fish screen (October 5-22, 2020). Also, there is a new district line outage that will affect Lemolo 2 and Clearwater 2 waterway from September 14-15, 2020. Notification will be revised shortly. He thanked Pam and the USDA-FS for the great job on brushing and flailing brush along the roads at the congested curves near Toketee Reservoir. With increased usage, there has been some crime and theft involving trailers and catalytic converters, a stranger temporarily occupying company housing, and dangerous day-use sites.

The abandoned car reported at the previous RCC meeting is still in same spot, but now it's smashed and riddled with graffiti. Jon asked Pam about plans to remove the vehicle. Pam said the last of her recent calls were on how to remove it. Law enforcement now has funding for the removal and the "eyesore" is finally on schedule to be removed. Jon also mentioned that the logging on the 3400-100 road has been completed, and inquired with Pam if there was a schedule to make road repairs as the road is pretty beat up. Pam noted that she would look into it and report back to the group.

### Reservoir Management

The Fish Creek forebay water level is still being maintained for fire management as requested by the USFS and approved by the RCC.

**Lemolo Reservoir:** Rich reported that the reservoir level is normal. The drawdown plan will be sent out soon and will probably look very typical.

Rich asked Pam about algae monitoring. She said she recently was on a staff call about the Diamond Lake District and reported that Mark Sommer (hydrologist) indicated the lakes are looking really good - in fact they are the best he's seen as far as algae blooms go. There were some blooms earlier in the year, but they all seem to be cleared up now.

**Toketee Reservoir:** *Nothing new to report. It is still being managed at the lowest end of the water level range due to rehabilitation needs.*

**Soda Springs:** *Nothing new to report.*

**LWD Management Plan:** *Nothing new to report.*

### **SA 19.1 TRIBUTARY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE**

Jason reported they are still out in the field doing really good work and a lot of it. They are getting ready for the end of the in-water work season. They are getting good deals on logs and have had success in securing free materials that normally would be expensive. These will be used on various restoration projects throughout the Rock Creek basin. They finalized and obtained access permits from Forest Investment Associates, Seneca, and Roseburg Resources. They worked with the contractor to develop insurance contracts and get timing lined-out for instream restoration work. They tested turbidity monitoring equipment and helped to stage materials near project sites. In mainstem Rock Creek, 27 restoration sites were created or augmented utilizing 140 logs (some with root-wads attached) and 150 boulders. The projects came in under budget. Two excavators were used this year which helped with timing and limiting turbidity issues and led to less time spent with excavators instream. The instream restoration work went smoothly overall with ODFW hydro personnel on-site helping to guide material placement and turbidity monitoring. They are currently undertaking post-project monitoring, taking photos, and developing reports for landowners. The crew also assisted on a tour with Seneca Jones folks of restoration projects on their property. ODFW hydro personnel are already starting to get ready for next year's potential projects which may include restoration work in Zigzag and upper-Camp creeks in the Steamboat drainage. The BLM has been consulted about possible boulder extraction from Rock Creek and Canton Creek rock pits for future restoration work. The hydro crew has been completing lamprey spawning surveys in Rock Creek and finishing up Harrington Creek data analyses. The Rock Creek water quality monitoring sites were checked to make sure they were working properly and data was downloaded. The crew helped sort fish at the Rock Creek fish ladder, removing as many hatchery fish as possible to help limit the number of hatchery fish spawning above the ladder. Upgrades to the Rock Creek ladder, in part to facilitate fish sorting activities, was a major component of the MOU developed between ODFW and PacifiCorp.

### **SA 19.3 FEDERAL MITIGATION FUND PROGRAM UPDATE**

Pam said the project list has been sent out. It received accolades from some of the NGOs. There is a large amount of funding for next year. Audrey will work on leveraging funding on the larger projects. If anyone has any questions, please let Pam know. Project funding requests should be submitted by February 2021. Rich asked if gravel augmentation was on the list and, if yes, was there a schedule for deliveries to the Soda Springs area. Pam said per the fund report, out of the original \$80K released several years ago, the balance is \$39K with \$1,200 currently funded for gravel augmentation.

### **OTHER**

Steve mentioned that he and ODFW have started the initial required 15-year review of the SA 19.4 Monitoring and Oversight Funding program.

He also asked Pam about using the SA 19.3 mitigation fund for gravel augmentation and habitat work once the SA 7.2 and SA 8.3 funds are zeroed out. She said yes, the program states that if it's something that PacifiCorp is obligated to do but the funding is gone, then yes, the mitigation fund should be used.

Lastly, Scott thanked Pam and Steve Marchi for responding to the project traffic congestion issues during the Lemolo 2 canal repair work.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** *None at this time.*

**NEXT RCC Meeting:** October 21, 2020 (conference call)

Parting words, “Stay Positive!”

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 AM.