

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

**Resource Coordination Committee (RCC)
January 15, 2020 Meeting Summary**

FINAL (3/20/20)

RCC Members or Alternates Present

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

Other Attendees

Beth Bendickson (PacifiCorp)
Jon McSmith (PacifiCorp)
Pete Sukraw (PacifiCorp)
Travis Mackey (Cow Creek)
Scott Schevenius (PacifiCorp)

Storm Update: Hundreds of trees have been removed in the last few days. The Project tripped offline yesterday. This morning all plants were online at 8AM, however, Line 55 just tripped offline. Lemolo 2, Clearwater, Toketee, and Slide Creek have also just tripped offline. With the amount of trees that are falling, it's dangerous for employees. Power to homes is intermittent. The Diamond Lake feeder line is down, but we're hoping to re-establish it today. We have access to major plant areas, but are still trying to establish access to Fish Creek, Clearwater 2, and Lemolo 2 forebay. We have contracted help to plow snow and clear fallen trees on Burma Road and other problem areas.

INTRODUCTIONS, AGENDA, OLD BUSINESS

Introductions/Member Updates/Organization News

USDA-FS: Steve Marchi is on detail. Martha Price is the acting RELM staff officer. Jake Wynn is on detail as the Tiller District Ranger, and Bob Nichols will detail behind Jake as the Natural Resources Staff Officer for 120 days. Terri Brown's detail (acting Diamond Lake District Ranger) will end in two weeks. Gabe Wishart (Wolf Creek Job Corps) will step in as acting Diamond Lake District Ranger for the next 120 days. Jeff Bohler will retire this July.

BLM: There are no new personnel updates at this time, as their hiring process has gone to a crawl. They are moving the Washington office to Grand Junction, CO.

NOAA: Ken Phippen retired. Eric Murray is acting Oregon Coast Branch Chief until mid-February or the first of March. He is very knowledgeable in ESA matters.

USFWS: Two positions were filled. Jon Stevenson (Bend) will work on wolf issues as the new Predator Specialist. They are replacing Rob Burns' vacated position with a fish biologist in March. Pauly will stay onboard for North Umpqua hydropower matters in the near term, but the new person will work with Pacific Power on Prospect.

DEQ: They are in the middle of hiring an Umpqua Basin coordinator. By the next RCC meeting, we should know who the new coordinator for that area will be.

ODFW: Jason will keep us posted on rumored retirements within the hydropower program.

OWRD: No updates at this time.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public Tour: Pam suggested doing the tour every other year. Chris said perhaps time it around significant events. If there is nothing new to report then there is less incentive for folks to come out. Steve suggested maybe taking a year off, or until something changes or we have something new to report. Chris said there might be one other option, particularly with the fish window, and that's perhaps to do a virtual tour that still reaches out to the public. Other RCC members liked the idea of a virtual tour. Steve asked if anyone was opposed to taking a year off. He said he would look into how a virtual tour could work and will report back at the next meeting.

Rich said he will continue to provide smaller group-specific (e.g. school classes, veterans groups) tours as needed, but there are currently none scheduled. Umpqua Community College usually schedules Rich to do a winter presentation as part of the Water Resources course. Although not exactly a project tour, Rich will also be assisting ODFW in teaching high school students about fish habitat at the Umpqua Fishery Enhancement Derby Student Education Day in late January.

FACILITY AND PROJECT UPDATES

Fish Protection and Passage Facilities

The Soda Springs Fish Passage Operations and Maintenance annual report is currently under review by the TWG. It will be submitted to FERC prior to the February 1, 2020 deadline. The report summarized last year's operation of the fish screen and fish ladder. Rich said the Soda Springs fish ladder will be out of service from February 3-7, 2020 to install an expansion joint seal, to reduce the intrusion of water. There will be another maintenance event in October for other repairs and upgrades. The other fish screens and ladders, as well as the tailrace barriers, are operating very well.

Projects Requiring NTPs or Other Coordination

Project	Status
<i>Slide Creek Quarry Development Plan</i>	Awaiting USDA-FS NTP – Pam said that the NTP should be issued this week or next. FS was determining how to address the rock and road royalty fees.
<i>Level 1 Road Gates</i>	Request submitted on January 3, 2020

Pam noted that Vern Shumway has been talking with the owner of the Lemolo Resort regarding the upcoming Low Poole refuse trench capping project. Vern reported to the resort owners that if they want to clear an opening for additional “beach” area at the time of the capping work, that the beach clearing will be at the resort’s expense. Steve spoke to the resort owners as well. Pam will provide the final capping prescription and NTP by the end of January so that PacifiCorp can begin the permitting process.

Rich will be drafting permit applications and approval requests for excavation of the Clearwater 2 impoundment to remove and reshape sediments (mostly from Mowich Creek), restore some of the original pool volume, and reduce plugging of the instream flow pipe feeding the Clearwater 2 bypass reach. Excavation would involve building an access road into the impoundment in order to reach sediments, as was done in 2005.

Other/Upcoming Projects

Toketee Dam Rehabilitation: *Nothing new to report.* Monthly coordination meetings are held with the USDA-FS. We are still awaiting FERC acceptance of seismic loading and acceleration calculations, and we are still planning for initiation of construction in 2022. Pam asked about an overall dam rehabilitation project NTP request (i.e., separate from the quarry development NTP request). Steve will send an NTP request once FERC approves PacifiCorp’s designs.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) UPDATES AND ISSUES

The Fish Habitat and Studies TWG met January 9, 2020 from which the following updates are gleaned.

Fish Habitat Studies (FHS): Monitoring and Maintenance Schedules

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

SA 7.2 Gravel Augmentation: Work completed last fall included adding 700 CY of gravel by sluice pipe to the river below the Soda Springs fish screen. In addition, 200 CY was added by conveyer belt, with 100 CY being deposited near the fish evaluation building (FEB) and another 100 CY off the Schoolhouse Bridge into Slide Creek bypass reach. There are already quite a few fish spawning on the gravel near the FEB, including some brown trout seen last month and Coho salmon now. We haven’t had high enough flow yet to disburse the larger gravel pile. The fund balance is currently about \$10K and the ACOE/DEQ permits authorize work for up to five years and with substantial quantities of material for fish habitat. The TWG proposes using the remaining fund balance to add the remaining gravel (already staged in the Soda Springs area) concurrent with in-water work on the SA 8.3 spawning habitat maintenance project.

SA 8.2 Habitat Monitoring: *Nothing new to report.*

SA 8.3 Soda Springs Habitat Maintenance: The structural boulder and riverbed grading work planned for 2019 is now rescheduled to occur in August 2020. The SA 8.3 fund has a balance of about \$22K. The contracted and RCC-approved cost last year was \$25K. The contract will be reviewed and revised if necessary to ensure we get the maximum amount of work completed for the remaining balance within both the SA 7.2 and SA 8.3 funds during August 2020.

ACTION: Approve the TWG recommendation to spend the remaining funds in the SA 7.2 and SA 8.3 accounts on fish habitat and gravel augmentation this year. ***Approved January 15, 2020.***
Note: Steve noted that in the future, gravel augmentation projects are expected to be covered by SA 19.3 funding, pending the USDA-FS approval processes.

SA 19.2 Long-term Monitoring/Predator Control Study:

The 2019 annual report is being drafted and the TWG hopes to get it out to the RCC in March of this year. Because the budget is smaller this year than the past several, work emphasis will be focused more on monitoring upstream fish passage through the ladder and sampling downstream passage through the fish screen. The secondary focus will be on spawning surveys to monitor the distribution of fish upstream of the dam. If staff is available after other tasks have been completed, downstream surveys will be conducted. The predator control study concluded that control is warranted in Soda Springs Reservoir, so the TWG also plans to remove a target of at least 200 brown trout from the reservoir during 2020, which may take as many as five nights of capture effort. We are in process of revising the SA 19.2 Study Plan for a detailed TWG review. Budget-wise, last year the RCC approved a budget of \$116,000 and a scope of work for 2020. Based on TWG discussion, we think we can make the project work within that budget barring no additional expenses come up. Smolt trapping below the Soda Springs dam is an uncertain and risky component as we've learned during the past two years, so may or may not be pursued. It depends partly on snowpack and operational conditions.

Jim Muck requested that ODFW provide a work plan in a month-by-month format on how the funding will be used, for example, how many hours for FEB operation, surveys, smolt trapping, etc. It would be helpful to ensure that the priority ranking of tasks is implemented accordingly. Steve asked Jason if this work plan could be e-mailed before the next RCC meeting, and Jason said yes.

Jim went on to mention that every time we have a spill we seem to lose the smolt trap. He questioned if it was worth trying to keep it going. It's one of those tools that takes two people for safety reasons. He asked ODFW to evaluate whether it's still worth it to keep the smolt trap running, depending on the data we're getting from it. Rich confirmed that the smolt trap presents a bit of a Catch-22 since it is of no use unless Soda Springs is spilling water, but the trap is in danger when Soda Springs is spilling water in excess of about 2,000 cfs.

Rich said he is working on a TWG meeting summary. In the course of doing that, he'll summarize the 2020 budget information and get that out to the TWG this week.

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

With the recent winter storm activity, several of the bypassed reaches experienced ramping as a result of efforts to avoid overtopping of canals and forebays when the plants tripped offline. (See, for example, the USGS website for Lemolo 1 and 2 bypass reaches). For the most part, the operators did an amazing job of staying within the ramping thresholds despite the emergency conditions being experienced. Stage changes are not as smooth during emergency and/or weather-driven events as they are during planned maintenance. Regarding planned ramping, Rich sent the annual schedule of planned powerhouse outages last week. He also sent the Lemolo Reservoir drawdown report which shows that reservoir operations successfully achieved the planned water level changes and schedule as adopted in August 2019 although actual precipitation and natural inflows were very low. Flows at the Copeland gage went below the target minimum flow for a period, but this was due to abnormally dry weather. The Flow Monitoring Report for WY 2018 will come shortly after the USGS provides the final WY data. Chris reminded everyone that that these reports usually lag a couple years behind to allow for the USGS records review process. Rich added that recent changes in USGS personnel servicing the Umpqua basin have required re-educating the new staff regarding hydropower gage systems and may be contributing to lags in data review.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE UPDATES

Powerhouse/Canal Outages

No updates at this time. The schedule of planned outages for 2020 was sent out last week, showing Clearwater 2 occurring in May and Lemolo 2 occurring July-August. Chris asked if there had been any evidence of landslides with all the downed trees from the recent storms. Jon said he hadn't seen or heard of any substantial ones yet. Rich said his recollection of the turbidity measurements at Soda Springs has not shown any indication of major slide activity nearby.

Reservoir Management

Lemolo Reservoir: *Reported above.*

Toketee Reservoir: *Nothing new to report.* We are still trying to maintain a low reservoir until the Toketee rehab project is complete. On January 14, 2020, a public concern was expressed to ODFW and forwarded to PacifiCorp and USDA-FS about boat access. PacifiCorp and USDA-FS are analyzing potential boat access solutions including the potential for relocating the boat ramp.

Soda Springs: *Nothing new to report.* With the loss of power during the recent storms, the operators were still able to maintain a stable reservoir even without sensor indications.

LWD Management Plan: *Nothing new to report.*

SA 19.1 TRIBUTARY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

Jason reported that good work was done in the Rock Creek Basin in 2019. Spring Chinook Salmon surveys were completed (September-November). They did three surveys per week, which equaled three to four stream miles per week. They observed 40 spring Chinook Salmon and 24 redds. They

observed a peak count of over 200 coho redds in Rock Creek and its tributaries during October-January spawning ground surveys. It was one of the better counts they'd seen in a while. The summer/winter spawning steelhead surveys will start at the end of January. The surveys will be conducted depending on flows through April or May. They will continue to do semi-monthly downloads of the seven Rock Creek water quality monitoring sites and update software at each site. They will be entering a lot of data from the monitoring efforts. They are looking into new monitoring options for the restoration work, as they are wanting to see what they are getting out of Rock Creek restoration projects. They are working on an agreement with BLM engineers to fly BLM drones over Rock Creek restoration sites. The drone would be outfitted with a FLiR thermal camera for temperature monitoring. They are also working with the BLM on updated signage in the Rock Creek basin outlining restoration efforts that have been, and will be, happening and to remind folks that the basin is closed to angling.

Regarding log and boulder staging, ODFW cleaned up the old Swanson Group mill site, at which they previously had free use. They are now working on the Basco Logging site. ODFW will be able to use the Basco site for free in exchange for putting in a locking gate. This has been completed. They also procured free rocks. The contractor has already moved logs for summer work. They are opportunistic in obtaining materials from industrial landowners and are also working on landowner access signatures to make sure there is something on paper for property access and work. They are continuing to define 2020 locations and also finishing up on 2019 reporting.

SA 19.3 FEDERAL MITIGATION FUND PROGRAM UPDATE

The 2020 funding amount is \$1,798,388.44.

Pam said she doesn't have a confirmed date yet on project submittal but suggested that folks shoot for the end of February for getting their requests in. She is still working on last year's funding. The projects need a 20% match and they can't have over 49% of funds going to a contract. The grants/agreements folks are getting picky. She said to make sure you have been in contact with the appropriate USDA-FS staff specialist for the resource area in question (e.g., Bob Nichols for fisheries projects).

Mike asked who Jason was working with on the BLM drone work. He wanted to follow up as they have been grounded on drone use. Jason said he will check with Kirk Haskett on who he is working with.

Pam said per the USDA-FS special use specialists, a special use permit isn't required to operate a drone on NFS lands, but PacifiCorp will need to provide flight information (when and where) to Steve, who will distribute it to the same list they use for reporting helicopter flight information.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: *None at this time.*

NEXT RCC Meeting: May 20, 2020 (In-person meeting, followed by project tour)

The meeting adjourned at 11:12 AM.