

**North Umpqua Hydroelectric Project  
(FERC No. P-1927)****Resource Coordination Committee (RCC)  
October 5, 2022 Meeting Summary****FINAL**RCC Members or Alternates Present

Steve Albertelli (PacifiCorp)  
Rich Grost (PacifiCorp)  
Pam Sichtung (USDA-FS)  
Amy Golladay (USDI-BLM; via phone)  
Chris Stine (ODEQ)  
Jason Brandt (ODFW)  
Craig Kohanek (OWRD; via phone)  
Frank Weaver (USFWS; via phone)

Other Attendees

Travis Mackie (Cow Creek; via phone)  
Jeffrey Brown (PacifiCorp)

RCC Members Absent:

Kathleen Wells (NOAA Fisheries)

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

**USDA-FS:** New hiring and temporary detail positions are extensive. More assistants in the wildlife department are working on NTPs. Sophia Kim is backfilling Ron McMullin's position as fisheries biologist in the Zone. Ron will be retiring in February. Madilyn Houston is the new Zone hydrology tech. Pam plans to retire in March. Forest Service is trying to backfill Pam's position before she leaves. Pam will come back after retirement through the ACES program for contracting past employees to overlap her replacement.

**BLM:** Amy is returning from a detail in Coos Bay. No updates.

**FWS:** The state supervisor retired. Selection for the new supervisor will be made soon. Section 7 consultation biologist, Amy Price, joined in July. Amy will fill the role previously staffed by Scott Center. The coastal distinct population segment of the Pacific marten proposed critical habitat comment period closes later this month. The Service is also working on the fisher listing.

**ODEQ:** There has been some turnover in the agency. The Director who was scheduled to retire advanced his schedule by 3 months and is out as of September 30, 2022. Leah Felon, former deputy director, was installed as director. The agency is short several basin coordinators, including Klamath and Umpqua.

**ODFW:** Few changes. The new NE hydropower coordinator is Jordan Smith. NW coordinator position is still open.

**OWRD:** Director retired on September 13, 2022. Acting director is Doug Wolcott. Mary Grainey has officially retired as of the end of August. There has been a significant hiring push in the agency.

**PacifiCorp:** The new VP of Renewable Resources is Will Shallenberger, and the Managing Director of Generation is Ali Shafaei. Jeff is now the production manager for Prospect as well as North Umpqua.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

Bryan Benz, Natural Resources professor, from UCC will bring a forest resources class for a mini-tour next week (October 12, 2022).

The Douglas County Commissioners received a presentation and tour on August 23, 2022, which was similar to the RCC tour. Dave Andersen and Mark Sommer of the Forest Service attended.

Emergency managers (DCSO, OSP, et al.) will be touring the Project on October 18, 2022. Kori Nobel, PacifiCorp's Emergency Services manager, will be organizing that tour. Sam Carter, PacifiCorp's regional business manager, will lead the tour.

Response to publicizing of this year's public tour was quiet. Scheduled attendees include one member of the public, PacifiCorp's regional business manager, a News-Review reporter, Audrey Squires (NFF Mitigation Fund Coordinator), Kirk Blaine from the Native Fish Society, and many new Forest Service staff. [Post-meeting update: Approximately 10 members from the Cow Creek Band arrived for the presentation but could not stay for the tour.]

## **FACILITY AND PROJECT UPDATES**

### Pumped Storage: Fish Creek and Clearwater 2

Steve provided the following project updates:

**Fish Creek:** Water Quality Certification modification was issued in late August. DEQ received a petition for review of the modification from a third-party group. DEQ has 60 days to respond.

**Clearwater 2:** PacifiCorp continues to implement its proposed studies as well as agency requested studies. The Draft License Amendment Application is currently planned for distribution to agencies for review in June.

Fish and water quality sampling is on schedule. Spawning surveys were completed this spring. No rainbow trout spawning was observed in project-affected areas. Fish population surveys were conducted in June and September. Currently surveying for spawning brook trout, with brown trout spawning surveys to follow in November. PacifiCorp initiated creel surveys as requested by ODFW. Many anglers observed fishing were able to be surveyed for catch and fish information last weekend.

During August electrofishing, many small (50 mm-100 mm) fish were captured using the boat electrofishing system, thus helping to address concerns from ODFW that small fish may not be adequately sampled by that method.

Eleven data sondes were deployed and recording water quality since early June. Rich will be pulling sondes next week. Downloads and field audits were conducted regularly throughout the monitoring period. During monthly downloads, there were two periods when sondes failed to record, but there was redundant data being recorded in both cases due to two sondes at the site where errors occurred to accommodate the different sensors (TDG and turbidity sensors on different sondes).

### Fish Protection and Passage Facilities

**Fish passage:** All facilities are operating well. The typical autumn increase in leaf debris is beginning at the tailrace barriers. No ladder issues were observed since the last meeting. Power washing of the T-screens at the Fish Creek fish screen will be conducted next week.

During September a new problem was identified and corrected at the Soda Springs fish screen fish return system. Biologists started noticing a higher-than-normal injury rate at the Fish Evaluation Building (FEB). Typically, the injury rate is approaching zero and mostly from netting fish out of the tank. For a few weeks it was closer to 1% and increasing. After investigation, Rich and the operators discovered a large slab of tree trunk was wedged in the fish return hopper and had created a debris obstruction and injury-causing turbulence. The debris was immediately removed and since then fish injury rates have returned to normal.

Toketee Dam Rehabilitation - *No new updates.*

### Projects Requiring NTPs or Other Coordination

Pam noted that three NTPs should be issued later today.

A pile of logs has accumulated below the Clearwater reconnect. FERC requested that we clear the log jam. During high flow conditions the jam can back water up all the way to CW reconnect. The RCC discussed the permitting that would be required to translocate the logs in the river versus simply removing the logs for upland disposal. PacifiCorp will prepare and submit necessary applications.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Status</b>
DOGAMI Permit Application	Awaiting review and signature
Slide Creek new housing (Discussion with PacifiCorp and USDA-FS)	Pending appraisal of existing FS housing at Lappland
CW2 PS Geotech	
Fish Creek Forebay Geotech	
LM1 Dam Boom Anchor	Pending
T&D ROW Veg Mgmt.	
TOK/FC Access Road Improvements	
Residential Hazard Trees	
CW2 Plant Access Gate	Pending

*Note: Additional updates were not received from the Forest Service.*

## **MONITORING PROGRAM & TECHNICAL WORK GROUP UPDATES**

Rich provided the following updates:

### SA 4.1 Soda Springs Fish Passage O&M

Previously scheduled outage for wiring tracing and drawing updates was postponed until next year.

### SA 5 & 6 Flows and Ramping Monitoring

Rich and PacifiCorp's hydrologist are working on the WY21 report, which may be out by year's end if all records can be obtained from USGS. Lemolo Reservoir drawdown plan was approved in August, and the reservoir is at 3,134' now. Diamond Lake flows increased yesterday with removal of the first row of Diamond Lake weir flash boards. The Wild & Scenic Reach is receiving approximately 800 cfs.

### SA 7.2 Soda Springs Bypassed Reach Gravel Augmentation

Salmon spawning and redd monitoring is planned for tomorrow. Stillwater Sciences captured aerial images of this reach and beyond earlier in the year and are working on constructing the new base maps for future monitoring.

### SA 8.2 Slide Creek Bypassed Reach Monitoring

Stillwater Sciences captured aerial images and created new base maps of this reach and beyond in July. Ground surveys were conducted in September. Reporting is pending and due by year's end. They relayed that the best and largest patch of spawning gravel is still in 'The Grotto' area, which is a natural pool tailout about ¼ mile upstream of the Slide Creek powerhouse.

### SA 8.3 Soda Springs Bypass Reach Habitat Maintenance (update, schedule)

No maintenance is needed at this point. Redd and spawning surveys continue. Many Chinook salmon are currently using the gravel to deposit eggs, and there appear to be fresh fish in the wings still waiting to spawn.

### SA 19.2 Long-term Monitoring and Predator Control (update, schedule)

As planned, West Fork Environmental arrived in August for PIT antennae maintenance, upgrades, and testing. They also measured the FEB flume for a potential replacement of a metal flume section with a fiberglass section containing an antenna and tested the potential for adding a suspended loop antenna system above the riverbed antenna to expand the read-range at that site. We are awaiting design details and cost estimates for both potential modifications.

Last spring, the riverbed PIT antennae detected tags in spawning steelhead that had been tagged several years earlier as smolts. Pam encourages the RCC to publicize such events more broadly. Rich suggested that event was currently old news but could be woven into a future story if more tagged spawning adults are identified.

FEB and ladder counts continue. ODFW is keeping up to date with ladder counts and just yesterday provided count updates to the TWG. The latest updates show an increasing trend of wild chinook salmon returns since 2016, which Rich will highlight in the RCC presentation today. However, it also shows an exceedingly large number of jacks (including approx. 400 hatchery jacks) passing Soda Springs this year, for yet unknown reasons.

### Water Quality Certification Monitoring

The Soda Springs Water Quality Station is operating normally under USGS supervision. DEQ said they will be changing how data and reporting are submitted to the agency, including use of the Your DEQ Online interface.

## **OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE UPDATES**

### Powerhouse/Canal Outages (updates, plans)

Planned outages for 2022 are now complete. An outage plan for 2023 has not been developed yet. There are a lot of moving pieces, including staff, that will inform that effort. For example, the Toketee Unit 2 outage to rebuild the runner will take six months.

Public safety fencing at LM1 forebay is currently being replaced.

### Reservoir Management (Lemolo, Toketee, Soda Springs)

Rich gave the following updates:

**Lemolo Reservoir:** The Fall drawdown is proceeding normally and on schedule.

**Toketee Reservoir:** No change from recent operations.

**Soda Springs:** No change from recent operations.

Sediment removal from the Clearwater 2 impoundment was completed during early August as planned. The sediment has now dried and is being transported to Lemolo quarry for disposal.

The first public safety power shut-off to affect the Project occurred last month. The shutdown required the Project to de-energize virtually all distribution lines around the project, including to all homes and facilities, and forced the crew to take creative steps to use portable generators to power critical devices to continue generating and to power local administrative and operations systems.

## **SA 19.1 TRIBUTARY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM**

The hydro crew completed Rock Creek spring Chinook and summer steelhead adult holding snorkel counts at 77 sites above the hatchery diversion dam and 5 sites below the diversion dam/hatchery in early September. They observed 98 hatchery (less than the 171 observed in 2021), 11 wild (more than the 3 observed in 2021 and the most counted since 2015), and 3 of unknown origin Chinook above the diversion dam, and 43 hatchery and 1 wild chinook below the diversion dam (area below diversion dam was not sampled in 2021). A total of 407 hatchery Chinook were removed at the Rock Creek hatchery ladder. A total of 258 hatchery (much greater than the 3 observed in 2021 and second

highest count since snorkel surveys were initiated), 20 wild (0 observed in 2021 and the greatest count since 2016), and 1 of unknown origin summer steelhead were observed in the snorkel surveys above the diversion dam, and 39 hatchery (greatest count since 2016 and second highest observed since counts were initiated) and 1 wild summer steelhead were observed in the area below the diversion dam. A total of 148 hatchery summer steelhead were removed at the Rock Creek hatchery ladder. Spring Chinook spawning ground surveys in Rock Creek started off slow this year with a few redds and live fish observed so far. Water is very low with a good amount of suitable spawning gravel currently in the dry.

Instream restoration started July 5, 2022 and lasted until August 11, 2022. Over 1,000 pieces of large wood were mechanically placed, directionally felled, or pushed over at over 60 sites with 90-plus structures created in 10-plus miles of Mainstem Rock Creek, East Fork of Rock Creek, North Fork of East Fork, McComas Creek, Kelly Creek, Taylor Creek, Shoup Creek, Miller Creek, Harrington Creek, Stoney Creek and Mace Creek.

Contractors will be coming in for weed control before an early spring riparian planting project along a 3.5-mile lower reach of Rock Creek. The riparian management area will be planted with a focus on the south bank, along with several islands to provide shade in 80'-100' wide channel. The riparian management area will be replanted in areas impacted by the Archie fire and where instream access corridors caused disturbances. Post planting will require additional weed maintenance.

The hydro crew helped with the posting of “No Angling” signs throughout Rock Creek basin, especially at adult salmonid holding pools. There have been several instances of poaching occurring recently, with OSP getting involved.

### **SA 19.3 FEDERAL MITIGATION FUND**

USDA-FS is creating a new position of Partnership Coordinator, who will focus on establishing agreements with the partners. This person will take management of the mitigation fund apart from the fiscal responsibilities, which will remain with the hydropower program coordinator. There is currently \$1.8 million in the fund after this fiscal year’s funding. For FY23, only \$523K of projects were approved due to the availability of \$30 million of Forest disaster funding. FY24 project submittals will be due in April 2023. Gravel augmentation is an ongoing, programmatically approved project category.

**OTHER RCC AGENCY PROJECTS AND/OR COORDINATION:** None at this time.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Kelly Coates is now the Director of Natural Resources at the Cow Creek Tribe of Umpqua Band of Indians.

**NEXT RCC Meeting:** January 18, 2023. *Action Item:* Beth will schedule the 2023 meetings on the third Wednesday of the first month of each quarter.

The meeting adjourned at 10:57 A.M.