

**North Umpqua Hydroelectric Project  
(FERC No. P-1927)  
Resource Coordination Committee (RCC)  
July 19, 2023 Meeting**

**FINAL**

**RCC Members or Alternates Present**

Steve Albertelli (PacifiCorp)  
Rich Grost (PacifiCorp)  
Michelle McMullin (NOAA)  
Jeff Brown (NOAA)\*  
Chris Stine (ODEQ)  
Sarah Sauter (ODEQ)\*  
Jason Brandt (ODFW)  
Craig Kohanek (OWRD)  
Martin Sanchez (OWRD)  
Jedidiah Hancock (USDA-FS)  
Pam Sichting (USDA-FS)  
Mike Korn (USDI-BLM)\*  
Amy Golladay (USDI-BLM)\*

Frank Weaver (USFWS)\*  
Mike Korn (USDI-BLM)\*  
Amy Golladay (USDI-BLM)\*  
Frank Weaver (USFWS)\*

**Other Attendees**

Scott Schevenius (PacifiCorp)  
Jeffrey Brown (PacifiCorp)  
Debbi Smith (PacifiCorp)\*  
Heather Tugaw (ODEQ)\*

\*=Attended remotely

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**INTRODUCTIONS, MEMBER UPDATES, ORGANIZATIONAL NEWS**

**USDA-FS:** Jed is assuming the Hydropower Program Coordinator role on July 28, 2023, but Pam will still be around to provide support through the new year. Ron McMullin has retired, and Sophia Kim is the new North Zone Fisheries Biologist. Jake Wynn is currently detailing as the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Supervisor, and Steve Marchi is detailing at the Regional Office. A new hydrologist has been hired.

**ODEQ:** Chris' last day was last Friday, but he's back on contract until October, 17, 2023. Marilyn Fonseca has left ODEQ, and Valerie Thompson is the new 401 coordinator. Both Deb Mylander, Chris' previous supervisor, and Steve Mrazic have taken new positions.. Sarah Sauter is the interim Umpqua Basin Coordinator, filling in as the RCC representative until Chris' position is backfilled. Heather Tugaw is the interim stormwater program manager. Chris was presented with a framed photo commemorating his long and valued service to the RCC.

**OWRD:** Still advertising to fill the Director position by September. Hydro program has been very busy. The legislature added 71 new positions, so there are a lot of new people at OWRD. The Fish Creek pumped storage water right amendment has been finalized.

**NOAA:** No changes in the Roseburg office. Preparation has begun for October 23<sup>rd</sup> move to the BLM building.

**ODFW:** Sam Moyers has taken a position with ODOT. Rehiring to backfill Sam is in doubt. It hasn't been determined yet how ODFW staff will share the work covered by Sam. Jason reminded the group that the 19.4 funding review a few years back included funding for two positions.

**BLM:** There have been a lot of personnel changes as BLM seeks to increase staffing. The assistant field manager is filling-in for two botanists that departed. There are three new fish biologists on the District. There will be new natural resources specialists to cover wildlife, botany, hydrology, and soils.

**USFWS:** As a result of fuels reduction funding, there will be a new hire to address ESA consultations. Due to ongoing litigation, there is a request for more information on Pacific fishers to inform the listing decision. There is a target of 2025 for publication of a 12-month finding on whether listing fishers is warranted. There were wolves near Lemolo Lake. It's believed that people were feeding them to get better pictures. The oldest wolf was hit by a car and killed. The younger one is still there, but has moved more southwest of the campsite.

**PacifiCorp:** Chris Southwick is the new maintenance manager on the Project. He comes to PacifiCorp after 15 years at ODOT.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH (PAST EVENTS/FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES)**

The electrical pre-apprenticeship group from Glide High School toured the fish passage facilities at Soda Springs Dam, Soda Springs Power Plant, and the overlook area at the Clearwater 2 forebay.

### Upcoming Events

The group discussed the upcoming annual public tour. Different alternatives for increasing opportunities and attendance were discussed including scheduling later in the day, on a Friday, or on a weekend day. The group settled on pushing the tour later in the day on the regularly-scheduled Wednesday (October 4) to reduce the amount of time off required for the public to attend while avoiding competing activities on the weekend.

## **FACILITY AND PROJECT UPDATES**

### Fish Creek and Clearwater 2 Pumped Storage

**Fish Creek:** The final order for water rights amendment is complete, but FERC has not yet issued the license amendment.

**Clearwater 2:** PacifiCorp is not proceeding with licensing and design work for Clearwater 2 pumped storage until the Fish Creek license amendment is issued. Surveys and monitoring, including wildlife, water quality, and fisheries, will continue as planned. The geotech work plan was questioned, but Steve clarified that the geotech and eventual dredging of both Fish Creek and Clearwater 2 forebays is a maintenance activity that will be required regardless of pumped storage plans at each development. NTP requests have already been submitted for the geotech work at the forebays. NTP requests for the actual dredging have not yet been prepared or submitted.

Fish Protection and Passage Facilities (Tailrace Barriers, Ladders, Screens)

Fish protection passage facilities are all operating well, with minor maintenance planned at the Lemolo 2 and Fish Creek fish ladders and a major maintenance and upgrade outage planned at the Soda Springs fish screen (details below).

Toketee Dam Rehabilitation

It looks like construction of this project is being delayed to 2032 due to the ongoing coordination with FERC and the board of consultants regarding the seismic acceleration calculations. Scott noted that an NTP request would be submitted in the near future for additional geotech on the right abutment. The group discussed the timing of rock development at Slide Creek quarry. Scott noted the rock development would take approximately one year. Forest Service is working with DOGAMI to resolve conflicts over quarry reclamation following PacifiCorp’s use. Pam and Jed wondered if it was too soon to obtain a permit given the long lead time until implementation. Scott noted that quarry permits may be 10+ years. Forest Service will continue working with DOGAMI and loop in PacifiCorp as needed.

NTPs or Other Permitting Coordination

Numerous NTPs have been requested and received since April. There are only 2 outstanding NTPs.

There was discussion concerning work to remove a landslide on Happy Creek Lane. The affected segment of road is a PacifiCorp-maintained t-line road on Forest Service property that provides access to a private land holding. Pam described to the group that if the FS approves spoil of materials from federal land to private land, a cultural resources review and possibly survey would be required on the private spoils location. Forest Service has been held liable for third-parties spoiling Forest materials on known cultural sites. An NTP for the landslide remediation is pending.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Status</b>
Lapland Housing Purchase	Ongoing coordination
TL46_5/29 Access Road	NTP Pending
Happy Creek Lane Slide Removal	NTP Pending

Scott noted that a project to repair a leak at Lemolo 2 canal shut-off and drainage system Gate 3 was pending. Rich noted that there was some sediment in Fish Creek settling pond that may need to be dredged to allow dewatering of the fish screen for cleaning and maintenance, for which he would prepare an NTP.

**MONITORING PROGRAM & TECHNICAL WORK GROUP UPDATES**

SA 4.1 Soda Springs Fish Passage O&M

There is a planned maintenance outage of the fish screen August 7-31 during which it will be dewatered to clean, inspect, and maintain. The outage will include extensive maintenance on the submerged components of the de-sedimentation system and a major upgrade of the finishing screen cleaning system.

SA 5 & 6 Flows and Ramping Monitoring

The annual Flow Monitoring Report is in progress as the necessary data are received from the USGS. There was a rare ‘real-time reportable’ ramping event in the Slide Creek bypassed reach a few weeks ago. Two subsequent unit values were greater than one foot in change, meeting the threshold for real-time reporting. This is the first real-time reportable event since 2015. The event involved the

transmission group installing a power pole, which required the line to be briefly de-energized. The de-energizing of the line required the Toketee powerhouse to reduce load for an expected 2-minutes, but a line switch failed and caused the load reduction to last 28 minutes, during which power was also interrupted to the flow controls at Slide Creek diversion dam. This combination of unfortunate events caused the inadvertent flow changes and ramping. Upon review several improvements to the process were identified, including: replacing the faulty switch (done), better coordination with TCC and line crews to emphasize the critical timing of flow changes and speed of work, and planning to provide flow via alternate paths whenever a powerhouse flow is greatly reduced – so that the speed of switching is not assumed or required. The event occurred and was corrected so quickly that there was not time for a resource impact evaluation, but the flow changes did not appear to affect water quality at the Soda Springs water quality monitoring station.

#### SA 7.2 Gravel Augmentation Monitoring

Gravel augmentation reaches are being monitored for gravel abundance and fish use as usual, as will continue to occur during redd surveys this fall. It will continue to be monitored. There is a stockpile of gravel provided from 19.3 funding currently available in the Soda Springs vicinity.

FS currently has \$37,000 approved from the Hydro Mitigation Fund for gravel augmentation. There are discussions to decide the best way to provide those funds for gravel placement. One option is to go through the ODFW Good Neighbor Authority. In the past, the FS has contracted to deliver gravel but generally not been involved in permitting for or placing it.

#### SA 8.2 Slide Creek Bypass Reach Habitat Monitoring

Gravel augmentation at Slide Creek bypass reach since 2004 has improved spawning habitat, but the most recent monitoring indicated that the amount of spawning habitat is reduced since the high flows of 2019 seem to have moved more gravel out of the reach (and into the Slide Cr Full-flow reach) than into the reach. The TWG is reviewing the need and opportunities for adding additional gravel and continuing to monitor that and the natural gravel recruitment from Fish Creek (such as the 3,000 cy of natural bedload moved downstream of the Fish Creek diversion dam in 2018).

#### SA 8.3 Soda Springs Bypass Reach Habitat Maintenance

The spawning habitat structures are in good condition with plenty of gravel still accessible on them. There is no need for maintenance at this time since there have been no substantially-high flows since the most recent structural maintenance and gravel additions in 2020.

#### SA 19.2 Long-term Monitoring and Predator Control

The annual report for 2022 was finalized and distributed in May, with highlights including upstream movement of the first adult lampreys and an abnormally large number of hatchery mini jacks at Soda Springs Dam.

Upstream passage thus far in 2023 has been relatively low for winter steelhead and very low for summer steelhead, but quite high for spring Chinook salmon. Pam shared that on a recent visit she observed far more adult Chinook holding upstream of Soda Springs Dam than she had ever seen before. Jason shared figures of upstream fish passage thus far in 2023 from his recent RCC fish passage update, showing a large number of spring Chinook jacks in similar to that seen in 2022. ODFW is investigating the factors potentially contributing to the high number of hatchery fish reaching Soda Springs Dam, such as: the low number of hatchery fish entering Rock Creek in 2023, low flows and high water temperatures in the NUR and Rock Creek, post-fire water chemistry in Rock Creek, altered hatchery rearing practices and locations since the Rock Creek Hatchery burned down in 2020, and relatively high numbers of jacks existing even within the unclipped component of the run.

Because of the lack of hatchery spring Chinook salmon returning to Rock Creek, where ODFW would typically collect some for brood stock, ODFW is considering whether to attempt netting for the hatchery spring Chinook salmon in the Soda Springs vicinity. They may soon try tangle netting in the pool near the Fish Evaluation Building to see whether there are hatchery fish present and able to be captured.

Jason also noted that summer steelhead counts were extremely low both at Soda Springs Dam and at Winchester Dam, as well as region-wide. At least one otter has been observed multiple times within the ladder, and on one recent day it was observed holding a large Chinook. ODFW is continuing an ‘observe and report’ strategy to determine whether and when any form of otter control may be warranted.

Downstream passage monitoring is showing a strong out migration of juvenile fish this year. The limited predator control effort has removed 27 brown trout so far this year. There are too many adult salmon in the reservoir now to effectively target brown trout by angling. ODFW is getting the e-boat ready to use, which will help with future brown trout control efforts after the Chinook spawn. One ancillary benefit of the predator control study is that three steelhead which were PIT tagged as juveniles in 2020 have been ‘recaptured’ as returning adults on the PIT tag antennae array in Soda Springs bypass reach – two in 2022 and one more in 2023. Although our studies were not designed to estimate survival-to-adulthood, it is nevertheless encouraging to know that a few specific fish have survived the gauntlet of downriver and ocean hazards.

#### Water Quality Monitoring

The report of water quality downstream of Soda Springs powerhouse for Water Year 2022 was completed and submitted to ODEQ in May, indicating that all parameters met the relevant criteria as usual. At the request of USGS during a week when they were unavailable, Rich recently cleaned the Soda Springs water quality sensor of moss which was causing anomalous spikes in turbidity readings. Rich noted that the water quality station is powered by a distribution line subject to public safety power shut-offs. There is a battery present as back-up and Rich will discuss any additional battery back-up needs with USGS.

During a three-week outage of the Lemolo 1 canal in June, some new methods were used to remove dried organic and mineral sediments from the liner of the Lemolo 1 forebay which were thought to be contributing to macrophyte growth and previous summer conditions of high pH. In an up-scaling of manual methods used during a pilot study in 2021, UTVs with roller brushes pushed the debris to the outlet, where a skid-steer and excavator piled and lifted it into a dump truck for delivery to the Lemolo quarry. The clean-up resulted in removal of approximately 130 cy of debris and clearing of sediment from most of the liners surface area. Overall, the trial was considered a success and will be repeated if and when necessary in the future. This was the first major cleaning since the forebay was constructed in 2010, so cleaning may not be needed for a while. Rich observed the re-watering of the canal and forebay and said that the forebay water was clear immediately upon refill, and that, combined with the forebay flushing regime, has remained very clear since.

Chris observed that the Lemolo 1 forebay and Soda Springs water quality monitoring are the only ongoing Water Quality Certification actions from a long list of original requirements and studies which have all been completed since the New License was issued in 2003. Rich thanked Chris for his engagement and expertise over the years toward satisfying all of those requirements.

## **OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE UPDATES**

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

Currently the Toketee Number 2 turbine is out-of-service for a major 6-month rebuild. This will eventually require an outage of all 3 Toketee turbines to bring Number 2 back into service, likely during January 2024.

This year's outages were frontloaded in the first six months of the year due to the subsequent focus on Toketee Number 2 and Soda Springs fish screen (described above).

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

#### **Lemolo Reservoir:**

Lemolo Reservoir is being held within the normal summer range and at a level desirable to the KOA facility for best use of their docks and boats. Rich will be developing a drawdown plan during August as usual for review by ODFW and USFS. Anecdotal evidence (shoreline observations by anglers) suggests there are more tui chub in Lemolo Reservoir than during recent years.

#### **Toketee Reservoir:**

There are no recent or anticipated changes at Toketee Reservoir, other than raising it into spill during the 3-unit Toketee Powerhouse outage planned for January.

#### **Soda Springs Reservoir:**

There are no recent or anticipated changes at Soda Springs Reservoir, other than to use the log chute to supply instream flow and downstream fish passage during the planned fish screen maintenance outage.

## **SA 19.1 TRIBUTARY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM**

Mitigation and monitoring work is ongoing in Rock Creek. A staff biologist is doing spawning ground surveys. The summer steelhead peak redd count was 23; the winter steelhead peak redd count was 20, up from 18 in 2022. There is a significant amount of hatchery fish. Numbers are low at Winchester. Two lamprey redds were observed 8 miles upstream in mainstem Rock Creek. At five and eight miles upstream, Kirk noted the disappearance of large mussel beds. Continued effectiveness monitoring is finding that instream structures are holding up. Permitting pushed work back a little in Rock Creek basin. Contractors are not secured, and the SOW is in doubt. There wasn't much planned for this year anyway. ODFW is nurturing landowner relationships. The timber company has been good at getting needed materials. Should see more in-water work next year. There is continued planting in the wildfire scar. Finally purchased water quality data loggers and water quality work continues in the basin.

## **SA 19.3 FEDERAL MITIGATION FUND**

There is a larger number of projects but lower dollar value (\$2.3M) this year. The project recommendations are ready for Alice's review and approval. One reason for lower funding levels is the large value of funds available for multi-year projects on BLM lands. Forest Service needs to

focus on spending disaster funds in the near term. They are working on opportunities for agreements to provide money to National Forest Foundation to search for matching dollars.

**OTHER RCC AGENCY PROJECTS AND/OR COORDINATION**

*None at this time.*

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

**NEXT RCC Meeting:** October 4, 2023, regular quarterly meeting and conference call for attendees from 11:00 to 2:00, with in-person tour from 2:00 to 5:00.

The meeting adjourned at 12:43 p.m.; followed by a tour of some hydro project facilities.