

**North Umpqua Hydroelectric Project
(FERC No. P-1927)
Resource Coordination Committee (RCC)
April 17, 2024 Meeting**

FINAL

RCC Members or Alternates Present

Steve Albertelli (PacifiCorp)
Frank Weaver (USFWS)*
Michelle McMullin (NOAA)*
Jason Brandt (ODFW)*
Craig Kohanek (OWRD)*
Martín Sanchez (OWRD)*
Jedidiah Hancock (USDA-FS)*
Valerie Thompson (ODEQ)*
Mike Korn (USDI-BLM)*

Other Attendees

Jeffrey Brown (PacifiCorp)*
Debbi Smith (PacifiCorp)*
Colby Gonzales (Cow Creek)*
Hunter Cox (PacifiCorp)
Peter Sukraw (PacifiCorp)*
Chris Southwick (PacifiCorp)*

*=Attended remotely

INTRODUCTIONS, MEMBER UPDATES, ORGANIZATIONAL NEWS

USDA-FS: The Forest Service has hired a new hydrologist for the North Zone. The Forest completed the hiring before an agency-wide pause on new hires. The new Forest botanist, Chris Whitbeck, is preparing a NEPA document for herbicide use on the Forest. The Forest has broad support on this next round of gravel augmentation. The Forest is reviewing SA 19.3 and the possibility of PacifiCorp paying for this year's work through their procurement process and contracts and commensurately reducing the next year's 19.3 funding. Jed contacted the Forest wildlife program manager on using the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) for some of the permitting for the gravel augmentation effort. Jed will provide more information when it becomes available. With regard to the status of NTPs, some of the FS specialists have been requesting a little bit more time to look at some of the current project requests. The big focus has been the Lemolo 2 flume repairs. The FS is hiring for field season. They are doing spring prescribed burning and gearing up for fire season. There is a May 1 deadline for contracting and purchasing supplies, and due to declining budgets, everybody is scrambling to get everything sorted for the coming field season. An RFP was sent out for the mitigation fund, with a due date at the end of May. They are working closely with National Forest Foundation (NFF). Audrey Squires has moved on to a new position. The NFF is hiring an Oregon program-manager-type position that will oversee working with National Forests in Region 6, and NFF will backfill Audrey's former role with another position for southern Oregon that will work with the Rogue River-Siskiyou and Umpqua National Forests. The Forest will take on more of the project management role and use NFF support for some of the implementation. There have been some changes at the FS, including new people in line management roles. They are looking at how to possibly compliment 19.3 work and leverage funding opportunities by developing a more strategic approach. The Forest is also working on how to communicate the success the 19.3 program to the public as well.

NOAA: There are no project-related updates, but there are two agency updates of interest. One is that there is a new acting branch chief on a 120-day detail that started on April 1. The second is that NOAA has now moved over to the former Roseburg BLM building that is now the Roseburg Interagency Office with the BLM, FS, and FWS.

USFWS: The FWS is working on a species status assessment for fisher in order to inform a 12-month finding on whether it's warranted or not for listing. That 12-month finding is expected to be published in August of 2025. Frank will be leading a reintroduction effort for fishers. Locations have yet to be determined, but it would probably be South of the project. In other news, the wolves have been behaving, and there have not been any recent wolf-human conflicts in the Project area.

BLM: All of the realty staff has retired, with the exception of Amy Golladay, so they are very short-handed. They are working on filling some of those positions soon. On the management side, Sarah Bickford, the field manager in the South River Field Office moved, so Heather Whitman and Mike are the only two managers on the district. Although, the assistant district manager should be moved up to that vacated position next week. There are a couple of restoration projects that will be kicking off to follow up on the Rock Creek work that has been going on in the last several years. They are hoping they will be working in the Canton Creek watershed with some large wood placement and other habitat improvements for steelhead. It was noted that they do not yet have an approved budget.

ODEQ: The DEQ did hire a new manager for the 401 section earlier this year. She will be working in the Northwest region, but she will be the statewide manager for all things 401 water quality certification for DEQ. Her name is Teresa Bursue, and she came to DEQ with a background in data and spatial analysis from Oregon State and PSU. They will be contacting Steve to arrange a site visit for a group, including Teresa, to better understand the work occurring on the Project. DEQ is working with the EPA to complete the temperature TMDL for the Umpqua Basin due to a federal court order. Due to the large number of TMDLs, time requirements, and low staff availability, DEQ will be working with the EPA to complete the Umpqua TMDL. There will be a public information meeting on April 23. At the meeting, the DEQ and EPA will be talking about how the agencies plan to revise the temperature TMDL consistent with the requirements of the court order, detailing the public involvement opportunities, and the overall schedule. The RCC is also invited to that meeting.

ODFW: The search for a new director has begun. There is an interim director in place. Jason's boss, Sarah Gregory, the Umpqua District Manager, left last Friday. Gregory Huchko is currently the acting Umpqua District Manager, which also oversees activities in Coos Bay and Coquille. A number of the RCC members likely already know him as his regular position is the district fish biologist out of the Roseburg office.

OWRD: The search for a new director is still ongoing, with the governor's office leading the effort. It appears there are multiple candidates.

PacifiCorp: Steve introduced Hunter Cox as the new onsite engineer. He is backfilling a position vacated by Scott Schevenius. Hunter introduced himself, stating that he previously worked at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard as a nuclear engineer doing work on both pumps and piping, but he's glad to be working in renewable energy now.

PUBLIC OUTREACH (PAST EVENTS/FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES)

Jason said that he was asked to give a brief overview of the 19.1 Tributary Enhancement Program to the ODFW Commissioners and staff from the director's office. He said that presentation would be a good opportunity to provide a little background on what the RCC has been doing, how the program came about, and potentially, what the future plans of the program are for all of the new members of the RCC. Greg Huchko gave an update on the North Umpqua fish stock trends, then he and Jason did a joint presentation during the Commissioners lunch break at Rock Creek Hatchery. It was a very high-level overview, but enough to give them the gist of the good work being done, and some of the challenges the group is facing post-fire. Steve agreed that Jason's presentation to the Commissioner's would be valuable to the new members of the RCC, and the group agreed to schedule 30 minutes during the July RCC meeting for Jason's presentation.

On April 11, Rich provided a tour for Dennis Feero's South Umpqua High School science class that he's hosted for several years in a row now. Rich's report was that twenty students, two teachers, and one bus driver were enthralled, entertained, and educated. They even got to see some steelhead on the spawning gravel.

Rich also gave the talk, which he mentioned at the January meeting, to the Umpqua Fisherman's Association on January 23 at Abby's in Roseburg. Jason also attended that meeting, said it went very well, and there were a lot of good questions from the group.

Upcoming Events

None

FACILITY AND PROJECT UPDATES

Fish Creek and Clearwater 2 Pumped Storage

Fish Creek

It was discussed in the last RCC meeting that PacifiCorp received the FERC license amendment for Fish Creek Pumped Storage. Since that time, PacifiCorp consulted with DEQ and prepared the required Water Quality Management Plan, which essentially adopts the methods of the water quality monitoring work that has been completed to date and formalizes the post implementation water quality monitoring plan. The monitoring effort will resume in June, so PacifiCorp will have the sondes calibrated and in the water in late May.

Clearwater 2

Clearwater 2 is currently on an indefinite hold while PacifiCorp analyzes project economics and pump-turbine technologies.

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

Three pickets have been repaired and/or replaced at Soda Springs tailrace barrier due to corrosion damage. Plans are underway to gradually repair or replace the remainder as needed. The protection criteria at those facilities have not been compromised, and all other facilities are in good condition and operating well. Jeff Brown and Chris Southwick are working through the budgeting process to replace tailrace barrier panels.

Toketee Dam Rehabilitation

The Dam Safety Group is working through the seismic hazard analysis with the Board of Consultants and FERC. Implementation is anticipated in 2032.

NTPs or Other Permitting Coordination

For those who aren't familiar, the Toketee Unit 2 overhaul has been ongoing. The overhaul contractor has been using Toketee Control Center parking lot for staging and equipment. Due to the need for more room to do that work safely above the plant, there is a plan to build an access road and gravel staging area in the old school playground on the grass next to the TCC.

PacifiCorp just submitted some transmission pole replacements to both the FS and BLM. There are seven structures on FS property and five structures on BLM property, but those haven't been approved yet by the respective agencies.

PacifiCorp performed inspections on the Lemolo 2 flumes and found many significant structural deficiencies that need to be repaired as soon as possible. The flumes are elevated above natural waterways, and loss of those structures would result in significant facility damage and potential environmental damage. Some temporary shoring has been done to support the weight of the flume boxes in the meantime. An outage has been scheduled for May, and another one will be scheduled for later in the year for the timber replacement work. PacifiCorp has requested a Forest Closure Order on Burma Road parallel to the waterway for public safety due to a large amount of construction, access, and staging activities, including a very large crane. The contractor on this job has already experienced the theft of a large flat-bed trailer and shoring equipment that were staged overnight on Burma Road. The closure will help protect construction vehicles and equipment staged for those repairs. The FS has some concerns but will work with PacifiCorp in advance of the closures to build the necessary crane pads and staging areas. Putting up cameras in the staging areas was suggested, but Steve responded that it only shows the theft, but doesn't always help with recovery.

There is some Corps, DSL, and/or associated DEQ water quality certification for Corp permits required for the gravel augmentation work. The permitting process is lengthy and often complicates project schedules and implementation. The RCC has found that RCC agency influence and persistence with sister-agency connections is helpful to moving permits along. Jed mentioned the Good Neighbor Authority, and the Forest is reviewing ways they can increase the efficiency of the permitting processes.

MONITORING PROGRAM & TECHNICAL WORK GROUP UPDATES

SA 4.1 Soda Springs Fish Passage O&M

The annual report for 2023 was submitted to FERC in January. PacifiCorp will focus on maintenance and upgrading the actuators and control systems of the fish ladder, which can be done during the August maintenance period, mostly without needing to dewater the screen. There may be several days of intermittent outages for gate testing, but those should be limited.

SA 5 & 6 Flows and Ramping Monitoring

There was a death in the river downstream of the project recently, and Douglas County Sheriff's Office (DCSO) requested PacifiCorp's assistance, while maintaining compliance, to reduce flows to aid in the safety of the divers' search and rescue mission. Water levels were lowered, and DCSO was able to remove the vehicle that was still in the river, but the body was not in the vehicle. Another dive activity will be planned the following weekend to retrieve the body that is believed to still be in the general vicinity. Flows will also be lowered to support that activity and for the safety of the search and rescue crews. During recharge of Lemolo Reservoir, the ramping allowance downstream of the project is 5% of the incoming flows up to a maximum of 1/10 of a foot per day. PacifiCorp will be attempting to recharge Lemolo Reservoir, reduce flows downstream of the project by 5% or up to 1/10 of a foot per day at those times when DCSO is performing the search and rescue effort.

Pursuant to the information discussed earlier about the Lemolo 2 flume repairs, there will be a number of outages there, and PacifiCorp will be managing ramping back into the river as they reduce and shut off flows or diversions into Lemolo 2 waterway. Fish salvages will also be associated with that effort.

Steve noted that if anyone on the RCC is interested in participating in the fish salvage activities occurring for approximately 17 miles through the Lemolo 2 waterway, then they are welcome to join the effort.

Jeff commented that they were looking at consolidating the May and September outages for Lemolo 2 and using one large outage in September. An update to the RCC group on that will be provided once plans are finalized.

SA 7.2 Gravel Augmentation Monitoring

The Slide Creek bypassed reach monitoring report showed a need for additional spawning gravel. The TWG is planning to add gravel, currently stockpiled at Soda Springs, into the North Umpqua using a sluice pipe at the back end of the fish screen and into the Slide Creek bypass reach using the conveyor truck from up above as has been done in years past. The plan is to add 600 cy below the fish screen and 200 cy into the Slide Creek bypass reach. ODFW is working on the permitting, and PacifiCorp is using their contracting mechanisms to perform 19.3 mitigation fund work, which is proposed to be refunded via a reduction in the next year's 19.3 funding payment to the FS. Jed is still trying to make sure that mechanism works for the FS as the administrator of the 19.3 fund, but otherwise there's a general consensus that it seems like a good way to do it. ODFW had a site visit with the FS and PacifiCorp to talk about gravel augmentation and how best to move forward.

SA 8.2 Slide Creek Bypass Reach Habitat Monitoring

Jason provided an update in Rich's absence. Steelhead are now using the gravel near Slide Creek powerhouse bridge for spawning. High flows didn't allow for any coho salmon spawning ground surveys in the Slide Creek bypass reach, which would usually require a wading survey. The 2023/24 adult coho salmon return was exceptional, and it appears the 2024 winter steelhead return will be better than last years. Coho are even holding as far upstream as the base of Slide Creek Dam. Past gravel augmentation work is helping with current spawning.

SA 8.3 Soda Springs Bypass Reach Habitat Maintenance

The annual report was provided to the RCC in January. The habitat condition is currently very good. Steelhead are now using the gravel for spawning.

SA 19.2 Long-term Monitoring and Predator Control

ODFW and PacifiCorp are collaborating on the draft annual report for 2023. Jason is behind on his portion of the report but is hoping to get it out in May or June, though it could be a little later.

There was a total of 1,359 Coho salmon that returned to Soda Springs in 2023/24, which included 30 jacks and 1,329 adults. To put that in context, the previous high count was 542, the previous 10-year average count is approximately 250 fish/year, and last year's count was only 126. The 1,359 fish accounted for approximately 18% of coho salmon that went over Winchester Dam. Approximately 2,200 outmigrating Chinook salmon fry were recently sampled in the Fish Evaluation Building over 3 nights. ODFW biologists observed one 10" outmigrating steelhead, which is a very large outmigrant.

The electrofishing boat is being prepared for removing predators this year. It is used to shock brown trout so they can be removed from Soda Springs. Outboard maintenance was completed last month, and new marine batteries were purchased this month. We attempt to complete electrofishing work before adult/jack spring Chinook start showing up, which will be soon. The target number of fish for removal is approximately 200. It was mentioned that RCC members have previously gone out on the boat, and current members are also invited to attend if they are interested.

Water Quality Certification Monitoring

PacifiCorp completed the water quality certification monitoring annual report and sent it to DEQ in March. All parameters were within the normal range and applicable criteria.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE UPDATES

Powerhouse and Canal Outages (updates, plans)

As previously mentioned, it looks like the most likely outcome was cancelling the May outage at Lemolo 2 and merging that with the September outage.

There will likely be a 3-unit outage scheduled for Toketee from July 10 through 26. That'll put Toketee Lake into full spill over Toketee Falls. While that is still tentatively scheduled, there are some deliveries of equipment and other aspects that might impact the schedule. PacifiCorp will provide a 30-day notice for that activity.

Clearwater 2 is currently in a dewatered canal outage that's expected to conclude April 25.

Reservoir Management (Lemolo, Toketee, Soda Springs)

PacifiCorp distributed the annual report on Lemolo Reservoir management, and the results looked very typical of those plans for the last several years.

In-Water Work

The group reviewed planned in-water work, including gravel augmentation and work on the Lemolo 2 flumes previously in this meeting.

There is some sealing work that needs to be done at Lemolo 2 tailrace. There's a stop log guide, that is essentially a notch in the concrete wall of the tailrace, that is not allowing a good seal. PacifiCorp will have to perform some concrete repairs when that facility is in outage, and because it's in the tail race, it's within jurisdictional waters. Therefore, some permits may be required.

SA 19.1 TRIBUTARY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Jason reported that, since the previous meeting, the hydro crew finalized Coho spawning ground surveys in mainstem and East Fork Rock Creek and reported a total count of 168 redds. No additional redds were counted since the January meeting. For context, this year's total redd count was greater than the 83 total coho salmon redds documented during 2022-2023 spawning ground surveys but much less than the 398 total coho salmon redds observed in the 2021-2022 spawning season. Jason noted that the sampling conditions were very poor this year due to persistent, significant, and turbid high flow throughout the winter spawning season. Therefore, 168 redds was likely an undercount. Surveyors observed 44 coho salmon carcasses as well, with all appearing to be of wild origin. ODFW has initiated steelhead spawning ground surveys. Two redds were observed in February and seven last week in Middle East Fork Rock Creek. Twelve redds were documented the first week of this month in upper Rock Creek, which is a promising distribution extent of spawning fish. That number is expected to go up with sampling conditions improving. ODFW will begin lamprey surveys later in the year.

The ODFW hydro staff, particularly Kirk, have been working through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DSL, and DEQ permitting processes. That should be wrapped up soon. There is a significant amount of boulder work planned for this year. They are ready to move boulders in-stream at Miller Creek, East Fork Rock Creek, and mainstem Rock Creek. It was mentioned that those boulders were provided by the Forest Investment Association (FIA) at no cost to ODFW. There's been a significant amount of effort spent on post-fire and post-high-water monitoring of restoration structures this year. There were some significant high-water events in the Rock Creek Basin that particularly impacted large wood habitat restoration structures in East Fork Rock Creek and lower mainstem Rock Creek. Kirk did a good job of getting photos and information together to show those impacts. . For the time being, ODFW is not planning on placing any large wood instream, except occasionally as part of larger boulder structures. ODFW will focus on instream boulder structures that appear to be more resilient to debris flows and continue to provide intended objectives of collecting spawning gravels and directing some flows into side channels and other high-water fish refugia.

SA 19.3 FEDERAL MITIGATION FUND

Jed stated that the RFP is out, and projects that are in a two-year window are commencing or have funds obligated now. The Forest is focusing on bolstering previously funded efforts. The big sticking points for the Forest with 19.3 project selection and funding is whether a project has the NEPA analysis completed. Based on FS staffing levels, projects are limited by available resources, where to apply them, and existing planning schedules, which generally involve timber sales. The FS is looking at how they can leverage existing third-party analysis (e.g., timber sale NEPA decisions) to

get other partners engaged in helping leverage those approvals and possibly bringing in additional funds to 19.3 projects. The week the RFP went out, Douglas County contacted Jed. The County was interested in how they could collaborate with the FS through the mitigation funding, and Jed recommended some of the RCC members as being potential contacts and project sponsors.

OTHER RCC AGENCY PROJECTS AND/OR COORDINATION

Jed brought up an alternate location to relocate the boat ramp at the Toketee Campground, suggesting the existing turn-out just east of Clearwater 2 powerplant tailrace. Some of the pros and cons of the previous plan to realign the boat ramp at its existing location versus moving it to the south shore near Clearwater 2 were discussed. Jed mentioned that there is significant public interest in redoing the boat ramp. Jed noted that the State Marine Board would be willing to contribute some design help. Steve said he was looking forward to more discussions with the Recreation Resource Management Plan Group on this subject. Steve proposed the option of field trips for the RCC group to review locations and entertain suggestions. Jed volunteered to organize field visits to scout potential boat ramp locations.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

NEXT RCC Meeting

July 17, 2024 from 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM. 30 minutes will be allotted during the meeting for Jason's presentation discussed in the Public Engagement section above.

The meeting adjourned at 1:13 P.M.