



Conference Call Minutes

Aquatic Settlement Work Group

To: Aquatic SWG Parties

Date: October 15, 2020

From: John Ferguson, Chair (Anchor QEA, LLC)

Re: Final Minutes of the September 9, 2020, Aquatic SWG Conference Call

The Aquatic Settlement Work Group (SWG) met by conference call on Wednesday, September 9, 2020, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Attendees are listed in Attachment A of these conference call minutes.

I. Summary of Action Items

1. The Yakama Nation (YN) will send handling and tagging protocols for Pacific Lamprey to Douglas PUD for consideration in assessing the feasibility of implementing a passive integrated transponder (PIT)-tag study (Item VI-1).
2. Anchor QEA will set a reminder for May 2021, for the Aquatic SWG to begin discussing with the Joint Fisheries Parties (JFP) how to better coordinate Pacific Lamprey translocation activities among Douglas, Grant, and Chelan PUDs (Item VI-3). *(Note: the Priest Rapids Fish Forum [PRFF] and Rocky Reach Fish Forum [RRFF], respectively, meet every first Wednesday of the month; therefore, this reminder was set for the Aquatic SWG meeting on April 14, 2021, to allow time for Aquatic SWG members to coordinate with JFP members and the PRFF and RRFF before the May and June 2021 meetings, as needed.)*
3. Aquatic SWG members will: 1) review the juvenile and adult Pacific Lamprey literature reviews and document libraries in terms of format, structure, and content, in preparation for discussion during the Aquatic SWG meeting on November 11, 2020; and 2) provide to Douglas PUD any new documents members wish to include in the juvenile and adult Pacific Lamprey literature reviews, and Douglas PUD will add these documents to the respective document libraries (Item VII-1).
4. The Aquatic SWG meeting on October 14, 2020, will be held by conference call (Item VII-2).

II. Summary of Decisions

1. There were no decisions approved during today's conference call.

III. Agreements

1. There were no agreements discussed during today's conference call.

IV. Review Items

1. Aquatic SWG members will review the juvenile and adult Pacific Lamprey literature reviews and document libraries in terms of format, structure, and content, in preparation for discussion during the Aquatic SWG meeting on November 11, 2020 (Item VII-1).

V. Documents Finalized

1. There are no documents that have been recently finalized.

VI. Summary of Discussions

1. Welcome, Review Agenda, Meeting Minutes Approval, and Review of Action Items (John Ferguson):

John Ferguson welcomed the Aquatic SWG members (attendees listed in Attachment A). Ferguson asked for any additions or changes to the agenda. No revisions were requested by Aquatic SWG members. Ferguson added under the COVID-19 agenda item local wildfire updates that might affect Aquatic SWG activities in the field.

The revised draft August 12, 2020 conference call minutes were reviewed. Kristi Geris said there was one outstanding comment to address under the agenda item: *Upper Columbia Pacific Lamprey RMU Proposal*. Geris said Andrew Gingerich flagged a question that he believes was asked by Ferguson. Ferguson agreed to indicate this question was asked by him. Aquatic SWG members present approved the August 12, 2020, conference call minutes, as revised. Washington State Department of Ecology abstained, because a representative was not present during the August 12, 2020, conference call. (Note: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS] had not yet joined the conference call during approval of the revised draft August 12, 2020, conference call minutes; therefore, it is considered an abstention.)

Action items from the Aquatic SWG conference call on August 12, 2020, are as follows (Note: the following italicized item numbers correspond to agenda items from the August 12, 2020, meeting):

- *Douglas PUD will coordinate with the Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT) to resolve any discrepancies in the 2019 Pacific Lamprey translocation numbers that have been reported to the Aquatic SWG (Item VI-3).*

Andrew Gingerich spoke with John Rohrback (CCT) about this and Rohrback agreed with Gingerich's numbers. Rohrback had certain numbers in his head but was inclined to trust

- the computer numbers (i.e., the numbers reported in the PIT TAG Information System). Rohrbach confirmed the CCT did not hand-count the fish upon release. Gingerich said that, therefore, the numbers Douglas PUD reported in past summary tables and during the last Aquatic SWG meeting on August 12, 2020, are assumed to be accurate.
- *Anchor QEA will send the agreement made today by the Aquatic SWG regarding Pacific Lamprey translocation efforts in 2020 (see Section III below) to Tracy Hillman (Rocky Reach Fish Forum [RRFF] and PRFF Chairman; Item VI-3).*
John Ferguson relayed this agreement to Hillman, as discussed, following the Aquatic SWG conference call on August 12, 2020.
 - *Douglas PUD will coordinate with Grant PUD to implement the agreement made today by the Aquatic SWG regarding extending Pacific Lamprey collection activities at Priest Rapids Dam in support of translocation efforts in 2020 (Section III; Item VI-3).*
This will be discussed during today's conference call.
 - *Douglas PUD, the CCT, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), and other interested parties will convene outside of the Aquatic SWG to discuss the use of genetics with Dr. Andrea Schreier (University of California, Davis) to meet requirements in the White Sturgeon Management Plan and develop a draft Statement of Agreement (SOA) for a White Sturgeon Adult Reproductive Assessment (Item VI-4).*
Andrew Gingerich said he spoke with Jason McLellan last week and has also had discussions with Laura Heironimus following the meeting. Gingerich said in summary, these conversations are still ongoing, and he suggested closing out this action item and the next action item for now and continuing these discussions as agenda items as more information develops. He said if Aquatic SWG members are interested, Douglas PUD can arrange a phone call with Dr. Schreier, and perhaps Cramer Fish Sciences, to discuss what can and cannot be done. Gingerich said similarly with spontaneous autopolyploidy in White Sturgeon, these discussions and activities in the region are ongoing, which will help inform what Douglas PUD might do moving forward. He suggested continuing these discussions during future meetings after Aquatic SWG members have had more time to discuss these topics offline. John Ferguson asked if Aquatic SWG members need additional details at this time. Heironimus said she supports what Douglas PUD is suggesting. No other comments were provided.
 - *Douglas PUD, the CCT, WDFW, and other interested parties will convene outside of the Aquatic SWG to develop a list of topics—regarding spontaneous autopolyploidy in White Sturgeon supplementation programs—to discuss with the Aquatic SWG, and the Aquatic SWG will continue discussing the RRFF and PRFF document, Guidance for Evaluating Spontaneous Autopolyploidy in White Sturgeon Supplementation Programs, during future Aquatic SWG meetings (Item VI-7).*
This action item will be closed, per discussions above.

- *Douglas PUD will coordinate internally with Greg Mackey (Douglas PUD hatchery monitoring and evaluation staff) to assess the feasibility of conducting a PIT-tag study for Pacific Lamprey at the rotary screw trap in the Methow River (Item VI-9).*

Chas Kyger said he discussed this with Mackey, and it seems it would be possible to integrate a PIT-tag study into ongoing rotary screw trap (RST) efforts. Kyger said he also emailed Charlie Snow (WDFW) who oversees the RST program for WDFW, and a call is planned for next week to further discuss details of this effort. Andrew Gingerich clarified that Douglas PUD contracts WDFW to operate two RSTs, one near the town of Carlton, Washington, and the other in the Twisp River proper. Gingerich said for this effort, it probably makes sense to focus on the RST near Carlton. He said to the best of his knowledge, there have been no juvenile Pacific Lamprey collected in the Twisp River RST and there is very little documentation of Pacific Lamprey migrating into the Twisp River. Kyger agreed. John Ferguson asked what numbers of juvenile Pacific Lamprey might be available in a given year from the Carlton trap. Kyger said this varies and can depend on river flow, debris, timing of outmigration, among other things. He said sometimes numbers are on the order of hundreds to several thousand. He said typically, there will be a big pulse of fish during high river flows, but there will be a point when managers will stop running the trap and there is no way of knowing how many fish are being missed. He said there does seem to be a general upward trend in recent years. Ferguson agreed the outmigration can be episodic depending on turbidity and flow stage. Gingerich also noted that of the fish that can be collected at the screw trap, how many are large enough to receive a tag? Kyger agreed and said a lot of larvae encountered at the trap have not yet developed eyes. Ferguson suggested closing out this action item and bringing this topic forward through a formal agenda item when the topic and time is right for that. Kyger agreed.

- *The YN will send handling and tagging protocols for Pacific Lamprey to Douglas PUD for consideration in assessing the feasibility of implementing a PIT-tag study (Item VI-9).*
This action item will be carried forward.

2. COVID-19 and Wildfire Updates (John Ferguson):

John Ferguson asked if Aquatic SWG members had any updates to share regarding impacts of COVID-19 and the local wildfires on Aquatic SWG-related monitoring and evaluation activities.

Andrew Gingerich said Douglas PUD has no new updates related to COVID-19; however, Douglas PUD has been monitoring and discussing two wildfires burning in Douglas County and on the CCT Reservation that merged into one. He said the fires began on Monday, September 7, 2020, and winds blew the fire in Douglas County towards Wells Dam causing utility outages. He said of interest to the Aquatic SWG, Douglas PUD has been monitoring

the Wells Dam total dissolved gas monitoring station. He said as of yesterday, September 8, 2020, the station was operational. He said, however, the fire is only 10% contained and the station could be damaged. He checked the data from the station again this morning, and said it appears the data are reporting normally. He explained that he can conclude this because both the gas pressure at the sensor and the barometric pressure value at the dam should be changing when the station is operating normally.

3. 2020 Pacific Lamprey Translocation (Chas Kyger):

Chas Kyger said this is the final week of the 2020 Douglas PUD Pacific Lamprey Translocation Program, which included 8 weeks total: 4 weeks as stipulated in the Aquatic SWG SOA¹ and 4 weeks of additional fish from the Grant PUD Program as agreed to during the August 12, 2020 meeting of the Aquatic SWG. Kyger said so far, Douglas PUD has translocated 310 Pacific Lamprey upstream of Wells Dam, including 78 fish that were translocated farther upstream by the CCT to four tributaries in the Okanogan River Basin (16 fish to Salmon Creek, 32 fish to Omak Creek, 10 fish to Loup Loup Creek, and 20 fish to the Similkameen River). Kyger said this week, about 30 fish have been collected so far with one more night of trapping left (tonight). He said Douglas PUD anticipates about 40 to 60 more fish to be translocated this week, which will conclude the effort this year.

John Ferguson said it seems that there has been quite an increase in numbers translocated since the last Aquatic SWG meeting on August 8, 2020. Kyger said about 200 fish have been collected since the last meeting. He said there was a good push of fish a few weeks ago, close to 80 fish per week. He said numbers have decreased a little over the past 2 weeks, to about 50 fish per week. Ferguson asked if there have been any Pacific Lamprey counted in the Wells Dam fish ladders, and Kyger said only about 10 fish so far. Ferguson summarized that this means about 350 to 400 fish will reach habitats above Wells Dam this year, mostly from translocation. Kyger agreed.

RD Nelle (USFWS) asked where the release location is for fish outside of the Okanogan River Basin. Kyger said all fish this year are being released at Starr Boat Launch, about 3 miles upstream of Wells Dam.

Steve Lewis said concern was raised by Chelan PUD that the translocation activities in 2020, specifically the number of fish collected from the Grant PUD Program that were released above Wells Dam, was not coordinated with the RRF, so there was no opportunity to discuss preferences for a certain percentage of these fish to be allocated to tributaries below Wells Dam. Lewis said this was not a pressing concern this year; however, Steve Hemstrom (Chelan

¹ Aquatic SWG SOA titled *To translocate adult Pacific Lamprey from Priest Rapids Dam to areas within or upstream of the Wells Project and postpone passage evaluations*, and approved June 13, 2018.

PUD) wants more coordination in future years regarding Grant PUD fish translocated above versus below Wells Dam. Ferguson asked if Chelan PUD contacted Douglas PUD about this, and Kyger said no. Ferguson asked if Hemstrom is asking that some of the fish bound for above Wells Dam are instead translocated into the Entiat River. Lewis said it seems so, and it does not sound like there is the coordination aspect so that everyone is on the same page. Ferguson said it seems this topic needs to be discussed within the RRRFF (and PRFF); and he added that Douglas PUD cannot release fish bound for the Wells Project in the Entiat River. Andrew Gingerich said along these same lines, he recalled during the last Aquatic SWG meeting on August 12, 2020, Ralph Lampman questioned whether Douglas PUD's collection of 10% of run at Grant PUD projects is a potential loss to the Entiat River. Gingerich said where fish can go and how many can go is a great question and Douglas PUD will gladly coordinate with Chelan PUD; however, ultimately this is a question for the JFP and not for Douglas PUD. Lewis said yes and no. He said he spoke with Mike Clement (Grant PUD) and it seems the fish forums can make these decisions about translocating fish to specific watersheds, so long as there is the proper level of coordination so that decisions in one forum do not cause an issue or result in a backlash in another forum. Lewis said there were no issues this year because the YN conducted a separate program in the upper Wenatchee River to offset less fish from Grant PUD that would typically be available for that system (i.e., fish collected during the extended sampling period for the Douglas PUD translocation program). He said, however, this could be significant in subsequent years and he suggested the forums coordinate on this. Ferguson said that Anchor QEA will set a reminder for May 2021, for the Aquatic SWG to begin discussing with the JFP how to better coordinate Pacific Lamprey translocation activities among Douglas, Grant, and Chelan PUDs. *(Note: the PRFF and RRRFF, respectively, meet every first Wednesday of the month; therefore, this reminder was set for the Aquatic SWG meeting on April 14, 2021, to allow time for Aquatic SWG members to coordinate with JFP members and the PRFF and RRRFF before the May and June 2021 meetings, as needed.)*

Nelle said the Aquatic SWG is 3 years into a 4-year Pacific Lamprey SOA¹, where the target is to release, on average, 500 fish upstream of Wells Dam each year, and he asked what is the expectation for future years (after Year 4). Ferguson said this is up for discussion, and Nelle suggested discussing this next spring, as well (i.e., what the results of the 4-year program suggest). Gingerich said the Pacific Lamprey SOA also stipulates that after translocation there will be a check-in study to inform how to move forward. Lampman asked if this will be a radio telemetry (RT) study. Kyger said Douglas PUD was envisioning an acoustic and PIT-tag study, similar to past studies; however, there has been no formal decision on technology yet and this can be further discussed during the planning stages of the study. Lampman noted that RT arrays will already be in place for the Bull Trout study in 2021/2022, and Kyger agreed

there could be potential for overlap. Gingerich said there are also acoustic arrays already installed for White Sturgeon mainstem-focused studies, which he believes a Pacific Lamprey study will be, compared to the Bull Trout study, which will be both tributary- and mainstem-focused. He said typically in a deeper water environment, acoustic technology functions better than radio; however, acoustic technology sometimes does not perform as well in noisy environments (such as below mainstem dams), so there are a lot of factors to consider. Lampman said the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory has a new acoustic tag that functions better in a noisy environment, and he asked if Douglas PUD has considered using these tags. Gingerich said he is unsure about the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory tags, but Douglas PUD uses V16 tags in adult White Sturgeon, which are quite powerful. He said these are a Vemco product and Douglas PUD has had no issues with these tags for White Sturgeon application. He said tag selection is definitely something to consider for a Pacific Lamprey study.

4. Wells Fish Hatchery Brood Year 2020 White Sturgeon Rearing Update (Andrew Gingerich):

Andrew Gingerich said brood year (BY) 2020 White Sturgeon from Lake Roosevelt have been on station at Wells Fish Hatchery since about July 15, 2020. Gingerich said approximately 1,690 live fish went into the tanks at the hatchery, there were approximately 147 mortalities in July and approximately 159 mortalities during August, leaving approximately 1,384 fish on station as of August 31, 2020. He clarified that these numbers are not hand-counts; rather, the numbers are an estimate of fish on station and do not include mortalities that may have occurred during the first 9 days in September. He said through August 31, 2020, this equals a mortality rate of 18% and a survival rate of 82% in the facility. He said overall, mortality numbers are staying relatively low, and he noted that the tank with smaller fish have a slightly higher mortality rate. He said he is encouraged by the survival of these fish thus far, and he noted that actual number of fish on station may be a little lower than this initial count once fish are hand counted. He recalled that typically, the greatest fish loss occurs in the first few months of rearing. He said in terms of fish size, average fish size is ranging from 1 gram (g) to about 7 g. He said fish are growing well, especially the larger fish.

5. Surplus White Sturgeon (Andrew Gingerich):

Andrew Gingerich said that he and Jason McLellan spoke last week about Co-Managers taking surplus fish. Gingerich said in the past, the priority for surplus fish (i.e., larvae collected from Lake Roosevelt for the Douglas PUD White Sturgeon Supplementation Program) was to return the fish to Lake Roosevelt. Gingerich said Co-Managers also agreed that once there is confidence in the number of fish at Wells Fish Hatchery, surplus fish should be transported to the CCT Resident Fish Hatchery. Gingerich said the local wildfires have been intense near the

hatchery and he is unsure if plans have changed. He said Douglas PUD anticipates being able to transport surplus fish to the hatchery in about one month.

McLellan agreed with Gingerich and said he understands the plan is to transport surplus fish to the CCT Resident Fish Hatchery, with a determination on stocking pending discussion with WDFW once more is known about the survival of fish at Sherman Creek Fish Hatchery (i.e., the number of surplus from this program). He said surplus fish from the Douglas PUD program have generally gone back into Lake Roosevelt to make up any shortfalls in that program (where fish are reared at Sherman Creek Hatchery to be repatriated in Lake Roosevelt); however, if there is no shortfall, the CCT will coordinate with WDFW to determine an appropriate location to stock these fish. McLellan said regarding the local wildfires, the CCT Resident Fish Hatchery was under a Level 3 Evacuation. He said to his knowledge, there has been no damage to the hatchery and the plan is to transport the surplus fish to the hatchery.

John Ferguson recalled last year, Douglas PUD met the 551-fish stocking target, which included the 325-fish obligation to stock in 2020 (BY2019 fish) plus the balance that was not stocked in 2019 (only 99 BY2018 fish were stocked in 2019). Ferguson asked if Douglas PUD is targeting stocking 325 BY2020 fish in 2021. Gingerich said this is a good question and is another topic he mentioned to McLellan. Gingerich asked if there is any value in holding back some number of fish, in addition to the BY2020 stocking target of 325 fish in 2021, to meet next year's stocking target (325 fish are to be stocked in 2022). He said the available genetics research would support this approach, which clearly shows that wild fish collected as recently as 2010, and repatriated, represent 90% of the allelic diversity in the population at large. He said these fish are genetically diverse. He recognized that adults do not spawn every year, which means the genetics from some adults may be missed if there is no collection next year. He said, however, even with releasing 325 BY2020 fish in 2021 and 325 BY2020 fish in 2022, each year would represent a high proportion of the allelic diversity in the population. He said if there is high survival in the hatchery this year, there may be enough fish for two release groups and fish leftover to surplus to the CCT. He said he understands there are pros and cons to this idea to consider, that are both technical and non-technical in nature, and asked that Aquatic SWG members think about this as an option. He also noted that this idea has not yet been discussed with Douglas PUD policy staff.

Laura Heironimus asked if there is a concern about not being able to collect larvae next year. Gingerich said he does not believe there is a huge concern. He said this thought is partly about efficiency. He said sometimes fish are in high demand for research; however, over the years the CCT have been successful at collecting enough fish to support the minimum

requirements for different programs. He said where the sacrifice might come is in research studies, and if managers prioritize conservation programs, this can potentially affect or come at a cost to other research questions.

McLellan said there is not really much risk of not getting the fish. He said the CCT have never missed a target, especially one as low as that needed for the Douglas PUD program. He said larval collection is still fishing, so there is some level of risk of not catching the targeted sample size, but he would say it is a low risk. He said Gingerich is correct that there are multiple uses of larvae for hatchery production as well as for research. He said the number of larvae needed (for the Douglas PUD program) is small, especially with the high survival rates at Wells Fish Hatchery, and this number of larvae do not influence research projects. He said if there is consistently 50% survival at the hatchery, this is not a big deal. He said in the last 7 years, there has not been one year where the CCT collected less than 20,000 larvae. He said this year, the CCT collected 38,000 larvae, which is well-beyond what was needed for research and aquaculture programs. He said he thinks the question raised by Gingerich provides a little fail-safe aspect to the program, so if there were a pathogen issue or difficulty collecting larvae, although the odds are low, there is a little security in having those fish on hand. He said with that, comes other limitations. He said there are also technical questions that should be discussed in more detail at a later time. Heironimus thanked McLellan for the comments and said another thing to consider might be space requirements.

Ferguson said Douglas PUD is asking Aquatic SWG members to consider holding BY2020 fish to be released in spring 2022. Ferguson asked how large will these fish be, and can the hatchery hold this many fish? Gingerich clarified that BY2020 fish will be used to meet the stocking obligation in spring 2021 and potentially spring 2022. He said he also wants to be clear that this topic has not yet been discussed with policy or hatchery staff; however, there are staff at Wells Fish Hatchery who are interested in learning more about these fish and he believes staff will be receptive to the idea. He said in terms of growth, hatchery staff have a good understanding of cooler temperatures and a maintenance diet, where fish still grow and persist but at slower rates. He said data from the White Sturgeon Conservation Hatchery near Cranbrook, BC, show that hatchery staff have been able to hold fish for more than 1 year with success. He said if fish are fed 1% to 2% of their body weight each day and are put on ambient water temperature (56°F to 58°F), fish will grow slowly. He said this is opposed to methodologies being implemented now at Wells Fish Hatchery where fish are on warmer temperatures (61°F and above) and are being fed 20% of their body weight per day, and fish growth is 20% to 40% weight gain weekly. He said holding fish for another year would be a change in methods, but he believes this is doable.

McLellan clarified that White Sturgeon Conservation Hatchery staff do not manipulate water temperature as much as Douglas PUD does due to costs. McLellan said the fish being released after 1 to 2 years of rearing in-hatchery are age 2 and 3 and they are massive, averaging about 400 g each. He said the hatchery has released fish over 600 g. He said, however, Gingerich is correct, that it would not be difficult to hold fish longer and slow down fish growth.

Ferguson said this is a good introduction to the topic to get the Aquatic SWG thinking about it. Gingerich said there is no rush to get this answered. He said Douglas PUD might surplus one group of fish in one month and he suspects the CCT would be amenable to receiving a second group of larger surplus fish later, if needed. He said the default is to surplus all fish not needed for meeting the 325-fish stocking obligation in 2021. He said he still needs to engage the Wells Fish Hatchery staff on this idea because the burden would be theirs. He said he also needs to run this by Douglas PUD policy staff; although, he does not foresee an issue. He said at this point, nothing more is needed on the topic from the Aquatic SWG and he hopes to chat more on this in the next month or two. He said along the technical lines, he is interested to hear what Heironimus thinks about the available genetics data. Gingerich said he thinks there is a sound technical argument to support this idea. He said he understands there are other non-technical concerns, but based on the little data he has reviewed, he is impressed by the genetic diversity resulting from one round of repatriation, especially contrasted with a conventional broodstock program and what it takes to achieve the same level of diversity.

Heironimus said her initial thoughts are not concerns with genetics but are more related to the purpose of the stocking program. She asked whether stocking the same group of fish for two consecutive years might create issues with competition or might not align with the purpose of the mission of the stocking program. She said she does not see a lot of problems with doing this but needs to think more about whether this is meeting the same goal. She asked, what are the benefits of this and are the benefits worth the potential costs?

McLellan said another thing to think about is if there are effects from slowing down fish growth for a year. He asked if fish should be selected differently so that fast-growing fish are released in 2021 and the slow-growing fish in 2022, and what are the long-term effects of this? He asked if this selection should be done rather than having a mix of slow- and fast-growing fish released reared under the same conditions. He said these are the types of things he believes Heironimus is getting at, and he said he needs to think about this as well.

Ferguson said to add to these questions, what kinds of benefits might there be to survivability based on fish lengths at release?

Ferguson summarized topics discussed, including: 1) genetics; 2) competition; 3) effects of slowing down fish growth; 4) benefits to survivability and recruitment to adult life stages by holding back fish; and 5) what is the size target?

6. Wells Dam Fish Bypass Operations Update (Andrew Gingerich):

Andrew Gingerich said Wells Dam fish bypass operations started on April 9, 2020, and ended on August 19, 2020, at 12:00 p.m. He said 2020 was an interesting flow year, which exhibited a double peak freshet. He said bypass barriers were removed on May 28 and reinstalled on June 16. He said it turned out there was more water in Canada than was anticipated, and barriers were again removed on June 26 and reinstalled on July 6. He said other than this, the bypass operated normally this year, as designed and required by the Wells Dam Bypass Operating Plan, Emergency Action Plan, and Gas Abatement Plan.

7. Bull Trout Study Planning Twisp Weir and Wells Dam 2021 to 2022 (Andrew Gingerich)

Andrew Gingerich recalled in 2016 and 2017, Douglas PUD captured and tagged Bull Trout at Wells Dam (n=14) and the Twisp Weir (n=46), and conducted a 1-year RT study to demonstrate that Douglas PUD was able to meet passage standards for Bull Trout and subadults for those facilities, as required by the USFWS Section 18 Fishway Prescription, Biological Opinion for the Wells Hydroelectric Project and *Bull Trout Management Plan*. Gingerich said Douglas PUD is required to conduct a similar study in Year 10 of Douglas PUD's Federal Energy Regulatory Commission License No. 2149 (or 5 years after the initial study), and then conduct check-in studies every 10 years thereafter. He said Douglas PUD is now discussing the Year 10 study, which includes capturing and tagging fish in 2021 and monitoring the tagged fish in fall 2021 and spring 2022. He said he is working on a draft study plan that, in theory, will be similar to the last study plan. He said he wanted to notify USFWS and the Aquatic SWG that this draft study plan will be available for review in the next couple of months. He said once the plan is approved, there are a lot of study components Douglas PUD needs to plan for, including procuring tags, contracting, and the installation of telemetry equipment, among other things.

Steve Lewis asked if Douglas PUD is requesting comments now on how to improve the last study and to guide how to draft the upcoming study plan, or is the preference to wait to comment on the first draft study plan? Gingerich said he thinks there will be enough time to circulate a draft plan and then receive comments. He noted that similar to the last study plan, Douglas PUD plans to advocate for a deviation from the *Bull Trout Management Plan* that requires only 10 fish to be radio-tagged. He said Douglas PUD has concerns about this sample size and advocates that 60 fish should be considered the bare minimum. He said

although this is a deviation from the requirement, he thinks based on the take table in the Biological Opinion, there is room to study this many fish and this is how Douglas PUD proceeded last time. He said, however, Douglas PUD would want USFWS's approval that this is what the Aquatic SWG agrees to.

John Ferguson summarized that Douglas PUD plans to distribute a draft plan for Aquatic SWG review, and from that point, Lewis will take the plan to USFWS for a more holistic review. Ferguson said it sounds like Douglas PUD would like to have a final approved plan by early 2021 because of what needs to take place before implementing the study, and also in consideration of annual reporting tasks during the first quarter of each year. Ferguson asked if RT will likely be the study methodology. Gingerich said the last study used RT and the requirement says to use similar methods as used during relicensing, which was also RT. He said there are both pros and cons to using RT (e.g., radio signals do not do well in fast water but do well in turbulent water and a radio signal can still be detected by air if the tag is taken out of the water by a predator). He said combined acoustic and radio tags (or CARTs) and other tags have not yet been ruled out, but the plan is to mimic what was done in past years, which is radio tags. Lewis said this makes sense.

VII. Administration

1. Aquatic Settlement Agreement Pacific Lamprey Literature Reviews – Reminder (John Ferguson):

Kristi Geris reminded the Aquatic SWG that during the Aquatic SWG conference call on November 13, 2019, the Aquatic SWG agreed to revisit the juvenile and adult Pacific Lamprey literature reviews and document libraries in terms of format, structure, and content, annually each fall. John Ferguson said this will be forthcoming this fall. Chas Kyger said new documents were published in the past year that he has not yet had a chance to upload to the document libraries but plans to do so.

Ferguson summarized that: Aquatic SWG members will: 1) review the juvenile and adult Pacific Lamprey literature reviews and document libraries in terms of format, structure, and content, in preparation for discussion during the Aquatic SWG meeting on November 11, 2020; and 2) provide to Douglas PUD any new documents members wish to include in the juvenile and adult Pacific Lamprey literature reviews, and Douglas PUD will add these documents to the respective document libraries.

2. Upcoming Meetings (John Ferguson):

The Aquatic SWG meeting on October 14, 2020, will be held by conference call.

Other upcoming meetings include November 11 and December 9, 2020 (conference call).

List of Attachments

Attachment A List of Attendees

Attachment A – Attendees

Name	Role	Organization
John Ferguson	Aquatic SWG Chairman	Anchor QEA, LLC
Kristi Geris	Administration/Technical Support	Anchor QEA, LLC
Andrew Gingerich	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	Douglas PUD
Chas Kyger	Aquatic SWG Technical Alternate	Douglas PUD
Steve Lewis*	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
RD Nelle	Technical Support	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Breean Zimmerman	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	Washington State Department of Ecology
Patrick Verhey	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Laura Heironimus	Aquatic SWG Technical Alternate	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Ralph Lampman	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	Yakama Nation
Jason McLellan	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	Colville Confederated Tribes

Notes:

* Joined conference call around 10:30 a.m. (was not present during the approval of the August 12, 2020, conference call minutes)