

Final Conference Call Minutes



Aquatic Settlement Work Group

To: Aquatic SWG Parties **Date:** September 11, 2013
From: Michael Schiewe, Chair (Anchor QEA, LLC)
Re: Final Minutes of the August 14, 2013 Aquatic SWG Conference Call

The Aquatic Settlement Work Group (SWG) met by conference call on Wednesday, August 14, 2013, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Attendees are listed in Attachment A of these meeting minutes.

I. Summary of Action Items

1. Chas Kyger will verify the detection range of the radio-telemetry (RT) antennae that are being used in the 2013 Adult Lamprey Passage and Enumeration Study, and report back to the Aquatic SWG (Item VI-2).
2. **An Upper Columbia White Sturgeon Workshop will be held on September 10, 2013, at Douglas PUD in East Wenatchee, Washington (Item VI-3).**
3. Bob Rose will provide a draft agenda for the Upper Columbia White Sturgeon Workshop to the Aquatic SWG no later than Friday, August 16, 2013; the draft agenda will be structured by key management questions and will also include a presentation during the morning session by Andrea Drauch Schreier of University of California, Davis (UC Davis) (Item VI-3).
4. Chad Jackson will provide details regarding the white sturgeon broodstock fish health screening results via email to Kristi Geris for distribution to the Aquatic SWG (Item VI-3). *(Note: Jackson provided a summary of the white sturgeon broodstock fish health screening results, which Geris distributed to the Aquatic SWG on August 16, 2013.)*
5. Andrew Gingerich will provide a draft Conflict of Interest Policy to the Aquatic SWG for a 2-week comment period; the draft policy will largely be shaped after the HCP Hatchery Committees' current policy, which was distributed prior to the conference call as an example of a working conflict of interest policy (Item VI-6).
6. **The Aquatic SWG meeting on October 9, 2013 will be held **in person** (Item VII-1).**

II. Summary of Decisions

1. There were no Statements of Agreement approved at today's meeting.

III. Agreements

1. Aquatic SWG representatives present agreed to hold the Upper Columbia White Sturgeon Workshop on September 10, 2013, at Douglas PUD in East Wenatchee, Washington (Item VI-3).

IV. Review Items

1. Kristi Geris sent an email to the Aquatic SWG on July 29, 2013, notifying them that the draft Bull Trout Stranding and Take Study Plan is available for a 30-day review period, with comments due to Andrew Gingerich no later than Wednesday, August 28, 2013.
2. Kristi Geris sent an email to the Aquatic SWG on August 9, 2013, notifying them that the draft Lamprey Entrance Efficiency (LEE) and Operations Study Plan is available for a 30-day review period, with comments due to Andrew Gingerich or Chas Kyger no later than Monday, September 9, 2013.
3. Kristi Geris sent an email to the Aquatic SWG on August 26, 2013, notifying them that the draft Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures (SPCC) Plan is available for review, with comments due to Andrew Gingerich no later than Tuesday, October 1, 2013.
4. Kristi Geris sent an email to the Aquatic SWG on August 27, 2013, notifying them that the draft Conflict of Interest Policy is available for review. The draft policy will be up for approval at the Aquatic SWG meeting on October 9, 2013.
5. Kristi Geris sent an email to the Aquatic SWG on August 27, 2013, notifying them that the draft Water Quality Attainment Plan (WQAP) is available for review, with comments due to Andrew Gingerich no later than Tuesday, October 1, 2013.

V. Reports Finalized

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

VI. Summary of Discussions

1. **Welcome, Agenda Review, and Meeting Minutes Review** (Mike Schiewe): Mike Schiewe welcomed the Aquatic SWG members (attendees are listed in Attachment A) and opened the meeting. Schiewe reviewed the agenda and asked for additions or other changes to the agenda. The following items were requested as additions to the White Sturgeon Collection/Wells Fish Hatchery Rearing Update agenda item:
 - Bob Rose added a Marion Drain Sturgeon Hatchery update, and a discussion on an Upper Columbia White Sturgeon Workshop.

- Chad Jackson added a brief update on white sturgeon broodstock health results.

The revised draft July 10, 2013 meeting minutes were reviewed. Kristi Geris said that she incorporated a “Review Items” section into the meeting minutes’ template that tracks items that are currently available for Aquatic SWG review, and added that currently, these items include the draft Bull Trout Stranding and Take Study Plan and draft LEE and Operations Study Plan. She also added under the “Reports Finalized” section the distribution of the final Wells Hydroelectric Project Quality Assurance Project Plan for Water Temperature and Total Dissolved Gas that was approved by the Aquatic SWG on May 8, 2013, and filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in June 2013.

Geris said there was also one outstanding comment remaining to be discussed regarding the Fish Passage Waiver that was referenced during last month’s Wells Dam Water Quality Update. Andrew Gingerich explained that if the forebay total dissolved gas (TDG) is out of compliance, as long as the project does not add TDG, the project is still considered in compliance. He said that this exemption is not written in a Washington Administrative Code (WAC), but has been verbally agreed to by the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology). This clarification will be reflected in the final July 10, 2013 meeting minutes.

Patrick Verhey also requested that the 2013 Adult Lamprey Passage and Enumeration Study Update reflect that lamprey were delivered to Wells Dam on July 16, 2013, as planned, and that the transfer of lamprey was conducted by the Yakama Nation (YN) from the YN Prosser Hatchery facility. Therefore, the transfer did not require that Douglas PUD obtain a transport permit.

The Aquatic SWG members present approved the July 10, 2013 meeting minutes, as revised. Pat Irle provided Ecology’s approval of the revised draft minutes via email on August 19, 2013.

2. **2013 Adult Lamprey Passage and Enumeration Study Update** (Chas Kyger): Chas Kyger said there have been a total of three releases for the 2013 Adult Lamprey Passage and Enumeration Study, on July 16, 23, and 30, 2013, as follows:

Release Location	Tagging	Release Group Size*
Wells Dam tailrace (Approximately 1.5 miles downstream of Wells Dam)	PIT-tagged and radio-tagged	83
Wells Dam fish ladders	PIT-tagged and radio-tagged	18
Wells Dam tailrace	PIT-tagged only	5

(Approximately 1.5 miles downstream of Wells Dam)		
	Total:	106

Notes:

PIT – passive integrated transponder

*Numbers are totals spread out over the three release dates

Kyger said that Douglas PUD is expecting an additional 25 lamprey from Priest Rapids (PR) next week and he thanked Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) for their help in obtaining the necessary transfer permits required to meet study objectives.

Kyger said that based on data downloaded from the RT stations, 16 of the 106 total lamprey have been detected past Wells Dam; 12 of those have entered the Methow River. He said that 48 of the 83 total radio-tagged lamprey that were released 1.5 miles below Wells Dam still have not been detected. *(Note: Kyger later clarified the distinction between numbers detected, versus numbers passed; noting that the two are separate subsets of the totals.)* He said that mobile tracking efforts detected four lamprey last week, and another mobile tracking effort is planned for this week. He said that Douglas PUD is planning for one more release group on August 21, 2013, provided that the additional lamprey are obtained from PR; Douglas PUD plans to continue monitoring and downloading data for the next 2 to 3 months, for the remainder of the tag lives. Mike Schiewe asked about the distribution of release groups among those detected. Kyger replied that the first two release groups made up the majority of those that have been detected above Wells Dam. He added that only four or five of the total ladder releases have not been detected and were assumed to be still in the fish ladders, but the remainder have passed. He said that the majority of the tailrace releases have not been detected.

Andrew Gingerich said that the new FS2020 Half-duplex PIT-tag detection arrays installed in the Wells Dam East and West Fish Ladders have been obtaining useful PIT-tag data in pool 19; and that there is also video of lamprey passing the count window. Bob Rose asked about the detection range of the RT antennae located at the entrance of Wells Dam, and Kyger said that he will verify the detection range with LGL Limited Environmental Research Associates, and report back to the Aquatic SWG. Rose noted that this information would be useful in measuring entrance efficiency. Gingerich said that the RT antennae used during mobile tracking was able to detect a fish in about 35 feet, and Rose added that he expects something similar for those located at the entrance of Wells Dam.

Rose asked when a report with findings can be expected. Kyger replied that the radio tags have a 162-day tag life, and preliminary results should be available shortly thereafter. He said that a final report can be expected sometime next spring.

3. **White Sturgeon Collection/Wells Fish Hatchery Rearing Update** (Andrew Gingerich): Andrew Gingerich said that collections are now complete for both the direct gamete and larvae programs, and added that about 70,000 sturgeon are now on station. He said the fish are doing well and a protocol for culling excess fish is needed. Gingerich said that about 3,500 larval fish were collected from Lake Roosevelt, and survival has been greater than 90%. He said that these survival numbers are encouraging, especially compared to the 30% survival that has been observed in the past at Sherman Creek, which he speculated to be connected with rearing fish on cold well water. Gingerich said that the water source for the Wells sturgeon facility was recently switched from one well to another (called forebay and monument wells, respectively), due to complications with the water heater. He said that although fish are taking feed well, growth has been delayed due to colder water conditions. He said, however, that he is hesitant to put warmer water on the fish because he is not confident that the water temperature can be controlled. He said that a new controller card for the water heater is being installed today that will hopefully remedy the issue.

Jason McLellan further explained details of the collection of larvae by the Colville Confederated Tribes. He said that larval collection took place at two locations: Wanapum Pool and Lake Roosevelt. He said that the Wanapum Pool collections included a total of 82 sets, averaging 23 hours per set. Total frame hours fished was 1,892 hours over 16 days. Fishing effort was planned around when larvae were expected to be available based on collection of eggs by Golder Associates at Rock Island Dam. McLellan said that during this effort, only 43 larvae and 10 free embryos (yolk-sac larvae) were collected, and noted that for such an extensive effort, this was a fairly low catch. McLellan suggested that the cause of this low catch may be low productivity, and/or that reduced flows at night (due to power peaking) may have affected larvae drift. In an attempt to compensate for nightly low flows, nets were relocated to areas with higher nighttime velocities. McLellan said that Lake Roosevelt collections included a total of 164 sets, averaging 2 to 3 hours per set. Total frame hours fished was approximately 400 hours over 19 days. Staff collected approximately 5,000 larvae and 700 free embryos. McLellan said that 4,100 larvae were transferred to Wells Hatchery. He said that of the roughly 900 larvae that were not transferred to Wells Hatchery, some were mortalities, and some were transferred to Sherman Creek Hatchery for the Spokane Tribe of Indians' Lake Roosevelt program. *(Note: these data are preliminary and are subject to change.)*

Marion Drain Sturgeon Hatchery (Bob Rose): Bob Rose said that the YN has a Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) Accords project through the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish

Commission (CRITFC) to identify potential locations for a sturgeon facility. He said that, after a lengthy screening and planning process, a decision has recently been made to devote the majority of CRITFC Sturgeon Hatchery Accords funds to the Marion Drain facility. Rose said that a considerable amount of planning has already been completed, and upgrades to the Marion Drain facility should be complete within 2 to 3 years. He added that substantial improvements are expected—almost doubling the size of the facility. Rose said that the YN is now tasked with developing contracts, and added that they plan to meet soon with the Northwest Power and Conservation Council and BPA to discuss more on the process for moving forward. Rose said that there is interest in collecting juveniles in the lower Columbia River, and there are ongoing discussions about how to conduct more research in the lower Columbia River with existing funds. Rose said that he will keep the Aquatic SWG informed as the process moves forward.

Upper Columbia White Sturgeon Workshop (Bob Rose): Bob Rose said that after exchanging several emails, September 10, 2013, was identified as the best possible date for interested parties to hold an Upper Columbia White Sturgeon Workshop. He said that no other dates in September aligned with respective schedules, and the workshop would need to be pushed into October if September 10 did not work out. Rose said that Andrew Gingerich provided ideas for a draft agenda that he plans to develop and distribute once complete. Gingerich noted the importance of, and strongly encouraged, each Aquatic SWG members' participation in this workshop. Mike Schiewe reminded the Aquatic SWG that the in-person meeting on October 9, 2013, was identified as the time to have an in-depth discussion on Wells white sturgeon. Rose noted that the October 9 meeting also aligns with the September 10 workshop date, so that certain components can be discussed prior to any Aquatic SWG decisions. Jason McLellan said that his concern about the proposed September 10 date is that sturgeon geneticist, Andrea Drauch Schreier of UC Davis, will not be available that week. Gingerich replied that although Drauch Schreier will not be able to physically attend the workshop, she is available to attend via WebEx. McLellan said that he supports the September 10 workshop date as long as Drauch Schreier can participate; and added that Drauch Schreier has conducted a lot of work on stock structure, which is one of the key discussions that needs to take place. McLellan also said that Drauch Schreier planned to provide a presentation. Schiewe agreed that several issues are tied to stock structure, and that the workshop should be rescheduled should Drauch Schreier not be able to attend. Gingerich noted that another benefit of the September 10 date is that the Aquatic SWG monthly meeting is the following day on September 11, 2013, which will provide opportunity for a more focused discussion within the SWG.

Rose said that the draft agenda is currently split into a morning session and afternoon session, as follows:

- 9:00 a.m. Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Overview
- 9:20 a.m. Principles of the Past

- 9:30 a.m. PUD Program Activities and Achievements
- 10:00 a.m. 2013 Collection Activities
- 10:45 a.m. Past Rearing Experiences, Status of 2013 Juveniles, and Lessons Learned
- 11:30 a.m. Monitoring – Chelan PUD and Grant PUD
- 12:10 p.m. Working Lunch, Q&A Session
- 1:15 p.m. Presentation by Andrea Drauch Schreier of UC Davis
Other Presentations and Discussions
- 4:00 p.m. Adjourn

Rose suggested participants bring a sack lunch so that discussions can continue through lunch. He said that once Drauch Schreier provides her presentation, additional presentations and discussions can take place for the remainder of the day. McLellan questioned whether the afternoon session, alone, would provide adequate time for presentations and all needed discussions. Rose agreed and suggested removing items from the morning session to free up some time. Schiewe suggested moving Drauch Schreier's presentation to before lunch, and consolidating material from the morning session, rather than removing it. Schiewe suggested that the first part of the workshop focus on identifying: 1) what is on-hand now in terms of numbers and sources; and 2) what FERC requires. He added that the latter needs to be informed by stock issues and concerns. He said that this discussion should then be followed by the genetics discussion. McLellan also suggested that the draft agenda be structured by specific management questions, and added that this will help inform procedures in the future. He also noted the need to incorporate a certain level of background information within the frame of the discussions. Rose said that it seems feasible to consolidate the morning session into a single hour. He said that he will provide a new draft agenda for the Upper Columbia White Sturgeon Workshop to the Aquatic SWG no later than Friday, August 16, 2013. He said that the draft agenda will be structured by key management questions, and will also include a presentation during the morning session by Drauch Schreier of UC Davis. The Aquatic SWG agreed to hold the Upper Columbia White Sturgeon Workshop on September 10, 2013, at Douglas PUD in East Wenatchee, Washington.

White Sturgeon Broodstock Health Results (Chad Jackson): Chad Jackson said that WDFW received the white sturgeon broodstock health results back from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Idaho Fish Health Center in Orofino, Idaho. *(Note: this topic was originally discussed at the Aquatic SWGs meeting on May 8, 2013.)* Jackson said that all pathogens tested for were negative, and added that he will provide additional details regarding the fish health screening via email to Kristi Geris for distribution to the Aquatic SWG. *(Note: Jackson provided a summary of the white sturgeon broodstock fish health screening results, which Geris distributed to the Aquatic SWG on August 16, 2013.)* Jackson said that once the recently collected larvae grow

larger, they will also be subjected to fish health screening. He said that reduced sampling will also be conducted on approximately 60 larvae that were recently collected at a location downstream from Rock Island Dam.

4. **Bull Trout Stranding and Take Study Plan – Review Reminder** (Andrew Gingerich): Andrew Gingerich said that the draft Bull Trout Stranding and Take Study Plan was distributed to the Aquatic SWG by Kristi Geris on July 29, 2013; the draft plan is available for a 30-day review period, with comments due to him no later than Wednesday, August 28, 2013. He also noted that the draft LEE and Operations Study Plan was also distributed to the Aquatic SWG by Geris on August 9, 2013; the draft plan is available for a 30-day review period, with comments due to him or Chas Kyger no later than Monday, September 9, 2013. Gingerich noted the importance of meeting these deadlines because Douglas PUD needs to file these documents with FERC by October 2013. He said that Douglas PUD also hopes to distribute the draft Water Quality Attainment Plan for comments and revisions prior to next month’s meeting, so a more final version can be approved on the September 11, 2013 conference call.

5. **Lamprey Proposal for Upper Columbia** (Bob Rose): Bob Rose said that the Lamprey Proposal for Upper Columbia (formerly the “Joint Fisheries Parties No-Net-Impact Proposal [JFP NNI]”) is still under revision, and added that a fair amount of work has been done with the PUDs to tie the respective licenses to lamprey activities. Rose noted that it would be helpful to discuss the proposal with Douglas PUD soon, and added that he would also like to convene a workgroup with the other PUDs to further discuss a path forward. He said that as the revised proposal is nearing completion, he is also interested in identifying cost-share partnerships. He said that he has been working with USFWS, and has identified a few prospective partnerships. Rose suggested a 2- to 3-hour discussion to piece things together; however, he noted that he will be unable to attend next month’s Aquatic SWG meeting.

6. **Conflict of Interest** (Mike Schiewe): Mike Schiewe said that an example conflict of interest policy (Attachment B) was distributed to the Aquatic SWG by Kristi Geris on August 2, 2013. He explained that a conflict of interest policy is typically a standard requirement of committees or working groups responsible for reviewing proposals and recommending funding. He said that Attachment B is the HCP Hatchery Committees’ policy, which was modeled after the HCP Tributary Committees’ policy, and which also incorporates definitions from the National Institute of Health protocol for convening review groups. He said that there is nothing new or unusual about this policy, and that Attachment B is intended to serve as a draft for initial comments. He said that Pat Irle has indicated interest in participating in this discussion. Andrew Gingerich said that he will use Attachment B as a template to develop a draft Conflict of Interest Policy for the Aquatic SWG, and that once complete, he will provide the draft to the Aquatic SWG for review.

Bob Rose said that he thought “professional relationships,” as described in Attachment B, needed additional clarification. He also expressed concern about the inability of conflicted parties to participate in project review. He said that, in many cases, the conflicted parties are the key parties with the expertise. Rose added that he would not want the only people who have expertise to be excluded from the review process. Schiewe explained that, as implemented in the HCP Hatchery and Tributary Committees, the non-conflicted parties have the option to include a conflicted party in the discussion of a project under review—but that a conflicted party cannot participate in the decision-making. Schiewe said that the HCP Hatchery Committees’ policy was introduced initially on an interim basis, for a 2-year trial. He said that there was never a need to implement the policy during the interim 2-year trial; and so in January 2013, the policy was extended for an additional 2-year trial. Schiewe suggested implementing a similar interim 2-year trial for the Aquatic SWG Conflict of Interest Policy.

VII. Next Meetings

1. **Upcoming meetings** (Mike Schiewe): *September 11, 2013 (conference call); October 9, 2013 (in person); and November 13, 2013 (conference call).*

List of Attachments

Attachment A – List of Attendees

Attachment B – Example Conflict of Interest Policy

Attachment A List of Attendees

Name	Role	Organization
Mike Schiewe	SWG Chair	Anchor QEA, LLC
Kristi Geris	Administration/Technical Support	Anchor QEA, LLC
Andrew Gingerich	SWG Technical Representative	Douglas PUD
Chas Kyger	Technical Support	Douglas PUD
Patrick Verhey	SWG Technical Representative	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Chad Jackson	Technical Support	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Bob Rose	SWG Technical Representative	Yakama Nation
Jason McLellan	SWG Technical Representative	Colville Confederated Tribes