

Final Conference Call Minutes



Aquatic Settlement Work Group

To: Aquatic SWG Parties **Date:** December 10, 2014
From: Michael Schiewe, Chair (Anchor QEA, LLC)
Re: Final Minutes of the October 22, 2014 Aquatic SWG Conference Call

The Aquatic Settlement Work Group (SWG) met by conference call on Wednesday, October 22, 2014, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Attendees are listed in Attachment A of these meeting minutes.

I. Summary of Action Items

1. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) will provide a response to the Colville Confederated Tribes' (CCT's) email requesting clarification of the technical basis for WDFW's position on the 2015-2017 white sturgeon stocking plans in the Wells Pool prior to the Aquatic SWG conference call on November 12, 2014 (Item VI-2).
2. Aquatic SWG members will discuss internally Douglas PUD's revised draft Statement of Agreement (SOA) for a Wells White Surgeon Stocking Program Brood Year (BY) 2015 and will contact Douglas PUD (and copy Kristi Geris and Mike Schiewe) if they anticipate that their respective agency will not be in support of the SOA; if any party anticipates not supporting the draft Douglas PUD proposal, an interim in-person meeting will be arranged with the appropriate parties to resolve any issues prior to the Aquatic SWG conference call on November 12, 2014 (Item VI-2).
3. Each Aquatic SWG member will provide two questions for the Aquatic SWG Chair position interviews to Kristi Geris by Tuesday, November 11, 2014, and Geris will compile the questions for discussion during the Aquatic SWG conference call on Wednesday, November 12, 2014 (Item VI-3).
4. Anchor QEA will distribute a Doodle Poll to Aquatic SWG members to determine Aquatic SWG availability for conducting the Aquatic SWG Chair position interviews during the month of November 2014 (Items VI-3). *(Note: Kristi Geris distributed a Doodle Poll, as discussed, to the Aquatic SWG following the conference call on October 22, 2014.)*
5. Aquatic SWG members will respond to the Doodle Poll regarding scheduling the Aquatic SWG Chair position interviews during the month of November 2014, no later

- than Friday, October 31, 2014; at this time, if Aquatic SWG availability is low for the proposed November dates, Anchor QEA will distribute additional dates for December 2014, and Aquatic SWG members will indicate availability for the proposed December dates prior to the Aquatic SWG conference call on Wednesday, November 12, 2014 (Items VI-3). *(Note: Based on poll participation to date, Kristi Geris distributed an updated Doodle Poll with December dates to the Aquatic SWG on October 23, 2014.)*
6. Douglas PUD will inform the Aquatic SWG Chair candidates of their status based on the Aquatic SWG's discussions during today's conference call (Item VI-3).
 7. Aquatic SWG members will consider Douglas PUD's proposed modifications to the Wells Dam Collection Gallery for lamprey passage and Douglas PUD will request approval of the modifications during the Aquatic SWG conference call on Wednesday, November 12, 2014 (Item VI-4).

II. Summary of Decisions

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

III. Agreements

1. The Aquatic SWG members present agreed to interview three candidates for the Aquatic SWG Chair position, including Dr. Tracy Hillman (BioAnalysts, Inc.), Dr. John Ferguson (Anchor QEA), and Dr. Peter Bisson (Bisson Aquatic Consulting LLC; Item VI-3).
2. The Aquatic SWG members present agreed that the Aquatic SWG Chair position interviews will be 45 minutes each, with 30-minute breaks in between, and all interviews will be scheduled on the same morning; additionally, in the afternoon of the same day as the interviews, Aquatic SWG members present agreed to hold an Aquatic SWG conference call for members to discuss the interviews and a path forward (Item VI-3).
3. The Aquatic SWG members present supported Douglas PUD's request to present their proposed modifications to the Wells Dam Collection Gallery for lamprey passage to the HCP Coordinating Committees (Item VI-4).

IV. Review Items

1. Kristi Geris sent an email to the Aquatic SWG on October 8, 2014, notifying them that the revised draft SOA for a Wells White Surgeon Stocking Program BY 2015 is available for review. Douglas PUD will request approval of this SOA during the Aquatic SWG conference call on Wednesday, November 12, 2014 (Item VI-2).
2. Kristi Geris sent an email to the Aquatic SWG on October 8, 2014, notifying them that the draft 2015 Lamprey Passage and Enumeration Study Plan is available for a 30-day review period with comments due to Chas Kyger no later than Friday, November 7, 2014.

3. Kristi Geris sent an email to the Aquatic SWG on October 8, 2014, notifying them that the Aquatic SWG Chair qualifications document (originally distributed on September 10, 2014) is still available for review with comments due to Andrew Gingerich as soon as possible.

V. Documents Finalized

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

VI. Summary of Discussions

1. **Welcome and Review Agenda** (Kristi Geris): Kristi Geris welcomed the Aquatic SWG members (attendees are listed in Attachment A) and opened the meeting. Geris said that Mike Schiewe is unable to attend today's call. Geris reviewed the agenda and said that the purpose of today's conference call is to discuss a Wells white sturgeon stocking path forward, and also to finalize plans for selecting a new Aquatic SWG Chair. She said that Douglas PUD would also like to add, with time permitting, a discussion on a suggested modification to the Wells Dam collection gallery for lamprey passage.
2. **Wells White Sturgeon Stocking Path Forward** (Andrew Gingerich): Andrew Gingerich said that Douglas PUD provided a revised draft SOA for a Wells White Surgeon Stocking Program BY 2015, as well as a Microsoft Excel file containing a formula to calculate stocking values, to Geris on October 8, 2014, which she distributed to the Aquatic SWG that same day. Gingerich said that the intent of distributing the Microsoft Excel file was to provide an easy tool to estimate fish stocking under the terms of the SOA. He recalled that WDFW also provided a recommendation for white sturgeon stocking in the Wells Pool, which was distributed to the Aquatic SWG by Geris on October 6, 2014. Gingerich summarized that WDFW's recommendation was to release equal numbers of direct gamete-origin and larval-origin fish. He noted that the Douglas PUD-proposed SOA also recommends a genetically based split through parental representation, and also targets 5,000 fish and moves genes from the lower river upstream. He said that WDFW was not able to provide feedback on the SOA, nor were they able to provide further clarification on the technical basis for their recommendation, as requested by the CCT; however, WDFW indicated that they would do so by early November 2014.

Bob Rose said that the Yakama Nation (YN) will not be able to comment at this time. He explained that he was not able to discuss the SOA internally, nor with WDFW, as planned; however, he plans to be ready to vote at the Aquatic SWG meeting on November 12, 2014. Gingerich asked if the YN are still considering approving the SOA, and Rose replied that they are. Patrick Verhey said that WDFW is also considering approving the most recent SOA. He assured Gingerich that the SOA is not off the table and that WDFW just has not had the opportunity to discuss the SOA internally. Pat Irle said that the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has no

comments at this time. She added that she wants to consider the WDFW response to the CCT questions. Jason McLellan said that the CCT have no comments at this time; and he noted that the CCT will want to review the WDFW response to their request prior to making a decision on the SOA. Steve Lewis said that he has not had a chance to review the SOA, and indicated that he would reserve his judgment until the November meeting. He also asked McLellan to summarize the CCT request directed to WDFW. McLellan explained that the CCT requested technical evidence that supports the WDFW recommendation, including evidence: 1) that the sturgeon population in the John Day Pool has higher observed genetic diversity than all pools above McNary Dam; 2) that the BY 2014 direct gamete take offspring derived from John Day Pool parents possess "different" alleles than those found in the Trans Boundary population; 3) that supports or explains why WDFW believes that the "different" alleles suspected to exist within the John Day population are important for program success considering they are non-selective alleles at 13 microsatellite loci; and 4) that justifies WDFW's reasoning supporting a 50/50 split in release numbers from a genetic perspective. McLellan said that the CCT are not necessarily opposed to it, but they would like to understand evidence for a benefit.

Gingerich said that he understands that Aquatic SWG members have several responsibilities to balance, but that he was disappointed that more progress was not made on this. He said that hopefully more concrete discussions can occur in November. He noted that Wells Hatchery Staff will soon need to make decisions regarding space limitations, and he encouraged Aquatic SWG members to be prepared to vote in November. Aquatic SWG members agreed that they would be ready to vote during the November meeting, assuming that WDFW has provided a response to the CCT request. Verhey said that WDFW plans to provide a response to the CCT email requesting clarification of the technical basis for the WDFW position on the 2015-2017 white sturgeon stocking plans in the Wells Pool prior to the Aquatic SWG conference call on November 12, 2014.

Gingerich said that he is willing to contact individual Aquatic SWG members if they would like to discuss the stocking plan further prior to the meeting in November. He also noted that if an Aquatic SWG member senses that their agency may be uncomfortable with the SOA prior to the November meeting, in the interest of moving forward, he suggested convening an in-person meeting with the necessary individuals to discuss the issues prior to the call. He said that meeting in person may be a more effective approach to find common ground, rather than to email.

Aquatic SWG members agreed to discuss internally the Douglas PUD revised draft SOA for a Wells White Surgeon Stocking Program BY 2015 and will contact Douglas PUD (and copy Geris and Mike Schiewe) if they foresee that their respective agency will not be in support of the SOA; if any party anticipates not supporting the draft Douglas PUD

proposal, an interim in-person meeting will be arranged with the appropriate parties to resolve any issues prior to the Aquatic SWG conference call on November 12, 2014.

Lewis asked Gingerich if Douglas PUD was facing a deadline. Gingerich said that the deadline is driven more by hatchery capacity than stocking proportions; he added that hatchery staff are already developing a culling plan. He said that Douglas PUD would like to come to agreement on stocking before the winter, so that hatchery staff can manage fish accordingly. He added that Douglas PUD prefers to reach a unanimous decision, which is consistent with the spirit and intent of the Aquatic SWG.

3. Aquatic SWG Chair Position Candidate Discussion (Andrew Gingerich):

Andrew Gingerich said that the compiled Aquatic SWG Chair position rankings (Attachment B) were distributed to the Aquatic SWG prior to the meeting on October 22, 2014 by Kristi Geris. Gingerich noted that two candidates emerged over the others: Dr. John Ferguson and Dr. Tracy Hillman. Gingerich added that Mr. Geoff McMichael and Mr. Bryan Nordlund were ranked in the middle, and Dr. Pete Bisson ranked lowest. Gingerich said that he was pleased to see similar rankings submitted by Aquatic SWG members, implying similar view regarding candidates. He suggested moving on to interview Ferguson and Hillman, and asked if the Aquatic SWG had other recommendations as a path forward. The Aquatic SWG members present agreed to interview three candidates for the Aquatic SWG Chair position, including Hillman, Ferguson, and Bisson.

Gingerich suggested that the interviews be held by conference call, and that each Aquatic SWG member develops two interview questions to ask each candidate. The Aquatic SWG can discuss answers to these questions following the interviews. He added that if each member develops two questions, some questions may be similar, and so there may be less than 12 questions total. Aquatic SWG members agreed to each provide two questions for the Aquatic SWG Chair position interviews to Geris (with a copy to Schiewe) by Tuesday, November 11, 2014, and Geris will compile the questions for discussion during the Aquatic SWG conference call scheduled for Wednesday, November 12, 2014.

Verhey asked if selecting a Chair will require Aquatic SWG consensus, and Gingerich replied that that was the goal. Gingerich added that if consensus is not reached, this may trigger the need for additional interviews. Irle asked if Douglas PUD plans to contact the three candidates chosen for interviews to begin scheduling. Gingerich said that Douglas PUD can do that, and he suggested that first, a date should be selected that works for Aquatic SWG members. He suggested scheduling all interviews on the same day with 30-minute breaks in between. Irle suggested reserving at least 45 minutes per interview. Verhey suggested holding a discussion with the Aquatic SWG following each interview. Irle suggested, instead, convening a call following all of the

interviews. The Aquatic SWG members present agreed that the Aquatic SWG Chair position interviews will be 45 minutes each, with 30-minute breaks in between, and all interviews will be scheduled on the same morning; additionally, in the afternoon of that same day, Aquatic SWG members present agreed to hold an Aquatic SWG conference call for members to discuss the interviews and a path forward. Anchor QEA will distribute a Doodle Poll to Aquatic SWG members to determine Aquatic SWG availability for conducting the Aquatic SWG Chair position interviews during the month of November 2014. Aquatic SWG members will respond to the Doodle Poll regarding scheduling the Aquatic SWG Chair position interviews during the month of November 2014, no later than Friday, October 31, 2014. At this time, if Aquatic SWG availability is low for the proposed November dates, Anchor QEA will distribute additional dates for December 2014, and Aquatic SWG members will indicate availability for the proposed December dates prior to the Aquatic SWG conference call on Wednesday, November 12, 2014. *(Note: Geris distributed a Doodle Poll, as discussed, to the Aquatic SWG following the conference call on October 22, 2014; on October 23, 2014, based on poll participation to date, Geris distributed an updated Doodle Poll with December dates to the Aquatic SWG.)*

Gingerich said that Douglas PUD will contact the Aquatic SWG Chair candidates regarding Aquatic SWG's discussions regarding the Chair position, as discussed during today's conference call.

4. Modification to the Wells Dam Collection Gallery for Lamprey Passage

(Andrew Gingerich): Andrew Gingerich said that in 2015, Douglas PUD plans to conduct a second year of the Lamprey Passage and Enumeration Study, with a goal of increasing sample size and resolution in areas of the Wells Dam fishways, such as in the auxiliary water supply system. Gingerich recalled discussing opening a secondary entrance to the collection gallery, which has previously been referred to as the "c-channel," and is located near the entrance to Weir 1 at Wells Dam. He further explained that the c-channel runs across the face of the dam and provides a low level entrance to the collection gallery. He said that historically, the c-channel and side entrance were open for salmon passage, with the assumption that fish would be attracted to the turbine outlets, and these passage routes would provide a channel through the collection gallery. He said, however, that fish ultimately utilized one entrance, and then cycled through the collection gallery and exited via the other entrance; therefore, both entrances were closed, and have been closed for years.

Gingerich said that as part of the 2015 Lamprey Passage and Enumeration Study, Douglas PUD is proposing to reopen and add a modification to the c-channel to help improve lamprey passage. He acknowledged that there has been no previous study suggesting that reopening the c-channel will improve lamprey passage; however, Douglas PUD is proposing to do so as a best management practice to increase sample

size and improve entrance efficiency by providing this additional passage route. He said that in addition to reopening the c-channel, Douglas PUD is proposing to install an aluminum box to help make the entrance more conducive to lamprey passage. He said that a rough engineer drawing of this conceptual box (Attachment C) and a Wells Dam Fish Passage System Overview document (Attachment D) was distributed to the Aquatic SWG by Kristi Geris on October 21, 2014. Gingerich said that the box is about 6.5 feet wide and includes four walls with 90 square inches of orifice opening per wall, as depicted in page 3 of Attachment C. He said that river flow through the box would be targeted at 10,000 cubic feet per second (10 kcfs), with the intent that lower flow will make lamprey passage easier. He added that an illustration of the c-channel at Wells Dam is depicted in page 7 of Attachment D.

Gingerich said that approval to reopen the c-channel and install the box will be needed soon in order to construct the box in time to be installed during the Wells Dam annual winter maintenance. He added that once approved by the Aquatic SWG, approval will be needed from the HCP Coordinating Committees. Bob Rose said that the YN does not have any issues at this point, but would like some time to review the conceptual design. He said that this design may be similar to one installed at McNary Dam, and suggested contacting those engineers for input based on their experiences. He added that he is not certain how many lamprey will locate the box via attraction flow and that most may locate it by chance. Gingerich reiterated that Douglas PUD will be targeting 10 kcfs through that area, and that the bars illustrated in page 3 of Attachment C will also help control flow. He added that lamprey are exploratory fish, and reopening the c-channel would provide another opportunity for fish to enter the Project.

Steve Lewis said that USFWS has no reservations at this time, and asked how historical use of the c-channel aligns with run data. Gingerich said that Douglas PUD tried to locate details regarding when these entrances were closed off, but was unable to pinpoint the exact time. He added that the side entrance was believed closed at least 15 years ago. Rose said that at that time, closing of the low-level entrance was a priority topic within the Mid-Columbia Coordinating Committee, so Rose speculated that the low-level entrance was also closed around that same time. Gingerich also added that Shane Bickford, who has been with Douglas PUD for more than 20 years, believes that closing of the two entrances were mutually exclusive; however, engineers speculate that the two entrances could have been closed at the same time. Gingerich said that there is concern about reopening the side entrances at Wells Dam, especially for the HCP Coordinating Committees; so Douglas PUD is not proposing reopening those entrances at this time. He added, however, that reopening the side entrances is still not completely off the table.

Patrick Verhey asked if Douglas PUD is proposing passive integrated transponder (PIT)-tag monitoring to determine whether lamprey are entering the proposed box and

successfully exiting. Gingerich said that Douglas PUD is planning to install radio antennas in this location, and has considered installing PIT-tag detection as well. He said that some fish get PIT-tagged in the lower river; however, those reaching Wells is low. He said that the box is built in a way where PIT-tag detection can be easily installed in the future if chosen to do so.

Gingerich asked Aquatic SWG members if Douglas PUD can take this request to the HCP Coordinating Committees for approval, so that fabrication of the box can begin. The Aquatic SWG members present supported Douglas PUD's request to present their proposed modifications to the Wells Dam Collection Gallery for lamprey passage to the HCP Coordinating Committee. Aquatic SWG members will consider Douglas PUD's proposed modifications to the Wells Dam Collection Gallery for lamprey passage, and Douglas PUD will request approval of the modifications during the Aquatic SWG conference call on Wednesday, November 12, 2014.

VII. Next Meetings

1. **Upcoming meetings** (Mike Schiewe): Upcoming meetings are as follows: November 12, 2014 (conference call); December 10, 2014 (conference call); January 14, 2015 (TBD).

List of Attachments

Attachment A – List of Attendees

Attachment B – Aquatic SWG Chair Position Compiled Rankings

Attachment C – Engineer Drawing of the Proposed Pacific Lamprey Entrance Box at Wells Dam

Attachment D – Wells Dam Fish Passage System Overview Document

Attachment A List of Attendees

Name	Role	Organization
Kristi Geris	Administration/Technical Support	Anchor QEA, LLC
Andrew Gingerich	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	Douglas PUD
Patrick Verhey	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Pat Irle	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	Washington State Department of Ecology
Jason McLellan	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	Colville Confederated Tribes
Bob Rose	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	Yakama Nation
Steve Lewis	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service