

Final Conference Call Minutes



Aquatic Settlement Work Group

To: Aquatic SWG Parties **Date:** September 10, 2014
From: Michael Schiewe, Chair (Anchor QEA, LLC)
Re: Final Minutes of the August 13, 2014 Aquatic SWG Conference Call

The Aquatic Settlement Work Group (SWG) met by conference call on Wednesday, August 13, 2014, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Attendees are listed in Attachment A of these meeting minutes.

I. Summary of Action Items

1. Andrew Gingerich will distribute a summary table of passive integrated transponder (PIT)-tag detections by location for brood year (BY) 2013 white sturgeon released in the Wells Pool (Item VI-3). *(Note: Gingerich provided a summary table to Kristi Geris on August 14, 2014, which Geris distributed to the Aquatic SWG the same day.)*
2. Bob Rose and Chad Jackson will review the Aquatic SWG White Sturgeon Collection and Stocking: BYs 2014-2017 document, and will report back to the Aquatic SWG regarding a path forward and timeline for finalizing the document at the Aquatic SWG meeting on September 10, 2014 (Item VI-4).
3. Bob Rose will provide Shane Bickford with information regarding the Yakama Nation's (YN's) concerns with the Grant PUD sturgeon management program (Item VI-4).
4. The YN and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) will provide comments on the 2013 Lamprey Passage and Enumeration Study Report to Chas Kyger by August 27, 2014 (Item VI-6).
5. Chas Kyger will provide a draft 2015 lamprey study plan to the Aquatic SWG for discussion at the Aquatic SWG meeting on September 10, 2014 (Item VI-6).

II. Summary of Decisions

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

III. Agreements

1. No agreements were confirmed during today's conference call.

IV. Review Items

1. The Final 2013 Lamprey Passage and Enumeration Study Report that was distributed to the Aquatic SWG by Kristi Geris on July 7, 2014, is available for review with comments due to Douglas PUD by August 27, 2014 (Item VI-6).

V. Documents Finalized

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

VI. Summary of Discussions

1. **Welcome, Review Agenda and Action Items, and Meeting Minutes Approval** (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. Andrew Gingerich added a discussion on Schiewe's upcoming retirement and replacement of the Aquatic SWG Chair.

The revised draft May 28, 2014 and July 9, 2014 conference call minutes were reviewed. Schiewe said that all comments and revisions received from members of the Aquatic SWG were incorporated in the revised minutes, and that there were no outstanding edits or questions to discuss. Aquatic SWG members present approved the May 28, 2014 and July 9, 2014 conference call minutes, as revised.

2. **Sturgeon: Larvae Collection Summary** (Bret Nine and Andrew Gingerich): Bret Nine said that the Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT), with the help of the Spokane Tribe of Indians, were able to collect more than 31,700 larvae in the 2 weeks following July 4, 2014. He said that the collection effort was very successful—especially in comparison to last year's effort, which took close to 1 month to collect 5,000 larvae. Nine said that 17,623 larvae were delivered to Wells Hatchery.

Andrew Gingerich said that of the 17,623 larvae delivered to Wells Hatchery, there are about 15,750 remaining in the hatchery. He said that approximately 10% of the delivered larvae were lost due to the stress of transportation and the transition to feed. He recalled that white sturgeon spawning at Marion Drain resulted in a five-by-five (5x5) factorial cross followed by a two-by-five (2x5) factorial cross, resulting in at least 35 half-sibling crosses on station. Gingerich said that overall it has been a very successful collection year.

Pat Irle asked how many fish are on station from Marion Drain. Gingerich replied that more than 100,000 fish from Marion Drain are on station. He explained that the females provided more eggs than expected, and with all of the families represented, Wells Hatchery ended up with more fish than expected.

Steve Lewis asked if there was a particular area that has been more successful than others in larvae collection. Nine replied that a specific location has been targeted over the past 2 to 3 years; this location provided 1,000 to 2,000 larvae each night, and was very successful.

3. **Sturgeon: Status and Condition of Sturgeon at Wells Hatchery** (Andrew Gingerich):

Andrew Gingerich said that roughly 55% of the direct gamete-origin fish have survived to date, while 90% of the larval-origin fish have survived to date. Gingerich reiterated that the larval-origin fish losses are associated with the stress of transportation and the transition to feed. He said that the remaining fish at Wells Hatchery are in good health.

Gingerich provided an update on PIT-tag detections in the Wells Reservoir. He recalled that more than 5,000 fish were released last spring, including fish from both larvae-origin and direct gamete-origin programs, and the split was close to 50/50 between larvae-origin and direct gamete-origin fish. He said that the primary detection location was about 14 river miles upstream in the Okanagan River, where detections continue to increase, with 34 individual fish detected to date. He said that about 80% of the 34 fish detected were direct gamete-origin fish, and he noted that the direct gamete-origin fish were released earlier than the larval-origin fish. He said that the majority of movement has occurred during nighttime hours. He also reported that only three fish have been detected at the Rocky Reach bypass, and those were detected within the first 2 weeks of release. Gingerich said that he will distribute a summary table of PIT-tag detections of white sturgeon released in Wells Pool. *(Note: Gingerich provided a summary table to Kristi Geris on August 14, 2014, which Geris distributed to the Aquatic SWG the same day.)*

4. **Sturgeon: Yakama Nation Concerns with 2015-2017 Stocking Path** (Bob Rose):

Bob Rose reported that, at this point, the YN is not interested in signing a Statement of Agreement (SOA), and does not know when they will be able to do so. Rose said that the YN is in the process of discussing the matter internally and asked if there was anything pressing that required an immediate response. Andrew Gingerich replied that there was no pressing matter today; however, when Wells Hatchery approaches capacity for juvenile sturgeon, hatchery staff will need to know which fish are planned for release and extra fish will need to be culled. Rose estimated that the YN internal process will take a couple more weeks and invited Gingerich to contact him if the hatchery needs to start culling fish.

Gingerich requested that a decision date be set, and Rose said that the YN is meeting with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) on September 4, 2014, to discuss the matter further; Rose reassured the Aquatic SWG that the process is moving forward. Rose added that Ecology may also be invited to the meeting.

Irle asked what Rose's concerns were, and Rose replied that he did not have specific concerns to discuss, but that he was not in agreement with all of the concepts that were included in the document. Rose added that there are fundamental discussions that need to take place among the co-managers in order to move forward with a holistic approach. Irle asked Rose to define "co-managers," and Rose replied that he is referring to the YN and WDFW.

Bret Nine asked if all of the direct gamete-origin fish were from the same 5x5 and 2x5 factorial crosses. Gingerich replied that to his knowledge, all fish are from the same matings. He added that Grant PUD and Chelan PUD also fish from these same crosses and that their fish are being held separately (not at Wells Hatchery). He added that if Douglas PUD needed additional fish in the future, they could probably be obtained from these other programs with the help of WDFW.

Nine asked for WDFW's definition of "co-managers" that was referenced in the discussion between Rose and Irle. Chad Jackson replied that from a legal perspective, Rose was correct when he said that the term refers to the YN and WDFW; however, in certain situations and/or geographic areas, WDFW considers other tribes, such as the CCT or the Spokane Tribe of Indians, to be co-managers as well.

Gingerich acknowledged the YN's desire for a regional sturgeon stocking framework, but also asked Rose if the YN will be able to commit to a deadline for a decision regarding the 2015-2017 Stocking Plan for the Well Pool. Rose replied that he cannot guarantee a decision date at this time, but said that he and Jackson will review the Aquatic SWG White Sturgeon Collection and Stocking: BYs 2014-2017 document, and will report back to the Aquatic SWG regarding a path forward and timeline for finalizing the document at the Aquatic SWG meeting on September 10, 2014.

Shane Bickford asked Rose for clarification on what is currently being disputed. Bickford asked if the dispute will have a technical effect on what is happening at Wells Hatchery. Rose said that he will provide Bickford with information regarding the YN's concerns with the Grant PUD sturgeon management program.

5. **Water Quality Update** (Andrew Gingerich): Andrew Gingerich reviewed the Wells Dam Mid-Season Water Quality Update (Attachment B) that was distributed to the Aquatic SWG by Brooke Baker prior to the conference call on August 13, 2014. Figure 1 shows compliance and water quality standards (WQS) at the Wells Dam forebay and tailrace from May 8 to August 16, 2014. The blue dots above the blue line depict violations of the forebay standard; the values in the tailrace are shown as red dots with those above the red line depicting violations. He said that WQS were met at Wells Dam, with the exception of May 28, 2014, when Wells Dam was directed by North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) to reduce loads as a direct result of the Malaga,

Washington wildfire. He said that since the wildlife-related violations, water quality has been very good. Gingerich said that Figure 2 shows water quality conditions at Rocky Reach forebay, which historically has been the hardest standard to achieve because Wells Dam often receives water that is already above the 115% forebay standard. He said that the blue dots above the blue line show violations and that water quality in the past month has been very good.

Steve Lewis asked if all 5 days of exceedances in May were due to the wildfire. Gingerich confirmed that they were due to the Malaga, Washington wildfire when a wooden pole transmission system was damaged and NERC called for reduced loads at Wells Dam as a precautionary step to maintain the reliability of undamaged transmission system, which resulted in a high volume of spilled water.

Lewis asked if water quality would be affected when Grant PUD starts reverse load factoring again. Gingerich said that there should be no effect. He added that August 19, 2014 is the end of the 2014 bypass season, and that flows have been returning to more seasonal average conditions. He added that he expects that gas levels will reduce as well.

6. 2013 Lamprey Passage and Enumeration Study Report Comments (Chas Kyger):

Chas Kyger said that the comment period for the 2013 Lamprey Passage and Enumeration Study Report ended last Thursday, August 7, 2014, although he is expecting a few late comments. Kyger said that he addressed the comments received to date, many of which were received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and found that most comments requested clarification and were not actual changes to the document. Kyger said that he is waiting for all the comments to be submitted before issuing a formal, written response. The YN and Ecology agreed to provide comments on the 2013 Lamprey Passage and Enumeration Study Report to Kyger by August 27, 2014.

Kyger said that he is beginning to focus on the next study plan, and will provide a draft 2015 lamprey study plan to the Aquatic SWG for discussion at the Aquatic SWG meeting on September 10, 2014.

7. Replacement of the Aquatic SWG Chair (Mike Schiewe):

Mike Schiewe said that he plans to retire in April 2015, and that it is not too soon to start considering candidates for the next Aquatic SWG chair. He said that it will probably take time to develop a list of people who are interested and qualified for the position, and he wants to ensure a smooth transition. Schiewe said that he intends to continue as the Aquatic SWG Chair through April 2015, which will be his last Aquatic SWG meeting.

Shane Bickford said that Douglas PUD is beginning to prepare for the transition and would like to discuss how to replace the chair position during the Aquatic SWG meeting on September 10, 2014. He added that Douglas PUD will fund the position, and will start compiling a list of qualifications for the group's input, with the intention of identifying someone who will fit the unique role.

VII. Next Meetings

1. **Upcoming meetings** (Mike Schiewe): Upcoming meetings are as follows: *September 10, 2014 (conference call); October 8, 2014 (conference call); November 12, 2014 (conference call).*

List of Attachments

Attachment A – List of Attendees

Attachment B – Wells Dam Mid-Season Water Quality Update

Attachment A List of Attendees

Name	Role	Organization
Mike Schiewe	SWG Chair	Anchor QEA, LLC
Brooke Baker	Administration/Technical Support	Anchor QEA, LLC
Andrew Gingerich	SWG Technical Representative	Douglas PUD
Chas Kyger	Technical Support	Douglas PUD
Shane Bickford	SWG Policy Representative	Douglas PUD
Patrick Verhey	SWG Technical Representative	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Chad Jackson	Technical Support	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Pat Irle	SWG Technical Representative	Washington State Department of Ecology
Bret Nine	SWG Technical Representative	Colville Confederated Tribes
Bob Rose	SWG Technical Representative	Yakama Nation
Steve Lewis	SWG Technical Representative	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service