

Final Conference Call Minutes



Aquatic Settlement Work Group

To: Aquatic SWG Parties **Date:** July 13, 2016
From: John Ferguson, Chair (Anchor QEA, LLC)
Re: Final Minutes of the May 11, 2016 Aquatic SWG Conference Call

The Aquatic Settlement Work Group (SWG) met by conference call on Wednesday, May 11, 2016, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. Attendees are listed in Attachment A of these conference call minutes.

I. Summary of Action Items

1. Bob Rose will discuss internally the Colville Confederated Tribes' (CCT's) proposed criteria for culling juvenile white sturgeon, and will report back to the Aquatic SWG (Item VI-1).
2. Douglas PUD will consider requesting permission from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to combine all Aquatic Settlement Agreement (ASA) Annual Reports and deadlines into one submittal, and will report back to the Aquatic SWG following completion of the 2015 ASA reporting season (May 31; Item VI-1).
3. Kristi Geris will distribute to the Aquatic SWG a request for email approval of the six Draft 2015 ASA Annual Reports, with approval due by Friday, May 13, 2016 (Item VI-2). *(Note: Geris distributed this request following the meeting on May 11, 2016.)*
4. Douglas PUD will provide the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) a memorandum summarizing a recent bull trout survey conducted in the Wells Reservoir when the reservoir was drawn down to a lower elevation (Item VI-4). *(Note: Andrew Gingerich provided this memorandum to Kristi Geris on May 20, 2016, which Geris distributed to the Aquatic SWG that same day.)*
5. Kristi Geris will distribute to the Aquatic SWG a request for agenda items for the Aquatic SWG meeting on June 8, 2016, to gauge whether a June 2016 meeting will be necessary (Item VII-1). *(Note: Geris distributed this request following the meeting on May 11, 2016, and the Aquatic SWG agreed via email to cancel the meeting on June 8, 2016, due to lack of agenda items.)*
6. **The Aquatic SWG meeting on June 8, 2016, is tentatively scheduled to be held in-person at Douglas PUD Headquarters in East Wenatchee, Washington (Item VII-1).** *(Note: the Aquatic SWG agreed via email to cancel the meeting on June 8, 2016, due to lack of agenda items.)*

II. Summary of Decisions

1. Aquatic SWG members present approved the 2015 Bull Trout Management Plan and Incidental Take Statement Annual Report (Item VI-2). *(Note: the CCT approved the report via email prior to the meeting on May 11, 2016, Patrick Verhey confirmed the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's [WDFW's] approval of the report by Chad Jackson via email on May 12, 2016, the Washington State Department of Ecology [Ecology] approved the report via email on May 14, 2016, and the Yakama Nation [YN] abstained via email on May 20, 2016.)*
2. Aquatic SWG members present approved the 2015 Resident Fish Management Plan Annual Report (Item VI-2). *(Note: the CCT approved the report via email prior to the meeting on May 11, 2016, Patrick Verhey confirmed WDFW's approval of the report by Chad Jackson via email on May 12, 2016, Ecology approved the report via email on May 14, 2016, and the YN abstained via email on May 20, 2016.)*
3. Aquatic SWG members present approved the 2015 Evaluations of White Sturgeon Supplementation and Management in the Wells Reservoir Report (Item VI-2). *(Note: the CCT approved the report via email prior to the meeting on May 11, 2016, Patrick Verhey confirmed WDFW's approval of the report by Chad Jackson via email on May 12, 2016, Ecology approved the report via email on May 14, 2016, and the YN abstained via email on May 20, 2016.)*
4. Aquatic SWG members present approved the 2015 Water Quality Management Plan Annual Report (Item VI-2). *(Note: the CCT approved the report via email prior to the meeting on May 11, 2016, Patrick Verhey confirmed WDFW's approval of the report by Chad Jackson via email on May 12, 2016, Ecology approved the report via email on May 14, 2016, and the YN abstained via email on May 20, 2016.)*
5. Aquatic SWG members present approved the 2015 Pacific Lamprey Management Plan Annual Report (Item VI-2). *(Note: Patrick Verhey confirmed WDFW's approval of the report by Chad Jackson via email on May 12, 2016, Ecology approved the report via email on May 14, 2016, and the YN abstained via email on May 20, 2016.)*
6. Aquatic SWG members present approved the 2015 ASA Annual Report (Item VI-2). *(Note: Patrick Verhey confirmed WDFW's approval of the report by Chad Jackson via email on May 12, 2016, Ecology approved the report via email on May 14, 2016, and the YN abstained via email on May 20, 2016.)*

III. Agreements

1. Aquatic SWG members present agreed to open attendance for the Regional Pacific Lamprey Workshop (Item VI-6).
2. Aquatic SWG members present agreed to hold the Aquatic SWG meeting on June 8, 2016, in-person, at Douglas PUD Headquarters in East Wenatchee, Washington, from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., if needed, prior to the Regional Pacific Lamprey Workshop (Item VII-1). *(Note: the Aquatic SWG agreed via email to cancel the meeting on June 8, 2016, due to lack of agenda items.)*
3. The Aquatic SWG agreed via email to cancel the Aquatic SWG meeting on June 8, 2016, due to lack of agenda items, as follows: USFWS agreed to cancel on May 11, 2016; Douglas PUD,

Ecology, and the CCT agreed to cancel on May 20, 2016; and WDFW and the Yakama Nation agreed to cancel on May 24, 2016 (Item VII-1).

IV. Review Items

1. There are no items that are currently available for review.

V. Documents Finalized

1. The Final 2015 ASA Annual Report was distributed to the Aquatic SWG by Kristi Geris on May 16, 2016 (Item VI-2).
2. Kristi Geris sent an email to the Aquatic SWG on June 1, 2016, notifying them that the Final 2015 ASA Annual Report, which was filed with FERC on May 26, 2016, and full consultation record are available for download from the Douglas PUD website (Item VI-2).

VI. Summary of Discussion

1. Welcome, Review Agenda, Meeting Minutes Approval, and Review of Action Items

(John Ferguson): John Ferguson welcomed the Aquatic SWG members (attendees are listed in Attachment A) and opened the meeting. No additions or changes to the agenda were requested.

The revised draft April 13, 2016, conference call minutes were reviewed. Kristi Geris said all comments and revisions received from members of the Aquatic SWG were incorporated into the revised minutes. She said she also corrected the meeting date in the first sentence of the minutes. Aquatic SWG members present approved the April 13, 2016, conference call minutes, as revised.

Action items from the last Aquatic SWG meeting on April 13, 2016, are as follows (note: the following italicized item numbers correspond to agenda items from the April 13, 2016, meeting):

- *Bob Rose will discuss internally the CCT's proposed criteria for culling juvenile white sturgeon and will report back to the Aquatic SWG (Item VI-1).*
This action item will be carried forward.
- *Douglas PUD will consider requesting permission from FERC to combine all ASA Annual Reports and deadlines into one submittal and will report back to the Aquatic SWG following completion of the 2015 ASA reporting season (May 31; Item VI-1).*
This action item will be carried forward.
- *Bob Rose and John Ferguson (and other Aquatic SWG members, if interested) will compile topics to discuss during a potential Regional Pacific Lamprey Workshop, for discussion during the Aquatic SWG meeting on May 11, 2016 (Item VI-5).*

This will be further discussed during today's conference call.

2. **DECISION: 2015 ASA Management Plan Annual Reports** (Andrew Gingerich): Andrew Gingerich said, despite the low attendance, Douglas PUD would still like to request formal approval of the six ASA Management Plan Annual Reports from the Aquatic SWG members present. Gingerich noted that all reports have been available for at least a 30 day-review period, and notice and reminders of Douglas PUD's intention to request formal approval of the documents during today's conference call have been distributed several times.

Aquatic SWG members present approved the 2015 Bull Trout Management Plan and Incidental Take Statement Annual Report, 2015 Resident Fish Management Plan Annual Report, 2015 Evaluations of White Sturgeon Supplementation and Management in the Wells Reservoir Report, 2015 Water Quality Management Plan Annual Report, 2015 Pacific Lamprey Management Plan Annual Report, and 2015 ASA Annual Report. *(Note: the CCT approved the 2015 Bull Trout Management Plan and Incidental Take Statement Annual Report, 2015 Resident Fish Management Plan Annual Report, 2015 Evaluations of White Sturgeon Supplementation and Management in the Wells Reservoir Report, and 2015 Water Quality Management Plan Annual Report via email prior to the meeting on May 11, 2016; Patrick Verhey confirmed WDFW's approval of all reports by Chad Jackson via email on May 12, 2016; Ecology approved all reports via email on May 14, 2016; and the YN abstained from voting on all reports via email on May 20, 2016.)*

The Final 2015 ASA Annual Report was distributed to the Aquatic SWG by Kristi Geris on May 16, 2016. Geris sent an email to the Aquatic SWG on June 1, 2016, notifying them that the Final 2015 ASA Annual Report, which was filed with FERC on May 26, 2016, and full consultation record are available for download from the Douglas PUD website.

3. **Wells White Sturgeon Tagging and Rearing Update** (Andrew Gingerich): Andrew Gingerich said, briefly, the fish on station are doing well, and growth has improved with increased water temperature and feed.
4. **Wells Project Water Forecast Update** (Andrew Gingerich): Andrew Gingerich said river flow through the Wells Reservoir has been high for this time of year. He also noted that the reservoir was recently drawn down to a lower elevation to facilitate work in the Methow River. He said, per the ASA Bull Trout Management Plan, during the period of low reservoir elevation, Douglas PUD conducted an investigation for entrapped or stranded bull trout. Gingerich said Douglas PUD will provide USFWS a memorandum summarizing the recent bull trout survey conducted in the Wells Reservoir when the reservoir was drawn down to a lower elevation. *(Note: Gingerich provided this memorandum to Kristi Geris on May 20, 2016, which Geris distributed to the Aquatic SWG that same day.)*

5. 2016-2017 Bull Trout Passage and Take Monitoring at Wells Dam and Twisp River Weir Study

Update (Andrew Gingerich): Andrew Gingerich said preparations for the bull trout study are moving forward. He also noted that two bull trout have already been detected in the Wells Reservoir. He said, on May 5, 2016, one adult bull trout was trapped in the west fish ladder during spring Chinook salmon broodstock collection. He said the fish had an existing passive integrated transponder (PIT) tag indicating the fish was tagged in 2013 at Wells Hatchery at a fork length of 580 millimeters (mm). He said the fish was recaptured at a fork length of 720 mm. He also said the fish was detected last fall in Lost River (headwaters of the Methow River), which would be consistent with post-spawn migration. He said the other fish was also an adult, detected in early April 2016 at the Twisp Weir by WDFW staff. Gingerich said the fish was not captured but was detected on the PIT-tag detector.

Steve Lewis asked if Douglas PUD plans to modify the start date for the bull trout study, considering bull trout are already being detected in the Wells Reservoir. Gingerich said the study start date was derived from a comprehensive review of arrival date distribution data for bull trout throughout the last 10 years, queried from the Data Access in Real Time database. He added that Douglas PUD does have the capacity to start radio tagging tomorrow. He also said WDFW is already trapping 3 days per week at both fish ladders for spring Chinook salmon broodstock collection, and Douglas PUD requested that WDFW retain incidentally captured bull trout for tagging. Gingerich said, however, the study will not technically start until May 23, 2016.

Lewis asked where the retained bull trout will be held prior to radio tagging. Gingerich explained that fish captured at the east fish ladder will be tagged within 1 hour. He said at the west fish ladder, there is a water-to-water handling facility within Wells Hatchery. He said, per the spring Chinook salmon protocol, a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) crew arrives the following morning to work up spring Chinook salmon broodstock captured the previous day. He said Douglas PUD proposes that the retained bull trout will be worked up the next day with the M&E crew. He said, if bull trout are worked up at a different time, this could lead to harassment of spring Chinook salmon, which is not wanted. He added that fish tags include how fish were handled.

John Ferguson asked about the tag type, and Gingerich said the tags are surgically implanted. Gingerich added that bull trout can spawn multiple times, which is why a gastric tag is not used. He further explained two incisions are made, the radio tag is laid in the cavity, and a catheter is used to allow the antennae to exit the body cavity near the tail.

Chad Jackson asked about the schedule for releasing the juveniles. Gingerich said the goal is to PIT tag the fish from May 23 to 25, 2016, and then release the fish the following week on June 1 and 2, 2016. He said this schedule might be modified pending receipt of fish health

screening results. He said fish health samples were taken about 1 or 2 weeks ago, and Jason Wahls (WDFW) has not yet heard back from the laboratory. Jackson said Douglas PUD will likely receive the fish health results within a week or so.

6. Pacific Lamprey Update

Regional Pacific Lamprey Workshop (John Ferguson):

John Ferguson recalled recently discussing within the Aquatic SWG convening a regional workshop to discuss Pacific lamprey. He said, based on these discussions, he, Bob Rose, and Tracy Hillman (Rocky Reach Fish Forum [RRFF] and Priest Rapids Fish Forum Facilitator) crafted a draft workshop agenda, which was distributed to the Aquatic SWG for review by Kristi Geris on May 9, 2016. Ferguson said the workshop currently starts at 9:00 a.m.; however, the start time may change to 9:30 a.m., if the Aquatic SWG determines convening a brief monthly meeting is needed prior to the start of the workshop. Ferguson said he will begin the workshop with reviewing workshop goals. He said goals will focus on continuing discussions about Pacific lamprey, identifying how those discussions fit in the broader Mid-Columbia River Basin context, and determining what is known and what is not known. He said the workshop is intended to facilitate dialogue and share positions on Pacific lamprey. He said discussions may also include potential revisions to the Douglas PUD 2016 Lamprey Approach, Passage, and Enumeration Study Plan, if feasible, including future plans for Pacific lamprey in the Wells Reservoir. He said the PUDs will outline their views, constraints, and agreements. He said the group will also discuss and identify critical uncertainties, plans for 2016, and the future. He added that this workshop may be followed by additional workshops.

Ferguson asked about limiting attendance. He said Andrew Gingerich indicated room capacity should not be an issue. Ferguson said pros to opening attendance to anyone include lots of discussion and perspectives; however, cons include lacking focus strictly to Aquatic SWG members. He added that sometimes the ideal environment to educate a specific group is to create a comfortable place to voice opinions without extremist opinions present. Steve Lewis asked what Ferguson meant by extremist opinions. Ferguson said, for example, he does not know some of the requested attendees or their views, and there is also sometimes the desire to avoid having consultants or vendors present so that the technical discussions are not potentially influenced by participants with vested interests. Lewis said he does not believe there should be any concern with the requested attendees to date. He said many of these people are specialists in Pacific lamprey and can bring a lot of insight to the discussions. Gingerich agreed with Lewis and briefly introduced requested attendees to date, as follows: 1) Bao Le (HDR Engineering, Inc.) was formerly employed by Douglas PUD and conducted a lot of pre-licensing Pacific lamprey studies for Douglas PUD and also participates in Pacific lamprey efforts in the lower Columbia River; 2) Rod O'Connor (Blue Leaf Environmental) conducted early acoustics work on Pacific lamprey for Grant PUD; 3) Mike Clement (Grant PUD) is the technical lead for Pacific lamprey for Grant PUD; and 4) Pat McGuire (Ecology) is Ecology's technical

representative for Grant PUD's forum. Gingerich suggested, in the spirit of regional coordination, not to restrict attendance. He added that the Aquatic SWG can convene a more focused group at a later date, if needed. Aquatic SWG members present agreed to open attendance for the Regional Pacific Lamprey Workshop.

Lewis said, during the last RRF meeting, this Regional Pacific Lamprey Workshop was discussed, and he perceived a bit of hesitation from Chelan PUD to participate. He recalled Chelan PUD asking why they should have to participate, and the RRF explaining the goal of regional coordination. Lewis said he believes Chelan PUD understands; however, he suggested facilitating the workshop carefully. He requested that Chelan PUD be an active participant, and not just a presenter of their data. Gingerich said he appreciates the desire to encourage Chelan PUD participation; however, within the Aquatic SWG, there is no control over what Chelan PUD does. Gingerich said he spoke with Steve Hemstrom (Chelan PUD RRF Representative), and Hemstrom indicated Chelan PUD plans to participate. Gingerich noted that there is a lot of uncertainty about the approach of Pacific lamprey to Wells Dam; however, if fingers are pointed, the discussion will not be productive. Lewis agreed and suggested Ferguson and Hillman carefully set the tone for this discussion. Ferguson agreed.

Passage Metrics (Steve Lewis):

Lewis said, during the last RRF meeting, the RRF discussed how to determine the best passage metrics to compare projects. He said metrics increase and decrease depending on the project, and the RRF was not sure how to glean an average to compare projects. He said he wants to continue this discussion within the Aquatic SWG. He asked how to determine when Douglas PUD has obtained the best passage metric. Ferguson said this is a complex topic. He said his recollection of the ASA Pacific Lamprey Management Plan is fairly generic in that regard (i.e., Douglas PUD will address passage problems). He said the topic is a good one, and will require a lot of discussion within the Aquatic SWG. He added that the upcoming workshop may be a good venue to start these discussions. Andrew Gingerich agreed this is a good question. He said there is language in the ASA Pacific Lamprey Management Plan about addressing project effects, and also achieving passage success rates no less than other projects. He said these are questions Douglas PUD has been asking for years. He added that Pacific lamprey do not necessarily need to return to a natal stream, so it is difficult to evaluate lamprey the same way salmon are evaluated. He said Douglas PUD hopes to approach this topic incrementally. He said other projects have installed infrastructure to improve passage, and maybe the same will eventually be installed at Wells Dam. He recalled one year when fish accessed the auxiliary water supply system, and last year, when fish did not seem to want to approach Wells Dam. He said Douglas PUD needs to have long-term goals, but also needs to confirm study assumptions, which is how the 2016 Lamprey Approach, Passage, and Enumeration Study is crafted. Gingerich said Douglas PUD needs to incrementally go through this process. He said Douglas PUD is also open to discuss how to move forward using the ASA Pacific Lamprey

Management Plan to guide the process. He said this will be challenging, and he is not sure a passage standard will ever be reached due to the unique life history of the Pacific lamprey. Lewis agreed with Gingerich's sentiments and explained that some of this discussion stems from the last paragraph in the 2016 Lamprey Approach, Passage, and Enumeration Study Plan, indicating if passage at Wells Dam is the same at other projects, then Pacific lamprey efforts have been accomplished. Gingerich said it has never been the policy of Douglas PUD to just check a box and ignore the resource. He said there should be no concern regarding Douglas PUD discontinuing efforts concerning Pacific lamprey.

VII. Next Meetings

1. **Upcoming meetings** (John Ferguson): Aquatic SWG members present agreed to hold the Aquatic SWG meeting on June 8, 2016, in-person at Douglas PUD Headquarters in East Wenatchee, Washington, from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., if needed, prior to the Regional Pacific Lamprey Workshop. Kristi Geris will distribute to the Aquatic SWG a request for agenda items for the Aquatic SWG meeting on June 8, 2016, to gauge whether a June 2016 meeting will be necessary. *(Note: Geris distributed this request following the meeting on May 11, 2016, and the Aquatic SWG agreed via email to cancel the meeting on June 8, 2016, due to lack of agenda items.)*

The Aquatic SWG meeting on June 8, 2016, is tentatively scheduled to be held in-person at Douglas PUD Headquarters in East Wenatchee, Washington. *(Note: the Aquatic SWG agreed via email to cancel the meeting on June 8, 2016, due to lack of agenda items.)*

Upcoming meetings are as follows: June 8, 2016 (canceled); July 13, 2016 (TBD); and August 10, 2016 (TBD).

List of Attachments

Attachment A – List of Attendees

Attachment A List of 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
Steve Lewis	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Chad Jackson	Technical Support	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife