



Conference Call Minutes

Aquatic Settlement Work Group

To: Aquatic SWG Parties

Date: January 8, 2020

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

Re: Final Minutes of the December 11, 2019 Aquatic SWG Conference Call

The Aquatic Settlement Work Group (SWG) met by conference call on Wednesday, December 11, 2019, from 10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Attendees are listed in Attachment A of these conference call minutes.

I. Summary of Action Items

1. Steve Lewis will discuss internally with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) the appropriate fish size threshold for identifying Bull Trout passing Wells Dam fish ladder count windows as subadults (Item VI-1).
2. Douglas PUD will update the 2019 Pacific Lamprey Translocation PIT Tag Information System (PTAGIS) File and Detection Summary Tables to include table notes explaining the use and sequence of river kilometers (rkms) and color schemes for release and last detection sites (Item VI-3). *(Note: Andrew Gingerich provided a fourth revised table to Kristi Geris on December 31, 2019, which Geris distributed to the Aquatic SWG that same day.)*
3. Douglas PUD will: 1) notify the Aquatic SWG of the 2019/2020 maintenance (ladder outage) schedule at Wells Dam once this information is available; 2) coordinate with the Yakama Nation (YN), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), and USFWS regarding a tour of the Wells Dam fish ladders (preferably the east ladder) during the 2019/2020 maintenance outage at Wells Dam; and 3) coordinate with WDFW regarding a tour of the Wells Dam Fish Hatchery next spring 2020 (Item VI-5).
4. Douglas PUD will present a 2019 total dissolved gas (TDG) summary for the Wells Project during the Aquatic SWG conference call on January 8, 2020, and Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) will also provide a regulatory update on the TDG proposed rule change, including an update on the status of USFWS review on impacts to Bull Trout and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) review on impacts to anadromous salmonids (Item VII-1).
5. The Aquatic SWG meeting on January 8, 2020, will be held by conference call (Item VII-1).

II. Summary of Decisions

1. Aquatic SWG members present approved the juvenile and adult Pacific Lamprey literature reviews and document libraries (Item VI-2). *(Note: WDFW approved the literature reviews and document libraries via email on December 2, 2019, and the YN approved the juvenile portion during the Aquatic SWG conference call on January 8, 2020 and the adult portion via email following the Aquatic SWG conference call on January 8, 2020.)*

III. Agreements

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

IV. Review Items

1. Notification that the juvenile and adult Pacific Lamprey literature reviews and document libraries are available for review was distributed to the Aquatic SWG by Kristi Geris on October 25, 2019. Aquatic SWG members needing additional time for review will vote on the literature reviews and libraries via email by December 18, 2019 (Item VI-2).

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 are listed in Attachment A) and reviewed the agenda. Ferguson asked for any additions or changes to the agenda. No additions or changes were requested.

The revised draft November 13, 2019 conference call minutes were reviewed. Kristi Geris said the revised minutes were distributed to the Aquatic SWG on December 4, 2019. She further noted that a second revision was distributed on December 6, 2019. Geris said the second revision included edits from Ralph Lampman that addressed an outstanding comment for the YN and a clarifying note explaining the intent of a comment Lampman made during the meeting. Geris said Lampman approved these revisions via email on December 6, 2019, and Patrick Verhey provided WDFW's approval of the revisions on December 9, 2019. Geris said all other edits and comments received from members of the Aquatic SWG were incorporated into the revised minutes. Aquatic SWG members present approved the November 13, 2019

conference call minutes, as revised. (Note: the YN and WDFW approved the revised minutes via email on December 6 and December 9, 2019, respectively.)

Action items from the Aquatic SWG conference call on November 13, 2019, are as follows (note: the following italicized item numbers correspond to agenda items from the November 13, 2019 conference call):

- *Steve Lewis will discuss internally with USFWS the appropriate fish size threshold for identifying Bull Trout passing Wells Dam fish ladder count windows as subadults (Item VI-1).*
This action item will be carried forward.
- *Douglas PUD will update the table presented during the Aquatic SWG conference call on November 13, 2019, titled, Table 1. Last Detection of Pacific Lamprey Translocated by Douglas PUD in 2018 and 2019, to include rkms for release and last detection sites, total percent detected by release site, and overall percent detected across all release sites (Item VI-2).*
A third revised table was distributed to the Aquatic SWG by Kristi Geris on December 5, 2019. This will be discussed during today's conference call.
- *Aquatic SWG members will review the juvenile and adult Pacific Lamprey literature reviews and document libraries in terms of format, structure, and content, for discussion and approval during the Aquatic SWG conference call on December 11, 2019 (Item VI-3).*
This will be discussed during today's conference call.
- *The Aquatic SWG will revisit the juvenile and adult Pacific Lamprey literature reviews and document libraries in terms of format, structure, and content, annually each fall (Item VI-3).*
Kristi Geris created a reminder for Douglas PUD to add this to future meeting agendas each fall.
- *Douglas PUD will notify the Aquatic SWG of the 2019/2020 maintenance (ladder outage) schedule at Wells Dam once this information is available (Item VI-5).*
This will be discussed during today's conference call.
- *Douglas PUD will coordinate with the YN, WDFW, and USFWS regarding a tour of the Wells Dam fish ladders (preferably the east ladder) during the 2019/2020 maintenance outage at Wells Dam (Item VI-5).*
This will be discussed during today's conference call.
- *Douglas PUD will coordinate with WDFW regarding a tour of the Wells Dam Fish Hatchery next spring 2020 (Item VI-5).*
This will be discussed during today's conference call.
- *The Aquatic SWG will convene an in-person meeting next spring 2020 (Item VI-5).*
Kristi Geris created a reminder for Douglas PUD to arrange this next spring 2020.

2. DECISION: Pacific Lamprey Literature Reviews and Libraries (Chas Kyger):

Chas Kyger said no comments or questions have been received from the Aquatic SWG on the juvenile and adult Pacific Lamprey literature reviews and document libraries. Kyger asked if the Aquatic SWG was ready to vote, understanding that Ralph Lampman may have comments forthcoming. John Ferguson recalled that Lampman requested an additional week for review and plans to submit the YN vote via email by December 18, 2019. Ferguson also reminded the Aquatic SWG that these libraries will continually be updated as new information becomes available.

Aquatic SWG members present approved the juvenile and adult Pacific Lamprey literature reviews and document libraries. *(Note: WDFW approved the literature reviews and document libraries via email on December 2, 2019, and the YN approved the juvenile portion during the Aquatic SWG conference call on January 8, 2020 and the adult portion via email following the Aquatic SWG conference call on January 8, 2020.)*

3. Revised 2019 Pacific Lamprey Translocation PTAGIS File and Detection Summary Table (Andrew Gingerich):

Andrew Gingerich said a third revised 2019 Pacific Lamprey Translocation PTAGIS File and Detection Summary Tables document (Attachment B) was distributed to the Aquatic SWG by Kristi Geris on December 5, 2019. Gingerich said this latest revision addresses the requests made during the Aquatic SWG conference call on November 13, 2019.

Gingerich said river kilometers (rkms) were added to the first column of Tables 1, 2, and 3 of Attachment B, which he said was a valuable exercise because it identified one location in Omak Creek and one location in Salmon Creek where the release locations were farther upstream than the detection locations and were in the wrong order in earlier versions of these tables. He explained that rkms are reported to show stream order and distance upstream. He said, for example in Table 1, the rkms reported for CRU (Upper Chewuch Instream Array) are 843.080.028, which represents that CRU is located 28 rkms upstream of the confluence of the Chewuch River with the Methow River, which is 80 rkms upstream of the mouth of the Methow River, which is 843 rkms upstream of the mouth of the Columbia River. He said mainstem Columbia River locations down to RRJ (Rocky Reach Dam Juvenile) have only one number because these locations are relative to the mouth of the Columbia River and have a single stream order.

Gingerich said ratios were also added to the bottom of Tables 1, 2, and 3 of Attachment B. He said, for example in Table 1, of the 70 fish released at Brewster Boat Launch in 2018, 33% of these fish have been detected post-release. He said this observation is interesting compared to the 506 fish released at the mouth of the Methow River in 2018, which had 91%

detected post-release. He noted that very few of the Similkameen River releases were detected post-release, and he said he is unsure what this means. He said there is not good detection in the Similkameen River compared to the Okanogan and Methow rivers, which have more detection arrays.

Gingerich asked if Aquatic SWG members had questions or comments on the tables. Jason McLellan said he appreciates the addition of rkms, which he believes are helpful. Breean Zimmerman said she has no comments. John Ferguson said he appreciates the percentages added to the bottom of the tables. He said 76% overall detection of 2018 releases is amazing. He said there seems to be good coverage in the Methow River, but there is a difference between the first and second years. Gingerich noted that releases at the mouth of the Methow River might be what is driving 2018 detections. He said in 2019, fish were not released at the mouth and instead were released at Starr Boat Launch. He said further, overwintering fish only accounted for 24% of the 76% overall 2018 detections. He said considering these things, he suspects overall detection of 2019 releases will not be as high as 2018 releases. Ferguson said this might be something to consider in future years, i.e., does the Aquatic SWG still prefer to release fish at Starr Boat Launch or should the release location be moved back to the mouth of the Methow River?

Ferguson noted that without Gingerich's explanation, a reader may not understand that the parenthetical numbers in the first column are rkms or understand the sequence of numbers. Ferguson suggested adding a footnote explaining this. McLellan suggested explaining the color scheme, as well. Gingerich said Douglas PUD can update the tables to include notes explaining the use and sequence of rkms and color schemes for release and last detection sites. Gingerich said Chas Kyger can also provide text in the *2019 Pacific Lamprey Management Plan Annual Report*. (Note: Gingerich provided a fourth revised table to Geris on December 31, 2019, which Geris distributed to the Aquatic SWG that same day.)

4. Wells Fish Hatchery Brood Year 2019 White Sturgeon Rearing Update (Andrew Gingerich):

Andrew Gingerich said there are 575 brood year (BY) 2019 White Sturgeon on station at Wells Fish Hatchery and not much has changed since the update last month. He said on average, fish are 60 grams each. He said 75 small fish have been split into two tanks and are receiving a lot of feed and are on warmer water temperatures, in hopes of increasing growth. He noted, however, the fish are the slower growers of the population despite getting more aggressive feed rates and water temperatures. He said the larger fish are on a ration of 2% body weight compared to the smaller fish that are being fed 20% of their body weight daily. He said this translates into a range of growth between November and December of 39% to

107% change in body weight. He said the fish are growing as expected. He said a conservative estimate assumes these fish will grow an additional 40% in body mass per month. He said for release in May 2020, these fish may be at about 220 grams per fish. He said hatchery staff are monitoring these fish closely. He said growth may slow down; however, in past years, growth has not slowed down in fish that are less than 1-year-old. He said if rearing strategies are kept the same, he suspects that in January 2020 the fish should be about 80 to 90 grams per fish.

Gingerich said this is all good data and every year hatchery staff collect more information on growth under different water temperatures and feed rates. He said staff are targeting a release of 551 fish on May 30, 2020. He said ideally, all fish will be above the 200-gram size threshold consistent with the Statement of Agreement.¹ He recalled that typically, the release target would be 325 fish; however, the 551 fish target includes the BY2018 fish that were not stocked in 2019.² He said he is confident Douglas PUD will meet the 325-BY2019 fish target and 226-BY2018 fish shortfall for release in 2020.

5. Wells Fish Hatchery Tour (Andrew Gingerich):

Andrew Gingerich said the last he heard was the first fish ladder will not be dewatered until January 2020. He said typically, January and February are the months the fish ladders are offline for maintenance. Douglas PUD will: 1) notify the Aquatic SWG of the 2019/2020 maintenance (ladder outage) schedule at Wells Dam once this information is available; 2) coordinate with the YN, WDFW, and USFWS regarding a tour of the Wells Dam fish ladders (preferably the east ladder) during the 2019/2020 maintenance outage at Wells Dam; and 3) coordinate with WDFW regarding a tour of the Wells Dam Fish Hatchery next spring 2020.

John Ferguson suggested maybe coordinating a hatchery tour in spring 2020 with an Aquatic SWG in-person meeting.

VII. Administration

1. Upcoming Meetings (John Ferguson):

The Aquatic SWG meeting on January 8, 2020, will be held by conference call.

Andrew Gingerich said each year, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provides a recap on how water quality data were collected at projects on the Snake and Columbia rivers. He said Douglas, Chelan, and Grant PUDs also participate in this forum each year. He said he

¹ Titled, *Wells Reservoir White Sturgeon Supplementation 2018-2022*, approved by the Aquatic SWG on January 11, 2017.

² Per the Aquatic SWG Decision on January 9, 2019: Aquatic SWG members present approved Douglas PUD's proposal to stock 550 BY2019 White Sturgeon in the Wells Reservoir in 2020, which includes the 325 fish program target for 2020 plus the 226 fish (or balance of) short of program in 2019; and similarly, additional or future shortfalls to stocking targets will be addressed in subsequent years, as necessary.

provided a summary presentation during this recap that he can also provide to the Aquatic SWG during the conference call on January 8, 2020. He said the presentation discusses TDG monitoring and performance and river flows in 2019. John Ferguson asked Breean Zimmerman about any updates on Ecology's proposed rule change. Zimmerman said the comment period has been closed for some time now and at the end of December 2019, Ecology will submit a rule package to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for approval. She said simultaneously, the rule package will be under internal review with Ecology upper management and directors. Gingerich asked if USFWS has completed their review on impacts to Bull Trout and whether has NMFS completed their review on impacts to anadromous salmonids. Zimmerman said she can find out. Gingerich suggested Zimmerman provide another update next month alongside his TDG presentation. Gingerich said he believes there is value and interest by Aquatic SWG members in knowing whether the water quality standards will be different moving forward.

Douglas PUD will present a 2019 TDG summary for the Wells Project during the Aquatic SWG conference call on January 8, 2020, and Ecology will also provide a regulatory update on the TDG proposed rule change, including an update on the status of USFWS review on impacts to Bull Trout and NMFS review on impacts to anadromous salmonids.

Other upcoming meetings include February 12 and March 11, 2020 (TBD).

List of Attachments

Attachment A List of Attendees

Attachment B Third Revised 2019 Pacific Lamprey Translocation PTAGIS File and Detection Summary Table Document

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	Technical Support	Douglas PUD
Breean Zimmerman	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	Washington State Department of Ecology
Jason McLellan	Aquatic SWG Technical Representative	Colville Confederated Tribes