FINAL

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ANCHOR QEA

Memorandum

To: Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island HCP Coordinating Committees

Date: June 24, 2026

From: Tracy Hillman, HCP Coordinating Committees Chair

cc: Kristi Geris, HCP Coordinating Committees Support

Re: Final Minutes of the April 28, 2026, HCP Coordinating Committees Meeting

The Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island Hydroelectric Projects Habitat Conservation Plan Coordinating Committees (HCP-CCs) met in person at the Confluence Technology Center in Wenatchee, Washington, on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, from 12:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. Attendees are listed in Attachment A to these meeting minutes.

Action Item Summary

1. Douglas PUD will share the Wells Dam Spillway 2 Flap Gate Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) Detection design concept once it is available (Item I-C).
2. Regarding the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) annual request to tag adult Sockeye Salmon at Wells Dam in 2026, the Yakama Nation (YN) will confirm with CRITFC what anesthetic they intend to use to sedate the fish and where they plan to insert the PIT tag into the fish (Item IV-A). *(Note: Keely Murdoch confirmed via email on May 15: 1) Anesthetic used is Aqui-S; 2) PIT tag placement is in the Pelvic Girdle; and 3) There are no daily sampling quotas, only a seasonal sample size target of 800 fish. CRITFC samples 2 to 3 days a week from the last week of June through the first week of August. Kraig Mott noted that in the last couple of years CRITFC have only been allowed to work up Sockeye Salmon when Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) staff have been present on the east ladder, usually between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. CRITFC samples everything that comes through during that time.)*
3. Wells HCP-CC representatives will submit a vote via email on the *Request for UCUT Tribes' P2IP Salmon Reintroduction Effort* no later than Friday, May 22, 2026 (Item IV-A).
4. Douglas PUD will share a presentation on delayed and indirect mortality in the Wells Project during the HCP-CC June 23, 2026, meeting (Item IV-B).
5. Douglas PUD will continue coordinating internally and with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regarding permitting requirements if spring Chinook Salmon are the species selected for Douglas PUD's 2030 Survival Verification Study (SVS) (Item IV-B).
6. Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP-CCs representatives will be prepared to vote on the *2025 Rock Island Dam Smolt Monitoring and Gas Bubble Trauma Evaluation Draft Report* (2025 Rock Island Smolt and GBT Evaluation Report) and *2025 Biological Evaluation of the Rocky Reach Juvenile Fish Bypass System Draft Report* (2025 RRJFBS Report) during the HCP-CCs May 26 meeting; the YN representative will submit a vote via email before going on leave on May 17 and WDFW will verify the alternate representative will be present to vote or the representative

will submit a vote via email before being absent from the HCP-CCs May 26, 2026, meeting[1] (Item V-A).

7. Chelan PUD will provide the RRJFBS intake screen (IS) system diagrams that were shared during today's meeting to Kristi Geris for distribution to the HCP-CCs (Item V-B).
8. Chelan PUD will provide an update on the RRJFBS repairs once this information is available (Item V-B).
9. Anchor QEA will coordinate with Chelan PUD regarding the timing of next month's Rocky Reach Dam and Rock Island Dam Maintenance Updates to accommodate a discussion with Casey Hall, Chelan PUD Project Delivery Manager, about the Rock Island Dam drop gate structure (Item V-C).
10. Rock Island HCP-CC representatives will submit a vote via email on the draft statement of agreement (SOA), *Closure of Rock Island Right Bank Adult Fishway TRE Entrance During High Flows and Tailwater Elevation*, no later than Friday, May 15, 2026 (Item V-D). *(Note: This action item was completed.)*
11. BioAnalysts will inquire with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CTCR) about a presentation on recent Phase 2 Implementation Plan (P2IP) Reintroduction Efforts, possibly during an HCP-CCs meeting this fall 2026 (Item VII-B). *(Note: This outreach was completed and Casey Baldwin [CTCR] indicated that the CTCR, the Spokane Tribe of Indians, and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe would all be interested in participating in anything from a high-level overview to a deep dive on the P2IP efforts; to be further discussed with the HCP-CCs.)*
12. The next scheduled HCP-CCs meeting is on Tuesday, May 26, 2026, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and will be held in person at the Douglas PUD Auditorium in East Wenatchee, Washington, with a virtual Microsoft Teams option. The next Subyearling Joint Session (Session 17) with the Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee (PRCC) is to be determined[2] (Item VII-B).

Decision Summary

1. The Rock Island HCP-CC approved the SOA, *Closure of Rock Island Right Bank Adult Fishway TRE Entrance During High Flows and Tailwater Elevation*, via email as follows: WDFW, NMFS, and the CTCR approved on April 30; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) approved on May 4; and Chelan PUD and the YN approved on May 15, 2026 (Item V-D).

Agreements

1. There were no HCP Agreements discussed during today's meeting.

[1] Chelan PUD also offered to extend the review period from 30 days to 60 days, and vote during the HCP-CCs June 23 meeting, if the YN and WDFW are unable to review and submit a vote before or at the HCP-CCs May 26, 2026, meeting.
[2] Tentatively, a subyearling joint session may not be needed next month, and approval of the Douglas PUD study plan will take place during the normal HCP-CCs session. These details will be confirmed closer to the meeting date.

Review Items

1. The draft 2025 Wells HCP Annual Report was distributed to the Wells HCP-CC by Kristi Geris on February 20 and is available for a 70-day review with edits and comments due to Geris by May 5, 2026 (Item VII-A).
2. The draft 2025 Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP Annual Reports were distributed to the Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP-CCs by Geris on February 24 and are available for a 70-day review with edits and comments due to Geris by May 7, 2026 (Item VII-A).
3. CRITFC's annual request to tag Sockeye Salmon at Wells Dam in 2026 was distributed to the Wells HCP-CC by Geris on March 3, 2026.
4. The draft 2025 Rock Island Smolt and GBT Evaluation Report and draft 2025 RRJFBS Report were distributed to the Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP-CCs by Geris on April 14, 2026 (Item V-A).
5. A *Request for UCUT Tribes' P2IP Salmon Reintroduction Effort* was distributed to the Wells HCP-CC by Geris on April 16, 2026 (Item IV-A).
6. The draft SOA, *Closure of Rock Island Right Bank Adult Fishway TRE Entrance During High Flows and Tailwater Elevation*, was distributed to the Rock Island HCP-CC by Geris on April 27, 2026 (Item V-D).

Finalized Documents

1. Chelan PUD's and Grant PUD's final *Study Proposal: Tag Effects for Subyearling Summer Chinook Salmon*, as approved during Subyearling Joint Session 15 on March 24, was distributed to the HCP-CCs by Kristi Geris on May 5, 2026.

I. Subyearling Joint Session 16 with the PRCC

The HCP-CCs and PRCC convened Joint Session 16 to discuss the PUD study plans (see separate joint session minutes).

II. Welcome

A. Review Agenda (Tracy Hillman)

Tracy Hillman welcomed the HCP-CCs and reviewed the agenda. Hillman asked for any additions or changes to the agenda. Lance Keller added "RRJFBS Oil Leak" under maintenance updates.

B. Meeting Minutes Approval (Kristi Geris)

The HCP-CCs reviewed the revised draft March 24 meeting minutes. Kristi Geris said edits received were mostly minor clarifications that were incorporated into the revised minutes. More substantive edits to the Methow Hatchery walk-on discussion item were retained in tracked changes. The YN distributed additional edits to the revised minutes. Lastly, Geris made an administrative edit to the YN's version. HCP-CCs representatives present approved the March 24 meeting minutes, as revised. The

CTCR abstained because a representative of theirs was not present during the March 24, 2026, meeting.

C. Last Meeting Action Items (Tracy Hillman)

Action items from the HCP-CCs meeting on March 24 and follow-up discussions were as follows *(Note: Italicized text corresponds to agenda items from the meeting on March 24)*:

1. *Douglas PUD will share the Wells Dam Spillway 2 Flap Gate PIT Detection design concept once it is available (Item I-C).*
   This action item will be carried forward.
2. *Chelan PUD will distribute the draft 2025 Rock Island and Rocky Reach Juvenile Bypass Reports, and Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP-CCs representatives will be prepared to vote during the HCP-CCs April 28 meeting (Item I-C).*
   These draft reports were distributed on April 14, 2026. This will be further discussed during today's meeting.
3. *HCP-CCs representatives will review the YN's presentation,* Wells Dam Survival Study Planning: Should We Be Measuring Delayed Mortality Here?,[3] *and will be prepared to discuss the presentation, fish timing, fish size, and fish origin during next month's HCP-CCs April 28, 2026, meeting (Item V-D).*
   This will be discussed during today's meeting.

III. HCP Hatchery and Tributary Committees Update

A. HCP Hatchery and Tributary Committees Update (Tracy Hillman)

Tracy Hillman updated the HCP-CCs on the following actions and discussions that occurred during the HCP Hatchery Committees (HCP-HCs) meetings on April 15 to 16, 2026 *(Note: Joint HCP-HCs/PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee items are noted by "joint," Wells HCP-HC items are noted by "Wells," and Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP-HC items are noted by "Rock Island/Rocky Reach")*:

- *Okanagan Sockeye Salmon Reintroduction Program (joint):* Ryan Benson with the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) gave a presentation titled *Okanagan Basin Sockeye Salmon Reintroduction Program Update*. He indicated that the spawning escapement last year was very low at 8,956 Sockeye Salmon. Most of these fish spawned in the Okanagan River. About 90 adult Sockeye Salmon migrated into Okanagan Lake. He also provided a summary of Sockeye Salmon hatchery operations, noting that the program produced about 330,000 fry from the 2025 brood. All fry from the 2025 brood were released into Okanagan and Skaha lakes. Benson then provided an update on the adult transport program, which includes the trapping of adult Sockeye Salmon at Wells Dam and transporting them into Canada. Last year, 105 adult Sockeye Salmon were transported to the hatchery. Compared to broodstock

[3] As presented during today's HCP-CCs meeting (and distributed after the meeting on March 24, 2026).

collected within the Okanagan River near Oliver, transported fish had higher fecundities, and their progeny had higher egg-to-ponding survival rates. The transport program will be conducted again in 2026. Benson also discussed the marking and tagging of released fish, which includes thermal marking and PIT tagging. They use PIT-tagged fish to estimate travel time and survival rates. Finally, Benson described the completion and success of the Okanagan Lake Dam East Fish Passage project, which was largely funded by the HCP Tributary Committees (HCP-TCs) and PRCC Habitat Subcommittee (HabSC).

- *Hatchery M&E Plan Update (joint):* The HCP-HCs continue to work through the draft monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan. They have revised and updated all sections in the plan. Members are currently reviewing the entire document and will work through any remaining items of concern or disagreement during the May meeting. The goal is to approve the plan during the May meeting.
- *2026 Broodstock Collection Protocols (joint):* Last month, the HCP-HCs were unable to approve the draft 2026 Broodstock Collection Protocols (BCPs). This is because of a recent policy decision on the use of the east ladder at Wells Dam for broodstock collection. Specifically, the HCP-HCs were unable to approve protocols for collecting steelhead, summer Chinook Salmon, and Coho Salmon at Wells Dam. NMFS granted a time extension on the delivery of the BCPs to be no later than July 15, 2026. Douglas PUD leadership will meet with the YN leadership to discuss collection of broodstock from the east ladder. The HCP-HCs hope to approve the protocols in May or June. Bill Gale asked for any updates on this topic.
  Keely Murdoch said the YN and Douglas PUD technical and policy staff met, shared some thoughts, and Cory Kamphaus (YN HCP-HCs Representative) presented data from the YN's steelhead incidental take permit reporting that showed more steelhead were encountered per Coho Salmon collected on the west ladder compared to the east ladder, and trapping on the west ladder has tended to exceed the incidental take limit. So, even if Douglas PUD trapped for the YN, depending on the permits, this is a consideration and is another reason the YN prefers trapping on the east ladder. Andrew Gingerich said Douglas PUD was previously unaware of this concern, but these are the type of logistical discussions he anticipated having. Kamphaus and John Rohrback are coordinating on these logistics and how to make this fish collection work from an incidental take exceedance perspective. Whatever the solution, whether it be an SOA or BCPs amendment, Douglas PUD will make it happen. Gale believes the solution needs to encompass more than just Coho Salmon; it needs to encompass all fish. K. Murdoch said this is a fair point, but she thinks Coho Salmon collection is the most challenging. Rohrback is unsure whether an SOA is necessary, but Kamphaus does want something in writing to be clear about what is happening. Gale said there needs to be something to memorialize the intent about fish collected from these ladders, so in 5 to 10 years, agencies are not charged for this service. This is not appropriate for the BCPs; this is more of a high-level consideration. K. Murdoch said this could be an SOA, but it still needs to be included in a collection plan in the BCPs. Gingerich said one thing Douglas PUD does not

want is to be too prescriptive. Whatever is decided, it needs to be adaptive, with the ability to change on the fly, with an ultimate goal of meeting BCPs targets.

- *Wenatchee Spring Chinook Salmon HGMPs (joint):* The HCP-HCs continue to work on the Wenatchee River spring Chinook Salmon Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans (HGMPs). They plan to have these HGMPs completed by May or June. The HCP-HCs also hope to complete the Wenatchee steelhead and Methow spring Chinook Salmon HGMPs by August 2026.
- *Formalin Alternative Study (Rock Island/Rocky Reach):* Last year, Chelan PUD and WDFW proposed a study to evaluate different therapeutics to treat growth of *Saprolegnia* on fertilized eggs in the hatchery. Currently, formalin is used to control *Saprolegnia*, but supply chain issues and recent regulatory concerns regarding worker safety and environmental effects associated with formalin means they need to find an alternative therapeutic to treat *Saprolegnia*. Last year, the Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP-HCs approved the proposed study. The study, which was conducted at Eastbank Hatchery, used fertilized eggs from the Chelan Falls summer Chinook Salmon program and evaluated formalin, humic acid, and two different concentrations of hydrogen peroxide (500 parts per million [ppm] and 1,000 ppm) on growth of *Saprolegnia*. Egg survival (response variable) did not differ significantly among the different treatments. Formalin produced the most consistent results and the highest mean survival rate. Survival rates were highly variable within the humic acid and hydrogen peroxide treatments and variability was likely due to differences among females (i.e., female effect). However, even when outliers were removed, there was no significant difference among treatment groups. Of the treatment groups, hydrogen peroxide (500 ppm) appeared to be most similar to formalin. The Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP-HCs approved 2 additional years of study.
- *Lower Wenatchee Trap (Rock Island/Rocky Reach):* In response to an action item, WDFW provided reasons why the Lower Wenatchee Rotary Screw Trap should operate during fall and into winter. Currently, once water temperatures exceed trapping thresholds or flows are too low to operate the trap (July or August), the trap is removed from the river and is not reinstalled until the following year. Because large numbers of fish exit tributaries during the fall, the Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP-HCs are investigating the feasibility of operating the Lower Wenatchee Trap during fall and into winter to enumerate, tag, and measure a sample of these fish. The trap would be stored on site until conditions allow for the trap to be reinstalled into the river once temperatures and flows allow for safe trapping operations. The Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP-HCs will continue to evaluate the feasibility of operating the Lower Wenatchee Trap during fall and into winter.
- *Next Meeting:* The next meetings of the HCP-HCs will be on May 20 to 21, 2026.

Hillman updated the HCP-CCs on the following actions and discussions that occurred during the HCP Tributary Committees (HCP-TCs) meeting on April 9, 2026:

- *Budget Amendment:* The Rock Island HCP-TC received a budget amendment request from Trout Unlimited on the Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Phase II Project. Because of a $95,000 shortfall in Contract Labor, the sponsor asked to reallocate line-item amounts to address the shortfall in Contract Labor. After review, the Rock Island HCP-TC approved the budget amendment. The total contribution from the Rock Island Plan Species Account will not change as a result of this amendment.
- *Time Extension:* In March, the Rock Island HCP-TC received a time extension request from Cascade Fisheries on the Lower Chiwaukum Creek Restoration Project. The sponsor indicated that because of limited capacity within the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to work on this project, the project has been delayed. However, recently, USFS has committed necessary resources to make sure the project is ready for implementation in 2027. Because of this unforeseen delay, the sponsor asked to extend the contract from October 31, 2026, to December 31, 2027. On March 12, the Rock Island HCP-TC agreed to extend the contract period to December 31, 2027.
- *Salmon Recovery Funding Board Pre-Proposals:* A total of 10 pre-proposals were submitted through the 2026 Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) process. Of these, five pre-proposals requested cost shares from the HCP-TCs. Currently, the total amount requested from the HCP-TCs is $819,000 and includes restoration, protection, and assessment projects.
- *Restoration Opportunities on Mission and Peshastin Creeks (with the PRCC HabSC):* Cascade Fisheries joined the meeting to discuss potential restoration opportunities on Mission and Peshastin creeks. December floods washed out about 1,000 feet of road on Mission Creek upstream from the Sand Creek confluence. USFS has funding to replace the road, and Cascade Fisheries would like to work with USFS on improving habitat conditions within the reach. The December floods also severely eroded banks along private property near river mile 4.5 on Peshastin Creek. The landowner reached out to Cascade Fisheries to determine whether restoration work in the reach would reduce bank erosion there. Cascade Fisheries asked whether the committees would be interested in supporting the development and evaluation of conceptual designs for the Mission and Peshastin projects. Members said they would accept applications requesting funding to support conceptual designs and evaluation of alternatives.
- *HCP-TCs Coordinator:* Becky Sadler (HCP-TCs Coordinator) reported that she will retire from Chelan PUD at the end of May 2026. She indicated that she is willing to continue as the HCP-TCs Coordinator as a casual employee of BioAnalysts. This means that BioAnalysts will bill the HCP-TCs for Sadler's time. Currently, Chelan PUD bills the HCP-TCs for Sadler's time. All members supported Sadler continuing as the coordinator for the HCP-TCs and approved BioAnalysts billing the HCP-TCs for Sadler's time. Hillman questioned whether this also requires approval by the HCP-CCs. Tom Kahler said technically the HCP-TCs and HCP-HCs are

subordinate to the HCP-CCs, but long ago the HCP-CCs granted those committees autonomy for committee-specific decisions. Gale said it seems most important that the PUDs approve. Hillman said if anyone has issues with this plan, please let him know. *(Note: Kahler later clarified that the HCP-CCs have oversight of the other committees, but this is not as strict as the PRCC and their subcommittees. Long ago, the HCP-CCs elected not to review all the HCP-TCs and HCP-HCs work products and reports, and the HCPs give these committees autonomy to develop their own procedures, so the HCP-CCs did not have to grant them this.)*

- *Next Meeting:* The next meeting of the HCP-TCs will be on May 14. SRFB and HCP-TCs project tours will be on May 5 to 6, 2026. Hillman said if anyone is interested in participating in the project tours, please let him know.

IV. Douglas PUD

A. DECISION: Request for UCUT Tribes' P2IP Salmon Reintroduction Effort (Tom Kahler, Kirk Truscott, Casey Baldwin)

A *Request for UCUT Tribes' P2IP Salmon Reintroduction Effort* (Attachment B) was distributed to the Wells HCP-CC by Kristi Geris on April 16, 2026. Kirk Truscott said this is a request from the Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) to trap 600 adult Sockeye Salmon to support the P2IP study. Trapping will occur during the peak migration at Wells Dam, and will take place over 3 days, recognizing that efforts will be adaptable to regulatory requirements and other commitments at Wells Dam.

Keely Murdoch understands the proposed trapping is to support the P2IP study, but she would like more information on how this fits into the P2IP and which studies this will inform. She understands there is supposed to be a series of juvenile studies followed by a larger PIT and smolt-to-adult return (SAR) study. She thinks this involves Sockeye Salmon from Penticton Hatchery, and the PIT and SAR study uses tagged fish that are recaptured when fish return to inform this adult study. Have these juvenile studies started and how do these fit into the bigger picture. Casey Baldwin (CTCR) said the juvenile studies have started, but the studies are not sequential. The adult trap and transport studies are a two-prong approach involving the transport of both 'P2IP returning fish' (those released as juveniles) as well as other surplus salmon from downstream areas such as surplus hatchery Chinook Salmon and run-at-large Sockeye Salmon. Both groups will include tagging studies for survival and behavior evaluations and trap and haul to spawn in the natural environment to produce returns for the future. The latter approach is similar to what the YN is doing in Lake Cle Elum. K. Murdoch said what she read about the trap and transport effort did not focus on Sockeye Salmon. Baldwin said transporting Sockeye Salmon to the blocked area has always been a part of the plan and the environmental compliance documents[4] identified downstream facilities for trap and transport,

[4] Which were publicly reviewed and included Tribal consultation with the YN.

including Wells, Priest Rapids, and Tumwater dams, basically anywhere it may be possible to get a hold of Sockeye Salmon. These efforts have required flexibility based on what is available to obtain fish where possible. For example, eggs from Entiat Hatchery were used because these were available, even though the early planning documents identified other stocks as higher priority. Another example is fish were collected using purse seines as a proof of concept that Sockeye Salmon could be collected from the Okanogan/Columbia rivers confluence and because of the policy constraints regarding access to Sockeye Salmon from Penticton Hatchery. These fish were then transported to Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) in Richland, Washington. The initial juvenile tagging studies occurred from this effort, as well as the wild smolts collected at the Rocky Reach bypass. Ultimately, purse seines were not a good option because of the temperatures and handling stress, so there was a decision to use a small sample size just to get started. Regarding using juveniles from Penticton Hatchery, this was the plan but has not yet worked out. This pathway is presumed to be a possibility at some point in the future, but for now other options must be considered to move forward. As for juvenile studies completed so far, in 2025, migrating smolts were collected from RRJFBS, and fish were tagged and released into Lake Roosevelt. This was conducted in coordination with PNNL and Chelan PUD. Also in 2025, this was the first year of hatchery juvenile releases. In 2024, Sockeye Salmon were reared at PNNL. All fish were age 0, collected in July and September, some were acoustically tagged and some were PIT-tagged. K. Murdoch asked if these fish will also be used as broodstock, Baldwin reported 40 Sockeye Salmon adults will be used to produce juveniles, and K. Murdoch asked where do the rest of the 560 adults go? Baldwin said the rest will be used for a trap and transport tagging study, including releasing about 1/3 at Grand Coulee, 1/3 in the Sanpoil Arm, and 1/3 in the Sanpoil River. This is a pilot year, but the plan is to process 200 fish per day at the facility, then a couple hour drive. This is still a large enough sample size, and PIT-tagging and acoustic-tagging fish can be completed in a week or less. Additionally, this load can be accomplished with a single truck. The capacity for Sockeye Salmon is 240 fish per truck transport trip.

K. Murdoch asked how the UCUT's trapping is being coordinated with the ONA, Chelan PUD, and Grant PUD trap and transport activities. She believes these programs should take priority, per SOA obligations, if it comes down to prioritizing trapping. Truscott reiterated that this request will be adaptable to other commitments at the facility. Trapping can occur on a different week, if needed. This effort does not supersede other activities. Catherine Willard added that Chelan PUD also plans to trap 200 fish at a time, but this can be coordinated.

Bill Gale asked whether the UCUT's trapping will occur on the east or west ladder. Truscott said that given Douglas PUD's new guidance, the plan is to trap and tag at the west ladder with the improvements there. Gale asked whether this is an issue with Sockeye Salmon preferred passage routes. Tom Kahler said Sockeye Salmon are not selective of sides. For example, even last year, which was a small run, in early July, it was routine to have over 2,000 Sockeye Salmon per day on the east

ladder and over 1,000 Sockeye Salmon per day on the west ladder. Over the years, there has been no strong preference, and availability of fish in one day is many times what is proposed to be collected.

K. Murdoch recalled that there is also Jeff Fryer's (CRITFC's) Sockeye Salmon trapping, so this is another activity that needs to be coordinated. She said CRITFC will not want to tag fish that will be trapped and transported. Kahler said he believes Fryer has weekly quotas and he tries to match the run distribution. Truscott asked whether CRITFC's trapping is all on the west ladder, and Kahler said yes. Truscott asked about the Okanogan projections, and Kahler said 180,000 fish.

K. Murdoch also recalled that Fryer's Sockeye Salmon sampling has limitations. Early in the season, trapping must be conducted alongside other trapping activities to avoid additional delays, then once the thermal barrier sets up, trapping can occur on additional days.[5] She would like this same requirement applied to the UCUT's trapping. Andrew Gingerich said yes, this has already been discussed. Truscott said the UCUT do not want to delay passage, this effort will be adaptive and flexible with other programs, including not increasing delay. He thinks once the Sockeye Salmon run reaches Wells Dam, the thermal barrier may already be set up in the Okanogan River. Baldwin noted it is probable that fish that move early may experience higher survival. Logistically, for the UCUT, completing trapping by July 15 would be ideal. Kahler said in 2024, the run was huge. In 2023, the run was 146,000 fish. From July 1 to 20 on the west ladder there were over 1,000 Sockeye Salmon per day, with a peak of almost 5,000 Sockeye Salmon per day. This window looks like a good time for everyone to get their fish.

Truscott recalled his request for clarification on two items regarding CRITFC's annual request to tag adult Sockeye Salmon at Wells Dam in 2026,[6] and he asked whether responses were received from Fryer. Kahler said the anesthetic CRITFC intends to use to sedate the fish is Aqui-S; however, he guessed the location of the PIT tag would be in the pelvic girdle. K. Murdoch said she can confirm this with CRITFC.

Tracy Hillman asked whether Wells HCP-CC representatives are ready to vote. K. Murdoch said the YN is not ready to vote today. Truscott said this is a decision to trap or not to trap, and whether the proposal adversely affects passage; this is not a decision to support or not support the study plan. K. Murdoch said if she is forced to vote today, the YN will need to vote no. The Tribal Agencies are such that any decision needs to be fully scrutinized.

Gale said if there is no vote today but there is interest in gaging support, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is supportive. Chad Jackson said WDFW is supportive. Truscott said the CTCR are supportive, and he noted that the CTCR have not precluded CRITFC's Sockeye Salmon tagging efforts

[5] Per the HCP Policy Committees (HCP-PCs) SOA approved October 6, 2020.
[6] See HCP-CC March 24 meeting minutes.

in past years. Kahler said Douglas PUD is supportive. Scott Carlon said he needs to first connect with Trevor Conder (NMFS). *(Note: Carlon indicated NMFS support via email this same day.)*

Wells HCP-CC representatives will submit a vote via email on the *Request for UCUT Tribes' P2IP Salmon Reintroduction Effort* no later than Friday, May 22, 2026.

B. 2030 Survival Verification Study (All)

Tracy Hillman recalled the YN's presentation, *Wells Dam Survival Study Planning: Should We Be Measuring Delayed Mortality Here?*, that was presented and discussed during last month's HCP-CCs meeting. The HCP-CCs have an action item to discuss this presentation, today.

Andrew Gingerich said Douglas PUD has not had an opportunity to discuss this internally since last month, but he can share his own thoughts. He appreciated the reminder about the direct, indirect, and delayed mortality requirement in the HCPs, and walking through those definitions. He feels like the recommendation was that indirect and delayed mortality is not important in the Wells Project. He envisions the make-up of the HCP-CCs (technical leads) will evolve in the next years, and if this moves forward without something like an SOA, explaining this change to new representatives may be challenging. He recalled discussing the benefits of PIT tags and the concept of transparency, which is one reason Douglas PUD prefers PIT tags. Anyone can run these analyses in near real-time; PIT tags allow for very reproduceable science, no tag correction factors for things like tag-life are needed, things of that nature. The drawback with PIT tags is sample size. Douglas PUD is working with NMFS regarding a spring Chinook Salmon study, understanding the sample size issue changes what can and cannot be done with spring Chinook Salmon. Another topic discussed last month is the lack of route-specific passage (RSP). He understands the biological interest, but there is no requirement for this in the HCPs. He looks forward to continuing discussions.

Keely Murdoch clarified she did not say measuring delayed mortality in the Wells Project was not important. The point of the presentation was that the Wells Project is the wrong place to measure it, and likely the most difficult place to measure it, due to lack of cumulative impacts. Cumulative powerhouse impacts are the largest driver of delayed mortality, and in the Wells Project, fish have none. In 30 years, delayed mortality has never been measured. Unless Douglas PUD plans on changing the study design and significantly increasing sample size, there will probably always be the same inconclusive results. While not a specific requirement, she believes that updated RSP information would be more informative of the Wells Project's contribution to delayed mortality than what information has been provided to date with PIT tags. Gingerich said Douglas PUD has not done a good job of presenting what is known about delayed mortality in the Wells Project. He believes it would be worthwhile to present data Douglas PUD has been working on that speaks to whether there is enough statistical power to do an accurate comparison. Although, he continued to disagree with the RSP utility. K. Murdoch said it would be informative to her. Gingerich reiterated that he can see the biological interest.

K. Murdoch recalled that studying direct, indirect, and delayed mortality is not only an obligation for Douglas PUD, but this language is also in all three HCPs and applies to all three PUDs. She believes trying to measure delayed mortality in the Wells Project in isolation is not feasible. She said as HCP signatories, both PUDs need to think about what could fulfill this direct, indirect, and delayed mortality clause in all three HCPs. Tom Kahler agreed it would be beneficial to present data that Douglas PUD has been working on for the Wells Project. Douglas PUD is responsible for Wells Project delayed mortality. Hillman asked whether Douglas PUD's analyses are based on previous PIT studies, and Kahler said yes. Gingerich recalled language in Section 4.1.4. of the Wells HCP: "The testing shall consider direct, indirect and delayed mortality wherever it may occur and can be measured."

Kirk Truscott recalled discussing PIT tags versus acoustic tags. Doing the same thing is not always best. Conversely, new methods are not always the better methods either. The CTCR would like to see spring Chinook Salmon used in the next SVS. Kahler questioned, if the methods change, is the study really verifying what was done before? To know for sure, the study needs to repeat the methods. If there is a desire to know more, this is a new study. Truscott said methodologies have been changed before. Kahler said when Chelan PUD changed methods, this required a process of validating that acoustic tags were accomplishing what was necessary. This was another set of studies. Lance Keller recalled that Chelan PUD ran multiple studies in parallel in the same year.

K. Murdoch believes an SVS should be measuring survival using the best available science and best available technology, and these will continue to change. Moving forward, the PUDs should be improving the science by using the best available technology. For example, in genetics, this technology has evolved from using microsatellites to using SNPs[7] and now adaptive genetic markers. It does not make sense to keep using microsatellites. Earlier studies that used acoustic tags were limited in fish size because the tags were large. Later studies could use smaller fish as acoustic tags get smaller. The dual tests that Chelan PUD conducted need to be put into context. At that time, acoustic tags were nearly new and highly experimental, and part of those tests was to reach an understanding of how those results compared to PIT tags. Now there are 20 to 30 years of data. There is no need to recreate the wheel. Acoustic tags are used throughout the basin. It does not make sense to stick with old ways if better information can be collected with something newer. John Rohrback asked whether K. Murdoch is suggesting that better information can be collected using acoustic tags. K. Murdoch clarified that acoustic tags collect different information. There are pros and cons to both. She said Gingerich's points about the transparency of PIT tags are valid. PIT tags also require a large sample size, which limits fish source and species selection. She believes continuing to use hatchery fish is not the best approach. She believes studies should be using statistical models that require less fish and using wild fish that are more similar to the run at large, which can never be done using PIT tags. There is no way to study RSP proportions with PIT tags,

[7] Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms

which is a data gap for Wells Dam. Understanding fish passage through the powerhouse informs delayed mortality.

Hillman recalled Slide 10 of the YN's presentation: "Path forward: The next Wells survival study should answer what we actually don't know: current route proportions, FPE,[8] and route-specific survival under current operations." He asked whether this might be accomplished using a combination of tags. K. Murdoch said yes, but this means using acoustic tags. Gingerich said Douglas PUD will need to push back on RSP because it is not a requirement. Additionally, evaluating RSP requires way more acoustic receivers in both the forebay and tailrace. So, this would not only be an acoustic tag SVS study, it would be an SVS study plus additional receivers to evaluate RSP.
K. Murdoch said she does not know what an acoustic telemetry array in the Wells Dam forebay and tailrace would look like, but she does know the Rock Island Confirmation Survival Study had enough acoustic receivers to get RSP proportions but not survival. Even RSP proportions can be informative. Kahler said this is doable with a powerhouse separate from the spillways (Rock Island Dam design), but he does not know how to do this with spillways on top of turbines (Wells Dam design).

J. Rohrback asked whether there is reason to suspect the historical fyke net data are biased or are there data that suggest those RSP proportions would have changed. Kahler said the fyke net data are through 2001 but then become dramatically limited. Hydroacoustic and fyke net data were used to investigate the Wells Dam bypass design. Fyke netting was used for the initial configuration; since then, everyone recognized the loss of fish due to fyke netting, so this was limited to just sampling to confirm target fish species. He believes there was confirmation of passage proportions. Gingerich reiterated this is a moot point, anyway. The Wells HCP requirement is a check-in study to verify survival standards are still being met, not to calculate RSP proportions.

Bill Gale said USFWS appreciates the YN's presentation. The concept of a combined study to look at delayed mortality is intriguing, which does seem to be a data gap.

Chad Jackson said WDFW also appreciates the YN's presentation, and he is looking forward to Douglas PUD's presentation. He believes there is benefit that the Wells HCP-CC is having these discussions 3 years ahead of the study. These studies have been very technical, they are not always the same, and he believes studies have been progressive.

Scott Carlon said NMFS has no comments at this time.

Hillman said the next step is for Douglas PUD to share a presentation on delayed and indirect mortality in the Wells Project. Kahler recognized that K. Murdoch and Jackson will not be present in May, so he suggested this presentation take place during the HCP-CC June 23, 2026, meeting.

[8] Fish passage efficiency

Gingerich noted that the HCP-HCs are working on revising the HGMPs, and considering the desire to use spring Chinook Salmon or Coho Salmon as a backup, the Wells HCP-CC needs to figure this out in case a revision in the HGMPs is needed. K. Murdoch added that it also seems appropriate to continue conversations with NMFS in case permits are needed. Douglas PUD will continue coordinating internally and with NMFS regarding permitting requirements if spring Chinook Salmon are the species selection for Douglas PUD's 2030 SVS.

C. Wells Dam Maintenance Update (Andrew Gingerich)

Andrew Gingerich reviewed maintenance updates at Wells Dam, as follows:

- Wells Dam will be a nine-unit plant until September 1.
- From September 1 to October 23, Transformer 4 (T4) will be taken out of service for a transformer replacement. T4 serves Turbine Units 7 and 8. From September 1 to October 2, biannual maintenance will be conducted on Turbine Unit 7. From October 5 to November 6, biannual maintenance will be conducted on Turbine Unit 8.
- Turbine Unit 9 is out of service for a long-term rebuild, with no change in the return-to-service date (May 1, 2027).
- The west ladder trap build-out continues and is expected to be completed by the end of this week. These were 90% complete as of last Friday, April 24.

Keely Murdoch asked, on the east side, will Turbine Units 7, 8, and 9 be out of service at the same time? Gingerich said during the T4 replacement (September 1 to October 23), Wells Dam will be a seven-unit plant. He expects this may go faster, but this is the current outage window.

D. Wells Dam PIT-Detection Update (Tom Kahler)

Tom Kahler reviewed PIT-detection updates for the Wells Project, as follows.

<u>Spillway 2 Flap Gate</u>

The consultant team met and is progressing toward creating a package for review by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The timeline for the FERC process is still unknown, but the consultant is optimistic that there should be no issues with the review process.

<u>Railroad Bridge</u>

This system is performing well. Douglas PUD is currently processing several orphan tags. There was a "reader low power alarm" last Thursday, April 23. This low power lasted about 2.5 days before somehow fixing itself. Biomark replaced the reader today. The working relationship between Douglas PUD and the railroad is going well.

V. Chelan PUD

A. Draft 2025 Rock Island Smolt and GBT Evaluation Report and Draft 2025 RRJFBS Report (Lance Keller)

The draft 2025 Rock Island Smolt and GBT Evaluation Report and draft 2025 RRJFBS Report were distributed to the Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP-CCs by Kristi Geris on April 14, 2026. Lance Keller said, considering these draft reports were only recently distributed, today's agenda item is to address questions, if any. None were expressed.

Keller said Chelan PUD planned to request approval of these reports during the HCP-CCs May 26 meeting. However, recognizing that Keely Murdoch and Chad Jackson will be absent next month, Chelan PUD would be supportive of extending the review period from 30 days to 60 days and voting during the HCP-CCs June 23 meeting. K. Murdoch said she will strive to submit a vote via email before going on leave on May 17. Jackson said he will verify that Andrew Murdoch will be present to vote or Jackson will submit a vote via email before being absent from the HCP-CCs May 26, 2026, meeting.

B. RRJFBS Oil Leak (Lance Keller)

Lance Keller said on Friday, April 10, while collecting daily readings, bypass operators noticed a slow decreasing measurement in the IS hydraulic system. The best guess was a small oil leak coming from the IS hydraulic system associated with Turbine Unit C2.

Keller shared on Microsoft Teams RRJFBS IS system diagrams (Attachment C), which he will provide to Kristi Geris for distribution to the HCP-CCs. Keller explained that fish enter the IS system and then travel up and into the gatewell system (Slide 1). When crews isolated the IS system of Turbine Unit C2 due to concerns with leaks, the upmost panel of the Vertical Barrier Screen was left in the closed position (Slide 5). Staff were concerned that opening the panel would allow the leak to spread. Based on fish counts at that time, a decision was made to keep the panel closed. Over the weekend, fish counts increased, and during routine inspections on Sunday, April 12, fish were observed in the area. Mechanics were called to move the gates, flush the observed fish through the IS system, and then capture the fish at the sampling facility to be examined. In total, 897 mortalities were recovered, including the following:

- Yearling Chinook Salmon: 883 hatchery origin fish, seven unknown
- Steelhead: Two hatchery, four unknown
- Mountain Whitefish: One

Keller said fish were scanned for PIT tags and coded wire tags to determine origin. Two PIT tags were from a Chief Joseph Hatchery release. At this time, a small group assembled to discuss the status of the system. The leak slowed but there was still a slight leak. Collectively, 4 gallons were lost. Turbine

Unit C2 was isolated and Turbine Unit C1 was operative. There was a decision to restore IS operations for Turbine Unit C2 and isolate the Turbine Unit C1 IS system, but in a configuration that still allowed fish to pass through the IS system. The following week, divers were deployed but were unable to determine the source of the leak. Therefore, a brief Turbine Unit C1 outage was arranged to allow divers back into the Turbine Unit C1 IS system for an inspection in a calm-water environment. During this dive, a potential leak was identified in the hose leading to the flushing valve. Divers are in the water replacing this right now. He has not yet received an update on how this is going. Chelan PUD is developing a new standard operating procedure with clearer instructions should there be another need to temporarily isolate the IS system again.

Keller reviewed each slide in Attachment C. Chelan PUD will provide an update on the RRJFBS repairs once this information is available.

C. Rocky Reach Dam and Rock Island Dam Maintenance Updates (Lance Keller)

Lance Keller reviewed maintenance updates at Rocky Reach Dam and Rock Island Dam, as follows.

Rocky Reach Dam

Work continues on Turbine Unit C6, and the return-to-service date is still May 1. Last month, he reported that Turbine Unit C7 will be out of service from May 18 to June 5 for a thrust cooler assessment. Now Turbine Unit C3 has experienced a thrust cooler failure and was moved up the priority list. Therefore, this work will take place before Turbine Unit C7.

Rock Island Dam

In Powerhouse 1, work continues on Turbine Units B2, B8, and B10, with no changes to the return-to-service dates of Q1 2027, Q2 2028, and June 12, 2026, respectively.

In Powerhouse 2, work continues on Turbine Unit U5 with no change to the return-to-service date of Q2 2027. Work also continues on Turbine Unit U2 with no change to the return-to-service date of mid-June 2026.

Next month, Casey Hall, Chelan PUD Project Delivery Manager, will attend the meeting to discuss the drop gate structure. Two drop gates regulate water from the forebay into the upstream entrance left bank fish ladder. This structure is suffering from the alkali silica reaction (ASR) issues at Rock Island Dam. Repairs will be a large effort. Anchor QEA will coordinate with Chelan PUD regarding the timing of this discussion.

D. Rock Island Dam Right Bank Adult Fishway Tailrace Entrance Engineering Solution Update (Lance Keller)

The draft SOA *Closure of Rock Island Right Bank Adult Fishway TRE Entrance During High Flows and Tailwater Elevation* was distributed to the Rock Island HCP-CC by Geris on April 27, 2026. Lance Keller

said this is the same SOA as in past years, just with an updated date and a new table. He recalled the need for renewing this SOA has largely to do with the other ongoing maintenance at Rock Island Dam, notably the ASR work. This SOA is less than ideal but necessary to have in place in the event there is a large enough spring water event that necessitates closing the TRE. In 2025, there was no need to close the TRE, which may be the case this year. He hopes to obtain approval of this SOA today, or via email before next month's HCP-CC May 26 meeting.

Bill Gale said he needs to discuss this internally with regard to Bull Trout, recognizing this is outside the HCP forum, but he will need to do this before voting within this forum. Kirk Truscott asked about options. If this SOA is not approved, does this mean that operations will be out of compliance? Keller said this is correct, Thad Mosey (Chelan PUD) believes if the TRE is not closed and the attraction water system is pushed under high tailwater, this will lead to high velocities in the transportation channel that will exceed the maximum velocities noted in the HCP.

Rock Island HCP-CC representatives will submit a vote via email on the draft SOA, *Closure of Rock Island Right Bank Adult Fishway TRE Entrance During High Flows and Tailwater Elevation*, no later than Friday, May 15. *(Note: This action item was completed.)*

The Rock Island HCP-CC approved this SOA via email as follows: WDFW, NMFS, and the CTCR approved on April 30; USFWS approved on May 4; and Chelan PUD and the YN approved on May 15, 2026.

VI. Upper Columbia River Steelhead Overshoots

A. General Updates (All)

Tracy Hillman asked for general updates. Chad Jackson said last Friday, April 24, the Attorney General's opinion was received, WDFW policy staff are reviewing this, and he believes there should be something to share with the HCP-PCs soon. Lance Keller asked whether this will be distributed via email, and Jackson said he is not sure yet.

VII. HCP Administration

A. 2025 HCP Annual Reports (Tracy Hillman)

Tracy Hillman reminded the HCP-CCs that edits and comments on the draft 2025 Wells HCP Annual Report are due on May 5, and on the draft 2025 Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP Annual Reports on May 7, 2026.

B. Next Meetings (Tracy Hillman)

The next scheduled HCP-CCs meeting is on May 26 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and will be held in person at the Douglas PUD Auditorium in East Wenatchee, Washington, with a virtual Microsoft

Teams option. The next joint session (Joint Session 17) with the PRCC to discuss subyearlings is to be determined.[9]

Keely Murdoch and Chad Jackson will not be present in May.

Hillman will inquire with the CTCR about a presentation on recent P2IP Reintroduction Efforts, possibly during an HCP-CCs meeting this fall 2026. *(Note: This outreach was completed and Casey Baldwin [CTCR] indicated that the CTCR, the Spokane Tribe of Indians, and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe would all be interested in participating in anything from a high-level overview to a deep dive on the P2IP efforts; to be further discussed with the HCP-CCs.)*

The HCP-CCs meeting on June 23 is from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and will be held in person at the Confluence Technology Center in Wenatchee, Washington, with a virtual Microsoft Teams option.

The HCP-CCs meeting on July 28 is from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and will be held in person at the Wanapum Hydro Office Building in Beverly, Washington, with a virtual Microsoft Teams option.

List of Attachments

Attachment A List of Attendees
Attachment B *Request for UCUT Tribes' P2IP Salmon Reintroduction Effort*
Attachment C RRJFBS IS system diagrams

[9] Tentatively, a subyearling joint session may not be needed next month, and approval of the Douglas PUD study plan will take place during the normal HCP-CCs session. These details will be confirmed closer to the meeting date.

Attachment A
List of Attendees

Name	Organization
Kristi Geris	Anchor QEA
Tracy Hillman	BioAnalysts
Lance Keller*	Chelan PUD
Catherine Willard*	Chelan PUD
Bill Towey	Chelan PUD
Kirk Truscott*	Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
Casey Baldwin*††	Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
Tom Kahler*	Douglas PUD
Andrew Gingerich*	Douglas PUD
John Rohrback	Douglas PUD
Scott Carlon*†	National Marine Fisheries Service
Bill Gale*	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Chad Jackson*	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Keely Murdoch*	Yakama Nation

Notes:

* Denotes HCP-CC representative or alternate.

† Joined by phone.

†† Joined for Item IV-A.

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UNITED TRIBES

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April 6, 2026

Laura Robinson
Executive Director
Upper Columbia United Tribes
25 West Main, Ste 434
Spokane, WA 99201

Shane Bickford
Assistant Manager - Natural Resources and Dam Safety
Douglas Public Utility District
1151 Valley Mall Parkway
East Wenatchee, WA 98802
Submitted via email only: shane.bickford@dcpud.org

Subject: Request for UCUT Tribes' P2IP Salmon Reintroduction Effort

Dear Mr. Bickford,

The Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) organization, three of our member tribes (Coeur d'Alene, Colville, Spokane) and our partners, including the United States Government and the State of Washington, are working to restore salmon to the Upper Columbia River and its tributaries upstream of Chief Joseph, Grand Coulee and Spokane River dams. The Douglas Public Utility District (DPUD) has been a tremendous partner to the UCUT tribe's salmon reintroduction effort by providing access to live surplus adult Chinook and rearing juvenile hatchery Chinook. The salmon reintroduction program continues to expand to meet the objectives of the Phase 2 Implementation Plan (P2IP), which includes the trap and transport of Chinook and sockeye salmon for survival, behavior studies, spawning and productivity studies in the blocked area.

Consistent with the P2IP guidance and the environmental and cultural compliance coverage that we received in 2025 through a Programmatic Environmental Assessment, we are looking to expand our efforts to trap and transport live adult sockeye from areas downstream of Chief Joseph Dam to areas upstream of Grand Coulee Dam.

The purpose of this letter is to request access to approximately 600 adult sockeye salmon from the Wells Dam ladder/trapping facility(s) in July of 2026. Our current draft study plan calls for approximately 200 per day for three consecutive days, but we can be flexible depending on logistics and constraints at the facility(s). We also need some space to bio-sample and tag the fish before loading and transporting them (no overnight holding required). One or more of the three member tribes implementing the P2IP would execute the study via their existing Facility

Use Agreements with DPUD. We understand that our effort will need to be adapted to and implemented consistent with the regulatory requirements and other commitments for the facility.

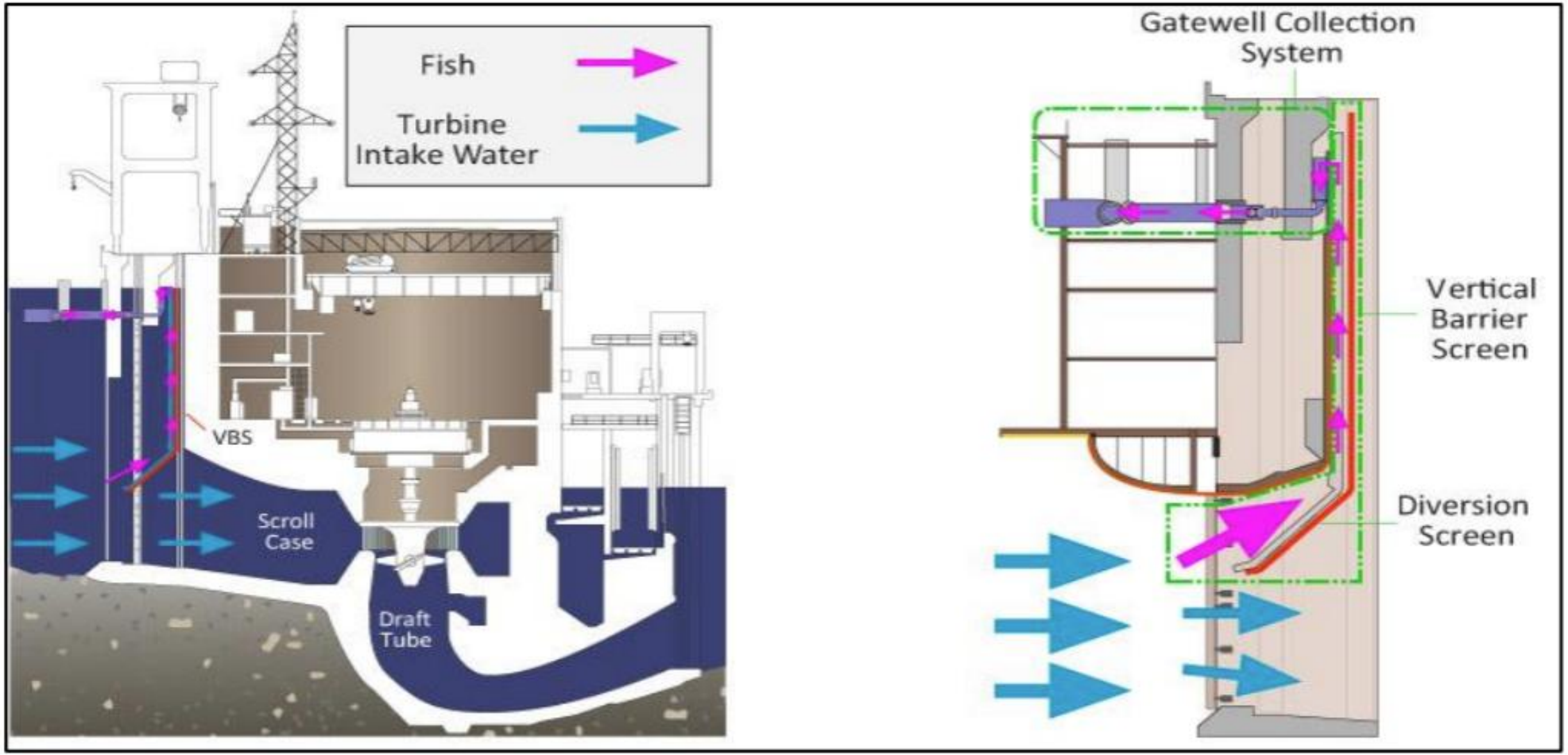
We appreciate your time and consideration of this request and look forward to working with you on this and other projects in the future.

Sincerely,

Laura Robinson

Laura Robinson,
Executive Director, UCUT

CC: Casey Baldwin (casey.baldwin@colvilletribes.com)
Kirk Truscott (kirk.truscott@colvilletribes.com)
Andrew Gingerich (andrew.gingerich@dcpud.org)



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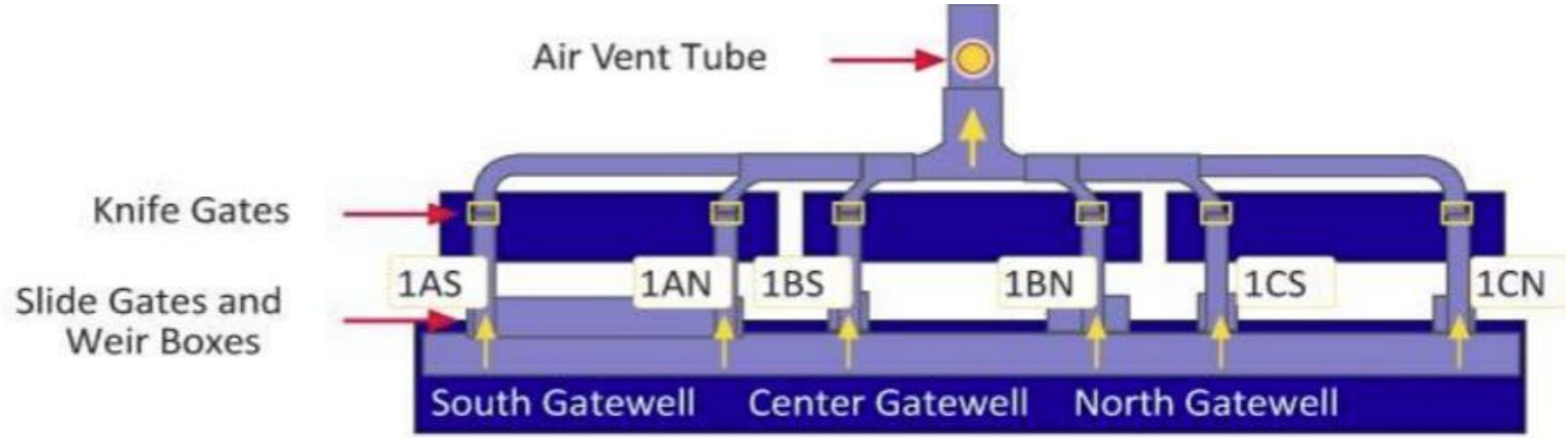
CHELAN COUNTY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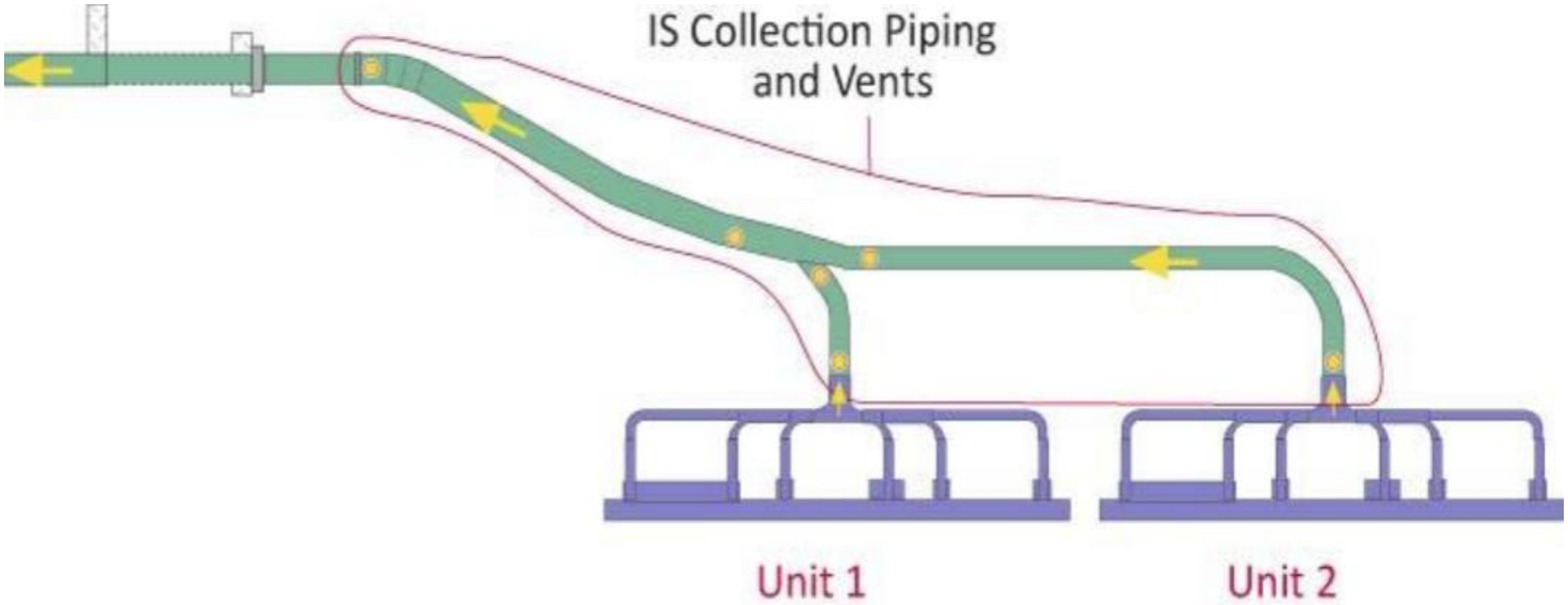
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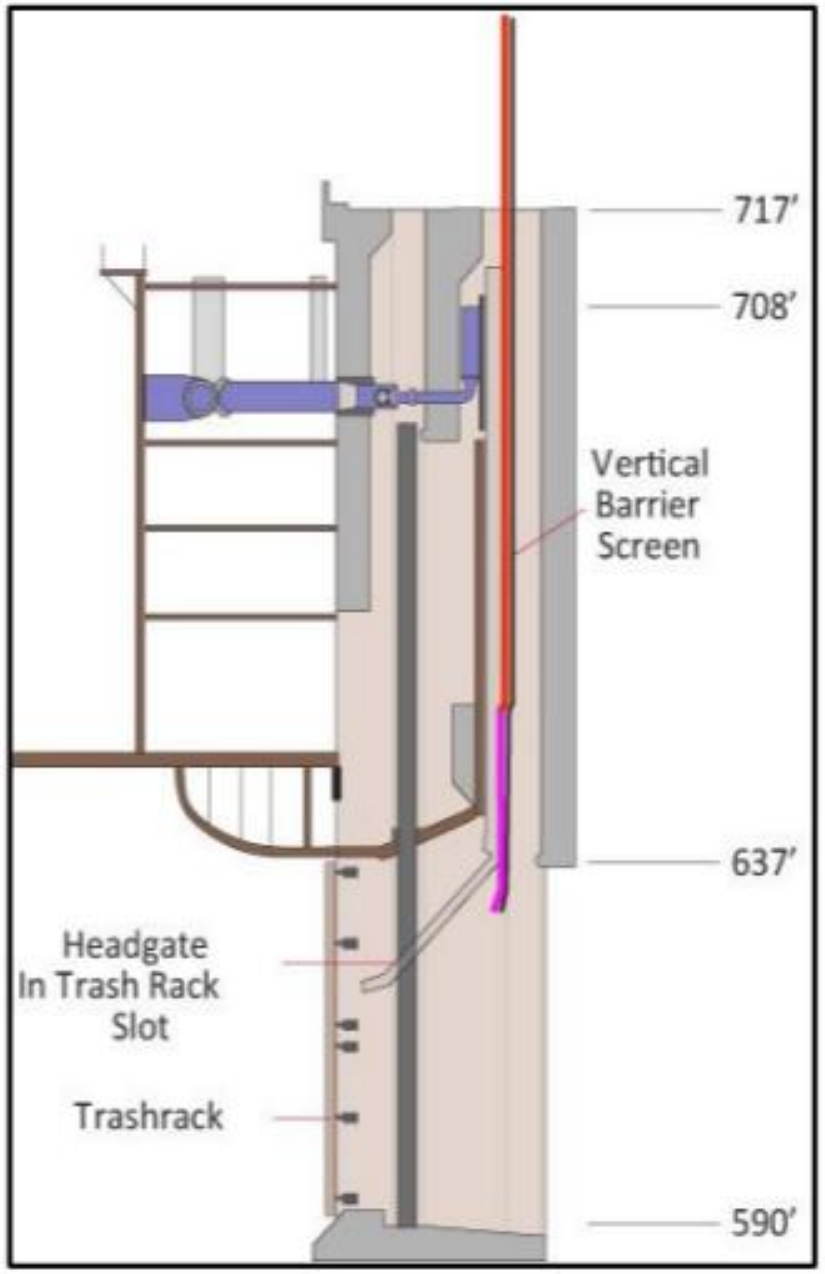

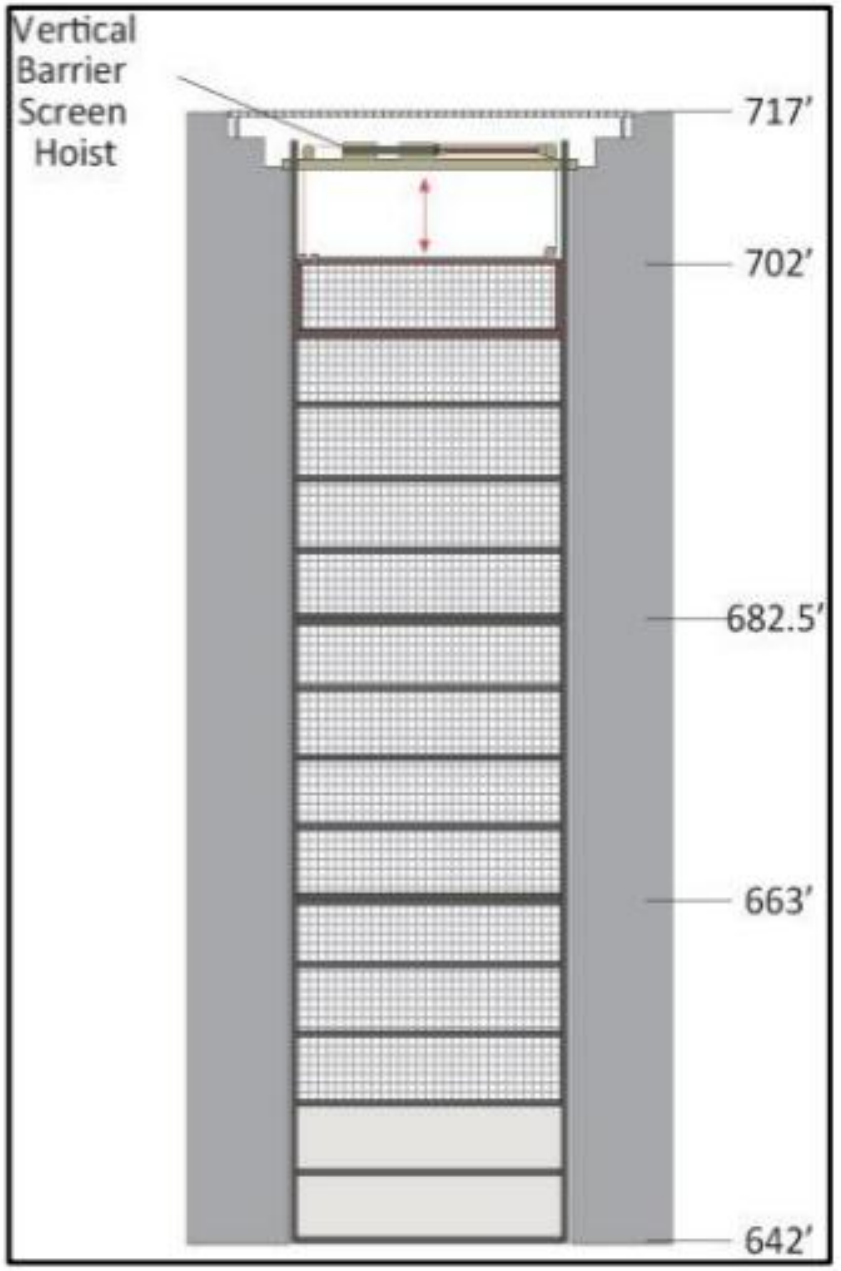

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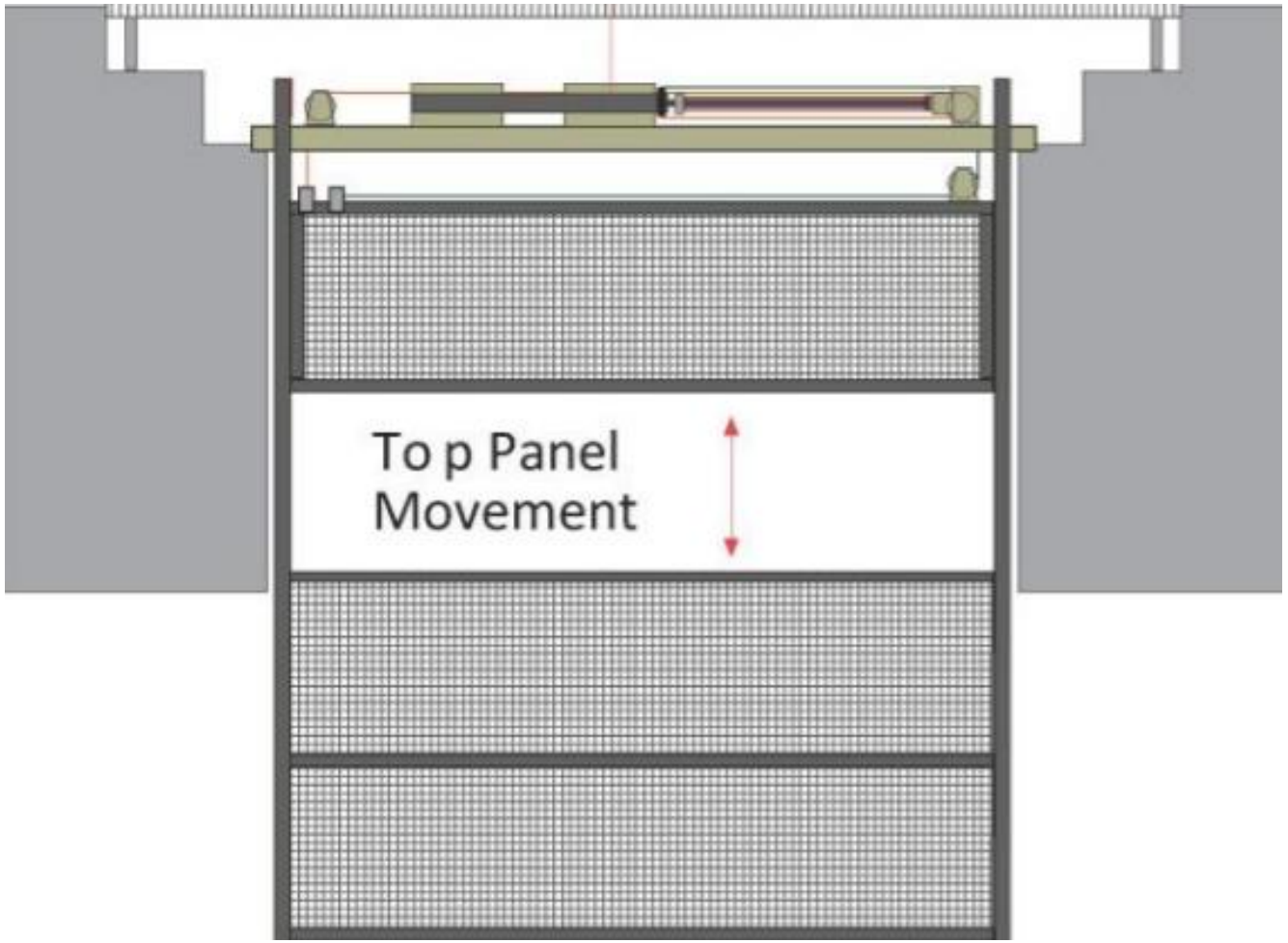
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