

Memorandum

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

Date: May 26, 2020

From: John Ferguson, HCP Coordinating Committees Chairman

cc: Kristi Geris

Re: Final Minutes of the April 28, 2020 HCP Coordinating Committees Conference Call

The Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island Hydroelectric Projects Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Coordinating Committees met by conference call on Tuesday, April 28, 2020, from 9:00 a.m. to 10:50 a.m. Attendees are listed in Attachment A to these conference call minutes.

Action Item Summary

- Chelan PUD will continue providing Rocky Reach Dam and Rock Island Dam turbine unit maintenance updates as information becomes available (Item I-C).
- Chad Jackson will update Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and Keely Murdoch will update the Yakama Nation (YN) and Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) about Douglas PUD's ongoing internal discussions and considerations about how to implement salmon and steelhead trapping activities at Wells Dam fish ladders in 2020, while complying with the evolving COVID-19 restrictions and concerns (Item IV-C).
- The YN will further discuss and consider the option of implementing CRITFC's sockeye salmon trapping and tagging concurrent with the Carlton Program trapping at Wells Dam in 2020, versus no CRITFC sockeye salmon trapping and tagging at all (Item IV-C).
- Keely Murdoch will discuss with Kraig Mott (YN Fisheries Biologist and Crew Leader for CRITFC sockeye salmon trapping) and Jeff Fryer (CRITFC) about the feasibility of conducting CRITFC sockeye salmon trapping at both east and west fish ladders at Wells Dam in 2020, to possibly meet sample size requirements (Item IV-C).
- Anchor QEA, LLC (Anchor QEA) will schedule HCP Policy Committees conference calls to follow the HCP Coordinating Committees conference calls in May and June 2020, in the event the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee cannot reach consensus on whether there are no impacts or acceptable impacts to Plan Species associated with CRITFC's request to conduct sockeye salmon trapping and tagging at Wells Dam in 2020 and the issue is elevated to the policy level and needs resolution in a timely manner. The calls will be canceled if not necessary (Item IV-C). *(Note: Following the meeting, Douglas PUD revised researcher access regulations to Wells Dam to address COVID-19 concerns, which made this discussion a moot point; therefore, there is no need to convene the HCP Policy Committees as discussed.)*
- The HCP Coordinating Committees meeting on May 26, 2020, will be held at 9:00 a.m., by conference call (Item V-E).

Decision Summary

- There were no HCP Decisions approved during today's conference call.

Agreements

- There were no HCP Agreements discussed during today's conference call.

Review Items

- The *Wells Project Subyearling Chinook Life-History Study 2011-2013 Draft Final Report* was distributed to the HCP Coordinating Committees by Kristi Geris on May 24, 2019.
- CRITFC's annual request to tag sockeye salmon at Wells Dam in 2020 was distributed to the HCP Coordinating Committees by Kristi Geris on February 4, 2020 (Item IV-C).
- A draft Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) notification letter regarding the maintenance rehabilitation of Rock Island Dam Powerhouse 2 was distributed to the Rock Island HCP Coordinating Committee by Kristi Geris on April 27, 2020, and is available for a 30-day review with edits and comments due to Lance Keller or Jeff Osborn (Chelan PUD License Compliance Specialist) by May 27, 2020 (Item III-D).

Finalized Documents

- There are no documents that have been recently finalized.

I. Welcome

A. Review Agenda (John Ferguson)

John Ferguson welcomed the HCP Coordinating Committees and reviewed the agenda. Ferguson asked for any additions or changes to the agenda. The following revisions were requested:

- Lance Keller added: 1) initiation of spring spill at Rock Island Dam; and 2) draft FERC notification letter regarding the maintenance rehabilitation of Rock Island Dam Powerhouse 2.
- Ferguson rearranged select agenda items in the following order: 1) Chelan PUD updates; 2) Douglas PUD updates; and 3) CRITFC decision.
- Ferguson added: 1) notification that an alligator gar was caught in the lower Yakima River; and 2) a subyearling Chinook salmon check-in reminder.

B. Meeting Minutes Approval (John Ferguson)

The HCP Coordinating Committees reviewed the revised draft March 24, 2020 conference call minutes. Kristi Geris said all comments and revisions received from members of the Committees were incorporated into the revised minutes and there is one outstanding item remaining to be discussed

under the 2020 Broodstock Collection Protocols discussion. Geris said Tom Kahler provided clarification to a statement he made in response to a comment made by Keely Murdoch during the meeting. Geris said she edited the minutes to incorporate Kahler's clarifications and asked if the edits were adequate. Kahler and Murdoch approved the edits. Kirk Truscott also requested edits under the CRITFC agenda item clarifying a statement he made during the meeting and these edits were incorporated. HCP Coordinating Committees members present approved the March 24, 2020 conference call minutes, as revised.

C. Last Meeting Action Items (John Ferguson)

Action items from the HCP Coordinating Committees meeting on March 24, 2020, and follow-up discussions, were as follows. (*Note: Italicized text corresponds to agenda items from the meeting on March 24, 2020*):

- *Chelan PUD will continue providing Rocky Reach Dam and Rock Island Dam turbine unit maintenance updates as information becomes available (Item I-C).*

This action item will be discussed during today's conference call and will also be carried forward.

- *The YN will provide the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) scientific research permit issued to CRITFC to tag sockeye salmon at Wells Dam in 2020, along with the scientific research permit application, which contains additional information about the study (Item III-A).*

Keely Murdoch provided these documents to Kristi Geris during the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on March 24, 2020, which Geris distributed to the HCP Coordinating Committees that same day.

- *The Wells HCP Coordinating Committee will consider the following language for concurrence during the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on April 28, 2020: Wells HCP Coordinating Committee representatives present have reviewed the CRITFC request to tag sockeye salmon at Wells Dam in 2020, and given the provisions contained within the Wells HCP, are voting on whether there are no fish passage impacts or acceptable fish passage impacts to Plan Species associated with the proposed data collection (Item III-B).*

This action item will be discussed during today's conference call.

- *The Wells HCP Coordinating Committee will be prepared to convene by conference call to discuss a path forward for implementing the Douglas PUD 2020 Survival Verification Study, in the event the study cannot begin by the scheduled start date of April 13, 2020 (due to impacts of COVID-19; Item III-D).*

This action item will be discussed during today's conference call.

II. HCP Hatchery and Tributary Committees Update

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

Tracy Hillman updated the HCP Coordinating Committees on the following actions and discussions that occurred during the HCP Tributary Committees conference call on April 9, 2020:

- *Goodwin Side Channel Assessment Project*: The HCP Tributary Committees received a Small Projects Program proposal from Cascade Fisheries titled, *Goodwin Side Channel Assessment Project*. The purpose of the project is to conduct a groundwater study and topographic survey to determine inflow of groundwater to a partially disconnected side channel located between river mile (RM) 11.7 and 12.1 on the Wenatchee River. Results from the study will be used to assess the suitability of a habitat enhancement project designed to increase year-round juvenile salmonid rearing habitat, hyporheic exchange, and floodplain inundation. The total cost of the project is \$21,157.02. The sponsor requested \$17,067.02 from HCP Plan Species Account Funds. The Rock Island HCP Tributary Committee elected to contribute.
- *Sugar Reach Habitat Enhancement Early Implementation Project*: The HCP Tributary Committees received a Small Projects Program proposal from the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation titled, *Sugar Reach Habitat Enhancement Early Implementation Project*. The purpose of the project is to reconnect a partially disconnected side channel located at RM 42.25 on the Methow River. Reconnection will be accomplished by constructing an inlet channel through fill material. The total cost of the project is \$19,931.95. The sponsor requested \$15,621.30 from HCP Plan Species Account Funds. The Wells HCP Tributary Committee elected to contribute.
- *Budget Amendment*: The Rock Island HCP Tributary Committee received a budget amendment request from Cascade Fisheries on the Chiwawa Nutrient Enhancement Project. The sponsor would like to reallocate existing funds among the budget line items. New line items include the use of a helicopter to distribute analogs along the Chiwawa River and a 10% indirect expense line item. The reallocation of existing funds would not affect the overall budget amount of \$267,650. Before the Rock Island HCP Tributary Committee can approve the amendment, the Committee needs proof that the use of a helicopter to distribute analogs within the Chiwawa River is covered under existing permits. Therefore, the Committee asked the sponsor to check with the appropriate regulatory agencies and provide confirmation that the use of a helicopter is covered under their existing permits. Once the Committee has this information, the Rock Island HCP Tributary Committee will make a decision on the budget amendment.
- *Salmon Recovery Funding Board and HCP Tributary Committee Schedule for 2020*: The HCP Tributary Committees will receive draft Salmon Recovery Funding Board applications with

HCP Tributary Committees cost shares on April 17, 2020. Virtual tours will occur from April 11 to 13, 2020. The HCP Tributary Committees will review the draft applications on April 14, 2020, and determine which applications are fundable and which ones are not. Those that are fundable, the Committees will ask the project sponsors for final applications.

- *External Financial Review:* Every 5 years the Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP Tributary Committees request an external financial review of all financial transactions made by the two Committees. The Committees selected the accounting firm Cordell, Neher & Co. to conduct the review this year. Results from the review will be available after the tax season. Funds to pay for the review come from the Rock Island and Rocky Reach Administrative Accounts. Hillman said the Wells HCP Tributary Committee does not do a 5-year review. Rather, the Wells account is reviewed on an annual basis.
- *Next Meeting:* The next meeting of the HCP Tributary Committees will be on May 14, 2020. Virtual site visits will occur from May 11 to May 13, 2020.

Hillman updated the HCP Coordinating Committees on the following actions and discussions that occurred during the HCP Hatchery Committees meeting on April 21, 2020 (*note: joint HCP Hatchery Committees/PRCC Hatchery Subcommittee items are noted by "joint," Wells HCP Hatchery Committee items are noted by "Wells," and Rock Island and Rocky Reach HCP Hatchery Committees items are noted by "Rock Island/Rocky Reach"*):

- *2021 Broodstock Collection Protocols Discussion Schedule (joint):* The HCP Hatchery Committees recently completed the 2020 Broodstock Collection Protocols and are now identifying topics that will need to be discussed before completing the 2021 Broodstock Collection Protocols. These discussions will occur from May through December this year.
- *Comprehensive Hatchery Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Report (joint):* The PUDs provided an update on the status of comprehensive reporting. The comprehensive reports, which are due at the end of this year, evaluate the performance of the HCP hatchery programs by addressing each of the hatchery M&E objectives in the Hatchery M&E Plan. The PUDs are currently compiling and analyzing data and writing reports for each HCP hatchery program. At this time, it looks like all reports, except the genetics report, will be completed by the end of the year. The genetics lab will not be able to meet the deadline because of issues related to COVID-19. The genetics report should be available during early 2021.
- *COVID-19 and Hatchery M&E Activities:* Each member of the HCP Hatchery Committees discussed the effects of COVID-19 on their respective M&E activities. M&E activities most affected by COVID-19 have been smolt trapping operations, steelhead spawning ground surveys, and precocial spring Chinook salmon sampling. Most of these activities have resumed or will resume shortly as entities identify ways to protect fieldworkers from exposure to COVID-19. Precocial sampling has been canceled this year. In-hatchery M&E activities have

occurred with little to no interruptions. In addition, most marking and tagging activities have occurred or will occur. Passive integrated transponder (PIT)-tagging of fall Chinook salmon may not occur this year. In addition, COVID-19 has not affected fish counting at dams. These data have not yet been uploaded to the Columbia River Data Access in Real Time (DART) website, likely because of COVID-19; however, these data are available on the PUD websites.

- *Marking and Tagging Pre-Release Assessment:* Recent sampling of marked and tagged fish indicates that several hatchery fish from several programs were not correctly adipose (ad) fin clipped. That is, several fish that were supposed to be ad-clipped retained 50% or more of their adipose fin. Among the programs evaluated, from 14% to 28% of the fish sampled had “bad” ad-clips. However, coded wire tag retention was high (greater than 95%) in those fish. There were a few reasons for the poor clippings that occurred this year, including not replacing replaceable marking/tagging parts in the tagging trailers and poor quality assurance/quality control following tagging. These issues have been resolved and will not affect marking and tagging in the future. The results of the poor ad-clips this year will have some effects on harvest and perhaps monitoring programs. It should not affect broodstock collections.
- *Next Meeting:* The next meeting of the HCP Hatchery Committees will be on May 20, 2020. Hillman said he hopes this meeting will convene in-person; however, it may be convened by conference call if necessary.

III. Chelan PUD

A. Rock Island Dam Powerhouse 1 Maintenance Update (Lance Keller)

Lance Keller said there has been little to no work completed in Powerhouse 1 due to COVID-19. He said the Rock Island Dam Superintendent is trying to determine how to continue work as restrictions ease but still require social distancing and appropriate personal protective equipment.

Keller added that Turbine Unit B4 will no longer be returned to service in May 2020, as previously scheduled before COVID-19, which will result in a reduction of powerhouse capacity and more spill than the 10% daily target.

B. Rocky Reach Dam Turbine Units Maintenance Update (Lance Keller)

Lance Keller said similar to Rock Island Dam, the Rocky Reach Dam Superintendent is trying to meet social distancing requirements and continue work on Turbine Units C2 and C3. Keller said work was ahead of schedule on Turbine Unit C2 when the Stay-At-Home Order was issued, so he hopes there will not be too much of a delay in the overall schedule.

John Ferguson asked if a delay or change in the maintenance schedule will have an effect on spill patterns, spill operations, or powerhouse capacity during the 2020 fish passage season. Keller said there should be no negative impacts to fish passage.

C. Initiation of Spring Spill at Rock Island Dam (Lance Keller)

Lance Keller said 10% spring fish spill at Rock Island Dam was initiated on April 17, 2020, at 0000 hours. Keller said Thad Mosey (Chelan PUD Senior Fish Biologist) oversees the fish spill program and monitored daily bypass trap counts of juvenile spring migrating species to determine if there was any indication to initiate spring spill earlier to provide spill for 95% of the spring species outmigration. Keller said the counts were low through April 16, 2020; therefore, per the Rock Island HCP, spring spill was initiated no later than April 17, 2020, at 0000 hours. He said in reviewing data on DART through April 16, 2020, as of April 28, 2020, the passage percentages for yearling Chinook salmon, steelhead, and sockeye salmon were well below 5% to meet 95% coverage at Rock Island Dam. Keller said Mosey interpreted these data well and made the right call. Keller said Rock Island Dam will spill 10% of the estimated daily average river flow, and when subyearlings arrive, daily average spill will instantaneously increase to 20%.

D. Draft FERC Notification Letter Regarding the Maintenance Rehabilitation of Rock Island Dam Powerhouse 2 (Lance Keller)

Lance Keller said a draft FERC notification letter regarding the maintenance rehabilitation of Rock Island Dam Powerhouse 2 was distributed to the Rock Island HCP Coordinating Committee by Kristi Geris on April 27, 2020, and is available for a 30-day comment period. Keller said the letter outlines the rehabilitation effort for eight bulb-turbine type units planned to start in fall 2021, after the 2021 survival check-in study. He said the schedule calls for rehabilitating one unit per year, which results in the maintenance being completed by 2029 and ahead of the next scheduled survival check-in study. He said this work is deemed maintenance, similar to Powerhouse 1 Turbine Units B1 to B4, and does not involve changes to the generator nameplate, turbine horsepower, or authorized Project hydraulic capacity; rather, parts will be refurbished or replaced and will be identical or comparable to the original components, which will bring their specifications back into tighter operating tolerances. He said, therefore, these activities do not require prior approval by FERC; however, Chelan PUD will continue to coordinate with FERC as these activities progress. He said the rehabilitation will replace the generator stator core and windings and turbine discharge liner, and the internal hub components will be re-built to decrease friction. He said the units will continue operating with variable-pitch blades, which are the same conditions tested earlier when the HCP juvenile salmonid passage survival standard was achieved. He said Rock Island Dam Powerhouse 2 Units U1 to U8 have been operated since 1979 and are reaching the end of their mechanical life. He said this rehabilitation work should lead to an additional 40 years of operation for the bulb units in

Powerhouse 2. He said there will be no changes to any civil works, for example, there will be no changes to the diameter of the intake or height of wicket gates. He said this draft FERC notification letter is available for review through May 27, 2020. Keller said to contact him or Jeff Osborn with questions or comments.

John Ferguson asked if Rock Island HCP Coordinating Committee members can provide verbal comments during the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on May 26, 2020, or if Chelan PUD prefers receiving comments in writing. Keller requested that edits and comments on the draft letter be provided in writing with changes tracked. He said all comments received will be included in a consultation matrix, along with Chelan PUD responses, and appended to the final letter. He said, however, if verbal comments work best for Rock Island HCP Coordinating Committee members, Chelan PUD can accommodate these as well.

Ferguson said Keller summarized key activities very well. Ferguson added that this letter also identifies the sequence of each unit going out of service. He said in terms of fish passage, there does not seem to be any changes. Keller said this is correct. He said the rehabilitation is an all mechanical maintenance approach. He said if anything, Chelan PUD expects additional efficiency from these units after the maintenance, which could benefit fish passage. He said Chelan PUD Fish and Wildlife Staff clearly explained to the engineers that HCP survival standards were met under the current bulb unit design and it is important to keep the refurbished units as similar to the original units as possible. Keller also noted that Rock Island Dam Powerhouse 2 Units U1 to U8 are horizontal-axis bulb units, which are more difficult to refurbish compared to vertical-axis units; however, the goal is to have no changes to how these units operate.

IV. Douglas PUD

A. Douglas PUD 2020 Survival Verification Study (Tom Kahler)

Tom Kahler said by the end of today, Douglas PUD will have reached the middle-point of the study by concluding the release of replicate 8. He said the weather has posed some challenges, but crews have been able to continue their work and accomplish the releases as intended. He said so far, detections have been good, with about 2,600 detections at the Rocky Reach Juvenile Fish Bypass System. He said in the lower river, however, there have not been good detections and he hopes this is an issue of travel time. He said additionally, with more spill in the lower river in 2020 compared to 2010 during the last survival verification study, Douglas PUD is expecting detection rates in bypass systems at lower Columbia River dams to be lower compared to 2010, which was one reason behind increasing the sample size for this study. He said Douglas PUD crews have figured out how to accomplish various components while social distancing to keep everyone safe. He said all components of the study are outside except the physiology sampling, which is completed in a

mobile laboratory in the back of a van. He said Douglas PUD expects the study to continue and be completed as intended.

John Ferguson asked what weather has posed challenges and Kahler said the wind. Kahler said high winds have impacted towing the barges carrying the release tanks. He said the cranes also have a long reach from the shore to load the tanks, and the high winds have shortened how far cranes can reach due to safety concerns. He said so far, all operations have been completed successfully.

B. Wells Dam 2020 Bypass Operations (Tom Kahler)

Tom Kahler said bypass operations at Wells Dam began on April 9, 2020, at 0000 hours. He said Douglas PUD is now equipped with new tools for monitoring bypass compliance remotely from a computer. He said the new tools include a graphical interface that displays turbine operations and spill gate openings. He said to date, bypass operations are going well.

John Ferguson asked if the PIT-tag detection system is operational in Spillway 2. Kahler said yes; however, there has not been high detections at this location because adjacent Turbine Units 1 and 3 are not operating. He said one unit is offline for rebuild and the other is offline for annual maintenance. He said fish are passing the project more toward river-left, away from river-right, where Spillway 2 is located. He said Turbine Unit 1 is scheduled to be back in service in 1 week; however, the survival study will be two-thirds complete by this time. He said still, the data should show the effect of bringing Turbine Unit 1 back to service and what this does to detection efficiency in Spillway 2.

C. DECISION: CRITFC's Annual Request to Tag Sockeye Salmon at Wells Dam (Tom Kahler)

John Ferguson recalled about 1 year ago, Kirk Truscott started questioning the need for these data. Ferguson said since then, this topic has been discussed over the course of several HCP Coordinating Committees meetings. He recalled during the last meeting, Keely Murdoch helped the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee focus on key issues to work through, including whether statements regarding the CRITFC sockeye salmon trapping in the Broodstock Collection Protocols are binding, which the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee agreed they are not. Ferguson also recalled that Murdoch questioned whether the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee has the purview to weigh in on tagging operations at Wells Dam, and the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee seemed to agree that they do to the extent the operations could affect passage of Plan Species. Ferguson said the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee agreed not to weigh in on whether the data are valuable or who conducts the sampling; rather, they will review the request from the perspective of impacts to fish passage. He recalled reviewing and discussing the CRITFC permit for incidental take, sampling concurrent with and not in addition to sampling for the Carlton Program, the use of AQUI-S, and

whether CRITFC holds an Investigational New Animal Drug (INAD) exemption for the proposed sampling. Ferguson recalled that the CRITFC request is to sample up to 800 fish. He said considering the past 25 years of passage timing, the proposed summer Chinook salmon sampling for the Carlton Program from July 1 to September 15 falls in the middle 80th percentile of the sockeye salmon migration. He recalled that the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee crafted a statement to discuss with respective HCP Policy Committees representatives and consider for concurrence, as follows:

Wells HCP Coordinating Committee representatives present have reviewed the CRITFC request to tag sockeye salmon at Wells Dam in 2020, and given the provisions contained within the Wells HCP, are voting on whether there are no fish passage impacts or acceptable fish passage impacts to Plan Species associated with the proposed data collection.

Ferguson said this statement addresses the technical aspects of the CRITFC request, consistent with HCP Policy Committees guidance from 2019. He said the CRITFC request is a decision item today, but it can be postponed 1 more month, if needed.

Murdoch said she has been talking a lot with people to obtain more information. She said she understands the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee is not making a decision on whether the data are useful or not; however, she believes the importance of the data can help inform whether the impacts of the proposed activity are acceptable. She said she had a conversation with Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) staff about how these PIT-tag data are used and the importance of these data. She said it sounds like these data are very important for in-season escapement management, spawner distribution, and M&E for the sockeye salmon Skaha Lake reintroduction program in the Okanagan River Basin. She said all parties except for Douglas PUD have helped fund this project (with the exception of efforts related to the Fish and Water Management Tool). She noted the email from Kim Hyatt (Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada [DFO]) to Tom Kahler that was distributed to the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee by Kristi Geris on April 27, 2020, which indicates these data are clearly very important. Murdoch said a modeling effort is underway to support discussions for the renewal of the Columbia River Treaty (Treaty), and DFO and ONA are relying on these data for the model being developed to support analyses associated with renewing the Treaty. Murdoch said further, she had a conversation with Jeff Fryer who indicated there has been a lot of restrictions on sampling at the Bonneville Dam Adult Fish Facility (Bonneville AFF) this year due to social distancing requirements associated with COVID-19 and Fryer may not be able to reach the target sample numbers at the Bonneville AFF, which makes reaching sampling targets at Wells Dam really important. Murdoch said this issue at the Bonneville AFF and the impacts to the data are so important that it will be on the agenda for discussion at the next Canadian Okanagan Basin Technical Working Group (COBTWG) meeting scheduled for June 2020. She said additionally,

regarding sampling only in space and time concurrent with the Carlton Program at Wells Dam, after talking with Kraig Mott, YN Fisheries Biologist and Crew Leader for CRITFC sockeye salmon trapping, Mott said if trapping is limited only to when trapping is operating for the collection of summer Chinook salmon broodstock for the Carlton Program, Mott will not be able to reach the target sample size for CRITFC. Murdoch said further, Mott is unsure the trapping efforts can be conducted concurrently while maintaining social distancing. Murdoch said, therefore, she suggests that the YN conduct the sockeye salmon sampling independent of the Carlton Program for the reasons just discussed. She said CRITFC's sockeye salmon trapping and tagging is a collaborative effort with DFO, ONA, and the YN, and it would be a shame to not be able to collect these data this year.

Murdoch asked Truscott how implementing CRITFC's request would impact the sockeye salmon population. Murdoch asked if data exist that show a negative impact. Truscott asked if data exist that show there is no negative impact to sockeye salmon or any Plan Species. He said he is erring on the side of caution. Murdoch asked if the Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT) are an ONA tribe and Truscott said they are. Murdoch asked if the CCT have discussed this topic with ONA. Truscott said he had not known the rationale of these data until he received Hyatt's email yesterday. Truscott asked why a retrospective analysis of the last 16 years of PIT-tag data would not be sufficient to meet the needs for this evaluation? Murdoch said Hyatt's email indicates he needs these PIT-tags to validate the data from a 3-year Treaty modeling project, and Murdoch read the last paragraph of Hyatt's email, as follows:

My DFO Research Group is currently reviewing the past several years of pit tagging, migration, and survival work to complete the adult freshwater migration portion of what we intend to eventually use in a cumulative impacts life history model for sockeye [salmon] and then for Chinook [salmon]. The ongoing information from tagging sockeye [salmon] at Wells [Dam] is viewed as having especially high value to our ability to verify model performance over the three-year funding window in which this work is to be completed. I am hopeful that the tagging and biological sampling that has been undertaken in recent years at Wells [Dam] may continue in support of this new three-year research initiative.

Truscott said he is not privy to the specifics of this 3-year initiative and he cannot really provide an answer on whether he or others agree this is correct that additional data are needed. Murdoch reiterated that ONA also indicated these data are used for real-time management of escapement, spawner distribution, and M&E, and this cannot be done with a retrospective analysis.

Truscott said the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee had a path forward and this discussion is a different path. He suggested Murdoch contact ONA and have Howie Wright (ONA Fisheries Manager) call Randy Friedlander (CCT Fish and Wildlife Program Director and HCP Policy Committees

Representative). Truscott said currently, his path remains unchanged. He said if CRITFC sampling is conducted concurrent with the Carlton Program there would be no additional impacts. He said this is still where he stands. Murdoch said Tom Scribner (YN HCP Hatchery Committees Representative) already spoke with Wright and it was Wright's idea to bring this issue to the COBTWG to discuss the technical implications of not reaching the target sample sizes. Murdoch said this is likely why Wright has not yet called Friedlander, because the topic will be discussed at the next COBTWG meeting in June 2020.

Ferguson asked if and how the run size forecast plays into Mott's conclusion that sockeye salmon trapping would need to go beyond the concurrent trapping window to meet sample size requirements. Murdoch said Mott's comments are based on his experience from conducting this sampling for several years. Murdoch said in the past, sockeye salmon trapping has occurred on the east fish ladder and brood collection has occurred on the west fish ladder. *(Note: Kahler later clarified that broodstock for the Carlton Program are collected on both ladders, with preference for the east ladder, and M&E run-comp trapping has typically occurred at the east ladder.)*

Murdoch said she thinks one limiting factor is sockeye salmon trapping would need to align with the brood collection schedule, which typically occurs early in the week. Kahler explained further that Fryer prefers trapping at the east fish ladder because when sockeye salmon are collected at the west fish ladder these fish are conveyed to Pond 6 and are processed along with the summer Chinook salmon the next day (compared to trapping at the east fish ladder and processing the fish the same day separate from the summer Chinook salmon).

Kahler said this year, brood collection for the Carlton Program will occur at both fish ladders. He said over the last 2 years, Chinook salmon have been favoring the east fish ladder and sockeye salmon have been favoring the west fish ladder. He said if trapping is concurrent on both fish ladders, he wonders if there might be a greater chance of reaching the quota.

Kahler said regarding COVID-19, Douglas PUD is still trying to figure out how to complete planned activities while maintaining social distancing. He said the hatchery buildings at Wells Dam are siloed off. He said he can access the old building but not the new building at Wells Fish Hatchery. He said he cannot go into Wells Dam but he can drive over the dam. He said there are a lot of older employees in hydromechanics and as dam operators, and Douglas PUD is trying to protect these staff. He said he cannot access Methow Fish Hatchery either and Methow Fish Hatchery staff are not allowed access to Wells Fish Hatchery. He said M&E and steelhead spawning staff are limited on when and where staff can be at different locations. He said now the major brood collection season has started, with spring Chinook salmon collection starting today and running through the end of June, and summers and sockeye salmon collection starting soon after. He said that surplus of summer Chinook salmon is also quickly approaching. He said this is all very complicated, and

Douglas PUD staff plan to convene this afternoon to discuss how to address COVID-19 while allowing all these different uses of the project. He said this is a multi-party consideration that Douglas PUD is trying to sort through, and it is still unknown how things will change in June and July. He said it is good to discuss ideals; however, he hopes everyone can appreciate that everything is in flux. He said it may be that Douglas PUD needs to trap and tag sockeye salmon. He said this is not ideal for Douglas PUD, the YN, or CRITFC, but this may be the only option. He said lastly, he appreciates the utility of the data and for the modeling exercise to support discussions on the Treaty, and the real time aspect of managing the resources. He said he also appreciates the need for long-term datasets.

Ferguson suggested that Chad Jackson update WDFW and Murdoch update the YN and CRITFC about Douglas PUD's ongoing internal discussions and considerations about how to implement salmon and steelhead trapping activities at Wells Dam fish ladders in 2020, while complying with the evolving COVID-19 restrictions and concerns.

Ferguson reminded the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee, as discussed during the last meeting, the purview of the HCP Coordinating Committees is the safe and efficient passage of Plan Species as a technical decision point. He said it is important to keep this in mind. He said if there is a formal vote right now, the CCT and the YN have been clear there is not consensus. He said this means the proposed sockeye salmon trapping and tagging at Wells Dam in 2020 will not go forward. Ferguson said this topic can be elevated to the policy level and addressed by conference call; however, he is unsure whether the outcome will be any different with the Wells HCP Policy Committee. He said Truscott expressed he is still firm in his view, so it comes down to whether the YN wants to collect as many fish as possible during concurrent sampling or get no fish at all.

Jim Craig said it seems the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee is at an impasse. Ferguson asked if Craig is proposing a vote now versus postponing a decision for 1 month. Craig said he is unsure what will change in 1 month but is also supportive of waiting another month if this is preferred. Murdoch said, considering that Douglas PUD plans to meet today to discuss COVID-19 mitigation measures and the COBTWG is convening in June, she thinks discussions from these two meetings might clarify a decision or path forward before the proposed sampling start date in late June. Ferguson said there will also be two more meetings of the HCP Coordinating Committees, on May 26 and June 23, 2020, to further discuss this topic, if needed. Murdoch said the YN is supportive of postponing a decision today. She said, however, if there is no way the CCT will approve this activity, she believes an HCP Policy Committees meeting will be needed. Truscott agreed.

Ferguson said the decision will be deferred for now to allow more time for COVID-19 and COBTWG discussions. He suggested that the YN also further discuss and consider the option of implementing CRITFC's sockeye salmon trapping and tagging concurrent with the Carlton Program trapping at

Wells Dam in 2020, versus no CRITFC sockeye salmon trapping and tagging at all. Murdoch said she can discuss this with Fryer; however, with the low sample size at the Bonneville AFF it is really important to reach the sample size at Wells Dam. Kahler also suggested that Murdoch discuss with Mott and Fryer the feasibility of conducting CRITFC sockeye salmon trapping at both east and west fish ladders at Wells Dam in 2020, to possibly meet sample size requirements. Murdoch said she can discuss this with Mott and Fryer; however, Mott already indicated he does not believe numbers will be close to reaching the sample target while sampling concurrently.

Ferguson said it is worth noting that the longer the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee postpones a decision, the more difficult it will be to convene the HCP Policy Committees in a timely way to meet the needs of sampling. Jackson suggested scheduling HCP Policy Committees conference calls now to take place after each of the next HCP Coordinating Committees meetings in May and June, in case these are needed. He said canceling the meetings will be easier than trying to schedule last minute. Murdoch agreed. Ferguson said that Anchor QEA will schedule HCP Policy Committees conference calls to follow the HCP Coordinating Committees conference calls in May and June 2020, in the event the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee cannot reach consensus on whether there are no impacts or acceptable impacts to Plan Species associated with CRITFC's request to conduct sockeye salmon trapping and tagging at Wells Dam in 2020 and the issue is elevated to the policy level and needs resolution in a timely manner. He said the calls will be canceled if not necessary. *(Note: Following the meeting, Douglas PUD revised researcher access regulations to Wells Dam to address COVID-19 concerns, which made this discussion a moot point; therefore, there is no need to convene the HCP Policy Committees as discussed.)*

V. HCP Administration

A. COVID-19 and Meeting Logistics (John Ferguson)

John Ferguson asked each HCP Coordinating Committees representative to provide updates on COVID-19 restrictions for their respective Parties, if any.

Lance Keller said most Chelan PUD staff are still continuing to work from home.

Tom Kahler said the same is true for Douglas PUD. He said there are very few staff still working at headquarters in East Wenatchee, Washington, which is now closed to the public. He said most, but not all, office phones are transferring calls directly to employee's mobile phones. He said the Douglas PUD Natural Resources Department should all be available via teleworking from home. He said currently, there is no timeframe established for ending this arrangement.

Keely Murdoch said she provided a similar update to the HCP Hatchery Committees. She said generally, the YN is reduced to activities required to keep fish alive. She said the YN also obtained

authorization for limited time-sensitive activities. She said, for example, last week, staff installed smolt traps that are now operational, and staff are now also collecting kelts at Rock Island Dam with help from Chelan PUD. She said staff are practicing social distancing during all activities.

Kirk Truscott said he also discussed most impacts of COVID-19 for the CCT with the HCP Hatchery Committees. He said briefly, the CCT are only conducting essential activities with essential staff, which changes weekly. He said Chief Joseph Hatchery is closed to the public. He said similar to Douglas PUD, the CCT are limiting internal staff visits to the hatchery.

Chad Jackson said for hatcheries, any activity required to keep fish alive is considered essential. He said WDFW staff are working from home except for smolt trapping and steelhead monitoring. He said WDFW is currently working on obtaining approval to expand what is allowed as essential work.

Jim Craig said most of the conservation office is teleworking. He said there are skeleton crews working at the three federal hatcheries, while social distancing. He said fish releases occurred last week and staff were equipped with personal protective equipment while cleaning ponds and moving fry out to the ponds. He said everything proceeded as planned and everyone is healthy. Ferguson asked if tagging at federal hatcheries stopped. Craig said the marking trailer is on hold but is ready to mobilize. He said all fish released were previously marked.

Ferguson said he and Kristi Geris are teleworking and are available, per usual.

B. HCP Policy Committee In-Person Meeting Postponed (John Ferguson)

John Ferguson recalled that the HCP Policy Committees had planned to convene an in-person meeting on May 5, 2020; however, this meeting is postponed due to COVID-19. He said the meeting is tentatively planned for late summer or early fall 2020. He said the purpose of this meeting will be to review the past year of HCP implementation, and maybe now to also discuss sockeye salmon.

C. Alligator Gar in the Yakima River (John Ferguson)

John Ferguson said a video was recently circulated to several fish and wildlife staff in the region showing an alligator gar collected in a carp trap in the Lower Yakima River. Ferguson asked Chad Jackson to provide a summary and update on this encounter.

Jackson said on April 14 or 15, 2020, Paul Hoffarth (WDFW District 4 Fish Biologist) received an email containing a Snapchat video from a permitted carp fisherman who annually fishes the Yakima River Delta. Jackson explained that a commercial carp permit allows take of carp only and bycatch, alive or dead, must be returned to the river. He said this carp trap is checked routinely and most bycatch is sport fish, and commercial gear cannot be used to capture sport fish. He said two fish identified as alligator gar (and later confirmed by an expert in Texas), both about 28 to 30 inches in length, were

captured in this carp trap. He said because of the permit requirement, the commercial fisherman returned both fish to the river, not knowing the extent of this. He said this fisherman plans to return to the Yakima River Delta to fish for carp as he would normally and will set nets in the same area where he caught the gar originally. Jackson said WDFW has modified this commercial carp fisherman's permit to allow retention of gar and northern pike. Jackson said U.S. Geological Survey and the YN have also attempted to recapture the fish with no success. He said WDFW has not been able to obtain an "essential work" permit to send out personnel to try to recapture these fish. He said based on research and information provided by the professor in Texas, these are immature fish and alligator gar typically take 10 to 12 years to reach sexual maturity. He said their best guess is that someone released these fish from an aquarium. He said these fish are available to purchase online for \$30 to \$50, with "platinum" alligator gar selling for \$2,000 each. He said fish and wildlife enforcement staff are investigating this case. He said he can keep the HCP Coordinating Committees updated as more develops. He said WDFW is currently waiting for permission to send out electroshocking boats.

Kirk Truscott asked what possibility is there for these fish to survive to sexual maturity? Jackson said WDFW believes there is a good possibility of these fish surviving to maturity. He said reaching maturity may be slower compared to when these fish are in their native range (warmer temperatures). He said so far, no evidence of spawning has been observed. He said there is no panic yet, and he hopes these fish are recaptured or both fish are males or females. He said based on the size and condition of the fish captured, it appears the fish survived a winter in the Columbia River; however, this is all speculation. Truscott asked about the chances of these fish successfully bringing up brood in this region. Jackson said he is unsure. He said spawning requirements for alligator gar include water temperatures as low as 68°F but more ideally toward lower- to mid-70°F. Ferguson asked about reproduction ecology. Jackson said alligator gar spawn similar to sturgeon, by broadcast spawning and sticky eggs that can hatch in days. He said alligator gar do not spawn in big water like sturgeon do but the fish spawn in the same manner.

D. Subyearling Chinook Salmon Check-In Reminder (John Ferguson)

John Ferguson reminded the HCP Coordinating Committees that the next subyearling Chinook salmon check-in will be on the agenda for the next HCP Coordinating Committees meeting on May 26, 2020.

E. Next Meetings (John Ferguson)

The next scheduled HCP Coordinating Committees meeting is on May 26, 2020, to be held by conference call.

The June 23 and July 28, 2020 meetings will be held by conference call or in-person at the Grant PUD Wenatchee Office in Wenatchee, Washington, as is yet to be determined.

VI. List of Attachments

Attachment A List of Attendees

Attachment A
List of Attendees

Name	Organization
John Ferguson	Anchor QEA, LLC
Kristi Geris	Anchor QEA, LLC
Tracy Hillmant†	BioAnalysts
Lance Keller*	Chelan PUD
Bill Towey	Chelan PUD
Tom Kahler*	Douglas PUD
Jim Craig*	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Chad Jackson*	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Keely Murdoch*	Yakama Nation
Kirk Truscott*	Colville Confederated Tribes

Notes:

- * Denotes HCP Coordinating Committees member or alternate
- † Joined for the HCP Hatchery and Tributary Committees Update