

## Memorandum

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To: Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island HCP  
Coordinating Committees Date: January 26, 2021

From: John Ferguson, HCP Coordinating Committees Chairman

cc: Kristi Geris

Re: **Final Minutes of the December 15, 2020, HCP Coordinating Committees Conference Call**

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The Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island Hydroelectric Projects Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Coordinating Committees met by conference call on Tuesday, December 15, 2020, from 9:00 a.m. to 10:45 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).
- Anchor QEA, LLC (Anchor QEA) will coordinate with the Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT) to arrange a presentation of *Reintroduction of Salmon Upstream of Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee Dams*, during the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on January 26, 2021, and will notify the Yakama Nation (YN) once these plans are confirmed (Item I-C). (Note: Kristi Geris emailed the CCT with the proposed date and time for this presentation, Casey Baldwin [CCT] confirmed this plan works for his schedule, and Geris notified the YN that these plans are confirmed.)
- Douglas PUD will communicate to the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) the discussions regarding Jeff Fryer's (CRITFC) annual request to tag sockeye salmon at Wells Dam that took place during the HCP Policy Committees conference call on October 6, 2020 (i.e., not conducting additional sampling for sockeye salmon until a thermal barrier has set up in the Okanogan River), and during the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on October 27, 2020 (i.e., stipulate in the next request letter, a request that sockeye salmon sampling periods are concurrent with both spring and summer Chinook salmon trapping operations) (Item I-C).
- Chelan PUD will update the Rock Island Dam overview figure that was shared during the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on December 15, 2020, to include more details such as turbine unit, spillway, and spill gate labels, as well as a legend (Item III-A). (Note: Lance Keller provided this updated figure to Kristi Geris on December 30, 2020, which Geris distributed to the HCP Coordinating Committees that same day.)
- Anchor QEA will set a reminder for June 2021 to consider scheduling an HCP Coordinating Committees in-person meeting at Rocky Reach Dam following completion of the Visitor's

Center renovation (tentatively set for June 2021; Item III-D). (Note: Kristi Geris set this reminder, as discussed.)

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will provide a vote via email on the 2020 Wells Post-Season Bypass Report and Passage-Dates Analysis no later than Friday, December 18, 2020 (Item IV-B). (Note: USFWS approved the document via email following the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on December 15, 2020.)
- The HCP Coordinating Committees meeting on January 26, 2021, will be held at 9:00 a.m., by conference call (Item V-B).

## Decision Summary

- Wells HCP Coordinating Committee representatives present approved the Statement of Agreement (SOA), *Approval of the Results of the 2020 Wells Project Survival Verification Study, Phase III (Standard Achieved)* (Item IV-A).
- Wells HCP Coordinating Committee representatives approved the 2020 Wells Post-Season Bypass Report and Passage-Dates Analysis, as follows: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) approved via phone call prior to the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on December 15, 2020; Douglas PUD, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the YN, and the CCT approved during the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on December 15, 2020; and USFWS approved via email following the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on December 15, 2020 (Item IV-B).

## Agreements

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

## Review Items

- The draft plan, *2021 Total Dissolved Gas Abatement Plan Wells Hydroelectric Project FERC Project No. 2149*, was distributed to the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee by Kristi Geris on January 8, 2021. A revised draft plan was distributed by Geris on January 26, 2021. Edits and comments are due to Tom Kahler by February 8, 2021.
- The draft, *Statement of Agreement to Adjust the Timing of the Annual Termination of Bypass Operations at Wells Dam*, was distributed to the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee by Kristi Geris on January 8, 2021, and Douglas PUD will request approval of the draft Statement of Agreement (SOA) during the HCP Coordinating Committees on January 26, 2021.
- The *Draft 2021 Wells HCP Action Plan* was distributed to the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee by Kristi Geris on January 20, 2021, and is available for a 30-day review with edits and comments due to Tom Kahler by February 19, 2021.

- The draft *Study Plan to Measure Yearling Chinook Survival through the Rock Island Hydroelectric Project in 2021* (2021 Rock Island Dam Survival Confirmation Study Plan) was distributed to the Rock Island HCP Coordinating Committee by Kristi Geris on January 21, 2021, and is available for a 30-day review with edits and comments due to Lance Keller by February 22, 2021.
- The draft *2021 Rocky Reach and Rock Island HCP Action Plan* was distributed to the Rocky Reach and Rock Island HCP Coordinating Committees by Kristi Geris on January 21, 2021, and is available for a 30-day review with edits and comments due to Lance Keller by February 22, 2021.
- The draft *Statistical Plan for the 2021 Yearling Chinook Salmon Survival Study at Rock Island Dam* was distributed to the Rock Island HCP Coordinating Committee by Kristi Geris on January 25, 2021, and is available for review with edits and comments due to Lance Keller by February 22, 2021.

## Finalized Documents

- The final SOA, *Approval of the Results of the 2020 Wells Project Survival Verification Study, Phase III (Standard Achieved)*, was distributed to the HCP Coordinating Committees by Kristi Geris following the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on December 15, 2020 (Item IV-A).
- The final 2020 Wells Post-Season Bypass Report and Passage-Dates Analysis was distributed to the HCP Coordinating Committees by Kristi Geris on December 23, 2020 (Item IV-B).
- The *Chelan PUD Rocky Reach and Rock Island HCPs Final 2020 Fish Spill Report*, as approved by the Rocky Reach and Rock Island HCP Coordinating Committees on October 27, 2020, was distributed to the HCP Coordinating Committees by Kristi Geris on December 30, 2020.

## 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. Lance Keller requested to present Chelan PUD agenda items after the HCP Hatchery and Tributary Committees Update, in order to leave early to participate in a fish rescue at Rock Island Dam for winter maintenance of the right fish ladder.

### B. Meeting Minutes Approval (John Ferguson)

The HCP Coordinating Committees reviewed the revised draft November 24, 2020, conference call minutes. Kristi Geris said all comments and revisions received from members of the Committees were incorporated into the revised minutes. HCP Coordinating Committees members present approved the

November 24, 2020, conference call minutes, as revised. The CCT and USFWS abstained because their representatives were not present during the November 24, 2020, conference call.

### C. Last Meeting Action Items (John Ferguson)

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

- *Anchor QEA will coordinate with the CCT to arrange a presentation of Reintroduction of Salmon Upstream of Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee Dams, during a future HCP Coordinating Committees conference call (Item I-C).*

Kristi Geris emailed Kirk Truscott and Casey Baldwin about this on November 24, 2020.

Truscott said he spoke with Baldwin, who indicated he is available to share this presentation during the HCP Coordinating Committees meeting on January 26, 2021, or February 23, 2021.

Keely Murdoch said David Blodgett, III (YN HCP Policy Committees Representative [newly appointed in 2020]), is interested in attending the presentation, and Murdoch requested to be notified as soon as the date is set so she can notify Blodgett. The HCP Coordinating Committees discussed anticipated agenda items for the meetings in January and February 2021 and determined January 2021 would work best for the presentation. Geris said she will coordinate with the CCT regarding presenting during the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on January 26, 2021, and will notify the YN once these plans are confirmed.

- *Douglas PUD will communicate to CRITFC the discussions regarding Jeff Fryer's annual request to tag sockeye salmon at Wells Dam that took place during the HCP Policy Committees conference call on October 6, 2020 (i.e., not conducting additional sampling for sockeye salmon until a thermal barrier has set up in the Okanagan River), and during the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on October 27, 2020 (i.e., stipulate in the next request letter, a request that sockeye salmon sampling periods are concurrent with both spring and summer Chinook salmon trapping operations) (Item I-C).*

Tom Kahler said he will complete this action item before the end of 2020. This action item will be carried forward.

- *Douglas PUD and the YN will further discuss the language included in the draft SOA, Approval of the Results of the 2020 Wells Project Survival Verification Study, Phase III (Standard Achieved), and will report back to Anchor QEA by the week of December 7, 2020 (Item III-A).*

This 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 said the HCP Hatchery Committees will meet by conference call tomorrow, December 16, 2020.

Hillman updated the HCP Coordinating Committees on the following actions and discussions that occurred during the HCP Tributary Committees conference call on December 10, 2020:

- *Time Extension: Enloe Dam Removal Concept Plan:* The Wells HCP Tributary Committee received a time extension request from Inter-Fluve on the Enloe Dam Removal Concept Plan. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been delays securing sediment data and results from U.S. Geological Survey. As a result, the contractor requested a time extension from February 28, 2021, to March 31, 2021. The Wells HCP Tributary Committee approved the time extension.
- *Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation Project Discussion:* The Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation (MSRF) discussed three projects last month and two projects this month. This month, MSRF discussed two site-specific projects that make up part of the larger Sugar Project on the Methow River. These site-specific projects included the WDFW and Eagle Rocks projects. The purpose of the discussion was to update the Committees on current design concepts, to seek feedback from the Committees, and to gauge the Committees' interest in moving forward with design development. This discussion was in response to the Committees' requirement to be engaged in the development of these projects. The Committees are currently studying the conceptual designs and will provide feedback to MSRF on January 8, 2021. Feedback from the Committees will be used by MSRF to develop preliminary designs.
- *Wetland Discussion with Washington State Department of Ecology:* Representatives from the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) discussed wetland regulations and policy with the HCP Tributary Committees. The Committees provided Ecology with 10 questions related to floodplain restoration projects and wetland regulations. The questions focused on a potential conflict between floodplain reconnection projects that will benefit HCP Plan Species and Ecology's regulations and policies. In sum, mitigation is not required if a restoration project does not convert an existing wetland to a flowing side channel. If a proposed action restores ecosystem services for fish and maintains wetland function, no mitigation is required. Ecology may, however, require 5 to 10 years of monitoring on these projects to demonstrate ecosystem benefits. Ecology would like sponsors to coordinate with them early in the design process. This allows Ecology to provide input on project designs.

- *Upper Nason Fish Passage Assessment:* The YN and their contractor evaluated potential fish passage barriers in Upper Nason Creek. The potential barriers are found in two reaches—Gaynor Falls Reach (river mile 16.5) and the Bygone Falls Reach (river mile 20.5), which are located between the confluences of White Pine and Mill creeks. The Gaynor Falls Reach consists of five potential barriers, while the Bygone Falls Reach (upstream) has one potential barrier. The evaluation determined that coho salmon cannot pass the second barrier in the Gaynor Falls Reach at any flow level. Chinook salmon cannot pass through the Gaynor Reach unless fish hold and wait for flows to fluctuate to levels that allow passage. Unfortunately, some barriers are only passable at high flows, while others are passable at low flows. Thus, it is unlikely Chinook salmon can pass through the Gaynor Falls or Bygone Falls reaches at any time during their migration. Steelhead, on the other hand, may be able to pass through the reaches at moderate to high flows; however, passage is challenging even at these flows. Steelhead cannot pass all barriers at low flows. Bull Trout, like steelhead, may be able to pass barriers at certain flows. Because of the location of the barriers, it is unlikely these locations can be made passable. This information will help the Committees determine if it is cost-effective to fund projects upstream from the barriers.
- *Next Meeting:* The next meeting of the HCP Tributary Committees will be on January 14, 2021. Hillman said several presentations are planned for this meeting.

### III. Chelan PUD

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

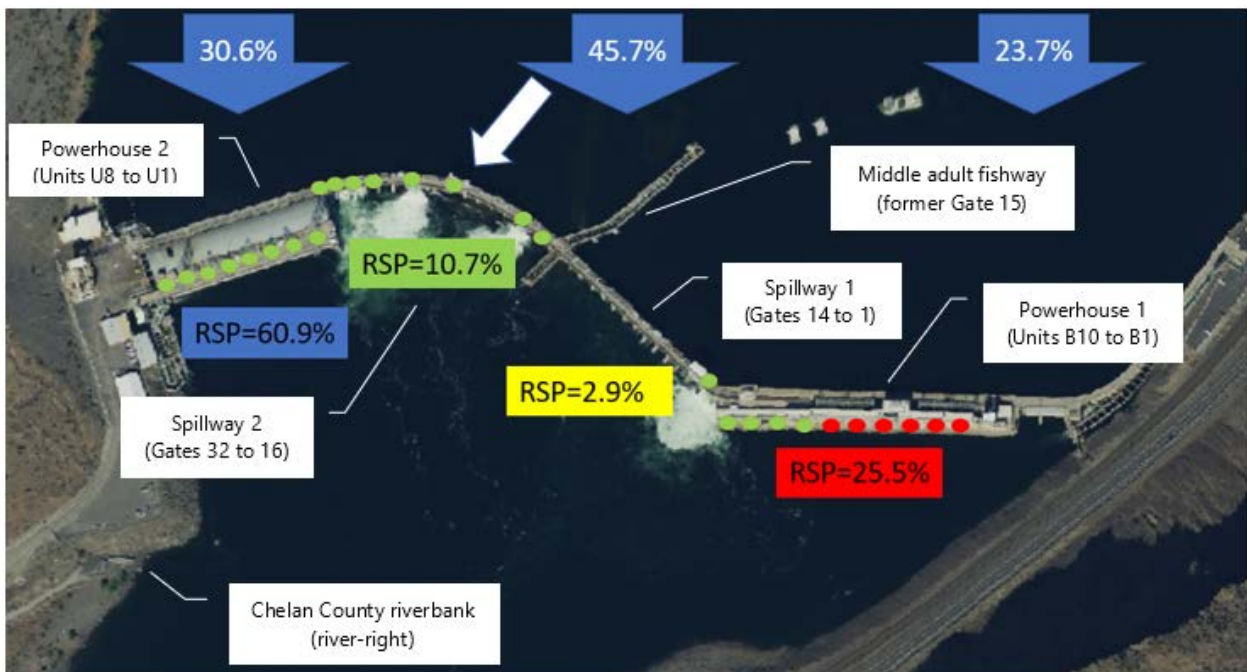
Lance Keller said the return-to-service date for Turbine Unit B4 is now scheduled for the second week in January 2021. He said Rock Island Dam maintenance staff indicate this date is currently holding; however, it does have the potential to change slightly. He noted that this return-to-service date is still well before the initiation of the 2021 survival check-in study scheduled for April 2021.

Keller said shortly after the Thanksgiving holiday, he was notified of additional delays in the maintenance schedules for Powerhouse 1. He explained that the ongoing work on Turbine Unit B4 and rehabilitation work on Turbine Unit B10 caused resource constraints associated with COVID-19 restrictions, limited available floor space in Powerhouse 1, and limited availability of headgate and dewatering equipment. He said these additional delays in Powerhouse 1 will result in unit outages during the 2021 Rock Island Dam Survival Confirmation Study. He said Chelan PUD vetted this internally and determined these outages do not raise questions or concerns about continuing the survival confirmation study in 2021. He said currently, Turbine Unit B5 and Turbine Unit B7 are estimated to be out-of-service when the 2021 survival confirmation study begins in mid-April 2021. He said Turbine Unit B7 may possibly be ready to return to service in May 2021; however, the current direction is to hold off on commissioning the unit because this requires starting and stopping the

unit (i.e., the unit would be operated independent of the overall unit operation sequence during the survival confirmation study).

Keller projected a Rock Island Dam overview figure (Figure 1) that he said is a visual summary of yearling Chinook salmon passage data from acoustic tag studies conducted in 2007, 2008, and 2010 at Rock Island Dam. He recalled previously sharing this figure with the HCP Coordinating Committees during the initial discussions about deferring the check-in study at Rock Island Dam<sup>1</sup>.

**Figure 1**  
**Rock Island Dam Overview**



Notes:

The projected figure did not include white callout boxes, which were inserted in the minutes by Anchor QEA to help clarify the discussion.

RSP: route-specific passage

Keller explained (moving from left to right across Figure 1): 1) the Chelan County riverbank on river-right; 2) Powerhouse 2 consisting of 8 units (Turbine Units U8 to U1); 3) Spillway 2 consisting of spill gates 32 to 16; 4) the middle adult fishway dividing Spillway 2 and Spillway 1 (formerly spill gate 15); 5) Spillway 1 consisting of spill gates 14 to 1; and 6) Powerhouse 1 consisting of 10 units (Turbine Units B10 to B1). He said the white arrow shows where the bulk of the river flow arrives at

<sup>1</sup> RI PH1 Verification Study Timing HCP-CC Slides, distributed on October 24, 2018, and discussed during the HCP Coordinating Committees meeting on October 23, 2018.

Rock Island Dam (i.e., at Spillway 2) and the blue arrows show the distribution of acoustically tagged fish at the boat restriction zone.

Keller said the unit-loading priority at Rock Island Dam is to operate Powerhouse 2 first, which is consistent with the load sequence tested during the 2007, 2008, and 2010 studies. He said Turbine Unit U1 (farthest unit from river-right in Powerhouse 2) is the first unit on at Rock Island Dam and as river flow dictates, the load sequence moves from Turbine Unit U1 toward river-right. He said once Powerhouse 2 is fully loaded (i.e., river flow reaches the 120,000 cubic feet per second range), operators begin picking up generation in Powerhouse 1, starting with Turbine Unit B10 (farthest unit from river-left in Powerhouse 1), and the load sequence then moves toward river-left. He said should river flow dictate that Turbine Units B7 and B5 at Powerhouse 1 be operated, Chelan PUD is confident that not having these units available for fish passage will not result in fish choosing a passage route outside of Powerhouse 1 because fish most likely will select to pass via an adjacent Powerhouse 1 unit. He said this is compared to, for example, having Turbine Units B10 or B9 out-of-service. In that case fish may choose a passage route other than Powerhouse 1 (i.e., Spillway 1) which would be cause for further consideration. He noted that Chelan PUD is planning to start Powerhouse 2 rehabilitation during fall 2021 to have all of the units back in service in time for the next survival confirmation study in 2031. He said having some units in Powerhouse 2 unavailable starting in fall 2021 could lead to additional consideration for studies under such conditions, as Powerhouse 2 is the main passage route for juvenile salmon and steelhead at Rock Island Dam.

Keller said the Rock Island Dam overview figure (Figure 1) shows that: 1) roughly 71% of all tagged fish passed Rock Island Dam via Powerhouse 2 and Spillway 2; 2) roughly 3% passed via Spillway 1; and 3) 25.5% passed via Powerhouse 1. He noted that average route-specific passage for Powerhouse 1 varies based on river flow and load sequence (i.e., lower river flows can yield a reduced number or no Powerhouse 1 Units operating, per the turbine loading sequence, causing a reduced number of available passage routes at Powerhouse 1 and the average route-specific passage to be lower for Powerhouse 1).

Keller said lastly, Rock Island Dam engineers anticipate having spill gates 17 and 25 back in service and available during the check-in study, which means all notch gates at Rock Island Dam will be in an operable condition, which is consistent with the previous survival studies.

Keely Murdoch said she appreciates the presentation, and Chelan PUD's thoughts about the Turbine Units B5 and B7 outages not affecting the study seems logical. She said regarding the notch gates now operating the same as the last studies, on the surface seems like good news. She asked, however, at some point, are these studies supposed to reflect normal operations of these projects? She said if the projects are operating one way for several years and then this changes to match the last survival study, are the studies now just measuring a certain set of conditions and not how the



projects are actually operating? She asked, what is normal? She said it seems the conditions that have been operating for the last 5 to 10 years should be the conditions tested and not so much what was tested during the last survival study. Keller said the direction is to return conditions to the spill plan, which is how the projects are intended to operate moving forward and absent of the changes due to the mechanical failures of spill gates 17 and 25. He said unfortunately, automated spill gates 17 and 25 failed, and as previously discussed with the HCP Coordinating Committees, the resulting operational changes were not desired but were needed for dam safety and were approached in a conservative fashion that resulted in increased full gate operation to meet daily spill targets. He said the intent of the survival studies is to confirm the standards are met and phase designations are appropriate for the conditions the projects are intended to be operated under. Murdoch said she is okay with this if Chelan PUD believes these conditions will be representative.

Kirk Truscott asked if the spill plan in effect for the 2021 Rock Island Dam and 2022 Rocky Reach Dam survival confirmation studies will be similar to past survival studies or will the plan be configured to how the projects will be operated in the subsequent 10 years? Keller clarified that the spill plan tested during the 2007, 2008, and 2010 studies is the intended gate configuration and is what will be implemented for the 2021 study and subsequent years, barring any future issues. He said the automated spill gate failures required a change to the spill plan to allow for dam safety issues should there be high runoff in the Wenatchee River. He said Chelan PUD is not changing the spillway configuration just for the check-in study; rather, the spill plan for the study is how Chelan PUD desires to spill moving forward (i.e., utilizing the three full over/under and six notch gate configuration).

John Ferguson asked which unit in Powerhouse 2 will be out-of-service first starting in fall 2021. Keller said it will be one of the middle units, maybe Turbine Unit U4 or Turbine Unit U6, and not a unit on the edge (e.g., Turbine Unit U1). *(Note: Keller later confirmed the first unit in Powerhouse 2 to be out-of-service will be Turbine Unit U5.)*

Jim Craig asked if Chelan PUD can update the Rock Island Dam overview figure (Figure 1) to include labels for the turbine units, spillways, and spill gates, and maybe a legend. Keller said he started labeling the figure, but it was so cramped it seemed more confusing. He suggested adding just a few labels and a legend for clarification, and Craig said this would be helpful. Chelan PUD will update the Rock Island Dam overview figure, as discussed. *(Note: Keller provided this updated figure to Kristi Geris on December 30, 2020, which Geris distributed to the HCP Coordinating Committees that same day.)*

Keller said the acoustic tag order has been placed and he plans to distribute a draft study plan for review prior to the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on January 26, 2021.

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

Lance Keller said work is continuing on the disassembly of Turbine Unit C3, and crews have begun commissioning Turbine Unit C2. He said everything is ongoing as anticipated. He said if no oil leaks are detected in the trunnion seal area, Turbine Unit C3 is expected to return-to-service by May 2021. He said work is also continuing on Turbine Unit C7 which is expected to return-to-service by March 2021.

## **C. 2020/2021 Rock Island and Rocky Reach Adult Fishway Winter Maintenance (Lance Keller)**

Lance Keller reviewed adult fishway maintenance updates at Rock Island Dam and Rocky Reach Dam, as follows:

### Rocky Reach Dam

Keller said on December 1, 2020, a fish rescue was conducted in the upper portion of the adult fishway. He said the rescue went well and included one juvenile Bull Trout. He said the fish was healthy, scanned for a PIT tag (no PIT tag was detected), and released to the Rocky Reach Dam forebay. He said on December 9, 2020, the lower portion of the adult fishway was dewatered and a fish rescue was conducted that same day. He said this rescue also went well and all fish rescued were alive and released in the Rocky Reach Dam forebay.

### Rock Island Dam

Keller said on December 14, 2020, a fish rescue was conducted in the upper portion of the right fish ladder. He said everything went smoothly. He said today, December 15, 2020, crews are dewatering the lower portion of the right fish ladder and will conduct a fish rescue afterwards. He said as far as he knows, the dewatering process is going well, there is a good seal on the exit gates, and the pumps are working appropriately. He said crews will begin the fish rescue within the next hour.

## **D. Rocky Reach Dam Visitor's Center Renovation and HCP Coordinating Committees In-Person Meeting (Lance Keller)**

Lance Keller said Kristi Geris reminded him of an action item from a past HCP Coordinating Committees meeting about the Rocky Reach Dam Visitor's Center renovation<sup>2</sup>. Keller said he was just at the dam for a fish rescue and a ton of work is ongoing at the Visitor's Center. He said the building is almost fully gutted, and the remodel is started and on target. He said there have been no impacts to the remodel schedule due to COVID-19. He said the exhibit contractor is on schedule, and the anticipated re-open date is scheduled for June 2021. He said this includes the unveiling of the

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<sup>2</sup> Action item from the HCP Coordinating Committees meeting on February 25, 2020, that "Anchor QEA will set a reminder for December 2020 to consider scheduling an HCP Coordinating Committees in-person meeting at Rocky Reach Dam following completion of the Visitor's Center renovation (tentatively set for July 2021)."

new fish windows installed during the 2019/2020 winter maintenance outage. He said a small leak was detected in one of the windows a few months ago; however, the leak was not of a size that required immediate dewatering of the fishway. He said this will be addressed during the 2020/2021 winter maintenance outage. He said should the HCP Coordinating Committees convene a meeting at Rocky Reach Dam, all facilities at the Visitor's Center should be fully open and operational by summer 2021, pending COVID-19 restrictions.

Anchor QEA will set a reminder for June 2021 to consider scheduling an HCP Coordinating Committees in-person meeting at Rocky Reach Dam following completion of the Visitor's Center renovation (tentatively set for June 2021). (Note: Geris set this reminder, as discussed.)

## IV. Douglas PUD

### A. DECISION: Draft SOA, Approval of the Results of the 2020 Wells Project Survival Verification Study, Phase III (Standard Achieved) (Tom Kahler)

Tom Kahler said the draft SOA, *Approval of the Results of the 2020 Wells Project Survival Verification Study, Phase III (Standard Achieved)*, was distributed to the HCP Coordinating Committees by Kristi Geris on November 13, 2020. Kahler recalled discussing the draft SOA during the last HCP Coordinating Committees meeting, including Kirk Truscott's suggestion to add parenthetical rearing and release location information and Keely Murdoch's request for additional time to review language in the SOA. Kahler said there was an action item for Douglas PUD and the YN to further discuss the language included in the draft SOA. Kahler said Murdoch provided Douglas PUD with specific questions, he provided answers, and Murdoch followed up with him indicating the YN is now ready to approve the SOA. Murdoch said she appreciates the extra time. She said she had not realized that the Wells HCP combines Chinook salmon and steelhead survival values and she needed extra time to understand this. She thanked Kahler for the additional help.

Wells HCP Coordinating Committee representatives present approved the SOA, *Approval of the Results of the 2020 Wells Project Survival Verification Study, Phase III (Standard Achieved)*, as revised.

The final SOA was distributed to the HCP Coordinating Committees by Geris following the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on December 15, 2020.

### B. DECISION: Draft 2020 Wells Post-Season Bypass Report and Passage-Dates Analysis (Tom Kahler)

Tom Kahler said the draft 2020 Wells Post-Season Bypass Report and Passage-Dates Analysis was distributed to the HCP Coordinating Committee by Kristi Geris on November 23, 2020. Kahler said he does not expect that Wells HCP Coordinating Committee members have had a chance to fully review the document. He said the draft report is available for a 30-day review with edits and comments due to him

by December 23, 2020; however, he included this as a Decision Item on the agenda in case the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee is ready to approve. He said if not, Douglas PUD would like to request approval via email at the end of the review period in order to include the final approved report in the *2020 Wells HCP Annual Report*.

John Ferguson said Scott Carlon provided NMFS approval of the report via a phone call prior to the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on December 15, 2020. Kirk Truscott said because he was not present during the last HCP Coordinating Committees meeting when this draft report was discussed, the CCT would like another day or two to review the report and meeting minutes. He said he understands the numbers are what they are. He said he still has a nagging issue that the HCPs did not distinguish between natural-origin and hatchery-origin recruits, but there is nothing he can do about this. He said he still wants to review the data to make sure there is nothing glaring to discuss. Jim Craig said USFWS would also like additional time to review the report and meeting minutes. Chad Jackson said WDFW is ready to approve the report, and Keely Murdoch said the YN is also ready to approve the report.

Kahler said during the last HCP Coordinating Committees meeting, Douglas PUD mainly reviewed why distribution of the report was delayed. He said he can provide a more thorough review of the draft report today. He said one thing he would like to note is that the Wells Project met the HCP standards for all Plan Species, including providing passage for 100% of the sockeye and subyearling Chinook salmon migrations and nearly 100% of the yearling Chinook and coho salmon and steelhead migrations. He said the second thing he wanted to note is Table 3 and Table 4 of the draft report, which show how well bypass timing at Wells Dam matched actual migration timing of Plan Species passing Wells Dam. He said the Wells HCP includes a requirement to evaluate bypass timing systematically in 10-year intervals. He said historically, fyke net and hydroacoustic data were used to establish bypass timing at Wells Dam. He said since 2011, the Rocky Reach Dam PIT-tag detection and bypass sampling facilities provide data on passage timing that represent the run at large. He said bypass timing at Wells Dam was last evaluated in 2011 to determine bypass dates for 2012, and Douglas PUD is now on the cusp of needing to evaluate bypass timing again. He said Table 3 and Table 4 include 9 years of data on passage starting with the change in bypass dates in 2012. He said Table 4 shows that for subyearling Chinook salmon, for the last 9 years, bypass operations at Wells Dam have ended at least 10 days past when the project already provided passage for 95% of the subyearling migration and have ended as many as 39 days past 95% of the migration. He said these data might suggest a shift in bypass dates is needed. He asked if this post-season bypass analysis developed by Drs. John Skalski and Richard Townsend (University of Washington, Columbia Basin Research) is sufficient to evaluate bypass operations for the next 10 years; and if not, do Wells HCP Coordinating Committee representatives have another suggestion on how to evaluate this because Douglas PUD does not. He also asked if the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee is comfortable with

shifting Wells Dam bypass operation dates in 2021 based on these 9 years of data, or is another year of data necessary?

Andrew Gingerich added that part of the reason Douglas PUD is asking this question now is because if there is a revision to the Wells Project bypass timing for 2021, Douglas PUD has about 2 months to make the updates in the Bypass Operating Plan and Gas Abatement Plan, discuss and obtain approval of these plans within the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee and Douglas PUD Aquatic Settlement Work Group, and prepare a consultation package that will be due to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) by February 28, 2021.

Ferguson asked about the timing for additional discussions. He said there are two HCP Coordinating Committees meetings before the FERC deadline, and he asked how does Douglas PUD want to proceed? Gingerich said Douglas PUD does not want to rush this, recognizing that some Wells HCP Coordinating Committee members were not in attendance during last month's meeting. He said in early to mid-January, Douglas PUD tries to distribute the draft Bypass Operating Plan and Gas Abatement Plan for review towards obtaining approval during the meeting in February. He said in the past, because the HCP Coordinating Committees meeting in February is always so close to the FERC deadline, Douglas PUD has built the consultation record for FERC using the HCP Coordinating Committees action items document to show approval of the plans. He said if there is a revision to the bypass operation dates, a draft SOA will likely be distributed at the same time as the draft Bypass Operating Plan and Gas Abatement Plan. Kahler noted that approval of the 2020 Wells Post-Season Bypass Report and Passage-Dates Analysis can be separate from the discussion about modifying the bypass dates. He said additionally, the Wells HCP does not require this evaluation of the bypass dates until before the 2022 bypass season, so the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee has another year to discuss this, if needed.

Truscott asked if Douglas PUD is proposing to change the bypass timing for subyearlings-only or yearlings and subyearlings. Kahler said for subyearlings-only. He said based on the past 9 years of data, Douglas PUD is proposing a 10-day shift in the bypass termination date for subyearling Chinook salmon from ending at midnight on August 19 to ending at midnight on August 9. Truscott said he likely would not support a change in bypass timing for yearling Chinook salmon. He noted in Table 3 of the draft report that bypass operations typically start a little before the 5% combined hatchery and wild migration, and typically start after the 5% wild-only population. He asked if Table 4 assumes a 14-day travel time from Wells Dam to Rocky Reach Dam for subyearlings. Kahler said yes, and he explained that there are so few detections at both Wells and Rocky Reach dams that a median travel time was estimated by dividing total travel time between the dams in half, based on the loose assumption that the species spend equal time in each reservoir. Truscott said considering the Wells HCP does not separate wild from hatchery populations and given the data in-hand, he

would be hard-pressed to say there is not a reason to re-evaluate bypass end dates for subyearlings. He said he can also approve the draft 2020 Wells Post-Season Bypass Report and Passage-Dates Analysis right now.

Ferguson summarized that USFWS will provide a vote via email on the 2020 Wells Post-Season Bypass Report and Passage-Dates Analysis no later than Friday, December 18, 2020. Ferguson said secondly, the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee needs to think about whether these post-season bypass analyses are sufficient to change the bypass dates for subyearling Chinook salmon, and whether there are adequate data to make this change in the 2021 bypass season. He said this will be further discussed during the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on January 26, 2021. *(Note: USFWS approved the 2020 Wells Post-Season Bypass Report and Passage-Dates Analysis via email following the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on December 15, 2020.)*

Wells HCP Coordinating Committee representatives approved the 2020 Wells Post-Season Bypass Report and Passage-Dates Analysis, as follows: NMFS approved via phone call prior to the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on December 15, 2020; Douglas PUD, WDFW, the YN, and the CCT approved during the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on December 15, 2020; and USFWS approved via email following the HCP Coordinating Committees conference call on December 15, 2020.

The final 2020 Wells Post-Season Bypass Report and Passage-Dates Analysis was distributed to the HCP Coordinating Committees by Geris on December 23, 2020.

### **C. 2020/2021 Wells Dam Winter Maintenance (Tom Kahler)**

Tom Kahler said the west fish ladder at Wells Dam is scheduled to be taken offline for winter maintenance the week of December 28, 2020. He said, however, the maintenance crew at Wells Dam is also discussing possibly postponing this to the first week in January 2021. Kahler said currently, the plan is to set the bulkheads on December 28, 2020, dewater the fish ladder on December 29, 2020, and then dewater the collection gallery on December 30, 2020. He said this will be the shorter of the two outages and will take no more than 2 weeks. He said the east fish ladder outage will follow.

## **V. HCP Administration**

### **A. COVID-19 Updates (John Ferguson)**

John Ferguson asked if there are any updates HCP Coordinating Committees members would like to share regarding impacts of COVID-19 on HCP activities. No updates were shared.

## **B. Next Meetings (John Ferguson)**

The next scheduled HCP Coordinating Committees meeting is on January 26, 2021, to be held by conference call.

The February 23 and March 23, 2021, 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**

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
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
Andrew Gingerich*	Douglas PUD
Jim Craig*	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Chad Jackson*	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Kirk Truscott*	Colville Confederated Tribes
Keely Murdoch*	Yakama Nation

Notes:

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