

Wells HCP Hatchery Committee
Statement of Agreement Determining Douglas PUD's Means of Satisfying NNI for Methow River Coho

Date of Approval: December 16, 2015

Statement:

The Wells HCP Hatchery Committee (HC) agrees that, beginning with brood year (BY) 2018, DPUD shall rear yearling coho at Wells Hatchery to satisfy the hatchery-compensation component of No-Net-Impact (NNI) for Methow River coho. On October 27, 2015, the Wells HCP Coordinating Committee (CC) agreed that Douglas PUD (DPUD) shall provide NNI hatchery compensation for Methow River coho at a rate equivalent to the multi-year-average project passage-loss value measured for yearling Chinook and steelhead (currently 3.7%, and subject to change with future survival verification studies as approved by the CC). Thus, until the next scheduled hatchery compensation recalculation (2023), DPUD shall produce yearling coho at 3.7% (subject to change, as noted above) of the Yakama Nation's (YN) Methow River coho Basin Release Goals for each respective BY (see examples below). Beginning with the recalculation in 2023, NNI production values for Methow River coho shall also take into account natural production in the Methow using the same methods for calculating production for other HCP Plan Species. The term of this agreement shall extend through the term of the Wells HCP.

DPUD shall acclimate their NNI coho production in the Twisp acclimation pond, and will accommodate the YN's actions to modify that pond to allow co-acclimation of coho with spring Chinook and steelhead in a manner that allows the separate release of co-acclimated species. The YN may acclimate additional coho at the Twisp pond at their own expense, subject to annual HC approval, and provided that the combined density index does not exceed that for spring Chinook or steelhead while those species remain in the pond. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW; or DPUD's future hatchery-production contractor) shall operate the Twisp facility, and the YN shall directly reimburse the operator for any acclimation costs above those necessary for DPUD's NNI fish. Additionally, DPUD shall allow the acclimation of coho in the Chewuch acclimation pond without cost to DPUD, by WDFW or a third-party contractor approved by DPUD. Finally, DPUD shall allow collection of adult coho broodstock (prohibiting collection for other uses), without cost to DPUD, at Wells Dam, Wells Hatchery, and Methow Hatchery.

Background

The Wells HCP defines coho as a Plan Species without specifying NNI hatchery-compensation requirements because coho, as a locally extirpated species, were the subjects of a reintroduction-feasibility study when the HCP was signed. Section 8.4.5.1 of the Wells HCP describes the necessary circumstances under which the HC shall determine whether Methow River coho warrant NNI hatchery compensation, and gives the HC discretion over the program(s) by which DPUD shall meet that obligation. In December 2007 the HC determined that Methow River coho warranted NNI hatchery compensation, and in early 2008, they approved a 10-year hatchery-compensation agreement between DPUD and the YN whereby DPUD provided monetary support for the YN coho reintroduction program at the then 96.2% survival level. As the term of that agreement nears completion, DPUD and the YN hereby establish a new long-term hatchery-compensation agreement to take effect in 2018, based upon the coho hatchery-compensation rate determined by the CC (currently 3.7%).

Production Examples: If the YN's Basin Release Goal of yearling Methow River coho for BY 2018 is 1,000,000, then DPUD would produce 37,000 ($1,000,000 \times 0.037$) yearling coho for the 2018 BY; should the Basin Release Goals drop to 700,000, and then 350,000 yearling coho in subsequent BYs, DPUD NNI coho hatchery production would change proportionally, to 25,900, and 12,950, respectively for those BYs. Production following 2023 recalculation will also account for natural production, as noted above.