Meeting Purpose: Meeting of the Rocky Reach Fish Forum to continue Rocky Reach license implementation

Minutes

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the Rocky Reach Fish Forum (RRFF) meeting.

Tracy reviewed the agenda with the Forum. The Forum made no changes or additions to the agenda.

Tracy reviewed the 6 April 2011 meeting minutes with the RRFF. The minutes were approved with no edits.
**White Sturgeon**

Joe Miller confirmed that 100% of the 6,500 yearling White sturgeon released into Rocky Reach reservoir in April 2011 were PIT tagged and scute marked. Additionally, 42 fish were implanted with acoustic tags. Within three days of the release, 26 PIT tagged yearlings were detected going through the Rocky Reach juvenile fish bypass. None of the acoustic tagged fish (42) that were released upstream of Beebe have yet been detected at Beebe.

Joe shared that one of Chelan PUD’s pikeminnow-control contractors caught one of the released White Sturgeon, the first re-capture, in 70 feet of water above the initial release site. Joe confirmed that Josh Murauskas will compile all the available data regarding White Sturgeon detections for presentation at the next Rocky Reach Fish Forum meeting.

Bob Rose reported that CRITFC and ODFW would prefer that no white sturgeon broodstock be collected from John Day Pool/McNary Tailrace. They would prefer that broodstock be collected from the Priest Rapids Tailrace. This issue will be discussed during the coordination meeting on 12 May in Ellensburg. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss and coordinate the collection and transportation of white sturgeon broodstock to Marion Drain.

Decision Item: The RRFF voted on the Rocky Reach Fish Forum White Sturgeon Hatchery Plan for the 2011 Brood Year, which was submitted by Chelan PUD (the plan is appended to these notes as Attachment 1). The Forum approved the plan.

**Pacific Lamprey**

*Lamprey Passage Improvement*

Bryan Nordlund stated that diffuser velocities would definitely increase if one were to cover parts of the grating with plating. The intent of the plating is to improve lamprey passage. Bryan expressed concern that the potential increase in the floor diffuser water velocities may create upwelling, which could delay upstream passage of salmonids.

Bryan offered other possible options for consideration:

- Build an elevated (~2”) byway (ramp and plating) above the diffuser grating.
- Only cover diffuser support beams with plating.

Bryan stated that he would likely request some type of demonstration (i.e., study) that plating would not affect salmonid passage if Chelan PUD did choose to install plating directly on the floor diffusers. Bryan noted that it is important to keep plating off the diffuser grating.

Jeff Osborn recommended that plating at the orifices should be the first step for 2012 adult lamprey passage improvements based on the demonstrated success at Priest Rapids. The Forum agreed. Jeff also stated that he talked with Mike Clement, Grant PUD, and Mike will be sending the drawings of ramps/plating that were installed at Priest Rapids Dam.

Regarding Half Duplex PIT-tag antenna installation, once Chelan PUD receives the conceptual designs from Cramer Fish Sciences, Jeff Osborn will contact the HCP Coordinating Committee to seek their approval regarding the RRFF-approved location of the monitoring PIT-tag antennas, particularly the antenna proposed for the transportation channel that will require wiring to run down the middle of the channel. Jeff anticipates receiving final approval from the RRFF on the “package” of measures to be installed during the 2012 winter fishway maintenance period by September 2011.

*Artificial Production*

Tracy Hillman reported that he sent the draft Pacific Lamprey Artificial Production Report to the RRFF for their review/comments. Members discussed briefly the draft report and noted that an analysis of the Marion Drain facility should be included in the report. In addition, the authors should prioritize hatchery facilities based on the potential of the facilities to produce lamprey. Comments are due to Tracy on Friday, 13 May.
Action Items:

• Jeff Osborn will continue his research regarding water velocities in the lower fishway ladder sections and report to the RRFF at the next meeting.
• Artificial Production Investigation Report schedule:
  o 13 May 2011: RRFF comments are due to Tracy. He will compile comments and forward them to GeoEngineers, USFWS, USGS, and the RRFF.
  o 30 May 2011: Final report from GeoEngineers due to Chelan PUD.

Reservoir Investigations for Ammocoetes
Ammocoete sampling, which is dictated by river flow (low flow and low load), will begin sometime in September or October. Sampling will likely follow an adaptive sampling design with a haphazard starting location. Sampling techniques will include electrofishing and shovel (grab sample) methods. Jeff Osborn indicated that he would like to borrow the shocker used by RD Nelle, USFWS, for sampling ammocoetes. Jeff also stated that he will communicate with Bob Mueller, Battelle, who is developing electrofishing methods for sampling ammocoetes.

Resident Fish
Jeff Osborn reported that the payment agreement with WDFW has not been executed. However, the agreement is a high priority to PUD staff and they will send the agreement to WDFW as soon as possible.

Tracy Hillman asked Steve Lewis if the USFWS has any concerns with implementing the Resident Fish Study Plan. Steve said that he did have concerns regarding the potential incidental take of bull trout during the sampling, but supported conducting the study. He also said that he is very interested in the thorough documentation of all fish species captured during study implementation.

Tracy asked Bryan Nordlund if NOAA Fisheries had any concerns regarding the implementation of the Resident Fish Study Plan. Bryan said that he had no concerns with the proposed resident fish sampling.

Action Items:

• Jeff Osborn will forward the revised reporting timeline for the Resident Fish Study Plan to Tracy Hillman for distribution to the RRFF.
• Patrick Verhey will verify who from WDFW will be responsible/authorized to sign the payment agreement.

Misc
Bob Rose reported that the First International Lamprey Workshop was a success. He also stated that a Workshop report would be available soon. Key outcomes included:

• It is relatively easy to raise lamprey from egg to early ammocoete.
• More research is needed on: (1) what to feed the lamprey and (2) facility designs for raising juveniles to more advanced ammocoete stages (beyond a couple months).

Action Item:

• Bob Rose will distribute a hardcopy of the Workshop proceedings to the attendees.

QAPP Update
Steve Hays stated that he was drafting the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP).

Next Steps
Next meeting will be a conference call, if deemed necessary, on 1 June 2011, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Attachment 1: White Sturgeon Hatchery Plan for the 2011 Brood Year proposed by Chelan PUD.
Rocky Reach Fish Forum White Sturgeon Hatchery Plan for the 2011 Brood Year

Submitted by Chelan PUD on April 6, 2011.

For discussion at the April 6, 2011, RRFF meeting

For approval at the May, 2011, RRFF meeting

This document represents the plan for implementing the hatchery component of the Rocky Reach White Sturgeon Management Plan. The contents reflect the key hatchery activities necessary to meet the requirements of Rocky Reach License. Additionally, this Plan reflects previous discussions and management considerations provided to the RRFF.

For the 2011 brood year, the Rocky Reach Fish Forum agrees to the following guidelines and activities to support the production of sturgeon in accordance with the White Sturgeon Management Plan:

**Broodstock collection**: Performed by Yakama Nation primarily. Possible augmentation from Golder & Associates (Priest and Wanapum Pools) and Blue Leaf (below McNary Dam). Broodstock collection will occur during the summer of 2011.

**Broodstock origin**: Brood stock will be collected from the Columbia River between Bonneville Dam and Rock Island Dam.

**Spawning**: Performed by Yakama Nation at Marion Drain

**Hatchery rearing to release in spring 2012**: Performed by WDFW at Chelan Hatchery

**Target release number**: up to 6,500 yearling sturgeon

**Target release date**: April 2012