

FTC Cowlitz Hydroelectric Project
FERC NO. 2016
Fisheries Technical Committee
Final Meeting Summary
April 7, 2009 from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Mayfield Office, Silver Creek, Washington

Members Present

Michelle Day	NMFS
Tim Romanski	USFWS
Brett Swift	American Rivers
Brad Caldwell	WA Dept of Ecology
Pat Frazier	WDFW
Mark LaRiviere	Tacoma Power

Other Attendees

Ed Meyer	NMFS
Rich Turner	NMFS
John Serl	WDFW
Wolf Dammers	WDFW
Debbie Young	Tacoma Power
Tom Martin	Tacoma Power
Tom Santee	Insight Northwest
Lyn Wiltse	PDSA Consulting
Steve Fischer	Tacoma Power
Marc Wicke	Tacoma Power
Dean McLeod	Tacoma Power

2009 FTC Meeting Dates (first Tuesday of each month)

May 5, June 2, July 7, August 4, September 1, October 6, November 3, December 1

Default time: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM; Default location: Mayfield

Announcement

Tom Santee will facilitate the May 5 FTC meeting.

Agenda Item: Review FHMP Update Implementation Schedule

Presenter: Mark LaRiviere

At our March meeting Pat requested integrating in the schedule a public workshop (or series of workshops in different areas to facilitate public attendance) followed by a 30-day public review period when the draft plan is out. These workshops would allow the FTC to walk through the plan and explain the *what* and the *why* of the plan. This would provide a common base of understanding to inform members of the public as they, subsequent to the workshop(s), formulate their comments on the plan.

Mark adjusted the schedule accordingly, keeping the same FERC filing date. He distributed a handout outlining the new schedule.

Action Item:

- Mark will update the schedule further to reflect the new process using the AHA model.

Agenda Item: Construction and Operations Update

Presenter: Mark LaRiviere

Mark reported that over the last couple of weeks Tacoma has removed the temporary trap and re-opened the ladder and has begun using the new electro-anesthesia system at the separator. The new re-built separator facility is now operational. We will tour that facility this afternoon.

Hatchery reconstruction: Mark reported that construction is proceeding on schedule. Construction is anticipated to be substantially complete by the end of 2009.

Downstream collection improvements at Mayfield: The bid for the counting house replacement has been awarded to Pease and Sons (who also built the CF fish facility). They will start mobilizing next week. This will require a lot of coordination with the operation of the downstream collection activities. A meeting to discuss this is scheduled for April 13. We will get an update on progress at the May FTC meeting.

Agenda Item: Productivity Testing

Presenter: Pat Frazier

Development of Testing and Decision-making Criteria

There was not consensus about proceeding with productivity testing for steelhead this year. There was strong interest in evaluating for salmon species later this year. The next opportunity to begin productivity testing will be this fall. Language regarding time frames and locations and how upper Cowlitz fits in with the productivity testing is undergoing legal review by WDFW. There are different perspectives on the interpretation Article 3 with respect to proper response to triggers not being met in time to meet the deadlines spelled out in the settlement. We need to “sort out” what volitional passage actually means. The settlement language says we have to either breach the barrier dam or ladder it. The objective is to keep the number of hatchery fish that make it upstream to an acceptable level.

There are concerns about negative impact to fisheries during productivity testing. There are also concerns about whether productivity testing would end with building a ladder. This would likely include a sorting facility. There is not consensus about doing this. What remains to be determined is how to do the productivity testing, over what timeline (8 -15 year timeline) and with which species. Pat believes that steelhead would be the

best candidate for achieving a sustainable population in the upper basins. There is a question around whether we can just select one of the stocks, while maintaining a harvest on the other stocks.

Rich reported that the updated abundance numbers for the Tilton population are 300 for steelhead; Chinook is 400; Coho is 1100, based on low risk range of viable population based on stock-specific information.

Action Items:

- Pat will send out a description of what WDFW is looking for regarding productivity testing by April 20.
- All FTC members are to review the Mar. 2, 2009 memo on productivity testing protocols to see if they agree with the suggested protocol. They are also to identify any information needs to inform further discussion at our May meeting and a recommendation which will be made at our June FTC meeting.
- Pat will work with Mark on what it might look like (management plan that includes sorting and hauling activities and impacts on fish) if we have a ladder in place and present this at the May FTC meeting.

Agenda Item: Supplemental Collection Efforts

Presenter: Marc Wicke

Marc reported that collection equipment is being installed. Out of 180 applicants, three experienced staff members have been hired. Collection starts April 15. The two inclined plane traps (4 x 4 and 6 x 6) are being installed side-by-side today below CF Dam. They will also be doing beach seining starting April 15 and if the catch falls off, they will consider re-installing the Merwin trap. Collection will continue until early September. The stress relief ponds will be shut down for remodel in late October, so there shouldn't be any conflict.

Action Items:

- Marc will post to the FTC website a monthly collection report one week prior to each FTC meeting.

Agenda Item: AHA Technical Team Update

Presenter: Mark LaRiviere

Mark reported that the subcommittee has met twice since our last meeting and plans to meet three more times between now and the June FTC meeting. They have created draft AHA solutions for fall Chinook, coho, and steelhead. They need to revisit coho (complicated by upper and lower basin populations) and steelhead. They are working on getting more information on the population status, and segregated or integrated status to create solutions for spring Chinook and sea-run cutthroat trout. They propose to meet one more time after the FTC reviews the final draft recommendations to finalize

them, incorporating FTC feedback. Their next scheduled meeting is April 17 in Vancouver.

Action Items:

- Mark will provide another update at the May FTC meeting.
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Agenda Item: Public Meeting and Communications Update

Presenter: Tom Santee

Tom is working on improving the website. He hopes to upgrade it to more easily support exchange of information and ideas so it becomes a more useful tool. The website will help inform visitors about topics of public meetings in advance.

Our last public meeting was in November in Morton. We want to schedule another public meeting in the near future, possibly late June in Morton, after graduations, etc. and when there is likely information to be shared relative to productivity testing, downstream passage, and the FHMP update workshops coming in September. These meetings afford people the opportunity to interact and build relationships. We will have at least these two public meetings this year and can look at possibly setting up a third, depending on information to be shared and public interest.

Tom Santee reported on the successful practice webinar session held last week. We had four FTC members participate, along with Tom S and Lyn. Tom had a couple of his colleagues also attend as “participants” playing the role of the public. The practice session went fairly well. Benefits of this format: would create buzz and provide a supplemental avenue of input. Participants can submit questions in advance, raise their hands, participate in polls, etc. Questions can be asked and answered in a general way where all attendees can see them. They can also be asked and answered specifically where only the asker and answerer can see them. There is also the ability to create a log of all the questions, chat, and the ability to record the session. Tom found himself to be somewhat hobbled by the limits of Mac technology. Next time he will make sure he is on a PC.

We agreed to give this technology a try as a public outreach method. A possible application is an update on downstream passage. We would also use this as a way to provide background information prior to public meetings. Tom S has hired an intern to create a marketing plan for the webinar and also for the public meetings. He will also contact past attendees and invite them directly.

Tom M reported that Tacoma will be doing a Cowlitz Currents publication before Memorial Day. This 4-page newsletter will publicize the website; announce public meetings, webinars, etc.

Action Items:

- Tom S will report on improvements to the website at our May meeting.

- Tom S will research some of the technical issues that arose during the practice session.
 - Tom S will look at setting up a webinar public meeting prior to the June public meeting. He will also schedule a rehearsal for this with FTC members.
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Agenda Item: Downstream Team Update

Presenter: Tom Martin

Tom Martin reported that work continues on the 60% conceptual design report. They had a conference call last week to review the deliverables and schedule. Draft cost estimates are due next week. The 60% design draft report will be complete for review by the next FTC meeting (distributed internally on April 23 and published on April 30). The team will incorporate comments and give a formal presentation on the 60% design at the June FTC meeting. We will assume a 6 month time approval period from FERC. May 12 is the date of the next meeting (in Tacoma).

Prototypes: Fabrication of the flow deflector is nearly complete. They plan to install in the next few days. The screen and both deflectors are to be in place on April 15. ENSR will begin the hydraulic testing at that time. The weir box contract has been let, materials have been received, and fabrication has been started and should be complete May 27. Tacoma is awaiting dam safety approval from FERC who has some issues about how quickly the weir box could be removed in the event of a Probable Maximum Flood. Bill Iyall has been meeting with LDPUC and is working with them on solutions to satisfy FERC's requirements. Installation is contingent on FERC approval.

Evaluations: Marc Wicke reported that the evaluations contract with the USGS has been finalized. They get approval from the Utility Board tomorrow. USGS is finishing the setup for the acoustic telemetry survey. These evaluations are following the January 15 study plan (for steelhead and Chinook). Marc will let us know if we need to use coho (a timing issue).

Any mortalities encountered during collection of downstream migrants, including supplemental collection and CF fish facilities will be run through Cowlitz Complex pathologist. There is a protocol in place to deliver these samples to the pathologist.

Action Items:

- Tom M will post pictures of operational prototypes to FTC website when possible.
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Mayfield Debris Management Review

Presenter: Steve Fischer

Dean updated us on the new cleaning protocol that Tacoma has been using for the past four months.

On an annual basis they will dewater and clean each intake wing including the louvers themselves in addition to the slots in the intake wings. They have been doing this annual cleaning for the past 3 years. They do this during the summer when flows are lowest. This process usually takes 3-5 days. We want the screens to be as clean as possible before the juvenile out-migration. Tacoma plans to revise the original plan and send it to FERC.

Action Items:

- Tom M will send out a draft of the revised plan for review before it is sent to FERC.
 - Dean will take some pictures of the louvers to show the amount of debris before and immediately after the annual cleaning. We will use these as baseline photos from which to compare subsequent years and re-evaluate accordingly.
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Upper Basin Juvenile Supplementation

Presenter: Wolf Dammers

Steelhead Upper Cowlitz Fry Plants

This is the time of the year we start collecting brood stock for the upper Cowlitz River basin fry plants. Mark pointed out that the six alternatives looked at so far by the AHA Solutions sub-committee eliminated the upper basin release program for fingerling plants. WDFW was the primary advocate for plants initially and now they advocate ending the fry plants. The smolts for this year's releases are already on station. We need to decide whether to take the broodstock this month. We need to know the right target for this. The fry plant survival has been low. Pat suggested we consider using Hall Creek as an acclimation location for smolts (next year). Mark Johnson has suggested we could possibly rear 25K smolts up there.

Action Items:

- Wolf will send out an email with the relevant information and set up a conference call with FTC members to make a recommendation on this by April 15.
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River Forecasts and Reservoir Refill

Presenter: Mark LaRiviere

Todd Lloyd, Tacoma Power has requested that this become a standing agenda item for this time of the year He is also available to meet with us by request. Mark distributed a couple of graphs from 3TIER Environmental and also the River Forecast Center. The River Forecast Center shows a 50% probability of refill to 770 feet with 5,000 cfs minimum discharge. The 3TIER forecast calls for 89% probability of refill to 770 feet with 5,000 cfs minimum discharge. Todd's best guess at this time is to look at the historic average inflow which shows us getting to 770 the first week of June (fits within our target). Debbie reported that snow pack is currently at 107% of average.

Action Items:

- Mark will post these to the FTC website every two weeks.
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Mayfield 2008 FHMP Annual Report Review**Presenter: Mark LaRiviere**

Mark reported that Tacoma has asked for an extension to May 15 for this report.

Action Items:

- Mark will meet with WDFW and then request FERC of adjustments to the annual report timeline.
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Agenda Item: Update Status of Action Items

- Tom M will check with Bill Iyall re WDFW portable adult release chute for the Cispus River.
 - All Cowlitz FTC members will let Mark know if they won't be attending each FTC meeting (one week in advance of the meeting if at all possible)
 - Lyn will add request for RSVP to draft agenda she emails out one week prior to each meeting. Also ask for where item requires decision and note this on agenda. Send out reminders of action items with agenda.
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Agenda Item: Approval of March 3, 2009 FTC Meeting Summary

We reviewed and approved the March 3 meeting summary. It will be posted to the public website.

Agenda Item: Meeting Evaluation**Well Done:**

- Good discussions and clarity around where we need to be more clear
- Michelle's desire to get into the details – WaHOOO!
- Eating outside
- Great attendance (through lunch)

Do Differently:

- When we review the agenda, make it obvious where a decision is required and indicate source of supporting information.
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The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Meeting Handouts

- Agenda for April 7, 2009 FTC meeting
 - Draft March 3, 2009 FTC meeting summary
 - Updated FHMP Schedule
 - Productivity Testing at Cowlitz River Memo dated March 2, 2009
 - Mayfield Dam Upstream Passage Graphic (also posted to FTC website)
 - Mossyrock Elevation Probability charts (3TIER and River Forecast Group)
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Topics for May 5, 2009 FTC Meeting

Welcome / Review Agenda / Check-In

Review FHMP Update Implementation Schedule

Construction and operations update

Productivity testing

Development of testing and decision-making criteria

Identifying FTC member information needs

AHA Technical Team update

Genetic Subcommittee report

Website, Webinar, and Public meeting and communications update

Lunch

Downstream Team update

Update on Supplemental Collection Efforts

Upper basin juvenile supplementation – steelhead upper Cowlitz fry plants

Update Status of Action Items

Approval of April 7 meeting summary

Meeting Evaluation and set June 2, 2009 meeting agenda