

**Cowlitz Hydroelectric Project**  
**FERC No. 2016**  
**Cowlitz Fisheries Technical Committee**  
**Final Conference Call Summary**  
October 5, 2021, from 9:30 – 3:30

**FTC Representative Attendees:**

Travis Nelson	TPU
Carol Serdar	WA Dept. of Ecology
Bryce Glaser	WDFW

**Additional Attendees:**

Josua Holowatz	WDFW
John Serl	WDFW
Peggy Miller	WDFW
Sam Gibbons	WDFW
Brian Gale	WDFW
Todd Hillson	WDFW
Eric Shoblom	TPU
Phil Sandstrom	TPU
Chris Foster	TPU
Steve Manlow	LCFRB
Steve West	LCFRB
Laura Wolfe	LCPUD
Russell Page	LCPUD
Debbie Carlson	BPA
Rudy Salakory	Cowlitz Indian Tribe
Kate Day	USFS
Lyn Wiltse	PDSA Consulting / Facilitator

**Remaining 2021 FTC Meeting Dates:** November 2 and December 7

Note: The December meeting will be open to the public and a call-in number will be provided.

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**Approval of Last Meeting Summary**

The approval of the September FTC meeting summary was deferred until the November meeting due to the complexity of suggested edits.

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**Updates**

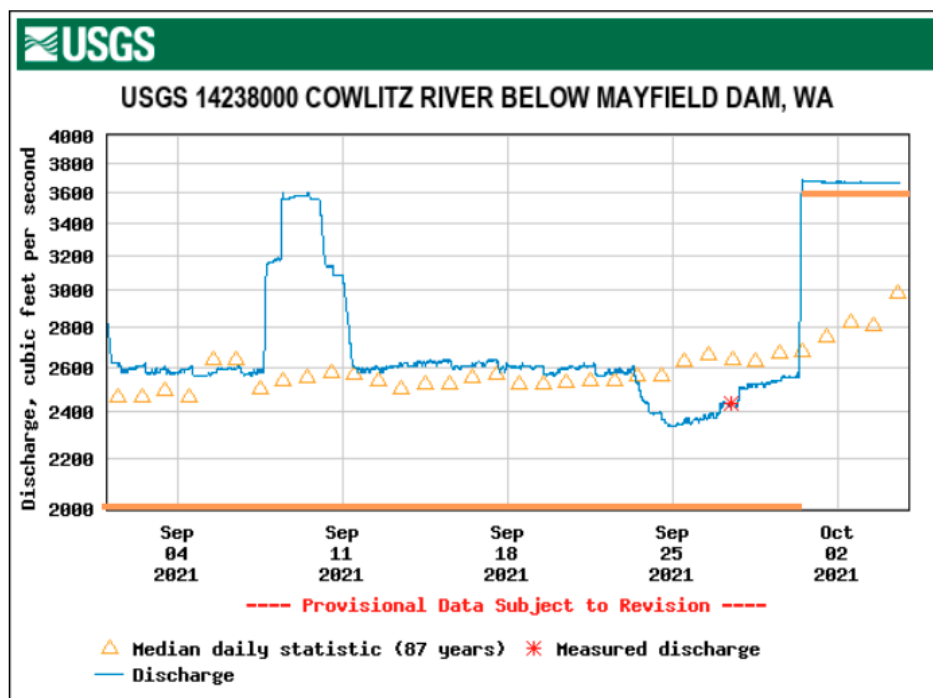
Hydro Operations

Melora reviewed the PPT sent out before the meeting:

- Inflows: Though typical in June, inflows dropped below the historical average in July, August, and were nearly back to normal in September. Inflows are currently running a bit below the average daily average.
- Storage: Power Management kept Riffe lake at 721' (low relative to the historical average, but more normal with the new maximum reservoir elevation of 749'). The last 10 days the reservoir has been drafting at a consistent rate. Mayfield storage is also typical and was at 421' this morning (October 5).

- Outflows: On October 1 the minimum flow changed from 2K cfs to 3.5K cfs. The minimum flow can reset if there are 5 days consecutively above 5K cfs (has not happened). There have been no exceedances. Ramping is being carefully managed to the limit of 1” per hour. This will change to 2” per hour on November 1.
- Outflow - Mayfield Gage: While the reading from this gage was affected by coffer dam backwater, it reverted to previous rating on September 29. The USGS continues to monitor the gage. The coffer dam was completely removed on September 30. Unit 41 is currently running at full gate with discharge as expected at 3.6K cfs. Discharge was consistent at ~2500 cfs during the construction/ deconstruction period.
- 10-Day Forecast: Welcome to fall! We are anticipating a cooler than typical 10-day forecast with perhaps as much as 3” precipitation. Freezing levels will be at between 4-7.5K ft. Inflows are expected to continue at 2K cfs.

## Outflow



Minimum flow 7/1-9/30: 2,000 cfs (can reset after 8/16). No exceedances since last meeting.

Link to the USGS real-time Cowlitz River hydrograph:

[https://waterdata.usgs.gov/wa/nwis/uv/?site\\_no=14238000&PARAMeter\\_cd=00060.00065](https://waterdata.usgs.gov/wa/nwis/uv/?site_no=14238000&PARAMeter_cd=00060.00065)

## Water Quality/Monitoring:

Kosmos: Carol visited the site on October 4 and reported that 10 cubic yards of metal debris was loaded into a dump truck and removed from the site for proper disposal. She explained bentonite clay will be mixed and used in the removal and capping of the contaminated ledge, noting this needs to be done outside of a rain window. The removed contaminated soil will also be disposed of properly. Sampling needs to occur, as per the WQPP, of any water with a rainbow or dull sheen. Bryce thanked Carol for providing continued updates on this site. Carol also noted that additional signage would be helpful to notify fishermen that the site is contaminated.

LCPUD Dam Operations: Russell reported that WDFW wrote a letter approving the 500 cfs variance from September 27 to October 11. The outage on Sept 27-28 went well and they are back to normal with Unit 1 up and running. They were able to complete the necessary testing and flows are run-of-the-river at this point. They plan to replace the 3D camera on Unit 2 between mid-November and early December. They don't anticipate any issues with flow at that time. Peggy thanked Russel for his excellent communication regarding the outage.

### Fish Facilities

Gust Backstrom: Eric was pleased to report the site repair was completed and being used as intended.

Barrier Dam: All in-water work was completed per the schedule on September 29, including the removal of the coffer dam and placement of gravel. Shimmick has some additional upland construction on the dry land of the left bank to access the ladder entrance gate. This work is adjacent to waters of the state and are also covered under the WQPP. The right bank (hatchery side) will be a laydown area with job trailers for next year's construction season. Water is following the ogee and the turbulence is extended out now further than previously. There was no noticeable impact to fish collection efforts during the in-water work. That's great news! Josua noted the laydown area that will include job trailers will probably be fenced off and asked if that would restrict any access to the bank. Eric responded that his goal is to maintain that access. That would allow WDFW to move the fishing barrier from 400 ft. up to 100 ft. Carol noted there are no restrictions unless there is a need to monitor turbidity in the case of in-or-near water work on the left bank. In that case, the monitoring needs to be 300 ft. downstream of that action. Carol requested an update for the work to be done on the right bank; will there be concrete in the preparations for the next phase on the right bank; Carol will provide Eric a copy of the CSWGP map showing the permit boundary.

- **Action Items:**

- Carol: Send Eric the Stormwater Protection Permit so he can see the permitted work zone.
- Matt Peter: Contact Carol to answer her questions re this site.
- Eric: Let Bryce, hatchery folks, and Josua know by October 8 if WDFW can move the boundary up to the 100' marker, as long as there are no safety concerns or water quality impacts. Copy Carol on this.
- Tacoma: Provide Ecology with the fish kill report as a requirement of the Administrative Order dated January 15, 2002 (second FTC meeting request).

Adult returns / brood / juvenile collection update:

- Spring Chinook: Broodstock collection goals have been met. Great year for NORs!
- Summer Steelhead: All brood targets have been met!
- Fall Chinook: Still struggling a bit – collecting everything that returns to the separator. They are running a little short on males. Bryce noted WDFW likes to get 50% of the run in before they make management decisions.
- Coho: Hatchery Coho are on track to surpass the 10-year average! NORs are looking fantastic. Eric noted they have gotten 1,566 that aren't reflected in the graph, bringing the total to over 7K to date. The peak of the run is the end of October.
- Mayfield Trap: Has been collecting 400-1500/day, including over 6K fall Chinook on October 4. Kudos to the staff for working long hours to keep up!

- Cowlitz Falls Fish Facility: Chris reported they completed the collection season the morning of September 30, after operating continuously since March 15 with no significant outages (including COVID-related). On September 25, an actuator for the Upstream Capture Zone weir went rogue. This is independent from the total inflow at the entrance. They had to operate with limited automated control of the capture zone weir for final week of operation. After the shutdown on September 30, they closed bulkhead gate and got mechanic in to investigate the capture zone weir– why it was wedged. He was able to repair the weir and got all equipment put back in place. Chris anticipated that today (October 5) they will be able to start up for fall block collection (will run three days a week).

Downstream Adaptive Management Technical Work Group: Phil announced at their last meeting they reviewed a number of recommendations which will be presented at the November FTC meeting. They also discussed the accuracy and bias of calculations used in the evaluation of FCE and FPS for the CFFF. This would involve reworking the analysis of existing data to improve its accuracy and reduce potential for bias, as requested by WDFW, and is expected to occur in 2022. At the last meeting Matt presented results of the engineering review of the Mayfield suspension bridge redesign. The suspension bridge bows and causes fish to hang up. The improved design will be more stable and will represent a major improvement of downstream passage at Mayfield. The preferred alternative includes construction of new pipe along dam face and south bank, terminating in powerhouse tailrace. Moving the pipe to the other side will also allow room for fish marking at Mayfield to occur. Phil reminded all this will be a multi-year process and the design for the fish transfer pipe is still at the conceptual level.

M&E Subgroup Phil reported this group meets the third Thursday of every month. At the last meeting discussion topics included:

- Sampling decisions / direction.
- Spring Chinook life history efforts - will be a topic for Downstream Adaptive Management TWG and M&E subgroup crossover analytics meeting on Nov. 17.
- SAR analysis with Coho and fall Chinook.
- Spring Chinook efforts (with Thomas and Josua bring the required data together).
- Carcass survey effort to improve estimates of Fall Chinook on the lower river. (Sample scales from every fish? Sample early fish for genetics to see if there is an identifiable difference between spring and fall Chinook in the lower River.
- Monitoring plan for the FHMP – and next steps.

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## **APR Decision Document**

**Presenter: Eric Shoblom**

Eric reviewed with all the Decision Document (DD) he sent out for review on September 28. He explained this is essentially memorializing the previous FTC decision made on keeping the size of the hatchery programs the same for 2021. They may look different next year. The DD contains the table that was presented at the annual APR meeting.

There was consensus agreement to approve the DD with minor edits. Bryce reminded all that this was an exception from the normal DD approval process which calls for introduction of the DD at one meeting and approval at the subsequent meeting.

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## **Satellite Rearing Program**

October 05, 2021 FTC Meeting

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## **Presenter: Phil Sandstrom**

Phil walked us through the DD which he revised based on feedback at the September FTC meeting. The document outlines Tacoma's approach of pursuing Options 2 and 5 with the intent to advance one of them. He received additional comments from WDFW at the end of last week when he was on PTO. Just before today's meeting, he sent the DD out in track changes mode as well as a clean version. Bryce expressed appreciation for Phil's quick turnaround of the document, noting WDFW is not trying to slow down the process or keep Tacoma from moving forward to do what they see as meeting their requirements from the SA for the satellite rearing ponds. They want to be sure there is a benefit (imprinting, distribution, etc.) from any actions taken. To that end, doing a population assessment may help guide future actions. Phil sees that occurring in a separate DD and also in the FHMP Transition Plan documents. He noted the table shows overall potential benefit for adults – in terms of what the facility could handle at any given time. There will be further discussion of program particulars at the January FTC meeting, to benefit adult abundances and juvenile production in the upper basin. WDFW wanted to see a process to do a benefit assessment and with an off ramp in case things do not go as expected. After incorporating FTC feedback, and when there is a consensus agreement to move forward with a particular option, then the option will be sent out for public feedback as well. Phil will keep an Excel comment matrix to track feedback and ensure nothing falls through the cracks.

After much discussion, there was a consensus agreement to approve the DD with edits made at today's meeting.

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## **FHMP Transition Plans**

### **Presenter: Phil Sandstrom and Bryce Glaser**

Phil reported they continue to meet frequently and make good progress. There are WDFW edits to the spring Chinook plan that are yet to be completed. The next step will be to go back through all the plans to ensure consistent formatting across all the species chapters. At the last meeting, discussion included how to move to increased program size for integrated winter Steelhead programs; when to look at culling (i.e., grading and surplus) to increase SARs, etc. Tacoma is evaluating this and will share its recommendation with the team on October 8 for discussion at the next workshop on October 15. They are also wrapping up Coho, after which they will get those chapters to the FTC for review. WDFW will get their remaining comments on fall Chinook and Coho to Tacoma in the near future. It is not clear how many more transition planning workshops will be needed. They will be close to final review of the draft chapters and getting public feedback. Phil appreciates folks reserving time to review these from late October through the end of November. Tacoma needs to prepare to make some of the changes in the plans to move the program forward. There will be scoping meeting October 7 on the bio-programming piece.

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## **Gravel Augmentation**

### **Presenter: Travis Nelson**

After much discussion of next steps, alternative analyses and evaluation of 10-12 sites below the Barrier Dam, Travis was happy to report that Tacoma successfully executed the short-term gravel augmentation project at Barrier Island. He thanked everyone for helping put together the agreement for that allowed Tacoma to start getting caught up on their gravel placement obligations. Travis showed photos of Barrier Island and the supply of

material that included what had been used in the super sacks for coffer dam construction for the Barrier Dam repair. He noted the material was very clean, with little dust. A truck with a conveyor mechanism pepper shot the 1,193 cubic yards of gravel across to the island. Travis showed a video of the mechanism in action. One of the benefits of this type of placement is they didn't have to get into the channel. They stayed within the mixing zone of 300 ft. There was good teamwork in planning and execution of the project. Teams worked over the weekend and into the night, allowing the placement to conclude on September 29.

Typical winter operations of flows from 6.5K – 11K cfs would likely help to disperse the pile. Thanks to all for the great effort on this start of getting caught up. Carol will follow up with discussion on removal of gravel at the boat ramp. Tacoma will provide an annual written account of these activities. Peggy thanked Tacoma for sending out the long-term gravel plan to which she is adding comments.

- Action Item: Travis will continue to work with Melora to develop a new timeline.

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## **CRR Fund / HAP Subcommittee**

### **Presenter: Travis Nelson / Melora Shelton**

Melora reported Tacoma and the Cowlitz Tribe are working diligently together on the 2019 grant agreement and addressing some unforeseen process issues. They are currently waiting for all parties to come together to comment on the most recent draft. She and Travis thanked Eli and Rudy being great tour guides on their recent site visit to Cispus Yellow Jacket site where they viewed the work already complete, in process, and what is anticipated for Phase 3. Thanks to Eli and Rudy for that!

LCFRB 2022 Round: They are finalizing application materials, manuals, and scoring materials, ahead of the 2022 grant round. For 2022, the LCFRB has adopted the same screening and scoring framework that the FTC approved in 2019.

Future CRR grant rounds will be very similar to before, with the LCFRB running the grant round. The LCFRB will bring a list of scored/recommended projects to the FTC to make funding decisions. Peggy noted LCFRB's role of updating materials isn't clear in the interim strategy. Travis replied LCFRB plans to do a more in-depth manual review for the following year. This update is to cover the upcoming 2022 grant round, establish the mechanics, including the FTC review of potential projects, during which they can change the initial ranking of projects as they feel appropriate.

Update on HAP: Tacoma is revisiting the HAP information from the 2017 implementation strategy and the 2019 HAP Guiding Principles. They are working to develop proposed updates from the foundational document to bring to the HAP subcommittee to review and make recommendations on guiding principles, etc., to present to the FTC. They will develop application material, scoring criteria, implementation strategy, etc. At the last FTC meeting, folks were asked to identify who from their organizations has the hatchery and production experience / expertise to serve on this new subcommittee.

Melora thanked WDFW for their thoughtful and coordinated comments on the Interim Strategy Update and DD presented at the last FTC meeting. On September 9 Travis emailed out (in track-change and clean versions) for further review at this FTC meeting. These include a number of clarifications and other edits in response to WDFW's review. Copies in track changes of both documents included WDFW comments and responses to those comments are available upon request.

Peggy asked about indirect costs, noting it would be ideal to make these available for HAB and HAP in the same grant round year. Melora acknowledged if/how to handle indirect costs has been a concern and noted they were not able to address this in the current grant round. Phil has seen indirect costs range from 17-60% and wondered if it might be prudent for the grant program to establish some level of cap. Steve M reported feeling like indirects should be eligible costs. Otherwise, it would be a large constraint for sponsors who might want to apply. Rudy agreed and noted it is possible to use these dollars to help leverage funds from outside sources. WDFW has a flat rate for indirects, and Rudy suggested a not-to-exceed amount (e.g., 10%) would be appropriate. Peggy reiterated wanting to see the same requirements for HAP and HAB at the same time for the sake of consistency.

Steve M noted the RCO doesn't have a set indirect rate. They rely on a rate sheet where sponsors define the rate and provide supporting rationale/data. After additional research/discussion on this topic, Travis and Melora agreed to put together a recommendation on how to proceed re indirect costs. This would be reflected in the Interim Strategy Update, inserted into the DD and sent out to for further discussion/approval at the November FTC meeting.

#### Action Items:

- Steve M: Research how LCFRB handles indirect and suggest a path forward for FTC approval at the November meeting. (*Done.*)
- Travis/Melora: By October 19 distribute versions of the 2021 Interim Update along with the DD (in time for the LCFRB 2022 grant round in early November).
- All: Review indirect cost recommendation and send comments to Travis/Melora by end of day October 26.
- All: Consider who from your organization is best qualified to serve on the new HAP CRR Subcommittee being formed.

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## **CRR Fund 2021 Grant Round / Habitat Grant Round Overview**

### **Presenter: Steve West**

Steve W walked us through a PowerPoint of the Cispus Floodplain Reconnection Project sponsored by the Cowlitz Indian Tribe. This is a design only proposal. He explained how elements of the proposed project address all of the LCFRB's Upper Cowlitz and Cispus Habitat Strategies (mostly reflecting of what EDT calls for). Steve showed a map with the elements of the design proposal, one of which is the relocation of the 2800 road. Existing culverts in the road function only for flood relief – not as fish habitat. He reviewed the timeline for salmon recovery projects from the LCFRB website and explained that scoring by TAC members is done in three different bins: benefits to fish; certainty of success, and cost. Scoring from all 14 members gets condensed into a single point. The Cispus Floodplain Reconnection project scored just 11 points below the funding range. Geographically, this is a good fit. All basins upstream of the Barrier Dam. Secondary focus is on the mainstem Cowlitz – Barrier Dam down to the Toutle confluence. This project targets three (spring Chinook, Steelhead, and Coho) of the top four species.

#### Project Review Timeline:

- October 8: Tacoma sends out draft DD along with supporting project information and links to RCO materials.
- October 22: Comments on DD are due back to LCFRB.
- October 26: Tacoma sends out revised draft DD.

- November 2 FTC meeting: FTC makes final funding determination.

Indirect Costs: Steve W noted these are called out in this proposal at about 28% with the amount listed as \$5,370 (which is less than 28% of the project cost). The Cowlitz Tribe doesn't apply indirect costs to construction costs. Indirect would apply to personnel, etc. On its merit minus the indirect, folks were asked to review this.

#### **Action Items:**

- All: Comments on DD are due back to LCFRB October 22.
  - Tacoma: Send out revised draft DD October 26.
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#### **Topics for November 2 FTC Meeting**

- Extra time for review of notes
  - Updates incl. Hydro Ops, Water Quality
  - LCPUD Dam Ops
  - Fish Facilities incl. Barrier Dam Project overview
  - Satellite Rearing DD
  - Downstream Adaptive Mgt. TWG
  - FHMP Transition Plan
  - Satellite Rearing Program
  - CRR Program
  - M&E Subgroup
  - Gravel Augmentation
  - Preview December 7 Public FTC Meeting topics
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#### **Meeting Evaluation**

- Several of us experienced technical problems with MS Teams
  - Photos are always appreciated
  - Great presentations today
  - Special thanks to Steve West for his presentation
  - Always appreciate Eric's PPT for his update.
  - Fun music by a real DJ!
  - Great collaborative discussions.
  - Great cooperation and we always come back to being effective. This is so important, now more than ever to celebrate our likenesses as well as our differences.
  - Josua's Quote: "Grace releases and affirms. It doesn't smother. Grace values the dignity of individuals. It doesn't destroy. Grace supports and encourages. It isn't jealous or suspicious." – Charles Swindoll
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#### **Parking Lot**

- Review/Update FTC Protocols to include remote meeting procedures
- Presentation by Tacoma's Power Management Group
- Review Steelhead Recycling Program