

Cowlitz Hydroelectric Project
FERC No. 2016
Cowlitz Fisheries Technical Committee
Final MS Teams Public Meeting Summary
November 1, 2022 from 9:30 – 3:30

FTC Representative Attendees:

Travis Nelson	TPU
Bryce Glaser	WDFW

Additional Attendees:

John Serl	WDFW
Peggy Miller	WDFW
Sam Gibbons	WDFW
Brian Gale	WDFW
Todd Hillson	WDFW
Josua Holowatz	WDFW
Matt Bleich	TPU
Eric Shoblom	TPU
Melora Shelton	TPU
Matt Peter	TPU
Tim Hoffnagle	TPU
Laura Wolfe	LCPUD
Russell Page	LCPUD
Steve West	LCFRB
Steve Lewis	BIA
Nick Grant	USDA FS
Michael Boyles	BPA
Bill Sharp	Yakama Nation
Ann Weckback	Lewis County
Lyn Wiltse	PDSA Consulting / Facilitator

2022/2023 FTC Meeting Dates: December 6, January 3, February 7, March 7, April 4, May 2, June 6, (No meeting in July), August 1, September 5, October 3, November 7, December 5

Approval of October Meeting Summary

The revised version of the October FTC Meeting Summary was reviewed and approved with clarifying edits and will be posted for public review.

Announcement

- We were pleased to welcome Michael Boyles as the new rep for BPA.
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Updates

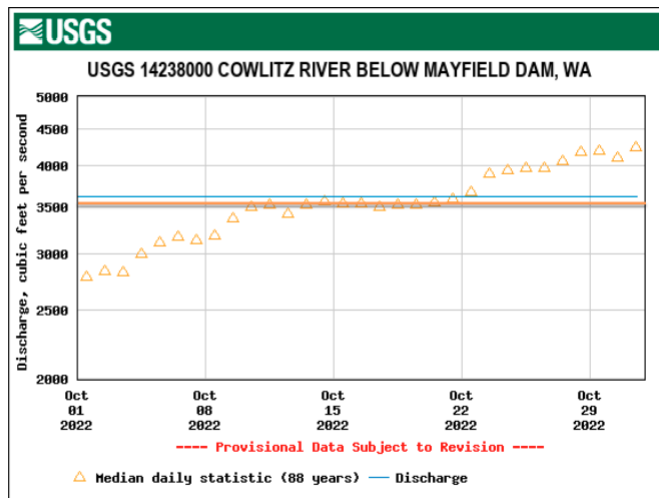
Hydro Operations (presentation emailed before the meeting):

- Inflows: Inflows continue to be low relative to the historical average (month to date 47% for October). Inflows typical increase substantially in November.
- Storage: Riffe Lake elevation is at ~702.9' and is drafting. The longest lane boat ramp is no longer accessible. This is the lowest elevation recorded for this date since limited reservoir operations started and is consistent with dry conditions. When asked about the "Disregard

forecast” note on the charts, Melora explained that the NWRFC forecast models have uncertainty in both weather/flow forecasts and hydro operation variables (e.g., discharge). They can indicate likely conditions early but are especially uncertain beyond 3 days.

- Outflow: These have been very consistent at 3,600 cfs with a minimum flow of 3500 cfs. Unit 41 at Mayfield is currently the only unit available for generation. There were no exceedances for flow or ramping.
- Forecast: Rain with typical temps for this time of year. Cooler than normal temperatures are expected for the weekend. Inflows are increasing and outflows will remain at 3,600 cfs (as the bank outage continues through November 18).

Outflow



Minimum flow 3,500 cfs. No exceedances for flow or ramping.
10/31: ~3,600 cfs

Link to the USGS real-time Cowlitz River hydrograph:

- https://waterdata.usgs.gov/wa/nwis/uv/?site_no=14238000&PARAMeter_cd=00060,00065
- <https://www.mytpu.org/community-environment/parks-recreation/river-flows-lake-levels/>

Water Quality/Monitoring:

Matt P noted the bank outage increased chances of spill until it was back online.

Kosmos: Kosmos monitoring well install, and borings are to be concluded by November 4.

ERTS Protocols/Dredge Material: Matt P noted there are ongoing discussion between Ecology and Tacoma on this as well as placing full spectrum material out of the wetted areas. In general, Matt reported there is not a lot of monitoring occurring currently.

Future Projects: These include some Riffe Lake improvements, culvert replacements, and gravel placement. Stay tuned...

2022 Gravel Augmentation:

Peggy asked about whether, and to what extend the gravel pile was distributing. Matt responded there was not a lot of opportunity for monitoring gravel movement.

Barrier Dam Repair:

This is the final report on this project which came in a year ahead of schedule. Eric reported all in-water work was completed the end of September and restoration of the upland site will also be completed ahead of schedule (by November 4 vs. the end of November). That will mean fishing access can be opened up to the 100' mark (more on that from WDFW).

Fish Facilities:

Separator Collections: This seems to be around the peak for coho. Last week there were over 8K coho at the separator and over 9K total fish.

In the Tilton, all hatchery origin fish (HORs) are being released at Gust Backstrom and all natural origin fish (NORs) are being released at the Bremer Bridge site. They have also transported 10.5K adult coho, a third of which were NORs, to Packwood and Scanewa.

Fall Chinook returns continue to be extremely low.

Broodstock Collection:

- Coho: Easily collecting weekly brood.
- Fall Chinook: They are sending one ad-clipped fish upstream for every one that is kept for brood. It looks like collection goals this year will not be met. Green egg take is at 1.6 million and the goal is 4.1 million. The good news is this lower number of fall Chinook will allow for experimenting with raising fall Chinook at lower densities in hopes of improving survival. Bryce acknowledged this had been a tough year for fall Chinook and that it will allow us to invest more in understanding the reason for this and how we might address it.
- Summer Steelhead: Collection ended the end of September.
- Cutthroat: They are not getting many currently – are retaining HORs for broodstock.

Specific adult collection and transfer information with historical averages, etc. are in Jamie's weekly report. Eric invited everyone to let him know if they would like to be included on the distribution for this report.

Mayfield Juvenile Collection:

There were ~600 juveniles at Mayfield last week (slightly lower than expected). Outmigrant mortality starts to increase this time of year. The WDFW pathologist noted an abundance of nematodes, and the fish had a low-fat content. They are processing these fish through the secondary separator. Eric noted they increased the frequency of the auto flush there from once to 3 times a week and will continue doing this through the end of the season.

They have started a weekly report for Mayfield (a work in progress). Let Eric know if you'd like to be added to the distribution list.

Fisheries: Josua confirmed that the fall Chinook brood collection is not only running behind schedule, but those returns are slowing considerably. WDFW increased the adult coho limit in the lower river to four, after closing Chinook retention early in the season. The fishing boundary is currently at the 400' mark below Barrier Dam. As the season progresses and the equipment is removed (safety is always a primary consideration), WDFW will look at moving the boundary up to the 100' limit (sometime after November 4).

Cowlitz Falls Fish Facility: Eric noted fall operations ended October 28. The Annual Report should be out in the first quarter of 2023. General maintenance is underway and will extend to March 2023. Operations are scheduled to resume on March 15.

Downstream Adaptive Management Technical Work Group: Matt reported this group met last week. They received an update of the summer season and recapped fall operations. They also reviewed results for the year – what may have influenced the down year (environmental factors, debris loading (LC PUD trash racks), etc. They are formulating recommendations with LCPUD and the TWG and then will share them with the FTC for 2023. Draft recommendations will go to Tacoma and LCPUD the end of November. They hope to share the recommendations with the FTC at the December or January meeting.

APR Process for 2023: Phil will distribute the information from last year and set up a meeting to start the initial piece of data gathering process in the January/February timeframe, letting folks know what information is needed from each group. He would also like to start working on the agenda for the science meeting a little earlier. Bryce suggested a topic for the science meeting be the M&E prioritization/work plan.

Satellite Rearing Program

Presenter: Phil Sandstrom

Phil announced the second workshop was successful. Workshop materials were sent out to all this morning. They are currently working on draft recommendations for the sites, taking temperature profiles into consideration. Sam will send WDFW questions/comments to Chris and Phil. Peggy suggested Phil reach out to Amy Kocourek, the NMFS representative for Energy Northwest (EN).

After some discussion, the recommendation was edited as follows:

Workshop recommendation to the FTC:

Based on conversation at the second satellite rearing workshop the group recommended moving two paths forward, rearing of sub-yearling spring Chinook and continued exploration of options for a winter-run steelhead kelt reconditioning program. The group recommends deprioritizing options 2 & 5. The main site focus will be at the Energy Northwest site, there are some considerations around their annual outage and temperatures in the summer months. The high temperatures are of concern for sub-yearling spring Chinook and may preclude kelt reconditioning. The Tower Rock site showed favorable temperature conditions between August and September for kelt reconditioning. The temperature logger data will be cleaned and shared with the FTC.

Next Steps: Phil will update the table in DD 2022-06. After FTC approval at the December FTC meeting, and public feedback has been received, there will be a third DD, likely in the January/February timeframe).

Action Items:

- Phil: Update the table in DD 2022-06.
 - Phil: Reach out to Amy Kocourek (NMFS) re schedule.
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LCPUD Dam Operations

Presenter: Russell Page

Russell provided the following update on LCPUD's many maintenance activities. At Cowlitz Falls Dam, both units are now available. The baffle panels have been removed from in front of the units in preparation for fall runoff ('tis the season). All maintenance activities are complete except for some small projects - none will affect the run of river system

Debris removal: Shortly after the conclusion of this meeting Russell emailed the FTC that he had just received confirmation that the debris in front of the LCPUD Cowlitz Falls Project Unit 1 and Unit 2 will be removed starting November 7 and will take approximately four weeks to complete. The reservoir will stay at full pool, and they will be rotating between units during the removal work.

Annual Meeting: The PUD has its annual coordination meeting with BPA and Tacoma Power on November 29.

Projects slated for 2023: The biggest project will be the hatch cover seal replacement project to remove the flume system. This project is estimated to take four months total, will likely occur in the May to September timeframe, and can be done with the reservoir at full pool.

Debris barrier moorage site clean-up and debris barrier coating: This project will require a drawdown and may be delayed until 2024. They are waiting on contractor approval and permitting. Rescheduling CT (Current Transformer) replacement for 2023: The PUD is in discussions with BPA about this. The schedule will likely be the same as for this year – taking the 230 kV line outage for two weeks.

Sluice gate repair: This project is still anticipated to occur in 2024-2025, after the crane rail extension which will likely occur in 2023.

M&E Subgroup

Presenter Phil Sandstrom

Phil reported recent subgroup discussions have included prioritizing a list of baseline and directed studies in the FHMP update. WDFW and Tacoma will share their respective prioritized rankings of top five directed studies at the November subgroup meeting. Todd is working on restructuring the baseline monitoring sheets. There will be an update to the FTC on all of this at the December meeting.

CRR Fund / Habitat and Production (HAP) Subgroup

Presenters: Melora Shelton and Steve West

HAP Subgroup

Melora briefly recapped the work done to date by the Hatchery Associated Production (HAP) Subgroup. This group has worked on screening, scoring, and evaluation materials in the past two months. They also held two workshops – one participant attended both.

After the FTC Meeting today, they will meet to finalize application questions and scoring approach. The subgroup will then take a well-deserved break while Melora pulls the information together to share with the FTC. They are looking forward to aligning with the LCFRB's grant round schedule. The determination for funding is set to occur at the FTC next October.

Implementation strategy and supporting materials will be deferred to the January FTC meeting. They will reengage the public at that time and hold workshops focused on the process involved for HAP funding. Special thanks to Sam, Brian, Eric, Phil, Travis, and Matt P for their help.

The Annual FERC report will be out for 30-day review before the end of the year. Everything appears to be on track for the Cispus Yellowjacket Phase 3 project with construction slated to begin in 2023.

Recent Recommended Articles

This story ran in Saturday's edition of the Centralia Chronicle (it was posted online Friday evening). She is looking to follow up on correcting the grant award amount.

[Group Raises Concerns on Hatchery Production After Grants Approved for Cowlitz Restoration | The Daily Chronicle \(chronline.com\)](#)

See below for an interesting article involving the Cowlitz Basin, Tacoma's CRR funds, and how they are integrating climate change.

Gifford Pinchot National Forest (@GPNF) tweeted at 11:33 AM on Fri, Oct 28, 2022: The @GPNF Aquatics Team along with critical partners like @CowlitzTribe are working to integrate climate change into watershed planning in key watersheds within the Forest.

Learn more: <https://t.co/HBRqv0B9bs> <https://t.co/u01OkRggxX>

<https://twitter.com/GPNF/status/1586063498370437121?t=XJomvz1aktOFmaMcfBAd3A&s=03>

Steve W reported the LCFRB thinks their grand round for 2023 will begin in early February, with CRR-specific workshop in mid-February. Site visits will likely shift from April to May (RCO dependent) and scoring likely due later in July. They are also working to slightly adjust scoring for CRR to align with that of the SRFB and LCFRB more closely. They are in contact with sponsors for projects for this year.

FTC Public Meeting Process

Presenter: Travis Nelson

Travis reminded all that we have been opening these meetings to the public on a quarterly basis. Our final quarterly meeting this year will be December 6. Starting in 2023, all FTC meetings will be open to the public.

Travis reminded everyone that we can always have closed meetings for topics “not quite ready for prime time.” He has received feedback from members of the public requesting these meetings be in person. Travis would like to suggest meeting in person on a quarterly basis, perhaps starting in March. We will get their feedback. It would be good to offer a hybrid approach to those who cannot attend in person. Bryce also noted we need to stick to the rules we have set out in the protocols. We need to keep the expectations that people comment on the agenda. We need to manage expectations for the public as well. This isn’t a place for the public to “lobby” the fish managers. The FTC is an advisory group to Tacoma Power license implementation. Peggy suggested also reminding the public that this is a meeting where they attend vs. participate in discussions. Level of detail for public questions and response in the notes? If specific to agenda topics, capture those broadly along with response in the notes. E.g., “Joe raised this issue; WDFW’s response was...” For general comment period, just note the topics raised, unless something rises to the level of a future FTC agenda item.

Topics for December 6, 2022 FTC Meeting

- Updates incl. Hydro Ops
 - Water Quality, incl. ERTS protocols
 - LCPUD Cowlitz Falls Dam Operations
 - Fish Facilities
 - Update on Cispus Release Site - Laura
 - Satellite Rearing
 - Downstream Adaptive Management TWG
 - CRR Fund / HAP Subgroup
 - M&E Subgroup
 - 2023 APR Process
 - Preview January FTC Meeting topics
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Meeting Evaluation

- Prevailed despite technical difficulties.
- Doing Hybrid meetings is something we all are learning to deal with now. The more we learn, the better we get.
- Happy to have Michael Boyers with us from BPA
- Josua: Since yesterday was Halloween, instead of words of wisdom, I thought that today I would share a cultural snapshot: In Mexico and some other parts of Latin America, the two days after Halloween are celebrated as Día De Los Muertos. This is a holiday for us to celebrate those we’ve lost. Día De Los Muertos is an occasion to honor and remember the

those who have passed despite their departure from this world. It's a celebration and a chance to come together with your living relatives and friends who miss loved ones who have passed.

Parking Lot

- Presentation by Tacoma's Power Management Group and/or from Grant PUD re improving SAR
- Review Steelhead Kelt Recycling Program