

Project Name	Technical Working Group (TWG) Subcommittee Charter
Date Proposal Summited	November 4, 2025
Date of Requested Decision ¹	December 2, 2025
Requested By	Jenise Bauman
Date of Decision	December 2, 2025

¹ Decision will become final if committee members who were not present at this meeting do not oppose this proposed decision within 7 days

FTC Decision and Justification

The FTC approves the development of a subcommittee to develop the Technical Working Group (TWG) Subcommittee Charter and the FTC approves the charter included in this decision document.

FTC members present included: WDFW (Bryce Glaser), Ecology (Andrew Luymes), Trout Unlimited (Jonathan Stumpf), Yakama Nation (Bill Sharp), Tacoma Power (Melora Shelton), and USFWS (Jeff Garnett).

Proposed Decision for Consideration

The FTC technical representatives listed below (“Membership”) recommend that the FTC formalize the TWG Subcommittee and approve the TWG Subcommittee Charter described herein. The Charter formalizes the FTC directive for the subcommittee, defines roles and scope of work, and describes administrative practices.

Background

Directive:

Downstream Passage Technical Working Group (TWG), at the direction of the Fisheries Technical Committee (FTC), will evaluate studies as outlined in the Downstream Adaptive Management Plan (DAMP) directed at optimizing the performance of smolt collection systems at or near Cowlitz Falls Dam and Mayfield Dam. Recommendations from the TWG are presented to the Cowlitz Fisheries Technical Committee (FTC) for final decision-making.

The TWG Subcommittee will follow the DAMP or further direction from the FTC, to help guide the optimization of the collection of fish in the years after initial implementation. The goal of the DAMP is to describe an iterative and logical process by which the facility configuration and/or operations, including guidance structures, entrance locations, number of entrances, facility geometry, and attraction flows and velocities, and forebay flow patterns can be adjusted to improve performance of the downstream smolt collection system with the intention of meeting the goals set in the Settlement Agreement License Article 1 (FERC 2000).

Article 1a): “...proposed facilities and measures most likely to achieve the goal of 95% Fish Passage Survival (“FPS”), as defined in the August 2000 Settlement Agreement, to

be funded by the Licensee to contribute to effective downstream passage and collection at or near Cowlitz Falls and/or to be constructed by the Licensee downstream of Cowlitz Falls Dam at Riffe Lake;”

Article 1c): “The Licensee shall implement, or support implementation of, additional downstream passage facility improvements and file additional reports at 18 month intervals in accordance with the preceding paragraph until the Licensee has employed the best available technology and achieved at least 75% FPS for all species.”

The TWG Subcommittee will strive to achieve consensus on their recommendations and facilitate efficient and open flow of information to support FTC decisions and operate within the established FTC protocols. This will be structured by a monthly meeting open to, and optional, for all FTC representatives, and technical advisors. To ensure regular communication with the FTC, the TWG subcommittee will submit and present meeting summaries at monthly FTC meetings. In the event a subcommittee does not meet, it will be noted in the consolidated report.

Roles:

The mission of the TWG is to improve the Fish Passage Survival (FPS) of anadromous salmonid juveniles at or near Cowlitz Falls Dam and Mayfield Dam. This includes identifying facility or operational changes that should be implemented to improve juvenile fish collection efficiency (FCE) and facilitate the successful passage of these juveniles to the lower Cowlitz River. Achieving successful fish collection at any facility is challenging due to behavioral differences in fish species, variable environmental conditions, and operation constraints of the facility. As is often the case, fish passage structures seldom meet desired performance goals in the first year, requiring adaptive management from year to year to achieve the desired results for the target species. Recognizing this issue, the DAMP was developed to help guide the optimization of the collection of fish in the years after initial implementation. At the request of the FTC, the TWG Subcommittee will provide technical support to fish passage related projects using the DAMP as guidance.

The TWG will aspire to achieve this directive as a collaborative group using a consensus based decision-making process. A consensus based decision-making process is an effort in which participating parties (in this case technical representatives) seek to reach agreement on a course of action. Successful consensus processes follow several guiding principles:

- Members make decisions by agreement rather than by majority vote.
- To the extent possible, all necessary interests are represented or, at a minimum, approve of the decision.
- In most cases the members represent stakeholder groups or interests. They are accountable both to their constituents and to the process.
- A TWG rep acting as an impartial facilitator can help manage the process, ensure the ground rules are followed, and help to maintain a productive climate for communication and problem solving.
- Members share in the facilitator’s responsibility for setting and maintaining the ground rules to maintain a productive climate for communication and problem solving to produce successful outcomes.
- All members commit to carrying out the consensus-based agreement (s).

Additionally, the TWG subcommittee may also seek review of specific plan components or actions from the Cowlitz Restoration and Recovery (CRR) Hatchery-Associated Production (HAP) Subcommittee and the Monitoring and Evaluation (TWG). A brief description of the roles of these groups is provided below:

Cowlitz Restoration and Recovery (CRR) Hatchery-Associated Production (HAP)

Subcommittee: The HAP subcommittee operates as a recommending body to the FTC on implementation of the HAP elements of the CRR program. HAP subcommittee (subcommittee): The HAP subcommittee's role is to develop and/or review materials and provide the FTC with HAP recommendations and rationales for decision making in support of the CRR program.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) subcommittee: The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Subcommittee, at the direction of the Fisheries Technical Committee (FTC), will advise and make recommendations to the FTC on matters related to Tacoma Power's implementation of activities under the settlement agreement (SA) for the Cowlitz River Hydroelectric Project (FERC 2002, 2004).

Scope of Work:

As a subcommittee to the FTC, the mission of the TWG is to improve the collection of salmonid juveniles at or near Cowlitz Falls Dam and Mayfield Dam, and the successful passage of these smolts to the lower Cowlitz River. The TWG subcommittee will provide recommendations to the FTC on issues where the FTC requests technical review, study design or analysis to assist the FTC in guiding the implementation of various plans obligated in the Settlement Agreement. Specifically, the TWG subgroup will provide technical development and review of plans outlined in the DAMP. To fulfill this mission, the TWG subcommittee will:

- Identify facility or operational changes that should be implemented to improve juvenile collection rates at Cowlitz Falls and Mayfield Dam.
- Ensure consistency and accountability of the recommendations set forth in the DAMP.
- Make prioritized recommendations for adjustments and modifications to the facility and project operations intended to meet FERC settlement goals for 95% fish passage survival for all species.
- Utilize best available information from previous studies to guide recommendations for future studies.

The TWG subgroup may also review other technical materials requested by the FTC to provide technical recommendations and rationales for decision making.

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Primary Contact</i>	<i>E-mail</i>
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Meetings:

TWG Subcommittee meetings will be held monthly and follow procedures and protocols provided by the annual FTC Work plan/protocols. Meetings will focus on developing and reviewing technical aspects of the DAMP, monthly reports, facility updates, and evaluations. The TWG Subcommittee meetings are open to, and optional for, all FTC representatives, and technical advisors. An email will be sent to the FTC e-mail list with the date, location, time, and purpose of the meeting, one week before the meeting. The core organizations and departments on the TWG subgroup include Tacoma Power, WDFW, Lewis County PUD, NOAA NMFS, and Department of Ecology.

The TWG Subcommittee will meet primarily on a virtual platform and periodically in person, if warranted and decided by the subcommittee. Team members are expected to commit to participating in one, 1.5 - 2-hour meeting per month. Most of these meetings will be conducted via conference calls with the potential for in-person meetings held at the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery. Team members are expected to spend about 4-8 hours per month to review information prior to the monthly TWG meeting. Team members are expected to come on time and be prepared, complete assigned tasks on time, and be committed and dedicated to the team's objectives.

The subcommittee chair will provide an agenda and any materials to the subcommittee and interested FTC representatives, and technical advisors one week in advance of subcommittee meetings. Attendees are invited to provide edits, alternate meeting topics, and set priorities prior to the monthly meeting. A designee will take notes and prepare a meeting summary utilizing an FTC approved reporting template. Meeting summaries will not be a verbatim record, rather a summary of major ideas, discussions, and outcomes. The subcommittee will review and approve the meeting summary before (preferred) or at the next FTC meeting. Subcommittees

will submit and present meeting summaries at monthly FTC meetings. In the event a subcommittee does not meet, it will be noted in the consolidated report. In addition to meeting agenda topics, the TWG Subcommittee may also review special plans, reports, proposals, and regulatory documents as requested by the FTC.

Formation of TWG specialized subgroups:

To develop recommendations on complex or specialized issues, it may be beneficial to form temporary subgroups to the TWG Subcommittee. All specialized groups shall be organized through the TWG Subcommittee, and open and inclusive to all FTC members. The intent of subgroups is to improve overall efficiencies and effectiveness through focused or technical discussions to assist the TWG Subcommittee in developing recommendations for the FTC. Subgroups shall also follow procedures accepted within the TWG Subcommittee Charter and FTC Work plan/protocols.

Recommendation Documentation:

Recommendations, supporting materials, and presentations will be prepared by the TWG Subcommittee and disseminated to the FTC for review and approval, as needed, to support FTC decision making. Materials requiring decision will be provided by the TWG Subcommittee to the FTC within a formal Decision Document request.

The TWG Subcommittee can make in-season decisions to facilitate implementation of approved plans and monitoring strategies outlined by the DAMP. However, in-season decisions made by the TWG Subcommittee will be communicated to the FTC and must not contradict the intent or goals of implementation plans or strategies, the Settlement Agreement, FERC licenses, 401 water quality certifications, FTC approved decision documents, or existing Biological Opinions for the Cowlitz River Project. Any decisions contrary to these documents will be addressed and approved by the FTC.

Milestones and measures:

- The TWG Subcommittee will follow the adaptive management process outlined in the DAMP. This entails data collection, analysis, reporting, and decision making through the APR.
- Annually, the TWG Subcommittee will propose a Decision Document to the FTC that outlines the implementation of studies designed to address key issues outlined within the DAMP. Identification of directed studies may be outlined by the TWG subcommittee and assessed through the adaptive management process within the FTC.
- The TWG Subcommittee will review the progress and advise updates to the DAMP on a timeline that allows for completion of those updates every 5-years starting with consultation with the FTC and FERC approval of that plan (if required).
- The TWG Subcommittee may discuss changes to program implementation and monitoring activities on a rolling basis and updates to the DAMP may be made throughout the year as agreed-upon by the FTC.
- The TWG Subcommittee shall make recommendations to the FTC as needed through use of a Decision Document Template using established protocols in the FTC Protocols. FTC recommendations may also be provided at FTC meetings where a Decision Document is not required.

Coordination Need
<p>The TWG subcommittee provides documents, information, and recommendations to the FTC. This subcommittee has one standing meeting scheduled on the last Tuesday of the month. FTC members and technical representatives may participate as interested or be added as a core member at any time.</p>

Summary
<p>The intent of the subcommittee is to provide recommendations and guidance to the FTC for decision making associated with the implementation and evaluation of the DAMP plan or directed studies that arise from that established plan. This document will approve a TWG Charter to aid in these initiatives.</p>