

**Cowlitz Hydroelectric Project
FERC No. 2016
Cowlitz Fisheries Technical Committee
Meeting Summary**

June 2, 2026 from 9:30 am - 3:30 pm

FTC Representative Attendees

Ecology: Andrew Luymes
Tacoma: Melora Shelton
TU: Jonathan Stumpf
WDFW: Bryce Glaser
Yakama Nation: Bill Sharp

Additional Attendees

BPA: Michael Boyles
Ecology: Anne Baxter
LC: Ann Weckback
LCPUD: Joe First, Laura Wolfe
LCFRB: Steve Manlow
Tacoma: Jenise Bauman, Matt Bleich, Sam Gibbons, Scott Gibson, Matt Peter, Eric Shoblom
WDFW: Todd Hillson, Chris Kopack, Peggy Miller, Larona Newhouse, Matthew Siskey, Sean Toomey, Kris Warner, Phil Sandstrom

Facilitator: Jennifer Arnold, Reciprocity Consulting, LLC

Public Attendees: Randy LeDuc (Coastal Conservation Association), Steve Emrich (Coastal Conservation Association), Fred Ming (Friends of the Cowlitz)

2026 FTC Meeting Dates: July 7, Aug 4, Sep 1 (in person), Oct 6, Nov 3, Dec 1 (in person)

Review of Agenda and Action Items

We reviewed the agenda and action items.

Approval of Last Month's Meeting Summary

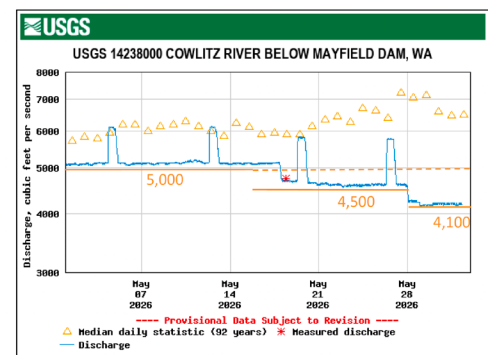
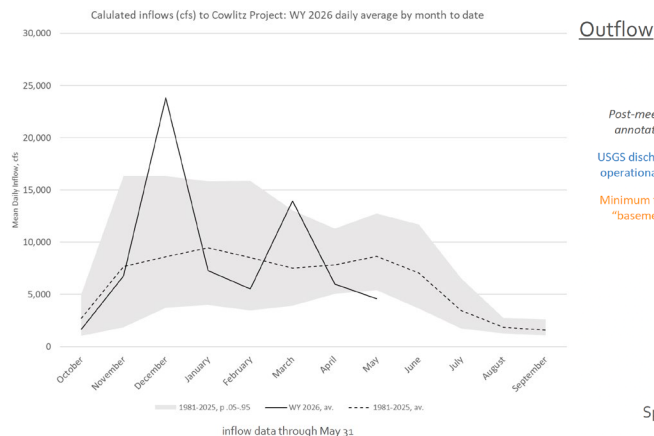
FTC members reviewed and edited last month's FTC Meeting Summary for clarity. It will be posted on the public website. There was discussion related to expectations for the stranding surveys and edits to the meeting summary reflecting agreements. An action item was added to last month's summary and included here for tracking purposes.

Action item: S. Gibson will provide information in the narrative update for stranding surveys that describe flows below 5,000 cfs at which side channels are deactivated, including current and past years where information is readily available.

Updates

Hydro Operations Update by Melora Shelton (Tacoma) (emailed 6/1, revised slides 6/5)

- May inflows were historically low despite 80% of normal precipitation.
- Tacoma maintained the reservoir as full as possible.
- Snowpack is extremely low, almost gone.
- Near minimum flows throughout; reduced operational flow as of 5/17.
- The 10-day forecast is variable temperatures and low precipitation.
- The climate outlook tilts dry and likely warm through August.



Current (6/2) 4,100 cfs.
Spring minimum 5,000 cfs + fish transport flow (12 hrs at 120% if <8,000 cfs);
start reduced minimum flow 5/15. No ramp or flow deviations.

Summer Outlook

- Continue Settlement Agreement Article 13(a) spring flow reduction in June (see later agenda topic), then transition directly to summer low flow July 1.

Discussion:

- Why do the slides say that reduced minimum flow initiated on 5/15, but flows didn't change until 5/17? Tacoma clarified that the "basement" minimum flow changed on 5/15, but operationally the flows were reduced on 5/17.

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Subcommittee by Jenise Bauman (Tacoma)

The M&E subcommittee meets monthly and has been discussing the following topics:

- coho Mayfield Net Pens Assessment – Phase II (more in later agenda topic)
- continued prep for the Life Cycle Modeling,
- next steps for the Transition Plan, including a deep dive into spring Chinook data on the M&E agenda for next month, and
- ultrasound training for sex determination for early spring Chinook.

More detailed information is covered in the subcommittee meeting summaries distributed monthly to the FTC.

Discussion of ultrasound as a tool and the roles of FTC and M&E in adopting new tools and techniques:

- WDFW asked about the ultrasound methodology for sex determination. Tacoma responded that it seems like a straightforward method that they should add to their toolkit and integrate into their workflow. S. Gibson organized a demonstration and training for separator staff and others.
- B. Glaser clarified the expectation that because there is no Annual Operating Plan, any adoption of a new technique or tool should be reviewed by the M&E subcommittee, which should brief the FTC. It may not rise to the level of needing a DD from FTC, but it should at least involve M&E briefing the FTC.
- Tacoma responded that they gave two presentations to the M&E subcommittee, and it seems like a straightforward process improvement that would not require a DD from the FTC to proceed. J. Bauman responded that it is so straightforward that Tacoma staff are not clear how it would be set up as a directed study.
- WDFW acknowledged that not all staff have attended all of the M&E meetings, but the presentations did not appear to include an evaluation. It may or may not need to be a directed study. However, they feel more discussion is needed before proceeding with adoption of ultrasound as a new tool.
- P. Sandstrom, T. Hillson and B. Glaser emphasized that they would like to walk through a set of questions, such as: What are the assumptions for using this tool?, What are the proposed protocols?, What are the questions we are trying to answer?, and What are the benefits of using it?
- B. Glaser emphasized that TWG is in a similar situation. Because there is no Annual Operating Plan, the FTC needs some way to vet new tools and procedures before adoption. We can use a template that includes the problem statement, what the new tool is, and how to implement for this year. It doesn't necessarily need to be a DD.
- M. Shelton agreed that M&E has the option to bring topics to inform the FTC that could fall along the spectrum from a fully developed directed study to some level of detail walking through what the change is and why it is being made.
- B. Glaser emphasized that there is clarity about existing work and task orders, but if there are any changes or new tools or techniques, Tacoma is not supposed to be making those decisions alone. Ideally, FTC would have an Annual Operating Plan that would provide guidance and direction, but since we don't have this, FTC should be informed or decide on any new tools or changes.
- B. Glaser suggested that M&E could develop a work plan that is annually approved by FTC, similar to TWG. J. Bauman responded that this worked well for TWG and she liked the idea of doing this for M&E.
- A. Baxter appreciated hearing this discussion and the value of M&E bringing topics to FTC for information or decisions as appropriate.
- J. Arnold reminded the group that this topic will be relevant to the discussion of the M&E charter later in the agenda.

- The group agreed to next steps for discussing ultrasound in the M&E subcommittee.

Action items:

- J. Bauman will include ultrasound for sex determination on the next M&E agenda. Tacoma will coordinate with WDFW to prep questions for this discussion and/or use a template to guide the discussion. WDFW will make sure staff are able to participate in this meeting. M&E will inform FTC and/or provide a recommendation for an FTC decision, as appropriate.
- The M&E subcommittee will consider developing an Annual Implementation Plan for FTC approval, similar to TWG.

TWG Subcommittee Update by Jenise Bauman (Tacoma)

The TWG subcommittee meets monthly and has been discussing the following topics:

- operations at Mayfield, CFFF, and Cowlitz Falls Dam,
- evaluation recommendations for 2026, including alternate tagging,
- the acoustic telemetry study, which will restart year 2 data collection this month,
- Downstream Adaptive Management Plan revisions,
- juvenile coho aging project to potentially align methods,
- options for coho parr assessment, and
- examining FCE models for the CFFF collector report.

More detailed information is covered in the subcommittee meeting summaries distributed monthly to the FTC.

Hatchery Associated Production (HAP) Update by Melora Shelton (Tacoma)

The HAP subcommittee has not met and had nothing to report.

M. Shelton also provided an update on the CRR funding program:

- Tacoma and LCFRB will soon start work to update the CRR Implementation Strategy. They aim to complete the update by the end of the year so that it is ready for the next grant round. This will require a 30-day review with FTC.
- The Implementation Strategy was created when we first started the program. This update will give us the chance to make any changes that reflect a more established program. Topics we expect to discuss include changes to the funding cap and maybe recommended assessment in the Tilton River.
- If anyone from FTC would like to be a part of this working group, please contact M. Shelton. It would likely be a monthly meeting along with helping to do some work outside of meetings to prepare materials. Tacoma would take the lead.
- Once a draft Implementation Strategy is prepared, it will go through the standard DD process, where everyone from FTC will have the chance for full review.

Fish Facilities Update by Eric Shoblom (Tacoma) (emailed 6/5 – 2026-06-02_FTC Fish Facilities Update.pdf)

- All Cowlitz release sites are useable. Lewis County PUD successfully excavated gravel at the Cispus River site, which is now open for release again.
- Rainbow trout plants are ongoing March-August.
- For the Cowlitz Trout Hatchery Remodel, Tacoma continues to work with the consultant on a series of draft technical memos. This month they worked on memos for the Hatchery Building, Permitting Matrix, and Outdoor Rearing.
- For the Mayfield Juvenile Bypass System (JBS) Remodel, Tacoma is working with Kleinschmidt Consulting to bring the design from 25% to 100%. It will go to FTC for review when it is at 60% design anticipated for late 2026 or early 2027. This is a fixed timeline, so Tacoma will coordinate with FTC members so they can set aside time for review recognizing that FTC members may want to ask other staff members from their organization with specific areas of expertise to participate in review.
- To prepare for satellite rearing, Tacoma is working with consultant FSP for engineering and design work for the new supply pipeline, Pollution Abatement pond, and intake blow off system.

See the slides and the Cowlitz Weekly Fish Facilities Reports for more detailed information.

Mayfield and CFFF Collection Updates by Jenise Bauman (Tacoma) (emailed 6/5 - 2026-06-02 FTC Downstream Collection Update.pdf)

J. Bauman presented data on downstream fish collection prepared by S. Luis.

B. Glaser asked if the data on slide 9 could be presented as a bar graph with smolt by species for easier comparison. It is not necessary to do this at any particular frequency, just whenever data are reported out next. Tacoma confirmed they can and will do this.

Separator Collection Update by Eric Shoblom (Tacoma) (emailed 6/5 - 2026-06-02 FTC Separator Ops.pdf)

- Currently at the separator, there are mainly spring Chinook returning with a small number of winter steelhead and summer steelhead. Winter steelhead dropped off a few weeks ago, while summer steelhead are picking up every week. First time arrivals are recycled to I-5.
- Broodstock collection for all winter programs ended on 5/12, and program goals were met for all programs.
- Spring Chinook broodstock collection runs from the end of March through August 1, and Tacoma is on track for meeting broodstock collection goals.
- Broodstock collection for summer steelhead will begin on June 15.

- Other species will start showing up in August.

See slides for more detailed information.

Discussion:

- B. Glaser shared an update that the Lower Cowlitz remains open for spring Chinook retention. WDFW moved the fishing boundary line below the barrier dam up to the more liberal line at 100' since spring Chinook brood collection is on track.
- He also reflected that the Kalama spring Chinook would be 6-year-olds and there have only been maybe 4-5 collected this year. It should be the last year that this group of Kalama fish return. Their purpose was to supplement harvest, and they were not used for broodstock.

M&E Charter Update by Jenise Bauman (Tacoma)

The M&E charter was created last year, and following FTC protocols, this is the opportunity to review it each year to see if any updates are needed. J. Bauman walked the group through the charter and made some live edits as the group discussed.

Discussion:

- Reflecting on the earlier discussion during the M&E Update agenda item, J. Bauman restated that it would be useful to establish annual goals for the M&E subcommittee, similar to TWG, and have them approved by the FTC in a DD. Would that be the Annual Operating Plan (AOP)?
- B. Glaser referred to the M&E Plan, Section 11 and reflected on the terminology challenge. The FHMP calls for an overarching Annual Operating Plan (AOP) that describes more than just M&E work. It also says an M&E Implementation Plan will be created annually to be included in the AOP.
- There was agreement that it would be helpful to keep these two documents separate for clarity and simplicity recognizing that the M&E Implementation Plan would be updated annually and the AOP has not yet been created. J. Bauman made edits to the charter using the term M&E Implementation Plan to refer to annual goals for M&E and left in the term AOP when referring to the larger program goals.
- The group discussed and clarified the second paragraph under the recommendation section to read: "any decisions contrary to FTC approved plans or DDs will be addressed and approved by FTC." They agreed that no decisions should be contrary to existing regulatory requirements, so the language was changed to reflect that.
- T. Hillson raised the question about the APR whether it has evolved from a broader focus on program goals to a more specific focus on hatchery production goals. B. Glaser and M. Bleich clarified the intent is to review the whole program

over the last year and then reach a decision on production goals. The Science Conference before the APR meeting is designed to inform the annual review and decision. They are both very important and intentionally separate but also connected. M. Bleich reflected that over the last few years in particular, the Science Conference and APR meeting have focused on the Transition Plans, more than just production goals. People agreed that APR refers to Annual Program Review and not Annual Production Review or Annual Project Review, as it has been referenced sometimes.

- Do we still have a point person from NOAA for the M&E subcommittee? J. Bauman will check with J. Archibald. She will also check with the other point people to make sure they are still willing.
- Under Milestones and Measures, P. Miller asked if the 5-year expectation for reviewing and revising the M&E Plan is listed in other documents. It doesn't appear so. FTC agreed that they don't want to create new requirements in this charter that are not stated elsewhere. There was agreement to remove this statement.

Action items:

- J. Bauman will check with J. Archibald to see if he is still the point person from NOAA for the M&E Charter.
 - J. Bauman will send a tracked changes version of the M&E Charter to FTC for review. The M&E subcommittee will discuss any outstanding questions before the next FTC meeting, where we will aim to finalize the updated charter in a DD.
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LCPUD Updates by Joe First (LCPUD)

- All units are running and stable.
 - Unit 2 will be offline for annual maintenance July 13 to August 21.
 - The transmission line between Cowlitz Falls and the Glenoma substation will be down for maintenance September 21-25.
 - New turbidity sensors were installed to replace the ones that washed away in the winter storms.
 - The Cispus Adult Fish Release site was cleaned out and is now available for fish release.
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Spring Flow Reduction Update by Melora Shelton (Tacoma) (emailed 6/5 2026-06-02 FTC Spring Flow Reduction Update.pdf)

M. Shelton let everyone know that Tacoma received a FERC notification on Friday regarding the flow reduction, including NMFS consultation. They are in the process of reviewing it and figuring out how to respond. A. Luymes is interested in Tacoma's response and is available to talk if it would be helpful.

M. Shelton presented the data and forecasts for spring flow reduction.

Discussion:

- Is there a need to go even lower than what we discussed because of the dry conditions? No, Tacoma is committed to holding at 3,400 cfs, which will be the basement until June 30. They are anticipating drafting throughout the month of June. It has been challenging because conditions are so dry compared with historic data that the models don't perform well. On July 1, Tacoma will draft down to summer minimum flows.
- B. Glaser reminded Tacoma that WDFW abstained because of their request for more monitoring related to stranding. He asked if Tacoma has any more willingness to ask the M&E subcommittee to review the stranding survey methods? Tacoma responded that nothing has changed for them.
- M. Shelton sent out the first stranding report update from S. Gibson to FTC voting representatives.

S. Gibson presented the results from the second stranding survey.

Discussion:

- What was the condition of the other sites where stranding surveys were not done? Only three sites were dewatered, which is where Tacoma conducted stranding surveys. The other sites were all still connected.
- Why didn't they use electro-shocking techniques to catch stranded fish if it was difficult to use a seine due to fish hiding in woody debris? T. Hillson commented that with electro-shocking, at the right frequency, it is possible to get lamprey, that are difficult otherwise. Tacoma hadn't used electro-shocking before with stranded fish, so they didn't want to start something new now. They have been able to catch lamprey with a seine.
- B. Glaser asked if they could break down hatchery versus wild fish in the stranding numbers. They also asked if Tacoma could use the term stranding surveys instead of fry stranding surveys. S. Gibson responded that they are only seeing fry or parr and that they are all NOR fish. The hatchery only releases smolts. B. Glaser requested that a note be added to the narrative that all fish are assumed NOR unless otherwise noted.
- B. Glaser also asked that Tacoma note the start and stop times of the stranding surveys as it is important whether they are conducted 5 minutes or 2 days after flow reduction occurs. Tacoma responded that all surveys are conducted the day following the ramping, which occurs at night. Tacoma staff are usually on site for stranding surveys within a few hours.
- B. Glaser asked if the purpose is to rescue fish or quantify the impacts? Are Tacoma staff walking dry gravel? He emphasized WDFW would like to quantify impacts and extrapolate them. S. Gibson responded that they walk and look for fry in interstitial areas although usually they don't find them on the gravel because the birds will find them first. If sites are still watered up with some connectivity to the mainstem, then they don't evaluate them. Once they are

disconnected, which will happen to more sites once Tacoma moves to lower flows, then they will report on those sites.

- P. Miller emphasized that WDFW has a lot of questions about methods because there is not much information presented in the first report. If the M&E subcommittee could review the stranding survey methods, then they could decide whether to recommend electro-shocking or not, for example.
- L. Newhouse asked if Tacoma saw any fall Chinook in section 1? She had seen some mergansers feeding on smolts. S. Gibson responded that they did not see any hatchery fish.

Fish Hatchery Management Plan (FHMP) Update by Matt Bleich (Tacoma)

M. Bleich provided an update and invited discussion from the FTC. The FHMP was filed with FERC in October 2020 and is intended to be reviewed every six years, which would mean it would be due October 2026. At the time it was submitted to FERC, Tacoma asked that the FHMP be updated on a 10-year cycle instead of a 6-year cycle. Informally, FERC staff seemed receptive to the idea, but they never officially responded to the request despite frequent reminders. FERC stated that they would do their best to respond. At this point, Tacoma is assuming that they will not receive the official response from FERC extending the renewal period to 10 years in June, in which case, Tacoma needs to take action now to update the plan before the October deadline and stay in compliance. M. Bleich provided 2 options to proceed:

- Prepare an FHMP with no substantive changes to go through our three-month DD process July through September so that Tacoma can file it in October and stay in compliance.
- Request a one-year extension from FERC and get to work to produce an updated FHMP. (FERC grants a maximum one year extension with the option for multiple extensions.)

Discussion:

- How long did it take to finalize the 2020 FHMP? Many people laughed and groaned emphasizing that it took more than three years of hard work. It was a big lift and further complicated because of personnel turnover.
- P. Miller reflected that the FHMP was actually due in 2016, and Tacoma had to request multiple extensions to finally get it done in 2020. She said she believed the due date is based on the license date, not the 6 years from the last FHMP. She emphasized it can be confusing and it is good to get the FERC order with the due date so there are no questions.
- M. Bleich emphasized that Tacoma has been very intentional about their FERC filings, but FERC hasn't been responsive. He confirmed that the FTC sent a DD showing support for a 10-year renewal cycle.
- M. Bleich emphasized that all the hard work put Tacoma on a productive path. If he thought all the hard work to update the FHMP now would be beneficial, he would want to put in the work. However, he does not feel like it would be a good

use of time right now. B. Glaser agreed that he would rather everyone focus on implementing the M&E plans and Transition plans over the next four years, rather than have the FTC redirect their energy to update the FHMP, which would slow down implementation.

- A. Luymes asked, If we prepare to resubmit the current FHMP to cover the next six years, would there need to be cosmetic changes, or would it be exactly the same with just dates updated? Tacoma has a consultant with expertise working with FERC on these issues that they would have look over the document to advise them. Tacoma hopes that there would be only very minor changes. If a substantive change was needed to stay in compliance, Tacoma would review that with FTC.
- A. Luymes said he was tracking and would look to WDFW for direction.
- Reflecting on the current FHMP, B. Glaser said that FTC was probably too ambitious with what could realistically be accomplished in a year when it established some of the initial timeline requirements. Some of those have still not been completed. Even if we decide to support resubmission of the current FHMP, it might need to be updated to reflect what work has been completed and what still needs to be completed.
- In summary, WDFW, Ecology, Yakama Nation, and Trout Unlimited expressed support for Tacoma proceeding with a streamlined update of the current FHMP aiming to develop a DD over the next 3 months so that they could file an updated FHMP with FERC in October and stay in compliance.

Action items:

- M. Bleich will prepare a draft DD to renew the current FHMP for another 6-years. He will work with a consultant to advise on any critical changes that need to be made to stay in compliance, and otherwise, he will stay as close to the current FHMP as possible. Everyone else should review the FHMP and flag anything for M. Bleich that would need to be addressed at least a week before the July meeting. In the meantime, he will let FTC representatives know if he hears back from FERC on their proposal to extend the current FHMP to 10 years.

CRR 2026: Biennial limit removal by Melora Shelton, Tacoma (*emailed 5/26 DD 2026-04 CRR 2026 award availability DRAFT to FTC.docx*)

There were no comments and no changes to the DD since it was discussed at the May FTC meeting.

M. Shelton again reviewed the background setting the stage for this decision. Refer to the May meeting notes and the DD for detail.

All FTC members present supported this DD.

Action item: M. Shelton will send out DD 2026-04 (CRR Funding Limit) to FTC members not present for a 7-day hold.

Mayfield Net Pen Assessment by K. Warner (WDFW) and DD by Eric Shoblom (Tacoma) (emailed 6/5 2026-06-02 *FTC Mayfield Evaluation.pdf* and 6/1 DD 2026-05 *MFNP Pilot Project Phase 3 Proposed Final to FTC.docx*)

K. Warner presented the results comparing different methods to quantify losses of Coho raised in the Mayfield Net Pens as part of Phase 2 Evaluation.

Discussion:

- How did the pooled model perform, where pooling refers to consideration of fish across all pens? The pooled model was the least informative when looking at the delta in AIC. There was a lot of variation across pens. This is in contrast to fish in the Cowlitz Trout hatchery where the pooled model performed just as well as the stock-specific models.
- In summary, the results show that the Mayfield Net Pens performed fairly well in terms of producing healthy juveniles of the right size for scheduled release with room for improvement. The comparison of methods was important to more accurately evaluate performance. Investigation of release enumeration options should continue during Phase 3 with full implementation of satellite rearing.
- How tight should the confidence intervals be? K. Warner responded that he is not prepared to answer here although the M&E subcommittee could address it. T. Hillson responded that they did a power analysis and found that 400 tags would be sufficient to obtain adult data with statistical power. P. Sandstrom added that they suggested lower numbers of PIT tags were viable in order to estimate in-net survival, but Tacoma ended up choosing to use more tags because it was easy to do since they were already tagging fish. M. Bleich emphasized that they are using an evaluation methodology for management decisions, so we do not need to get the confidence intervals as tight as possible.
- M. Bleich thanked everyone for their work and emphasized how important it is to get accurate estimates of losses. Others emphasized that if these numbers are underestimated, when we look at SARs, there will be a negative bias that suggests our programs are performing worse than they actually are.
- P. Sandstrom emphasized that for the Phase 1 analysis they only had estimates from observed mortality, which we now know is an underestimate. With these tighter estimates now, the SARs estimates will be more accurate. He complimented K. Warner for turning around the analysis and quality control so quickly so that Tacoma had the data to develop the DD.

E. Shoblom walked the group through the DD acknowledging that they were only able to send it out to the FTC a day before the meeting because of the extra coordination time needed. E. Shoblom made live edits to the DD as the FTC discussed.

Discussion:

- B. Glaser emphasized that it is important to show the mortality/survival estimates for each pen and not pool them due to the variability. K. Warner added that if we

report an average of apparent survival then we should report standard deviation of 9.8% as well, or we could report a range of survival estimates by individual nets as 66-92%. The group edited the document “observed mortality” was similar in both years but inventory was different.

- B. Glaser emphasized that it is important to attach the full results to the DD, not just cut and paste the figures and tables. K. Warner said he can provide an html for a permanent link. M. Shelton responded that the previous link wasn’t working, but they can use a link if it’s permanent.
- B. Glaser summarized that WDFW is supportive of moving forward with Phase 3. Year 1 was good although estimates of survival may have been biased high. For this year, survival was slightly lower and outside of the bounds that we set in the pilot study doc. He explained this is okay with WDFW, but it is important that we have identified the best method to evaluate performance effectively moving forward.
- Was predation the biggest driver of the difference between observed mortality and the two other methods? This is how it was stated in the DD, but T. Hillson expressed he had doubts about predation being the biggest component of estimated loss. There was some loss to otters, and it will be good to learn from and implement deterrence methods used in other places. However, WDFW felt the difference in numbers would be too much to account for with just otters.
- The two methods don’t quite align, so which one will we use? WDFW suggested language in the coordination section that speaks to adaptive management. We have more work to do before we determine a best or sufficient method. It’s important not to try to prescribe the solution here. The wording was changed to say “identify release inventory enumeration” prior to fall 2026.
- The group discussed timing. S. Gibbons emphasized that Phase 3 starts in December, so we need all of the work listed in the DD done in the fall before then.
- P. Sandstrom asked about the detailed comments and edits that WDFW shared with Tacoma in the M&E meeting. J. Bauman and E. Shoblom confirmed that they integrated the comments but that some were too detailed for the DD. B. Glaser responded that some of the comments related to potential recommendations, some of which won’t be able to be addressed this fall. The group agreed on editing the DD to say that a review of Phase 2 analysis recommendations will occur at M&E meetings before fall of 2026 to identify implementation needs for Phase 3.
- L. Newhouse emphasized that they are clipping fish now and need to know what the direction is to move forward with Phase 3. Everyone confirmed that they will work quickly to finalize the direction so that hatchery staff have what they need to implement it.

All FTC members present supported this DD.

- **Action item:** M. Shelton will send out DD 2026-05 (Mayfield Net Pens) to FTC members not present for a 7-day hold.

Public Comment Period #1 - Agenda related

R. LeDuc asked, Will the low water flow increase water temperatures? M. Shelton responded that the low flows and forecasted higher temperatures will likely mean higher water temperatures. He went on to ask if the warmer temperatures might lead to a C. shasta bloom and an even larger impact on fish. E. Shoblom responded that it is possible. Last summer there were lower flows, warmer temperatures at the trout hatchery, and they did have increased disease challenges. He added the M&E subcommittee is looking at all limiting factors with fall Chinook, and Tacoma has included a climate change component for the trout hatchery redesign.

F. Ming asked about densities in the net pens and if they are going to figure out if higher or lower densities work best. E. Shoblom and S. Gibbons responded that they looked at different densities in the net pen pre-pilot study. They researched different densities from different WA locations as a reference, then tried lower and higher densities. They found survival was fine at the higher density, so they stuck with that. They do still have additional empty net pens if they find that they want to go with lower densities.

Topics for July 7, 2026 FTC Meeting

Potential topics include:

- Follow-up on Spring Flow Reduction
 - Spring Chinook Transition Plan topic (WDFW and Tacoma agreed to postpone this topic until September due to the coordination needed to recalculate SARs.)
 - FHMP draft DD
 - CRR Implementation Update
 - Usual Updates
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Public Comment Period #2 – Any topic

R. LeDuc asked, Is there an update on chum? T. Hillson responded that WDFW moved into the next phase of scoping. They've identified multiple potential locations based on a desk analysis, and now they are trying to contact landowners to see if they can do site visits, which is a challenge. At least a couple of locations are on Cowlitz Tribal land or City of Tacoma land, so they are doing a first phase feasibility analysis in those locations. Then, if all goes well, they will move on to testing.

R. LeDuc asked if there is any news on opening the fall Chinook NOR fishery. B. Glaser responded that they are working through the permitting. WDFW is conducting an internal policy review of the FMEP (Fisheries and Management Evaluation Plan), and

they plan to submit it to NOAA as soon as possible, maybe even by the end of the month. They are hearing that NOAA is not staffed up to be able to engage and move forward with consultation. The last time WDFW asked, NOAA said it might take 5-7 years. WDFW has emphasized that it is important and that they would like NOAA to prioritize it. It is unclear if this is possible. In the best case scenario if they can prioritize it, the earliest any change would go into effect would be next year.

Meeting Evaluation

What went well? What can we change or improve in the future?

- The room was too warm. (It was a hot day.)
- Several people emphasized that they appreciated the time for discussion. Some topics went longer than planned, but they were important topics. It was good to allow the time that FTC members needed to work through questions and concerns.
- There was good participation in the room and online.
- Thanks to the team who turned around the net pen evaluation and DD so quickly so that we could make a timely decision for L. Newhouse to plan what to do with the fish.

Closing

J. Holowatz was not present to share a closing quote. Instead, we all reflected on our earliest memories of being outside in the rivers, stream, creeks, and lakes that inspired us to do the work we are here to do today.