

McNary Fisheries Compensation Committee Meeting

Northern Wasco County PUD Meeting Room

2345 River Road, The Dalles, Oregon 97058

Call in Number: 1-971-256-0996 , passcode: 148967

Updated 1/08/2019

Link for Web Meeting: <https://www.conferencerecalling.com/meeting/14896798>

Due to weather conditions this meeting was convened as a conference call.

Monday, February 11, 2019, 10 am.

Attending: Blane B-NOAA, Blaine P-CRITFC, RD N-USFWS, Erick V-ODFW, Patrick V-WDFW, Brandon R-Yakama, Rick M-PUD.

Presenters: Becca Wassell-Mid Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group, Mark W, Josh M-Four Peaks, Jeff Fryer, CRITFC, Richard B-Co-investigators.

1. November meeting minute's approval request – done via email.

Last call for edits.

2. New Proposals, Extension Request or Final Report Presentations.

a. Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group, Yakima River Mile 25 Refuge

Becca Wassell presented this project and talked about the unique opportunity to test this pilot project idea with a cooperative and motivated land owner. She discussed the character of the oxbow and the area they propose developing as an alcove of cold water refuge. She showed a graph showing how the ground water was warmer than the mainstem in the winter and colder in the summer, which could potentially benefit juvenile and adult salmonids. She talked about the alcove and the addition of root wad logs for structure. She discussed the replacement of the farm road and culvert with a check dam and bigger culvert. There is also to be a second check dam and culvert installed about 400 feet upstream which the landowner has committed to adjusting to keep water levels at desired elevations.

Brandon asked if the area above the culvert would be available. **Becca** said it would be but only for juveniles. **Brandon** wondered if the invert of the culvert could be lowered to allow for adult passage. **Becca** said she wasn't sure. **Brandon** asked if a groundwater collection gallery was considered. **Becca** said that idea was rejected by the steering committee. **Blaine** wondered if the benefit of shade from the Cottonwoods was worth the loss of water they would soak up. There was some additional back and forth but that pretty much concluded the presentation.

Post presentation discussion:

Rick- unsure about this project. Likes the potential but seems like it is on too small a scale to be beneficial. Also aware of the dangerous environment (80 degrees) that can be present in the summer and the potential benefit of a cool water refuge to pull into. It is a small project but it could be valuable in proving a concept. Want to hear others.

Blaine P. – referenced some work that showed a disproportionate use of a cold water refuge by migrating adults so he is pretty sure it is an important thing. Likes the price tag, the matching funds, and the coordination.

Brandon- has experience with off channel habitat from ground water, it is important, there are examples in the upper Columbia, and other areas. With climate change could become even more important. Thought the analogy of aid stations in marathons was a good one. He has concerns about the design, would like to do more with the oxbow and is curious about why the groundwater collection idea was rejected.

Erick – ground water flow is important. Wondered if the Yakima was free flowing in the project area and if it was similar to the conditions where Brandon had seen successful similar projects. Wondered about the task group, Brandon thought they may not have been the best technical folks. Thought the cost was reasonable, thought it was in line with our consistent support of eco function improvement. Likes the project and would vote YES.

Patrick – good project, had heard about cold water refuge projects in Alaska. Agrees with idea of addressing river temp issues. Thinks the access to the alcove and the star grass should be addressed. Small scale start a necessary evil, has tangible aspects, Votes YES.

RD – Good project, could be expanded, concerned about suspended solids settling in the alcove and filling it in over time. But overall a good project with potential un-mentioned lamprey benefits.

Blane- in favor, meets our criteria, new idea but good for proof of concept. Would like to see more monitoring and evaluation. Votes YES

To Do: Rick- draft email with questions and circulate, then forward to Becca.

To Do, Cont.

Rick- finalize vote, fill out voter record form.

Draft applicant notification letter.

- b. Four Peaks Environmental, Upper Columbia River Sockeye Salmon Escapement in a Changing River Environment.

Mark, Jeff, Josh and Richard all contributed to this presentation. Mark began by talking about Columbia River sockeye returns over the last 80 years. He talked about the very high water temps in 2015 and the corresponding sockeye run failure. This project proposes to tag returning sockeye at the adult facility at Bonneville Dam and track their progress upstream using an array of antennae, many in place for other projects. They discussed the large scale of the project, showing a map with the approximate location of the 120 or so antennae. They talked about the low escapement numbers even if returns to Bonneville are high (500K). They talked about key metrics and management implications. Lastly they discussed the schedule and the budget. Post presentation discussion was limited, with only a few questions. Erick asked if the other funding sources were contributing distinct funds or if activities were part of programmatic costs. Mark responded with a “No”, but I wasn’t clear on this exchange. Over half of the matching funds number is the cost of not having to buy receivers. The rest is labor costs paid by CRITFC, ODFW, Douglas and Chelan PUD’s for their staff to work on this project.

RD asked if we should be concerned that some of the antennae were below McNary Dam. Jeff F. responded that some were below McNary but most if not all of the fish were headed to waters above McNary Dam. Mark sent an update later saying that 43 of the receivers were located below McNary, 28 of which are ODFW receivers for sturgeon work.

At this point there were no more questions and the presenters hung up. Our internal discussion followed.

Blaine- project is a stretch for being above McNary, more of an outlier for meeting criteria. He thought their hopes of getting useful genetic info were overly optimistic. Otherwise, the project seemed OK.

RD – the downstream of McNary component was bothersome. RD thought it sounded like a good project, he was hopeful that the data collected could inform management decisions. He felt the data are needed. He acknowledged that it was expensive but IF we can get results we should consider this project favorably.

Patrick – he had talked to sockeye management folks and they were supportive. The project would provide increasing data, but he also hears the comments on adhering to criteria. He mentioned the importance of the Okanogan to the sockeye. Right now, looking at project favorably.

Erick – appreciates the previous comments but he doesn’t see this as mitigation, also, it is quite expensive. He acknowledges that Okanogan fish are important. Concerned about direct results and the hatchery component. Also doesn’t like the lack of regional funding and how much money going to tags, feels like moving away from mitigation. Likes projects that need some additional funds to get off the ground, with this project, all funding is from MFCC.

Brandon – proponents haven’t talked to other committees, why not? That is disturbing. Seems like they just came to us, it is expensive and it is research, skeptical.

Blaine P- Work below McNary but fish going upstream of McNary. Blaine thought they needed to redo proposal, focus more on black holes. Work won’t provide direct management direction. It is expensive, not needed in its full scope, and should be more focused.

Rick – Echoed Erick and Brandon’s comments. Pure research, expensive, no matching, didn’t coordinate with other committees, doesn’t meet our criteria, NO vote.

To Do:

Rick- receive email votes from members.

Tally votes, fill out form,

Draft applicant notification letter.

3. Other new business, agenda additions, etc.

- a. Trout Unlimited- Icicle Creek Fish Passage, see update from Aaron.

Also, Brandon updated us, he said things are going well, thought it was all but done, hopes to have completed by end of February. Document titled, "Annual Operational Agreement"

To Do: Rick - Once the agreement is finalized, receive outstanding votes, tally on Vote record form.
Draft applicant notification letter.

Next two items tabled until next meeting.

- b. Grant Evaluation Table - review format, consider utility and decide to pursue or not.
- c. Logo selection- review current designs, decide on one or decide to redesign.

4. Grant Updates, work progress and financial activity.

Active-Open Grants

- a. Upper Yakima River Restoration Project-KCT-
- b. Screen Angle Testing- see update from Theresa
- c. Juvenile Lamprey Tracking – see update from Theresa
- d. Yakima Wood Fiesta – North Fork Manastash & Lower Umtanum Creeks
- e. Wallowa-Baker Habitat Restoration Project –see update from Colleen

Closed but Update Worthy

- f. Swauk Creek Restoration-Yakama Nation
- g. Lamprey Habitat Restoration Guide – Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation
- h. Cle Elum River Restoration- KCT
- i. Yakama Beaver Project- MCFEG

To Do: Rick- add updates to folders

5. Change Forms

- a. Capital Equipment Purchases with grant funds.

Blane-thought it was reasonable.

RD- also thought it sounded fine.

Blaine P. – mentioned that if it costs more to rent may as well buy, likes the idea of an inventory list.

Brandon- OK as is

Erick – money should be used for direct mitigation, not to build inventory. Sending comments.

Patrick- looks good.

To Do: Rick- incorporate comments, add to protocols and application instructions.

Rick - Update tables with results of votes.

6. Website updates

Working on web site updates, getting some training to be able to update as needed.

Rick : Continue to work on web site

7. Next Meeting Date: Mid-May

Other To Do: Draft 2018 Annual Report- to date, forgotten about this, thanks for the reminders guys!