

**FTC Cowlitz Hydroelectric Project**  
**FERC NO. 2016**  
**Fisheries Technical Committee**  
**Final Meeting Summary**  
May 7, 2008 from 9:00 AM – 3:45 PM  
Mayfield, Silver Creek, Washington

**Participating Members**

Michelle Day	NMFS
Mark LaRiviere	Tacoma Power
Brad Caldwell	WA DOE
Brett Swift	American Rivers
Pat Frasier	WDFW

**Other Attendees**

Ed Meyer	NMFS
Joe First	LCPUD, Cowlitz Falls
Mike Kohn	LCPUD
Lolanda Thomas	LCPUD, Cowlitz Falls
Debbie Carlson	BPA
Steve Vigg	WDFW
Wolf Dammers	WDFW
John Serl	WDFW
Mark Johnson	WDFW
Tom Scribner	Yakima Nation
Tom Santee	Insight Northwest
Bill Iyall	Tacoma Power
Steve Fischer	Tacoma Power
Marc Wicke	Tacoma Power
Debbie Young	Tacoma Power
Tom Martin	Tacoma Power
Lyn Wiltse	PDSA Consulting, Facilitator

**Future FTC Meeting Dates**

May 7, Jun 4, Jul 2, Aug 6, Sept 3, Oct 1, Nov 5, Dec 3.  
Default time: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM; Default location: Mayfield

**New Action Items**

- All – Check Settlement Agreement for reference to “mitigation” as it relates to flow reduction.
- Mark - Check re: monitoring being done in spring – what results and how they can inform the future. Also set up conference call as needed to request relief from MIF.
- Mark – Post alternate release site design criteria to website by May 11.
- Pat – Track broodstock collection and report at June FTC meeting.
- Pat – Complete review of Draft Fish Disease Management Plan and send to Tacoma by May 19.
- Mark – Notify FTC members when the revised Draft Fish Disease Management Plan is posted.
- All – Send suggested scope and sequence for FHMP update by June 4.
- Mark – Set up “Next FTC Meeting Materials” section on FTC Website.
- Marc – Break out data by day fish were collected and post reports to FTC website.
- Marc – Get revised study info from USGS and send out plan.
- All: Review revised plan and provide Marc with your input.
- Marc – By June 9 Talk with USGS about how changing baffle panel in Unit 1 might affect the evaluation.
- Tom M – Set up contracts with fish passage experts and set up meetings prior to June FTC meeting. Also inform FERC of our plans.
- Lyn – By May 11 revise protocol to reflect our discussions and send out for all to consider along with these notes. (done)
- All – By June 4 send list of suggested scope and sequence to Mark.
- Mark – By June 4 attach descriptions to each of the Tasks in FHMP Update schedule.

**Previous Action Items**

- Pat – Get detail of HSRG recommendation on chum.
- Mark – Send out Mayfield pump on/off data to Brett.
- Wolf – Report on the definition of low run sizes for summer-run and early winter-run steelhead.
- Steve V – Email creel data to Mark to post to FTC website.
- Steve V – Look at getting WDFW experts to do a site visit to check purse seining feasibility.

**Approval of Meeting Summaries**

We approved the January, February, and April meeting summaries with minor edits.

**Agenda item:** Riffe Lake Refill / Instream Flow **Presenter:** Mark

**Discussion:**

Mark walked us through the most recent forecasts. For the Cowlitz Project Operations, Riffe is flat-lined currently. We are continuing to hold steady at 5K cfs for Mayfield discharge except for the weekly pulse flow. This year represents an all-time high record for low-elevation snow pack. The high elevation snow pack is in the top three of the past 30-year record. Depending on how the snow pack melts and releases and precipitation levels, we may be short of inflow to the reservoir. We should barely get above 730 ft at 90% exceedence. Even at 50% we should get to 750 ft. in July. This is less than ideal in terms of reservoir refill. Dropping below 750 ft. in the fall impacts our ability to collect spring Chinook. Two weeks ago Tacoma posted a revised forecast curve. Since then there hasn't been much run-off so Todd re-ran the forecast with a reduction to 3,000 cfs the first of June. We would expand monitoring to look at any impact to fish and adjust operations to reduce stranding impacts to the extent possible. Tacoma may be requesting relief from the minimum flow for the month of June (reduce from 5,000 to 3,000 cfs). They would do this by conference call the last week of May. No rain will translate into a greater probability of making this request. The benefit would be 10-12 ft. of reservoir elevation. Fishery concerns – when start reducing flows, fish move quicker through the system and are not available for harvest. This results in calls from the public to WDFW asking what they are doing to flows.

Todd believes in a couple of weeks we should have a better idea of how the snow pack run-off will impact refill. Most recent weather update calls for cooler and drier than normal. Tacoma can, with approval of the FTC, go as low as 2,000 cfs. They want to try to keep it at 2,500 cfs after July to support fishing. They also want to make boat ramps accessible. Would like to get the reservoir above 760 ft to preserve recreation interests. There is a real chance that even with this reduction in flows in June we will probably not get above 740-750 ft.

**Conclusions:** We may have to manage low flows in a way that reduced negative impact to the resource and recreational interests.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
✓ Continue to provide updates on flows/reservoir refill	Todd	Ongoing
✓ Convene FTC conference call if necessary to request relief from MIF	Mark	May 27-30, 2008
✓ Check re: monitoring being done in spring – what results and how they can inform the future, Discuss at June FTC Meeting,	Mark	Late May

**Agenda item:** Collection of Adult Spring Chinook **Presenter:** Mark Johnson

**Discussion:**

So far we have collected about 30 fish. This is the lowest return in about 10 years. Normally we would have collected about 500 by now. We hope they are late. We hope the same for LWRSH. WDFW is considering how to deal to this (e.g., reduction in harvest, actively collecting the broodstock, etc.) Joe Hymer (WDFW) has announced that sport harvest is lower than usual for spring Chinook. Low run size is also being observed in other lower Columbia tributaries. Cold water temperature may be delaying migration.

**Conclusions:** Wait and see.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
✓ Track brook stock collection; report at June FTC meeting.	Pat	June 4, 2008

**Agenda item:** Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery Rebuild Schedule **Presenter:** Steve Fischer

**Discussion:**

Steve reported that the salmon Hatchery bids are in and Tacoma is moving forward.

**Conclusions:** Construction is set to begin in late May.

<b>Agenda item:</b> Downstream Migrant Supplemental Collection Activities	<b>Presenter:</b> Steve Fischer
---	---------------------------------

**Discussion**

Merwin traps: Marc explained we began fishing April 16. Wind storm in April 22 pushed everything out of position. Was back in operation on April 24 and has been so since. So far 76 smolts have been caught in the Merwin trap. Can't launch a boat in upper end of Riffe lake yet since have no access to boat ramps. Hope to be able to gain access to the boat ramp in the next couple of weeks. In the meantime, will also talk with LCPUD about doing some seining in Lake Scanewa. New low-level boat launch is complete (720 ft). This is an improvement from years past where it required elevation of 745 ft. Access issues for minnow traps. Tried to use roe as bait. Caught no fish. Now trying different types of bait. Merwin trap will be 100 yards upstream of Mossy Rock Dam.

Incline Plane Trap: Had to be repaired and re-fitted (replaced flotation), new winches, etc. This has been fishing since May 5. Guide nets have been purchased and are on site. The location is at cross section of the river channel 200 yards below CF dam. Velocity is at 7 ft/sec in the trap. Still working on access plank. Marc reported that 250 fish (95% Chinook) were caught in the first night of operation.

Tacoma is talking with USGS about modifying the evaluation to include a study before the debris barrier is moved and then after it is moved on July 1. The USGS has put extra antennae on the dam to get a better idea of fish activity in the forebay.

Natural Solutions wants to wait to see elevation of 750 before the site they have identified will be capable of operating.

**Conclusions:** We will continue to get updates as we go.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
✓ Break out data by day fish were collected – post reports to FTC website	Marc	ASAP
✓ Get revised study info from USGS and send out plan to	Marc	ASAP
✓ Review revised plan and provide Marc your comments	All	ASAP

**Agenda item:** Fish Passage Expert Workshop **Presenter:** Tom Martin

**Discussion:**

Tom distributed an email from Jeff Boltz including observations on the workshop and response to the King for a Day question. He also distributed a recommendation for a surface flow outlet approach from Dennis Dorratacague and Dave Thompson.

Steve walked us through the executive summary of the WDFW recommendations calling for a variety of actions over several seasons in order to accomplish the 95% fish passage survival goal. These recommendations were what WDFW determined were highest in terms of biological performance and technical feasibility.

Tacoma's plan as discussed at our last FTC meeting is to convene a team of experts to look at what plan to put in place to make substantial progress toward the goal. They are working on getting contracts in place to support this work. WDFW would like to see the plan fleshed out by August 1. We'll aim to have the plans for next year outlined by then. If possible, we will include what can be prototyped/ (done feasibly by next year), and/or tested in the meantime. Core team members were suggested to include: Ed Meyer, Mike Kohn, Ken Bates, Dennis Rondorf, Chick Sweeney, Al Giorgi, Rod Woodin, Chuck Peven (LCPUD has offered to fund), John Serl, Dana Postelwaite, and Tacoma staff. FTC members may attend all meetings. The process should be about the science and feasibility of downstream passage. Facilitation might be helpful. Caution was expressed that it is difficult for a facilitator to also be a full participant.

**Conclusions:** We will convene technical team ASAP and get regular reports at these monthly meetings.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
✓ Talk with USGS about how changing baffle panel in Unit 1 might affect the evaluation.	Marc	By May 9, 2008
✓ Set contracts up and set up meetings (The FTC would like to see at least 2 meetings take place before our June 4 meeting.)	Tom M	ASAP
✓ Talk to FERC about our intentions here	Tom M	By May 2008

**Agenda item: Alternate Release Sites** **Presenter:** **Mark**  
**Discussion:**

This teamlet met April 16 and discussed a release method at Tom Music Bridge and also to improve the existing release site up at Packwood. Notes from this meeting have been posted on the FTC website. NMFS has impact criteria for outfalls (not to exceed 25 ft/sec.). For adult flumes bigger is better. Maybe include lay-flat inside of 18 inch culvert. We want to get this installed this fall prior to the coho return.

Mark has also been looking at alternate release sites on the Tilton system. He wants WDFW to consider releasing some fall Chinook destined for the Tilton into Mayfield Lake.

**Conclusions:** Tacoma will send Mike Kohn an invoice for this before Sept. 20 or let him know so he can put a line item in the budget.

**Action items** ✓ Mark will post the design criteria including all the ideas expressed by the team by May 11.

**Agenda item:** FHMP Update

**Discussion:**

Schedule with proposed changes is now posted to the website. It includes the possibility of invoking dispute resolution. Kick off will include getting Lars Mobernd's schedule. We reviewed the draft operating norms that Mark drafted for the team.

**Conclusions:** We're off and running!

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
✓ Send list of suggested scope and sequence to Mark	All	June 4, 2008
✓ Attach descriptions to each of the Tasks in FHMP Update schedule	Mark	June 4, 2008

**Agenda item:** FTC Protocol **Presenter:** Lyn

**Discussion:**

We discussed revisions to the protocol to set ourselves up for successfully working together.

**Deadline**

**Action item:**

- ✓ Revise protocol to reflect our discussions and send out for all to consider along with these notes. Lyn By 5/11/08

**Meeting Evaluation**

Well Done:

- Good discussions
- Yakima presence
- Energy and Direction for improving fish passage

Do Differently:

- Ran late
- Too many side bars
- Tough to balance facilitation with note taking – consider how we can resolve this
- Missed Brian!
- Need to improve display of Meeting Summary notes projected on screen.

**Meeting Handouts**

- Revised draft agenda for May 7 FTC meeting
- Draft April 2, 2008 FTC meeting summary
- 2 Mossy Rock Refill Probability Curves
- 2008 Cowlitz Project Operations graphic
- Update of 2008 CFD Smolt Collection Activities
- Summary Report of 2008 Supplemental Cowlitz River Juvenile Collection Activities
- CFD Fish Passage/Collection Ideas
  - MWH
  - EA
  - WDFW
- Draft FHMP update development plan and consultation schedule
- Draft FHMP Update Team Norms
- April 4, 2008 FTC Operating Protocols

**Topics for June 4 FTC Meeting**

- Welcome / Check-In / Review Agenda, Action Items, etc.
- Approval of May 7 Meeting Summary
- Update of 2008 Cowlitz Falls Dam Collection Activities
- Update of 2008 Downstream Migrant Supplemental Collection Activities
- Update from Downstream Team
- FHMP Update Scoping Discussion
- Public Outreach Update
- Productivity Issues for: Late Winter Steelhead and Spring Chinook
- Update on Riffe Lake Refill and Operations
  - Past Springtime Monitoring Results and Lessons Learned
- Set Agenda for July 6 Meeting and Evaluate the Meeting

**Parking Lot**

- Ideas for chum enhancement