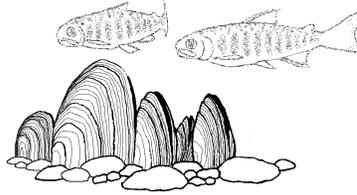


# *Pacific Northwest Native Freshwater Mussel Workgroup*



June 14, 2007

## *Minutes*

Attendees were as follows: Al Smith, Christina Luzier, Sarina Jepsen, Yvonne Colfax, Irene James. Rob Plotnikoff, Michelle Steg, Jeff Adams, Mary Hanson and Brian Adair were on the conference line. Special guests: Marie Fernandez and Al Clark from Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.

**Purpose:** This was a regularly scheduled meeting of the Workgroup.

**Condit Dam:** Molly Hallock, Nancy Duncan and Al Smith surveyed the White Salmon River near Condit Dam for the purpose of assessing mussel populations prior to dam removal in October 2008. Following is a synopsis written by Molly.

### Participants:

Snorkelers - myself and Nancy Duncan ( OR BLM, Roseburg). Al Smith (former ODFW) was present with aquascope.

Guides - USGS out of Willard/Cook Lab - Ian Jezorek

June 04 - USGS took us by boat up to their smolt trap at about RM 1.0. Nancy and I snorkeled downstream for about 1/3 to 1/2 mile, didn't see live mussels or relic shells. The substrate was largely bedrock covered with a few inches of crumbly cobble. A few pockets of habitat where a mussel might settle out were present. Marginal to fair habitat. Spent rest of day checking out access sites with USGS. The best looking site was right at the powerhouse. The PacificCorp staff there requested we reconsider sampling there because it is a dangerous stretch in case of flood and the gates automatically open without warning. They stated they couldn't keep us out, but with rain threatening they weren't comfortable with us sampling that reach.

June 05 - Met with biologist Frank Shrier of PacificCorp and he also had reservations about sampling the Powerhouse section and suggested we sample the Northwest Reservoir, which we did. Nancy and I snorkeled about 1/3-1/2 mile. It was largely silt/sand with some occasional cobble. No sign of mussels. Marginal to fair habitat. Nancy saw two lamprey ammocoetes and I saw one sculpin. Both sites were pretty poor in species diversity/#s. Saw mainly caddisflies and one sucker.

Al, Nancy and I reached the conclusion the White Salmon is unlikely to have mussel population. Result - no pre or post dam mussel monitoring to do. However there are some in the tribs further up that I hope to check out someday.

**Membership Growth:** Is the workgroup ok with current membership policies? Should we continue to add members as they request to join? Should we limit membership based on inactivity?

The group seemed to agree that we should not limit membership; however, we should ask members annually whether they would like to continue being a part of the workgroup. Another suggestion was to partition the workgroup into active members and communication only members.

**Xerces Affiliation:** The MOU has been completed. Al is going to sign and return it to Scott Black. We will transfer the leftover symposium funds to Xerces.

**Mussel Guide Reprinting:** We will use Xerces to help with the mussel guide reprint. It should only take a couple of months to reprint it. After the MOU is in place we will look for sponsors. Some potential sponsors are: WALPA, ODFW, Golder Associates (Jen Stone's employer), EPA, Water Tenders, USFWS.

**Workgroup Chairperson Search:** Al is convening a mollusk bivalve session at the Oregon/Western AFS meeting in May 2008. He is looking for somebody to replace him as chair of the workgroup for a year starting in September 2007. Responsibilities of chairperson are: planning and leading four annual meetings and communication with members on administrative and mussel issues. A third duty is communication with media, interested parties, etc. on mussel issues. Al will continue doing this.

No one present at the meeting showed interested in taking the chairperson position. Sarina Jepsen may be able to do it and will find out in July. Anyone interested should contact Al as soon as possible.

**Willapa Refuge Mussel Restoration Work:** Marie Fernandez and Al Clark visited from Willapa National Wildlife Refuge to talk about their plans to relocate Western Pearlshell mussels to the refuge. They will survey the Bear and Naselle Rivers this summer for potential donor populations. North and Headquarters would be potential relocation creeks. Marie had several questions for the group regarding calcium testing, sexing of mussels, appropriate numbers to transfer, size of donor populations, age structure of donor populations. She distributed a written proposal of the relocation work to the group. It will be attached to these notes.

A permit is not needed for the visual surveys they will be conducting this summer; however, they will need a permit to do the actual relocation. The group shared their concern with Marie and Al that a permit may not be easy to obtain.

**Updates:**

- 1) Mary Hanson, new member from ODFW, talked about new harvest regulations coming for mussels. There will be a mussel meeting/training session this fall with Al Smith, Nancy Duncan and 100 field biologists. Al will do the classroom part and Nancy will do the field component.
- 2) Brian Adair will be doing mussel surveys in the Sierra Nevadas this fall. He is not sure exactly where it will be but he will be doing presence/absence and quantitative surveys.
- 3) Rob Plotnikoff and Tetrattech is currently bidding on contracts and will include mussels on the species lists.
- 4) Willamette Riverkeeper, Art Bass, has money from PGE (via BPA) to do restoration work on the Willamette and tributaries. Mussel survey work will be included.
- 5) Xerces would like to do a large scale occurrence survey/study.
- 6) Karen Mock is spearheading effort to collect genetic samples, particularly Anodontas.
- 7) Meetings coming up: Oregon/Western AFS – May 2008; WALPA – October 2007.

**Next Meeting:** September 13, 2007 in Lacey, WA at 10am.