

# 2021 RCMT MEETING

44<sup>th</sup> Meeting

Hosted by: **RMPC; on MS-Teams Virtual Meeting**

## Meeting Minutes

Dates: **Tue, May 4, 2021**

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**Agency planning sheets & related documents for RCMT 2021 meeting:** [rcmt-2021-documents.html](http://rcmt-2021-documents.html)

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For further meeting information see: [rcmt-2021-meeting-announcement.html](http://rcmt-2021-meeting-announcement.html)

See also RCMT 2019 Meeting Minutes: [RCMT Meeting Minutes 2019.pdf](http://RCMT Meeting Minutes 2019.pdf)

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## **MAY 4: TUESDAY/ SESSION #1: 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM**

### **1. General RCMT Items (George Nandor /PSMFC)**

#### **A. Welcome and introductions; review agenda;**

#### **B. How to use MS-Teams for this meeting (Jim Longwill /PSMFC)**

- Discussion of protocols for this meeting, screen usage, question & answers;

#### **C. George Nandor: Celebrating tenure as RMPC Mark Coordinator**

2. George – retiring after 15 years.. & looking forward to it (!)
3. Prior to PSMFC.. was manager in the ODFW Hatchery program for 31 years
4. → this fall marks 46 years for George in the fisheries business (Yay!)

#### **D. How should we arrange the 2022 meeting?**

- Hold it in April or May?
  - Hold it in California? Idaho? OR: Instead do virtual again?
  - Future meetings: has our long-term situation changed? Discuss ideas.
- Plan having a ‘**hybrid**’ meeting– as it could include those who have difficulty traveling, etc.;
  - Looking at: California, (i.e. try again for that); Possibly at the Marriott near the Santa Rosa airport;
  - It is important to firm up in advance the number attending in-person;
  - Travel permissions may (still) not be easy to get next year;
  - Other times of year (e.g. fall) are discussed, consensus emerges for an early spring date, around Apr 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **2. Regional Mark Processing Center operations & announcements (RMPC staff)**

#### **A. Intro to Changes in RMIS Data Status Tables (Jim Longwill)**

Presentation reviewing changes made to Recovery Data Status Tables

How is ‘expected pending’ status determined? It means that RMPC is aware there is applicable data for that agency/ run year, but it hasn’t been submitted yet.

CDFW will look into status of Klamath-Trinity data.

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Was Nez Perce data submitted by IDFG? Their dataset doesn't go back very far. Someone else was submitting for them (possibly CRITFC?) but it wasn't IDFG; will look into it.

Looking into status of Quileute data; NWIFC reports escapement data for the tribes (QDNR and STIL report their own; QUIL reports through WDFW system).

What is the 'expected overdue' for YAKA? There is a 4-year gap in the recovery data.

The RMPC has not been in touch with Yurok tribe in CA for many years.

## **B. Status of CWT Datasets (Dan Webb /PSMFC)**

### **Presentation reviewing status of Release & Locations datasets**

Except for CRITFC, NMFS-AK, releases have been reported for Dec 2020 or Jan 2021.

--Not aware of any missing tag codes at this time.

76 NWIFC records are currently marked as 'preliminary'.

--Continue to run monthly data integrity reports to identify any issues, redundancies, etc.

--Still have API web services that can be viewed online- only accessible to reporting agencies with login and password.

Several browsers (Chrome, Firefox) no longer support FTP protocol, so moving to http URLs and looking at solutions for any remaining FTP in the system.

Agencies have been encouraged to work among themselves to resolve issues of missing tag codes. Contact NMT for assistance, cc: RMPC on correspondence to make aware of issues and request assistance as needed.

The tag prefix contact list on the RMPC site is kept up to date; let Dan know if any names need to be updated.

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## **MAY 4: TUESDAY/ SESSION #2: 10:00AM – NOON**

### **3. All-Agency Update on: (Tag-Coordination Representative, ALL-AGENCY Participation)**

- Tagging Levels for 2021 .....see tables below
- Mass Marking for 2021 .....see tables below
- Mark-Selective Fishery Plans &/or Comments .....see tables below
- **Covid-19 pandemic Impacts on your Agency: Tagging Operations, etc.** .....see tables below

### **Member agencies:**

If you have not yet forwarded a detailed 2021 marking/ tagging plan for your agency, please do so!

Agency or Organization	2021 Tagging Levels, Marking Plans, Comments
<p><b>WDFW / Washington Dept. Fish &amp; Wildlife:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No major changes to marking and tagging plans compared to last year</li> <li>Seeing substantial fish losses at locations using the early feed so will be re-evaluating where programs are short</li> <li>Still utilize manual mass marking trailers at large number of facilities- having a hard time getting them staffed and can only have 4 people in a trailer due to social distancing requirements; looking to increase their AutoFish trailer fleet to avoid future staffing issues</li> <li>Held off on adding new tag groups on the coast until next year; Issaquah new tag groups did happen this year</li> <li>Cautiously optimistic they will meet their mass marking goals</li> <li>Agency will use a staggered approach to returning to the office (25% in July, 50% in October, 100% in April '22 if possible); set up outside marking stations at some locations for manual clipping to meet COVID protocols; used shower liners as barriers between folks in trailers</li> </ul>	
<p><b>IDFG / Idaho Dept. Fish &amp; Game:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No changes from previous several years</li> <li>Returns not great this year; looking at limited fisheries</li> <li>All marking &amp; tagging done by PSMFC staff and was on time/ complete for last year</li> <li>Majority of staff has returned to office/ normal schedule</li> </ul>	
<p><b>MIC / Metlakatla Indian Community:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not in attendance</li> </ul>	
<p><b>ODFW / Oregon Dept. Fish &amp; Wildlife:</b></p> <p>See also: <a href="#">RCMT 2021 ODFW Fish Marking Program(TrevorClark).pdf</a> .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No changes from previous year</li> <li>Some of their hatcheries impacted by wildfires in 2020 and broodstock has been relocated as needed</li> <li>5<sup>th</sup> AutoFish trailer was added last season and it was a tremendous help to get the marking/ tagging goals met; were able to eliminate manual trailers; have issues getting staff for trailers (short-term, low pay, remote locations, lots of travel, no-shows, etc.)</li> <li>Added sneeze guards in trailers, along with gloves/ masks/ eye protection due to COVID</li> </ul>	
<p><b>NWIFC / Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission:</b></p> <p>See also: <a href="#">RCMT 2021 NWIFC CWT and MM Plans(RonOlson).pdf</a> .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in Ad+CWT group, about the same amount of CWT only, increase in Ad-only (many done by WDFW)</li> <li>Increases due to the Orca predation enhancement programs</li> <li>Only 1 person per trailer last year due to COVID protocols</li> <li>Got a 4<sup>th</sup> AutoFish trailer for this year, but still have staffing issues in spite of high vaccination rates among the tribes</li> <li>Most office staff still working remotely; tribal reservations were all closed last year, some still closed this year (but they all still wanted their fish tagged and marked)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>NMFS / National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska:</b></p> <p>NMFS, Alaska 2021 marking plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>~160,993 Chinook ad clip + CWT, ~3,287 Chinook ad-only (at Little Port Walter)</li> <li>~6K coho salmon ad clip + CWT (at Auke Creek)</li> <li>No releases at Little Port Walter in 2020 (largely due to COVID)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>USFWS / U.S. Fish &amp; Wildlife Service:</b></p> <p>See also: <a href="#">RCMT 2021 FWS R18 Production Summary 4-22-2021.pdf</a> .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No major changes over last year (some increases due to Orca Predation enhancement programs)</li> <li>Received another AutoFish trailer last year for use primarily at Olympic Peninsula hatcheries</li> <li>Delayed start last season due to COVID; all tagging was completed, some unmarked releases</li> <li>Makah reservation was closed in 2020 and no marking was done; will be marking in 2021</li> <li>Running 4-person manual trailers and 1 person in back of AutoFish trailers due to COVID protocols; difficulties in getting through all the fish due to smaller crews but should be on track this year</li> </ul>	

**CRITFC / Columbia R. Intertribal Fish Commission:**

- Hanford Wild Tagging Project could not be done last year, but is expected to be done this year
- Slides regarding COVID impacts in the PSC process are available

**CDFW / California Department of Fish & Wildlife:**

- Annual goal is to produce 32 million Chinook, low returns and fertility issues result in only producing 25 million this year (possibly thiamine deficiency due to feeding on anchovies? Contact Ben for more info- they are working on this)
- Tagging at minimum 25% for all fall run
- Trinity Hatchery did not tag last year due to COVID, everywhere else was tagged by PSMFC staff
- CWT reading was a challenge last year but eventually figured out safety protocols and it is working well now

**CDFO / Fisheries & Oceans Canada ■ :**

- Significant COVID implications- a lot of tagging and clipping did not occur in spring due to stay-at-home/ travel restrictions, were able to tag/ clip in fall, and now back to stay-at-home/ travel restrictions
- Not anticipating they will meet all of their targets for 2021 due to COVID and other issues

**ADFG / Alaska Dept. Fish & Game:**

See also: [RCMT 2021 ADFG Marking and Tagging Data\(EricKeller\).pdf](#) .

- No major changes from previous years
- Were able to continue most programs in spite of COVID, with the exception of samplers at the docks/ processors
- Recovery Lab has continued regular operations with COVID safety protocols in place
- 2 tagging trailers have been received and will be utilized for the first time this year for releases to occur next year; will increase tagging rate from 10 to 20% and considering mass marking (proposal submitted)

■ Agency CDFO represents two votes (members) of the RCMT

**Other reporting agencies:**

Agency or Organization	2021 Tagging Levels, Marking Plans, Comments
<b>YAKA / Yakama Nation:</b> See also: <a href="#">RCMT 2021 YAKA Marking Plan(BillBosch).pdf</a> .	
<b>NPT / Nez Perce Tribe:</b> See also: <a href="#">RCMT 2021 NPT Marking Summary(DrewWickard).pdf</a> .	
<b>CCT / Colville Confederated Tribe(s):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No changes to the Colville Tribes and the Chief Joseph Hatchery Program's marking and tagging plan for 2021</li> <li>• No impacts to the 2020 marking and tagging at the hatchery due to COVID.</li> </ul>	

**NWIFC has had a difficult time developing their COVID policies**- can they mandate a policy of requiring a vaccination for in-person work? Has anyone else explored this or come to this decision?

--ADFG- not mandating the vaccine but encouraging telework and taking it on a case-by-case basis

--CRITFC- been proactive with healthcare partners on vaccinations, have not decided if vaccination will be mandated or their parameters for in-person work

--WDFW- not mandating the vaccine but encouraging telework and taking a staggered approach on return to in-person work

--USFWS- not mandating the vaccine

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--PSMFC- not mandating the vaccine but encouraging it

--CDFO- vaccine rollout is slow, not requiring proof of vaccination but have significant & conservative COVID protocols in place

--CDFG- offering leave time to get vaccinated and can track who is vaccinated by who is requesting the time off

#### 4. SFEC Update (Ron O- NWIFC)

3 reports are in progress, including a Coho DIT Analysis

Work groups receive proposals for Mass Marking and Mark-Selective Fisheries. The 2020 review is still in process due to COVID, 2021 is in early stages.

2021 proposals show continued increases in Chinook production related to prey supplementation programs throughout the region, as well as a significant increase in proposed mark-selective fisheries.

There is a continued lack of post-season reporting on fisheries (sampling rates, mark encounters, etc.).

--Hope to see a Chinook DIT report in the future.

#### 5. Quality of Adipose Clips (Jill C- WDFW)

Is it precedent that no more than 30% of the adipose fin should remain to avoid a “bad clip”?  
What portion of the fin needs to be removed to distinguish it as a hatchery fish and avoid regeneration?

If you can remove 2/3 of the fin it will easily be identified as a clipped fish by a professional sampler, but others may not be as proficient at identification.

CDFO- If there is a healed scar it is considered a hatchery fish. “Stubbies” are considered a good clip when submitted to RMIS.

Other agency regulations also reference a “healed scar” in their definitions

Whoever is doing the QC on fin clips needs to be educated on what they should be looking for.

Is everyone in agreement that 2/3 removal is the standard that should be acceptable?

--Thompson & Blankenship paper (1997) was provided in the Chat for reference on this topic.

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### **MAY 4: TUESDAY/ SESSION #3: 1:00PM – 3:00PM**

#### 6. Special Marking Requests & Announcements for 2020, 2021: (George Nandor)

Requests & Announcements received to date: (.)

--Have not received any requests for the past several years; it may not be necessary to remain on future agendas but it does provide a good opportunity to inform the group of any changes or new plans and can add value to the group discussion if it remains

ADFG & CDFO (West Vancouver Island stocks, Yukon River Hatchery) are considering mass marking; CDFO may have variances but don't have clear plans yet due to COVID so paperwork may come through later

#### Agency-only Wire:

- CDFO does not use it
- ADFG discourages its use
- NWIFC only uses it on a steelhead research project (likes the option of having it)
- ODFW tags Umatilla fish with agency-only wire
- price going up on Agency-only wire (will likely see only a marginal difference in cost between that and Coded-wire)

## 7. Northwest Marine Technology (Dave Knutzen, Geraldine VanderHaegen, Joseph Greef /NMT)

--Closed down the Shaw Island facility and moved the main facility to Anacortes; also maintain an office in Olympia

All NMT staff got vaccinated and maintain all COVID protocols in the field and office (let them know if field staff are not following safety protocols).

--Working on cross-training staff throughout the company

NMT turns 50 in October 2021.

Navigating supply chain issues that have come up due to COVID

- notify NMT in advance of what you might be planning for so they can prepare
- bulk ordering within each agency would also be helpful when possible
- better to order early in the process of planning for tagging rather than waiting until just before tagging starts
- trying to keep pricing stable for as long as possible

--R9500 units- majority of them -- were purchased before 2001; will be looking at a production re-design

#### • Product update

- Delivered 8 AutoFish trailers in 2020-21 (2 Canada, 2 AK, 2 WA, 1 OR, 1 NWIFC), in addition to rebuilds/ upgrades/ maintenance on others
- Contact Geraldine with questions on tags/ tag codes, 360-764-8850 or [office@nmt.us](mailto:office@nmt.us)
- Working on 150 new T-wands for WDFW
  - Will replace button covers on T-wands as needed if the switch is exposed (switch is waterproof), get in touch before sending back
- Blue wands are discontinued (no repairs, trade-ins, etc.)
- Phasing in a new style of cutter; should eliminate some issues around bad cuts
- Looking to improve the time it takes to read tags by making a better hardware module (the Tag Viewer project); this portion of NMT's presentation was recorded and can be provided to agencies as needed
  - The A/I reads the tag at 97% (working on improving that; can manually overwrite the code that is read into the tag code box); could set it up where the A/I throws up a symbol if it's guess is below a threshold of confidence to avoid operator bias in determining the code;
  - Working on automating the recovery data to those who need it and improving the verification reads;
  - Currently testing with ODFW, hope to have beta version ready by fall/ winter reading seasons;
  - Can link the tag code/ read date to bar codes used during sampling

## End-of-Meeting Comments

There isn't a Standards/ Best Practices document for field-related items (like what percentage of ad-fin clip constitutes a "good clip")- could have a working group to pull this together and consolidate the various agency polices into standardized information

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If future meetings are offered online, it may be difficult to justify travel to attend in-person; hybrid meeting format may cause in-person attendance to decline significantly; given the pandemic should likely plan on at minimum a hybrid meeting in 2022 and re-evaluate for the future based on what the “new normal” looks like.

**REVIEWED**

*By Jim Longwill at 12:28 pm, Jun 16, 2021*

# APPENDIX A: ROSTER OF ATTENDANCE

<b>Meeting Summary</b>		
Total Number of Participants		25
Meeting Title		RCMT Virtual Meeting for 2021; MS-Teams
Meeting Start Time		5/4/2021, 7:45:00 AM
Meeting End Time		5/4/2021, ~3:30:00 PM
<b>Full Name</b>		<b>Email</b>
Ray Glaze		Ray.Glaze@nmt.us
CLARK Trevor R * ODFW		Trevor.R.Clark@odfw.oregon.gov
Geraldine VanderHaegen		Geraldine.Vanderhaegen@nmt.us
Jim Longwill		JLongwill@psmfc.org
Michele Masuda		Michele.Masuda@noaa.gov
Brian Leth		bleth@idfg.idaho.gov
George Nandor		gnandor@psmfc.org
Ron Olson		rolson@nwifc.org
Keller, Eric K (DFG)		eric.keller@alaska.gov
Cross, Benjamin K		benjamin_cross@fws.gov
Gilmore, Todd		todd_gilmore@fws.gov
Stan Allen		sallen@psmfc.org
Churchland, Carolyn		Carolyn.Churchland@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Cady, Jillian L (DFW)		Jillian.Cady@dfw.wa.gov
Azat, Jason@Wildlife		Jason.Azat@wildlife.ca.gov
Lensegrav, Gilbert L (DFW)		Gilbert.Lensegrav@dfw.wa.gov
Dave Knutzen		Dave.Knutzen@nmt.us
Dan Webb		dan@psmfc.org
Fraser, Kathryn		Kathryn.Fraser@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Joseph Greef		joseph.greef@nmt.us
Marianne McClure		mccm@critfc.org
Andrea		andrea.pearl@colvilletribes.com
Dettlaff, Yvonne		yvonne_dettlaff@fws.gov
Grundmann, Erik		Erik.Grundmann@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Amy Roberts		ARoberts@psmfc.org