

# 2021 USACE Anadromous Fish Evaluation Program Annual Review

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## Miller Rocks Islands (MRI) – Gull Management Update

- Location
- Ownership
- Project Focus
- 2021 Actions
- 2022 Next Steps



# Miller Rocks Island Location:

- 45.6618 N 120.8758 W
- Columbia River Mile 205
- The Dalles Pool
- ~5 acres of surface area.
- 850 ft. from main island
- 2.5 miles from Deschutes River Delta.





## MRI Ownership:

- Bureau of Land Mgmt. (Wenatchee Office), and
- US Forest Service – At inception CRGNSA (1986) all BLM lands within Scenic Area transferred to USFS.
- MRI “islands” not described in the boundary detail.
- USFS CRGNSA proposed boundary has not been recorded with BLM’s Cadastral Survey Program.
  - USFS and BLM discussions underway on boundary.
- For purposes of this project the BLM will be YN’s federal POC & lead the NEPA effort.

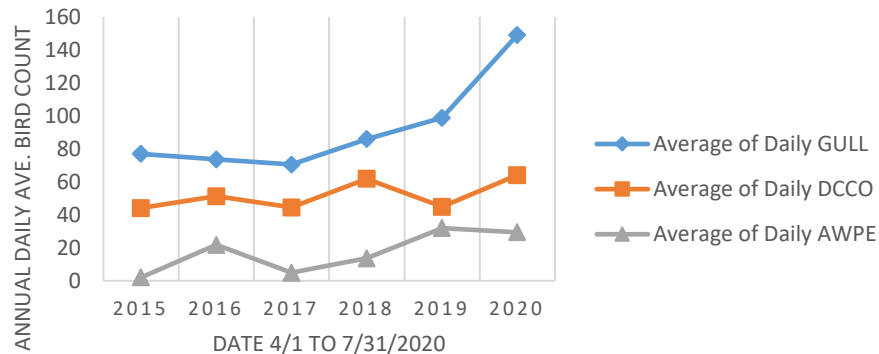


# Miller Rocks Islands – Gull Management Update



- In the CRSO EIS the federal Action Agencies (AA) do not discuss MRI.
  - Only in response to comments that AA are not considering action.
- Regional technical coordination via *USACE-FPOM* Avian Task Force.
  - USACE Avian Task Force data repository.
- Gulls observed nesting on MRI since the 1977 with hydro-development and new “islands” within impounded waters. Current estimates are ~4,500 breeding adults.
- 13 listed stocks of salmon and steelhead pass by this area as juveniles.
- Predation impact from this colony is well documented.
- Observation data at TDD and JDD show increasing trend.

ANNUAL DAILY AVE. 4/1-7/31 FOR  
AVIAN PREDATORS AT TDA 2015 TO  
2020



MRI Colony (PIT detection)	Consumption Rate (2007 -2019)	95% CI
Upper Columbia steelhead	8.2%	6.9 – 9.3
Snake River steelhead	7.2%	6.5 – 8.1
Snake River Sockeye	6.2%	4.8 – 7.7
Upper Columbia Spr. Chinook	2.1%	1.7 – 2.4
Snake River Fall Chinook	2.0 %	1.8 – 2.4
SR Spr/Sum Chinook	1.2%	1.1 – 1.4

## MRI – Gull Management Update - 2021 Actions

- ✓ Ownership (Federal)
- BLM Right-of-Way Permit submitted for 2022 actions.
- Removed mounted green laser as option.
- Hazing with cracker shells & pyrotechnics.
- In 2021, tested propane air-cannons at MRI.
- Nesting/egg laying/fledging:
  - Consistent with historic information. Arrive mid-March, first eggs observed mid-April, fledging in mid-June). MRI used for roosting area into the late summer.
- Preliminary conversations with USFWS for future Lethal Take Permit.
- Coordination Efforts and Updates to:
  - Tribal Leadership & Cultural Resources Program.
  - Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission.
  - Direct engagement with US Senate and House congressional staffers.
- Coordination with regional efforts focusing on predation
  - Columbia Basin Collaborative



## Next Step (2022 and beyond):

- Hazing (cracker shells, 24/7 propane air-cannons, oiling eggs).
  - BLM Right-of-Way Permit
- Coordinate Gov't to Gov't consultation to secure federal commitment and identify their tools and manpower that they'll bring to the table.
- Request USFWS Lethal Take authority to eliminate gull breeding on MRI.
  - Complement 2022 lethal efforts by the USACE at JDD and TDD.
  - Coordinate strategic approach with feds to push gulls from “man-made” breeding areas in Zone 6.
- Continue to communicate to responsible federal agencies the cultural significance of this land and the environmental injustice and ongoing desecration occurring on these sacred lands.





## Deschutes Delta

~97 Acres

If 6 ft. 940k cu. yds.

## MRI Predator Access ~9

Acres

If 6 ft. 15k cu. yds.

## Enhance CWR

- Reduce impaired warm shallow habitat
- Reduce larval lamprey desiccation
- Reduce gull loafing areas
- Reduce size of predation hotspot.



## **Acknowledgments:**

Yakama Nation Tribal Council

NOAA – PSCRF

Avian Task Force Members

Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission

Yakama Nation Fisheries Staff

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