
BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

INSTREAM FLOWS TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING

April 14, 2004
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Red Lion Hotel at SeaTac

FINAL MEETING NOTES

Team Leader: Arnie Aspelund, PSE (arnie.aspelund@pse.com)

ATTENDEES: Arnie Aspelund, Paul Wetherbee, and Cary Feldmann, (PSE), Steve Fransen, (NMFS), Ruth Mathews by phone, (TNC), Margaret Beilharz, by phone (USFS), Stan Walsh (SRSC), Mike Stansbury and Jeff McGowan (Skagit County Public Works), Irena Netik by phone, (Powel Group), Chuck Ebel (USACE), Brad Caldwell (DOE), Phil Hilgert (R2), Lyn Wiltse, facilitator (PDSA Consulting Inc.)

Future 2004 Baker Aquatic Meetings: May 13, June 10, July 8, August 12, September 9, October 14, November 11, December 9.

Next Policy Team Meetings: April 19 and April 27, both at the CottonTree Inn, in Mt. Vernon from 9:00 to 3:00.

Agenda for April 14, 2004 at the Red Lion in SeaTac (Start at 9:00 a.m.)

1. Review agenda, action items
2. Is SNF.04 “it”?
3. Potential Refinements to SNF.04:
 - Margaret’s suggested modifications (as per her 4/12/04 memo)
 - Ruth’s modifications (as per IHA analysis)
 - Other decisions?
4. PSE’s Flow Proposal
5. Next steps

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- Arnie: Send out draft language for PME 3.3.1 for all to review. We need to revise this to reflect our current direction with SNF.04.
- Cary: Share with the group any ideas on how to minimize costs of Dependable Capacity.
- Paul: By Aquatics Working Group Meeting on May 13, perform Additional HYDROPS Runs:
 - SNF.06 = Margaret's Refinement
 - SNF.07 = Ruth's Refinement
 - SNF.08 = Combination of Margaret's and Ruth's Refinements
- Paul: Button up with Margaret re: her run by April 26 (before she leaves for vacation).
- Phil: Send out revised Comparison Tables and post to eRoom (after QA/QC).
- Steve: Button up with Regional NMFS Office re: extending IPP. They touch base with folks re: expanding it to protect more than just Chinook. Get something to PSE re: schedule and flows by Friday, April 23.

OLD ACTION ITEMS

- Arnie sent out Instream Flows announcement of April 14, meeting from 9:00-12:00, including location.
- Cary verified that SNF.03 and .04 have been run with Skagit County's flood control storage of 150K acre feet. SNF.04 has been run with 150k and is in post processing. It will be posted to the eRoom later today.
- Lyn checked with the Cultural Working Group re: flexibility of water levels to protect cultural resources. There is no flexibility.
- Ruth emailed IHA handout to Phil and Arnie. She also emailed PSE's proposal to Margaret, Marian V., and Chuck. Thanks Ruth!

SNF.04

This run has a high flow escape hatch from October through December. There is no low flow escape hatch. The question was raised as to whether we need one for when Basin in-flow is low. If so, we would need a reservoir rule curve. The next step in considering this refinement would be to look at SNF.04 over a longer period of record (above the five representative years). This would be done in running a Level 4 Analysis. We'll do this to test final refinements.

We agreed to use SNF.04 as the basis for our proposed instream flow regime. There was great rejoicing!

Possible Refinements to SNF.04

Margaret explained a 4/12/04 memo she emailed asking for some adjustments to lake levels to accommodate recreational interests.

Ruth would like to suggest some refinements to these runs based on the IHA analysis. Ruth distributed a handout that she put together to explore impact on IHA factors. The goal of her analysis was to reduce the size of the hydrologic alteration numbers in certain places. The MIF would drop from 1,200 to 1,000 cfs between Oct. 21 and Mar. 1. Between May 1 and July 31, the MIF would increase to the capacity of what the two additional units could generate. There is also a high-flow escape hatch during April and May, set at 3% exceedance flow to Upper Baker (5,400 cfs).

PSE PROPOSAL

Flow Regime

Cary explained that PSE is proposing SNF.04. They can make it work economically if they slide the implementation of this regime out by five years. Approximately four years are assumed to be required for design and construction. There may be a concern with a slide of nine years, in terms of ESA issues.

Flood Control

The second piece of their proposal has to do with increased flood control. They are proposing SNF.04 with an additional 29K acre feet of storage at Lower Baker from Oct. 1 to Mar. 1. They would also provide for the existing 74K acre feet at Upper Baker. They feel this is an increment that will address the interests of all the stakeholders in the process. This proposal must be adopted by the USACE as PSE is not in the business of providing flood control. Chuck suggested that perhaps the Corps process can be speeded up. They support Skagit County's request for additional flood control if it is feasible and passes the environmental analysis. The timing of this analysis

The County is currently running an analysis of this proposal to see if it meets their needs.

SCHEDULE

We discussed the schedule between license issuance and full implementation of the flow regime. The clock starts at "license issuance". Between now and April 27, we need to understand ESA implications. We need to identify interim flow conditions. There were concerns with the current IPP being too Chinook specific.

Steve will talk with the NMFS Regional Office about extending the IPP. They/he'll discuss expanding it to other species. He'll also button up with others in what this might look like and get something (schedule and range of options) to PSE to consider by Friday, April 23. This will enable us all to have a good understanding of what our "handshake deal" looks like by the combo meeting on April 27.

HANDOUTS

- SNF.05 Scenario described in April 12, 2004 memo by Margaret Beilharz, USFS
- Comments on IHA Analysis of HYDROPS Runs, SNF.03 and SNF.04, authored by Ruth Mathews, The Nature Conservancy
- 4-14-04 Version of Table: Comparison of Economic, Hydrologic, and environmental effects of Alternative Operational Scenarios for the Baker River Project. *Note: Some of these numbers will change slightly as they go through the QA/QC process. In the next version, the FCA.01c will be renamed to PSE.20.*
- Cover Letter from Eric Markell, Sr. VP of PSE, that accompanied PSE proposal that was sent out end of the day on April 13.

NEXT STEPS

We will get an update on the latest HYDROPS runs at our next Aquatics Resources Working Group Meeting on May 13, 2004.