
BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Aquatic Resources Group/ BRICC

June 10, 2008 (9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.)

PSE Upper Baker Lodge

Conference Call Line: 1-888-228-0484, ID: 6058, Password: 12345

Please tell Arnie (425-462-3442 (w) or 206-276-0316 (c)) if you plan to call into meeting

AGENDA

1. Review notes/agenda/action items from May 13th, 2008 meeting	9:00 - 9:05
2. Recent Project Operations (PSE, Walsh)	9:05 - 9:15
3. Fry Releases (WDFW-Varney)	9:15 – 9:30
4. Decisions Required at Today's meeting (Detailed information Attached (if needed)) None [this is a placeholder for license implementation level decisions]	
5. Brief Updates Fish Facilities Operations Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Downstream Fish Passage Facilities Migration Update (PSE-Bruland)• Loading Plans-Sockeye Spawning Beach and AI Operations (WDFW)• Other, FPTWG <i>Break at 10:00</i>	9:30 – 10:00
6. Hatchery Update (90% Design Review)	10:05 – 11:05
7. Tour Briefing & Safety Orientation <i>Baker Lodge Lunch Provided at 11:15 - 1:15</i>	11:05 - 11:10
8. FSC Tour - Group 1 / Lunch - Group 2 FSC Tour - Group 2 / Lunch - Group 1	11:15 - 12:15 12:15 – 1:15
9. BRICC Meeting	1:30 – 3:30

Baker River Project License Implementation

Aquatics Resource Group Meeting Final Meeting Notes

June 10, 2008 ~ 9 am - 11 am
(followed by FSC tour and afternoon BRICC meeting)

Baker Lake Lodge

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

PRESENT

Arnie Aspelund, Cary Feldmann, Doug Bruland, Doug Koens, Jacob Venard, Dave Jenness, Tony Fuchs, Nick Verretto, Susan Berry, Gail Thompson, Willie Abadilia, Lynda Kupfer, Ginette Lacasse, Gene Galloway (by phone) and John Jensen (PSE); Mark Hunter, Ted Thygesen, Jed Varney, Rich Johnson, Brett Barkdull, and Kevin Kurras (WDFW); Jon-Paul Shannahan (Upper Skagit Tribe); Arn Thoreen (Skagit Fisheries); Steve Fransen (NOAA Fisheries); Stan Walsh, Rebecca Bernard & Bob Hayman (SRSC); Phil Hilgert (R2); Mort McMillen (McMillen Engineering); Bob Helton (Citizen); Craig Olson and Kari Neumeyer (NW Indian Fisheries Comm.); Lou Ellyn Jones (USFWS); Stan Zyskowski (NPS); Jeff McGowan (Skagit Co.); Lyn Wiltse and Jamie Riche (PDSA Consulting, Inc.); and members of the Magic Hour Production team.

NEXT ARG MEETING: July 8, 2008, Mill Creek, WA

Then second Tuesdays, (*except Nov. mtg. is on a Thurs*): Aug. 12, Sept. 9, Oct. 14, *Nov. 13 (Th)*, Dec. 9

NEW ACTION ITEMS:

- Arnie: Schedule a reliability / Mid-C study / climate change dialogue for an upcoming ARG meeting
- All: Send hatchery design feedback to Arnie.

PREVIOUS, STILL RELEVANT, ACTION ITEMS:

- Nick: Send First-Year Performance biological study presentation (May meeting) to all.
- Arnie: After the summer field season, bring together smolt capacity study teamlet (Arnie, Stan, R2).
- Jed: Follow up with Scott Lentz re. Beach 3 release sites.
- Rich: By end of June get with Co-Managers re. release sites beyond Beach 3.

MEETING VIDEOGRAPHY

PSE is in the process of documenting the Baker Story and the construction/deployment of the FSC. A film crew from Magic Hour Production joined us for the first part of the meeting.

BAKER PROJECT OPERATIONS

Gene Galloway (PSE) phoned in to share an update about system reliability and recent Baker operations.

PSE has an obligation to provide system reliability (per NERC/WEC/FERC). This includes maintaining “spinning reserves” ..., which is power generation that can be put into the system on little notice to provide system reliability by moderating fluctuations / reductions in load. The spinning reserves are normally (about 95% of the time) accomplished with hydro projects on the mid-Columbia.

There are exceptionally high inflows across the entire northwest, and during the last 30 days, mid-C projects have been maxed out due to high runoff. PSE has purchased reserves from Canada and is now having to turn to Upper Baker, Lower Baker, Snoqualmie, and CT projects (Fredonia and Frederickson) to fill the gap and maintain adequate reserve. This is expected to continue over the next several weeks. In the meantime, to provide additional space and flexibility, PSE has curtailed wind power, Colstrip and hydro operations. PSE is currently spilling at Snoqualmie and Lower Baker, but is not generating at capacity in order to create and maintain reserve.

Concern was expressed about the impact of the mid-C ten year study (we’re in year two) *which puts the mid-C projects under a no spill constraint. Under a no spill constraint the mid-C projects can not be used for spinning reserve during periods of high flow. This results in an* extreme number of downramps *in the Baker River when Lower Baker must be used for spinning reserve.* We will schedule a presentation and dialogue (by this fall) for planning purposes about this, also taking into consideration the impacts of climate change. *A desire was expressed to avoid the large number of daily downramps seen at the Baker this May and June during next year’s mid-C study.*

FRY RELEASES

Jed (WDFW) shared the team’s work to investigate the source of some problems with AI (artificial incubation) and beach sockeye fry releases this year. It appears that releasing them into flowing water is not effective. Releases at the upper location of Channel Creek seem to be more successful. Our determinations to release have been made largely on size; we need to consider more than this (they may not be ready, even if they are the right size).

We will vet this more thoroughly at our next meeting; in the meantime, if you have additional information about fry release and successful strategies please connect with Jed. Snow levels delayed the Beach 3 teamlet; Rich will be convening this team now that access is improved.

FISH PASSAGE MIGRATION

Doug Bruland (PSE) walked us through the migration data and noted that we’re at 53% and 60% recapture with freeze-branded groups of Coho – which is a bit more than what we typically get. We expect this percentage to increase, maybe 10% by the end of the month.

Lower Baker Coho freeze brands are at 6.5%; we are in the middle of the migration and have spilled at LB (which affects the count). We noted that this is low.

The Sockeye ad-clipped group is nearing the end of the run; have recovered 40k of the December release (nearly 80%), which includes some that may have been residualized and migrated the following year. We are at about 235,000 total out-migrated Sockeye so far, which is the second highest ever (2006 holds the record). This represents an important milestone for FSC operations (success!); we also have evidence that the guide-nets are pretty “fish tight.” There was much rejoicing across the land...

LOADING PLAN

Kevin Kurras reported the Beach 4 sockeye adult loading plan is 950 per beach section (3,800 total), 4,000 to Baker Lake, 1,400-1,500 to AI program. Kevin shared that the manufacturer of our troubled counters has discontinued the model. He has talked with a Canadian company that has new technology that is promising; he is also exploring options with other manufacturers.

HATCHERY 90% DESIGN

Dave Jenness (PSE) shared that we expect to be at 100% design in mid-July, final by mid-August. At this time, PSE is actively in permitting with Whatcom County. There will be another update to the ARG this fall. Mort walked the group through an updated (90%) design with a photo-tour type representation of the current 3D design model. The 90% design drawings were submitted to participants and available for review at this meeting. Mort has been reviewing these illustrations with the crew and is making improvements based on their feedback.

FISH PASSAGE – FLOATING SURFACE COLLECTOR TOURS

Nick and Arnie walked the group briefly through the highlights folks will see on their tours of the FSC. Nick noted that the Lower Baker fish “gulper” is slated for replacement in 2012, so he asked that folks keep an eye out for design improvements that can be applied to the next structure. John Jensen (Baker Plant manager) reviewed safety instructions, and the group split into groups for the tour.

ADULT FISH TRAP

Cary shared that FERC called for a new or amended license before going forward with construction on the adult fish trap, so that project has been moved back a year to 2009.

HANDOUTS

- Agenda, Notes, 2008 Meeting Schedule
- ARG Representative List
- USGS Skagit River gage graph
- 2008 Upper and Lower Baker Juvenile trap data & graphs (5 handouts)
- Final Beach 4 Fry Production 2007-08
- Baker Fish Rearing Inventory
- 90% Fish Hatchery Design Review package

AGENDA FOR NEXT ARG MEETING (more later –stay tuned)

July 8, 2008; WDFW-Mill Creek office

1. Welcome, review notes, action items, agenda
2. Fry Release Strategies (30 minutes)
3. Fish Operational Updates (30 minutes)
4. Other implementation updates
5. Evaluate meeting, set next meeting agenda & location