



## *Baker River Project License Implementation* **Terrestrial Resource Implementation Group**

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### **PRESENT**

Tony Fuchs, Tom Flynn, Scott Heller, Haley Edwards, Mel Walters, and Ira McDaniel (PSE); Stan Walsh (SRSC); Theresa Mathis (USFS); Peter McBride (Swinnomish); Brock Applegate by phone (WDFW); Bob Nelson by phone (RMEF); and Jamie Riche, facilitator (PDSA).

**DECISIONS TODAY:** none

### **2013 TRIG MEETINGS**

Quarterly - Sept. 5 and Dec. 5 – with conference calls to be scheduled as needed.

### **OTHER MEETINGS**

- July 12 VIP Celebration at Lower Baker
- July 20 Concrete Community Day
- Sept. 9 TRIG Meeting
- Oct. 23 BRCC Meeting (at Snoqualmie)

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- All Consider monitoring activities to include in the 514 plan, share with Tony
- Tony Schedule a 514 teamlet; Theresa, Peter, & Brock expressed interest
- Tony Distribute the draft 514 plan to the TRIG in early August
- Tony Queue up a decision to adopt the 514 plan as the TRIG's working document
- All Review the draft 514 plan, come to the 9/9 TRIG meeting ready to finalize and adopt plan
- All If you want more information about potential land acquisitions, contact Tony, Ira, or Ray; Tony is happy to share the parcel numbers
- Tony Check WDFW's perspective on the latest potential acquisitions

### **PREVIOUS - STILL RELEVANT - ACTION ITEMS:**

- Haley Confirm that the 502/514 Survey Report was emailed to the full TRIG
- Tony Create a draft prioritization and schedule for the projects on the Alder Creek DNR LTA road plan for the TRIG's review and consideration (review at Sept. 2013 meeting)
- Stan Coordinate mtg between PSE and the Tribes re: access on acquired lands (still in the works)

### **UPDATE ON PREVIOUS ACTION ITEMS**

- Brock, Peter, and Chris D. all shared Goshawk protocols with Tony (thank you!)
- The site visits to acquired lands were nicely organized, well attended, and got positive reviews all around. Thank you, Tony.

### **SAFETY MOMENT**

The group acknowledged the death of State Trooper Sean O'Connell, who was struck by a car on the detour route around the Skagit bridge collapse. Today is Officer O'Connell's memorial and several TRIG members

saw the troopers gathering in preparation for the service. It serves as a good reminder to be extra cautious and attentive when driving in construction or detour conditions.

### **BRCC / LICENSING UPDATE**

The fourth Wednesdays will continue to be reserved for BRCC conference calls as needed. In-person meetings are scheduled semi-annually (spring and fall). Tom shared a few highlights from the recent BRCC meeting, noting that there was great attendance and participation. BRCC members celebrated recent accomplishments, talked about policy-level questions, and focused on cross-team projects. The next in-person BRCC meeting is scheduled for October 23 in Snoqualmie.

### **Botanical Update**

Scott reported that the last Botanical Teamlet meeting was April 11. They talked about herb Robert sites and the challenges related to treatment. They decided to focus on high-priority sites (those that are small in size, further up the lake, and those that match Forest Service triggers). Scott has visited several of those sites and he shared highlights. The county does not list herb Robert as a high-priority species because it is so common, but it is a higher priority on Forest Service lands because it is treatable and it aggressively crowds out other plants if left to its own devices.

The botanical teamlet decided to survey, document, and treat a variety of bull thistle sites this year, prioritizing the sites that are not scheduled for review again until 2016 and 2018. They also took a field trip with Shauna Hee (USFS) to review the Reed Canary site scheduled for treatment this fall and spring in advance of willow plantings next fall. The Reed Canary Grass that was treated at WB 17 mostly has not returned.

An egg mass survey in March gave much the same results as last year (no Oregon spotted frogs), so there aren't any additional egg mass surveys planned unless conditions change. Scott also noted that this is a *Carex flava* census year, and that work is scheduled the week of July 29. Scott pulled ivy at the spawning beach decommissioning sites. He thinks the trees will be saved. He also went to Alder Creek June 3 to flag and treat wild chervil. It is spread over 7.5 acres. He noted that they weren't able to treat all of it, but they focused on elk trails and other areas of greatest risk of spread.

The plants of special status plan has been updated with new photos and status updates. He will be sending it to Shauna.

### **Osprey, Loon Updates**

Haley reminded the group that this will be the second of a two-year cycle of song bird monitoring at Alder Creek. She suggests scheduling a similar set of surveys for unit 2 at Burpee Hill, and suggested waiting until next year to start there. Theresa asked if we were planning work on Burpee Hill that might impact our desired timing. Peter asked for clarification of the surveys' purpose, which Haley confirmed was to establish a baseline. TRIG agreed to run the surveys at Burpee Hill, and to wait until next year to start.

She showed the chart of osprey surveys. Mel noted that the ospreys have moved to the topped trees for their nests, which is great. Geese have moved into the bowls. One tried to nest in one of the topped trees, too, but osprey had taken over that nest by the second survey. The next osprey survey will give us a better idea of nest utilization.

She also showed the results from the first four loon surveys. Seven birds have been observed on Baker Lake (none on Lake Shannon, yet this year). Haley showed a map of the distribution and folks agreed that this year's activity is consistent with what we've seen before. She showed photos of the loon nesting platforms, which continue to attract geese. There has not been any observed loon nesting activity.

### **Legacy Wood Update**

Haley showed photos of elk forage habitat / legacy wood opportunities in the eastern parcel of Alder Creek. Tony noted that some of the trees that were preserved there would make lovely snags.

Haley and Scott went on a site visit to unit 2 of Burpee Hill and identified six potential sites for legacy wood creation. She showed a map of the parcel with the sites identified and additional comments for each site. She noted that we already have the conditions we want in several places on this site, so the suggested modifications are minimal. Brock noted the proximity of residential sites to the fifth site on the map; Tony and Haley will look at that more closely. Peter noted that downed wood is a safe way to develop legacy wood. Ira noted that there is a permit associated with this parcel, allowing neighbors to maintain limited access, so it is good to be extra cautious in that area. Haley and others familiar with the contractor agreed that they are qualified to ensure that any tree modifications are done safely and thoughtfully.

#### **SA 514**

Tony reminded the group about the purpose of SA 514, which allocates three payments of \$100k each for monitoring the effectiveness of the group's work. Article 514 focuses on articles 502 (Forest), 503 (Elk), and 504 (Wetlands) since articles 506 (Osprey), 507 (Loons), and 513 (Eagles) already include monitoring requirements.

The overarching SA 514 management plan was completed a few years ago. An implementation procedures plan is due this October (license year five). Tony reminded the group that a teamlet of the TRIG met several times when this work was first started a couple years ago. TRIG decided to set this work aside for a while to focus on the more time-sensitive work related to acquired lands.

With the 514 implementation doc due this October, Tony and his team have dusted off that original work and added to it to create a preliminary draft for the TRIG's review. He emailed that draft to the TRIG yesterday and walked the group through a high level review to orient folks to the purpose and layout. This 514 implementation document will include a schedule for specific monitoring actions, timing of each monitoring period, monitoring criteria, suggested scope based on budget, and reporting format.

Theresa asked for a summary of management purposes by parcel; she also noted the lack of specificity related to goals. The group talked about the different purposes of the various, related documents: 514 Management Plan, the upcoming 514 implementation doc, and the Management Program docs for Alder Creek and Burpee Hill. The group also talked about the relationship between the documents and the appropriate level of detail for each at some length before agreeing that it would be appropriate to pull together a teamlet to delve into the questions further. Theresa, Peter, and Brock expressed an interest in participating.

Stan also noted that the Article 505 group talked about monitoring at their last meeting. They agreed that they want to avoid overburdening the work with monitoring requirements, but they do want to know two things about each funded project, essentially: "did you do what you said you would do?" and, "did you get the result you anticipated? (was it worth it?)" Their thinking may be helpful here.

Tony will coordinate a 514 teamlet meeting. Once that team has done their work, he will email the completed draft of the 514 implementation doc to the full TRIG in early August to give folks time to review it prior to the TRIG meeting. At that September 9 meeting, TRIG will review it and incorporate any suggested changes to the draft and there will be a vote to adopt the plan as our working / "living" document.

#### **Land Acquisition Update**

Ira updated the TRIG on his work with Ray (RMEF) to go back through the list of properties the TRIG has considered for acquisition. They reviewed all of those properties and reprioritized that list as needed. They stay in contact with the large landowners and continue to review other properties in the area with TRIG's interests in mind. He shared information about the parcels they think are most promising and asked for the TRIG's input about several potential parcels to guide his and Ray's next steps.

Details about acquisition activities are not included in the TRIG's notes. If you have questions, please contact Ira, Tony, or Ray directly. Tony would be happy to give you the parcel numbers for the properties that were discussed today.

### **Alder Creek Update**

Tony showed photos from the recent work at Alder Creek. He moved through this quickly since everyone has been on site recently thanks to the site visits mentioned earlier. Tony updated the group on the summer plans for the replanted pasture areas. The thistle is growing faster than the grass, so he suggests mowing the thistle down a second time this summer to give the grass time to take over. Theresa asked if mowing was an appropriate treatment; Scott confirmed that it is and Mel added his support based on a relative's positive experience eliminating thistle in a similar situation.

### **Burpee Hill**

Tony reminded the group that Step One of the Long Term Application was reviewed and accepted back in January. He and his team have been working the last several months on filling in the documents related to Step Two of the process. Step One was focused on an inventory of current conditions. Step Two is focused on planned activities. Tony projected the draft map of management / harvest units, pointing out the proposed locations of wildlife reserve / green tree areas, the wetland buffers, and the location of the goshawk nest.

Tony noted that DNR may require an HPA before allowing the bridge replacement on this site. For Alder Creek, DNR did not require engineering drawings for the culvert replacements as long as the work would be completed to DNR standards. He is hopeful that this may be sufficient again for the Long Term application.

### **Goshawk Survey Update**

Tony reported that he, Chris D., Peter, and Haley conducted a first survey of habitat near the goshawk nest tree on Burpee Hill. They followed the Kennedy-Stahlecker Protocol broadcast globalization method, using the adult alarm call from a variety of calling stations around the nest tree. They will follow up with another survey June 20, and will add some additional calling stations to meet Brock's request. Brock pointed out that protocol requires two surveys over two years, so they need to schedule a second survey of the added sites so that all the sites surveyed this year will have two rounds of survey. Tony and Peter will coordinate. They plan to add dawn acoustical surveys next spring to augment the data from the broadcast surveys.

### **Large Woody Debris Update**

Jacob sent out draft guidelines for the allocation of large woody debris via email in May. Tony reminded folks that BRCC members (or others, as long as they are sponsored by a BRCC member) may request LWD for aquatic or terrestrial habitat restoration projects located within the Skagit River Basin.

Stan noted that there should be a process in place for maintaining an inventory of LWD by size class so folks know what is available. He suggested this might be piggybacked with the 505 Aquatic / Riparian annual review process. He and Brock wondered if it would be appropriate to prioritize 505 projects.

### **Work Plan Update**

Tony noted that the 2013 activities have closely matched the plan outlined with the TRIG in March. The 2014 work plan will be reviewed at our December meeting.

### **Budget Update – O&M Funds:**

- 502 – No money spent on O&M this year
- 503 – Spent 24k on Burpee Hill DNR work and Alder Creek pasture work; after the remaining DNR work, there will be about \$20k left in the Elk O&M fund, which will be spend on road work and mowing
- 504 Wetlands – Got a big infusion of O&M funds this year (\$140k plus almost \$16k in escalation). FYI - Plans haven't been established, yet, for wetland enhancement work. Stan noted that there isn't

a hurry to spend this money. At some point, the resource teams may decide to reallocate all or a portion of that money for wetland acquisition. Stan also suggested that Lou Ellyn may have thoughts on this. Tony noted that we would want to be careful since this enhancement money must last the life of the license and it would be frustrating to spend our enhancement money on acquisition and then be unable to complete future desired enhancement.

- 514 – Only expenditure has been the song bird monitoring
- 602- \$8,172 is available in the TERF fund. SA 602 outlines the use and guidelines related to these funds

#### **Budget Update – Capital Funds:**

- 502 – \$154k, nothing spent this year
- 503 – \$1,031,011; about \$6k has been spent on Ray and Ira. Next infusion of cash comes in next year, and will bring the account to about \$2.5 million.
- 504 – \$67,190
- 505 – \$2,430,395

#### **Meeting Evaluation – Worked Well**

- The new order of agenda items is great (short updates first, meaty dialogue next, work plan review and budget update at the end)
- Lunch choice and quantity are good; thanks, Tony.
- Facilitation was “adequate” :)
- Got out early

#### **Meeting Evaluation – Do Differently**

- Yowza! Technology was a significant distraction today. (Thanks, Brock, for hanging in!)
- Now that we’re on a quarterly schedule, start each agenda item with a brief overview / refresher (give context before details).
- Please include some protein with breakfast snacks.
- More time for dialogue about potential acquisitions

#### **Draft TRIG Agenda, September 9, 2013**

- Welcome, Safety, Agenda, Action Items
- License / BRCC Update
- Botanical Update
- Osprey, Loons, Legacy Wood Updates
- 514 Implementation Plan – review edits, adopt (decision?)
- Acquisition Update
- Work Plan Update
  - Alder Creek, including prioritized road plan
  - Burpee Hill
- Budget Update