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## **BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE**

### **Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group Meeting**

**August 21, 2001 (8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.)  
(Bring Sack Lunch)**

**U.S. Forest Service Office  
21905 64th Avenue West  
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043  
Monte Cristo Conf. Rm. 425-744-3236 (office # 425-775-9702)**

### **AGENDA**

Review notes/revise agenda
Action items
Study Plans: Finalize T-5, review RT-12, RT-16,
Progress report on field studies
Progress report on T-4, mapping (general)
Review Study Requests for 2002
Review Parking Lot
Consider Carl's Northwest Forest Plan/Watershed Analysis presentation (for October mtg?)
Set agenda and location for September 18 (new US Forest Service Office, Sedro-Woolley, start at 9am), and October 16, (WDFW Office, Mill Creek?)
Evaluate meeting

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## BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

### Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group

August 21, 2001

8:30 am – 2:00 p.m.

USFS Office, Mountlake Terrace, WA

### FINAL MEETING NOTES

**Mission:** *“To develop alternative solutions and recommendations, addressing terrestrial and wildlife resource interests for the Baker River Project and its operations, leading to a settlement agreement that:*

- 1. accurately defines and describes the existing environment in relationship to the previous environment;*
- 2. identifies project effects (existing and proposed) leading to development of protection, mitigation, and enhancement options.”*

**Team Leader:** Tony Fuchs (Phone) 425-462-3553, [tfuchs@puget.com](mailto:tfuchs@puget.com)

### ATTENDEES

Tony Fuchs (Puget Sound Energy), Patrick Goldsworthy (North Cascades Conservation Council), Lauri Vigue (WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife), Martin Vaughn (Biota Pacific), Bob Nelson (Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation), Tom Hamer (Hamer Environmental), Robert Kuntz (National Park Service), Ann Risvold (U.S. Forest Service), Stan Walsh, (Skagit Systems Cooperative), Lyn Wiltse, facilitator (PDSA Consulting)

### SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS:

September 18	Sedro-Woolley USFS new office - Start at 9:00a.m.
October 16	Mill Creek WDFW office (Mountlake Terrace USFS office as alternate?)
November 15	Lacey USFWS? - Start at 9:00 a.m.
December 18	Mountlake Terrace
January 24, 2002	<b><i>Switch to 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month for 2002???</i></b>

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## **AGENDA**

**August 21, 2001, 8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.**

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

1. Review notes/agenda
2. Action Items
3. Study Plans:
  - Finalize T5
  - Review RT-12, RT-16
  - Report on Field Progress (T2)
4. Progress on T4, mapping T2, T5, T15, T17
5. Review 2002 Study Requests
6. Review Parking Lot
7. Set agenda and location for September 18 (new US Forest Service Office, Sedro-Woolley)  
October 16, WDFW Office, Mill Creek Start at 9:00 a.m.
  - Consider Carl's Northwest Forest Plan/Watershed Analysis (October?)
8. Evaluate meeting

### **• NEW ACTION ITEMS**

- Ann: Confirm with Don our September 18, meeting at USFS office at Sedro-Woolley (9:00-2:00)
- Lauri: Check Lacey/Mill Creek locations for October and November meetings.
- Lauri: Let Lyn know if she needs to follow up with Fred re: Lacey meeting location for November 15.
- Tony, Tom, Don: Look at re-writing RT-12
- Tony: Work with Lauri to draft study request for Phase II of T-5
- Lyn: Check with Don and Fred re: changing meeting dates to fourth Fridays
- Tom: Email handouts to Tony to include within the minutes.
- Patrick: Get more climate-related information
- Tony: Contact Laurel and Bill re: RT3, RT6 re: Can they revise/consolidate the study requests for the group to review and then be better prepared to address questions at our November meeting?
- Tom: Update T4 matrix and send to Tony to distribute to members for comment/review.

### **REPORT ON PAST ACTION ITEMS**

- ALL: Reviewed initial spread sheet for T-4 and note which species exist in the Basin or in the area effected by the project. (If you know it's there put "y" for yes or "n" for no with your initials by it. Leave blank if you don't know. Add any species present in the area but not on the list.)
- Lauri: Drafted study request for BBS.
- Ann: Drafted study request for RT-16.
- Tom: Review T-17 protocol with Fred Seavey re: next steps.
- Tony: Contacted Stan, Fred, Steve, and Gary re: finalized study plans from today. Got nods of approval.
- Lauri: Got data from Lewis River process re: Wetland monitoring protocol.
- Tom: Incorporated edits into Working Group approved study plans, sent to Tony who distributed them.
- Ann: Got Tom list of Forest Service sensitive species, focus on vascular plants.

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## **RESERVOIR FLUCTUATION ZONE – RELATED STUDIES**

Tony reported that studies in the drawdown zone will have to be conducted in spring of 2002 since reservoir levels have remained high through the summer.

### **STATUS OF:**

#### **R-T5: Wetland Inventory Study**

This plan was approved with some additional edits. The next version will be the “Working Group Approved Final Study Plan”.

#### **R-T16: Project Area Rare Plant Survey**

Ann explained that the intent is to apply to National Forest and other lands. This study uses Forest Service protocols and lists of species from Forest Service and Natural Heritage. Level 2 and Level 5 surveys are proposed. Descriptions of these levels, along with the lists of the botanical species of concern were included in an addendum to this study. There was discussion re: the scope of the study. Ann will reassess the areas that would be surveyed – specifically, how much of suitable habitat would be surveyed, based on potential/current project impacts. Are Level 2 surveys needed? What are the Forest Service NEPA requirements?

#### **R-T2: Vegetation Mapping in Project Area**

Tom distributed a progress report of the work being done on this study, which began on July 17 and is expected to conclude by summer 2002. (See attached).

#### **R-T15: Basin Vegetation Mapping**

Joetta is awaiting a couple more data sets from Crown Pacific/DNR. When she gets those we will convene a Technical Work Group to review the plots and determine next steps (decide which database to use). Looking at October time frame.

#### **RT 18: Breeding Bird Survey**

Lauri shared with the group references for protocols. This methodology is based on singing adult males. It wouldn't cover the drawdown zone, e.g. waterfowl, shorebirds, waders etc. Perhaps we should use this survey to get baseline data on abundance and distribution. Maybe we should modify Partners in Flight protocol – to do variable circular plots to get densities.

Bob suggested we add a vegetation protocol to get at structural data often missed by plant surveys. We may want to cover “project vicinity” (beyond project area.). Lauri's intention with this survey is for developing baseline information for potential PM&E discussion/measures. She will re-work this draft and we will review it in September.

### **LAND USE:**

The Recreation Working Group will take the lead on land use. Much of that information will be relevant to studies/recommendations this Working Group makes.

#### **T4: Analysis Species Assessment – Technical Working Group Notes:**

Aim of Matrix – to help us identify priorities species for potential purposes of:

- HEP Studies

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- Possible P/M/Es
  - Further/more detailed studies
  - Analyze for project effects
  - Documented/defendable list

**Matrix:**

Column 1: Answer    ‘C’ - for Current  
                               ‘H’ - for Historic – “Pre-project” 1920 or earlier  
                               ‘B’ - for Both  
                               ‘N’ - for Neither  
                               ‘DK’ -for Don’t Know

Column 2: Change wording to ‘Present in Project Boundary’  
                               Use same codes as described above.

Make State & Federal Column into Federal Status  
                               Use Federal codes e.g., ‘endangered’ or ‘threatened’

Combine Forest Service Columns into a single column  
                               Use codes to distinguish

Make PHS into State column  
                               Use codes to distinguish

**OTHER POTENTIAL 2002 STUDIES**

- Elk foraging
- BBS (breeding bird survey)I
- HEP
- Riparian habitat
- Side channel/Off channel habitat Lower Skagit
- Previous studies submitted on Study Request forms

**HANDOUTS**

- Progress Report on Amphibian Surveys (T17) – 8-17-01
- Final Study Plan: Wetland Inventory Study T-5
- Rare Plant Surveys, RT-16
- Spread sheet for R-T4 – Analysis Species Assessment
- Vegetation Mapping in the Project Area (T2) – Progress Report –8-16-01

**PARKING LOT**

- Conceptual Mitigation Approach (P/M/Es)
- Review time frame/goals of working groups/milestones

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- Definitions of “project boundary” , “project effects” , “previous environment”, “project area”, NEPA definitions
  - Watershed Analysis Presentation
  - Land Management – Do study?
  - Make list of all available relevant data. Create a subset of those data for Tony to always bring to meetings for group to continually reference.
  - Are transmission lines in or out of FERC boundary?
  - Changing Climate Patterns

## **MEETING EVALUATION**

### **Well Dones:**

- Got out early
- Technical Working Group last hour
- Sushi! Yum!
- Food variety
- Scheduled through January 2002
- Changing schedule to accommodate others.
- Changing locations

### **Need for Improvement:**

- Missed Don and Fred
- Tony was a little wound up
- Remind members of start time (8:30 or 9:00)

## **TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

**Location: USFS Office Sedro-Woolley, WA**

**September 18, 2001, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.**

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

1. Review notes/agenda
2. Action Items
3. Study Plans:
  - T4 (invertebrates?), 2, 5, 17, 15, 11, 13
4. Study Requests:
  - RT12, RT18, other new requests as they come in.
5. Solution Team Technical Working Group Update
6. Set agenda and confirm location for October 16 meeting
7. Evaluate meeting

## **SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR THE OCTOBER 16, 2001 MEETING**

- Carl's Presentation
- RT6: Noxious Weed Survey
- RT16: Rare Plant Survey
- Land Use Update

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- Data Management – November meeting?