



BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Recreational & Aesthetic Resources Working Group

March 25, 2002

9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

USFS Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Headquarters
21905 64th Ave. West
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043

AGENDA

1. Review/revise minutes/agenda
2. Review action items
 - Is it spring yet? (re: traffic monitoring)
 - GIS teamlet report
 - Data teamlet report
3. Update on existing studies: R9, R14, R11, R15
4. Evaluate 2001 data
5. Identify 2002 study needs
6. Set agenda and location for next meeting (March 25)
7. Evaluate meeting

BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Recreational & Aesthetic Resources Working Group

March 25, 2002

9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

USFS Office, Mountlake Terrace, WA

FINAL MEETING NOTES

Mission: *“To develop alternative solutions and recommendations addressing recreation, education and aesthetic resources related to the Baker River Project and its operations leading to a settlement agreement.”*

Team Leader: Chris Lawson (Huckell/Weinman Associates) (425) 828-4463,
clawson@huckellweinman.com

PSE Contact: Tony Fuchs: (425) 462-3553, tfuchs@puget.com

PRESENT

Chris Lawson (Huckell/Weinman Associates), Tony Fuchs (PSE), Jim Eychaner (Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation), Rod Mace (Forest Service), Ann Dunphy (Forest Service), Andy Hatfield (PSE), Lyn Wiltse, facilitator, PDSA Consulting Inc.

SCHEDULE CHANGES AND MEETING LOCATIONS:

April 22 will be at USFS Office in Mountlake Terrace. We will start at **9:00 and go until 2:30.**

Other 2002 dates: May 20 (at Mt. Vernon or Sedro-Woolley), June 24, July 22, August 26, Sept. 23, October 28, November 18, December 16.

NOTE: *Be prepared to report on action taken on Action Items at our next meeting.*

AGENDA FOR MARCH MEETING

March 25, 2002 Agenda –USFS Office in Mountlake Terrace.

9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

NOTE: BRING LUNCH; BE PREPARED TO WORK THROUGH

-
1. Review/revise minutes/agenda
 2. Review Action Items
 - Is it spring yet?
 - GIS Teamlet Report
 - Data Teamlet Report
 3. Update on Existing Studies (R9, R14, R11, R15)
 4. Evaluate 2001 Data
 5. Identify 2002 field study needs
 6. Set agenda and location for next meeting (April 22 at MLT)
 7. Evaluate meeting

INTRODUCTIONS

We welcomed Rod Mace, new Forest Service representative. Rod is with the USFS National Hydropower Assistance Team, and was asked to fill in today because Ardis would not be able to attend and Ann's participation time would be limited.

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- ALL: Review description of visioning exercise in R16 Needs Analysis Study Plan
- ALL: Come with questions for 2001 data analysis
- Rod: Get Chris contact for electric-eye counters
- Chris: See if Sedro-Woolley or Mt. Vernon location is available for our May 20 meeting
- Chris: Secure contact from Whatcom and Skagit Counties.
- Chris: Get with teamlet of Ann (with Ardis and Jim as backups) re: integrating market analysis into needs analysis.
- Chris: Talk to John (Lindsay) re: re-installation of electronic traffic counters.
- Chris: Contact Mark M. of DNR re: relevant data
- Ann: Find out current Forest Service direction on access management, and send Chris a copy of the Forest Service ATM plan
- Tony: Send information to members on how to retrieve boat ramp photos electronically.
- Chris: Invite Nancy to our April meeting
- Tony: Provide dispersed recreation site map with site location/codes.
- Chris: Check with Ann to see if she needs help with the aesthetics study.
- Andy: Review comment card information re: reservoir levels.
- Andy: Add data field to comment cards

REPORT ON OLD ACTION ITEMS

- Jim: Sent Chris data on Draft SCORP Report (Board Review Draft of State wide survey of 15 different activity areas) and Chris sent it out to team members. This report is public. Anyone is invited to send comments by May 31.
- Chris: On March 12, met with Ardis, Jim, Susan and Ann re: reviewing survey data coverage and formulating survey data queries

-
- Tony: On March 22, had conference call with Chris, Ann, R2 re: sharing resources for GIS mapping. They reviewed different GIS layers the Forest Service has. Wetland and rare plant layers are being put together by the Terrestrial Working Group and the stream routing and barrier mapping is being done by the Aquatic Working Group. The Forest Service is working on the suitability analysis, looking for areas where new recreation could be sited in the Baker Lake area. We will use the same data as those provided by the Forest Service. The Recreation Working Group will be responsible for gathering and analyzing the data for Lake Shannon, using the same data layers as those used by the Forest Service for Baker Lake. We will be also be reviewing the analysis done by the Forest Service for Baker Lake. Ann thought the Forest Service might have some preliminary data for us to review in the next few months.
 - Tony: At Team Leader Meeting brought up toilets vs. parking lot

NEW MEMBER

Ken Howard (Anacortes resident with second home above Lake Shannon) has expressed interest in joining this team. He has good Skagit County contacts and awareness of local land use issues. He would be more likely to be able to attend meetings at northern locations (e.g., Mt. Vernon or Sedro-Woolley).

EXISTING STUDIES UPDATE

R9 RECREATION USE SURVEY – ELECTRONIC MONITORING

Andy reported that as soon as he gets the equipment back, it can probably be installed on Road 11 and on Road 1107 on the far side of the dam (past the Crown gate). The main road is now open up to Boulder Creek.

R11: RECREATION CAPACITY AND SUITABILITY ANALYSIS & R15: RECREATIONAL TRAIL ROUTING

Primary activity was GIS teamlet (refer to teamlet report) in action items above.

R7 +R8 = R14: SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION

Little activity in past month, focus on survey results from 2001 field studies.

R16: NEEDS ANALYSIS

In reviewing survey responses from local vs. non-local users, we decided to define “local” as Skagit County. PacifiCorp determined that “local” use constituted most of the dispersed camping in the Lewis River area. We are also going to examine the up-river component of local users separately.

PacifiCorp instituted a modest (\$3/day) day-use fee at Lewis River developed recreation sites and found it reduced vandalism by 90%. Local people complained about the fee. The IAC regards fees as just another tool in the management tool kit.

At our April meeting, we will work on fleshing out specific plans for the visioning exercise that is described in the study plan.

PROJECT-INDUCED RECREATION DISCUSSION

After some discussion, we agreed that we don’t think it necessary at this time to come up with an

operational definition re: project-induced recreation. Instead we could agree that we will use data from studies to guide further discussion on this topic. The Cultural and Terrestrial Working Groups may need to look for connections (to the Project) within their own resource areas. The dispersed campsite map we processed is simply an indication of the area we did studies on.

Down the road all Working Groups need to make a distinction between “association” and “causality”. Some believe it may be impossible to separate the impacts of the project vs. management decisions. The consensus of the group is that we will collaborate to come up with P/M/Es to address what we believe to be project impacts.

2001 DATA

Chris distributed summaries of the 2001 study data that Nancy has tabulated so far. We were surprised to see such high numbers of “rare to none” in the summary of human/animal/ waste and trash. Chris reminded us that the initial surveys were done in May, prior to most of the use from the 2001 season, and that some sites were not used much. These numbers may also reflect the clean up efforts that occurred in the basin last year. We may want to supplement these data with an occasional spot check during the busy season. It was suggested that we form a teamlet to review the 2001 data when these summaries are complete. This teamlet would review the data and make recommendations re: 2002 data requirements. This teamlet will meet during our regularly scheduled meeting April 22.

We also briefly reviewed the manual traffic count data. It will be more meaningful to look at these in combination with the completed electronic traffic count data when they become available.

Chris also distributed examples of completed observation data summaries. These data have also been put into an Access database, and summary information is being developed.

POTENTIAL 2002 DATA NEEDS

- Aesthetics data
- Supplemental field study needs
 - We will probably rely on existing data on trailheads (per decision by teamlet at March 12 meeting/conference call)
 - Lake level information? (aesthetics component)

2002 STUDY NEEDS

- Lake elevation impacts
- Other parameters we want to have modeled
- Land use/management (need study request)
- Aesthetics (need study request)

HANDOUTS

- Existing Studies Status Report 3/25/02
- Project-Induced Recreation Discussion (March 25, 2002)

-
- 2001 Data Status Report 3/25/02
 - Traffic Count Totals by Location
 - Baker River Site Inventory Study Dispersed Sites (Sec. 4 Human Use Condition, Sec. 6 Visual Setting and Sec. 7 Shoreline Conditions)
 - O-3 Site Occupancy, Number of Observations
 - O-3 Site Occupancy, Number Times the Sites have been Occupied
 - (Dispersed Sites) Summary for Vehicles and Boats, RVs and Tents

PARKING LOT

- Operationally define “project induced”
- Tie education piece to ALL Working Groups
- Hold periodic “outreach” meetings for feedback from other groups (hiking, horseback riding, etc.)
- Land Management
- Forest Service presentation of SMS
- Trailhead surveys
- Have demonstration of Charles Howard Operational Model (this April?)
- Refer to April 26, 2000 Interest List.
- R5 – Aesthetics
- Water quality study (recreation induced) – Aquatics Working Group
- Presentation of National Forest Plan

EVALUATION OF MEETING

We forgot! [Must have been good. On behalf of other attendees, team leader notes Rod’s participation and perspective was helpful.]

TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR MARCH MEETING

April 22, 2002 Agenda –USFS Office in Mountlake Terrace.

9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

NOTE: BRING LUNCH; BE PREPARED TO WORK THROUGH

1. Review/revise minutes/agenda
2. Review Action Items
3. R16: Visioning Exercise
4. Review 2001 Data
5. Set agenda and location for next meeting (May 20)
6. Evaluate meeting