



## *Baker River Project License Implementation*

### **Recreation Resource Group Meeting Final Meeting Notes**

February 15, 2011, 9:00 am – 12:00 noon

**Team Leader: Pam Garland, PSE** (pamela.garland@pse.com)

**Facilitator:** Lyn Wiltse: 425-890-3613 (call if running late or if your plans to attend the meeting change)

### **PRESENT**

Pam Garland, Haley Edwards, and Cary Feldmann, by phone (PSE); Ann Dunphy and Debra Paul (USFS); Brock Applegate (WDFW); Brian Adams, by phone (Skagit County), Corrina Koenig (Town of Concrete), and Lyn Wiltse, facilitator (PDSA Consulting)

### **2011 RRG MEETING DATES**

- March 1 from 10-noon in Baker Conference Room of PSE Skagit Office in Burlington to finalize layout and content for bulletin boards.
- Hold 9:00 – 11:00 am on these dates for potential conference calls: Mar. 15, Apr. 19, May 17, July 19, Aug. 16, Sept. 20, Nov. 15, Dec. 20
- In-Person Meetings: June 21 (including field trip to Swift Creek Campground), Oct. 18 (followed by LEP Meeting). We will provide Web-Ex capability for these meetings to facilitate remote attendance.

### **NEW ACTION ITEMS**

- Jamie By Feb. 25 send out revised Lower Baker Development Plans with tree overlays, signs and pathways.
- Pam Talk with Elizabeth re historical / cultural considerations for the Lower Baker Development.
- Pam Run bulletin board layout ideas by PSE creative design person and ask for suggested layout prior to March 1 meeting (see above).
- Pam will send out description of the flow line buoys, etc. to Ann to review.
- Pam Send Upper Baker Screening Plan to Director of PSE Security Department for input.

### **ONGOING ACTION ITEMS**

- All Let Pam know of any updates to the contact list for your organization.
- Pam Continue to coordinate cross-resource group collaboration (e.g., I&E) – ongoing.

### **APPROVAL OF MEETING NOTES**

We reviewed and approved the draft November 16 RRG and LEP meeting notes. They will be marked as final and posted to the PSE website.

### **SA 305: LOWER BAKER DEVELOPED RECREATION**

The license requires the licensee to develop the Lower Baker Developed Recreation Plan in consultation with the RRG and ARG, and specifically Skagit County. This draft will be submitted to the RRG, ARG, and specifically Skagit County for review and comment within one year of site and access acquisition. Pam explained that we will be expediting the development of this plan in order to take advantage of efficiencies that could be gained by coordinating with the development efforts of the Lower Baker Floating Surface Collector (FSC). By expediting the design of the development, there is potential savings of both time and money in the areas of permitting, grading, mobilization, etc. Note: FSC construction at Lower Baker extends from March of this year through March of 2013.

Jamie walked us through some aerial views of the site and the draft conceptual designs (including a preliminary site plan) he has developed for the day use boat access facility that is called out in the license. PSE has not acquired a new site as the prior road access issues have been resolved. Brian offered that since there is already a use pattern established there, the existing site is a good location as far as Skagit County is concerned.

Pam explained that PSE has met with their permitting person to discuss necessary permits and the associated timeframes as we coordinate the Lower Baker development with the FSC construction. The construction of the FSC will take place within the footprint of the day use area.

Brian expressed thanks to everyone involved in securing the necessary access. He also shared that he is happy to see that the Town of Concrete reengaged in this process.

In reviewing the preliminary site plan we discussed the turnaround area allowing vehicles with boats to safely exit the site. It will likely be an unstaffed site (like the Forest Service's Grandy Lake). Gating it at night might be wise due to the high level of vandalism. We also reviewed preliminary plans for the boat launch.

License Article 305 states:

Site acquisition and selection criteria shall be developed in consultation with the RRG. This action shall include, and may be limited to, identifying an access area suitable for the construction of a concrete boat launch, parking area, and day use area, that has an existing access road, commensurate with the States' Organization for Boating Access ("SOBA") Design Handbook for Recreational Boating and Fishing Facilities standards for "small access sites."

A confirmed site exists and will be developed per SA305.

Note: Upon further review of the language of SA 305 we discovered that the site needs to be "suitable for the construction of a concrete boat launch, parking area, and day use area, that has an existing access road, commensurate with SOBA Standards. The distinction between requirement to provide and an area suitable for may be a material cost commitment that may prohibit other actions from taking place within the allowed budget. Consequently, we are carefully reviewing SOBA standards for consistency before proceeding further in design of the access to Lake Shannon.

Ann observed that Brian's access to RCO funds could be very helpful with regard to this development. Some trees will be affected. Haley reminded all that we want to minimize the removal of large over-story trees for eagles. Jamie will add tree overlays to these schematics.

Jamie further explained the plan for 28 trailer parking spaces and 18 standard parking spaces for day use. The plan includes disabled access to the two restroom facilities. The day use area contains mature trees, great views and picnic tables. Debra asked that informational signs and pathways be added to the schematic. There will be a bulletin board on this site.

Jamie acknowledged that there is a trade-off between the amount of parking space and the amount of open space. The plans call for changing the edge of the water to level it up to the extent possible. A water quality control plan for this work will be combined with the work on the FSC.

In June of 2012 the FSC is scheduled to be moved from the staging / construction (day use area) onto the lake. This will be followed by 6 months of in-water work before the FSC is deemed operational. During that time, we may be able to use their equipment and even contractor (if appropriate) to begin work for this project. More than likely the construction of the boat launch will have to be in March to take advantage of the low reservoir levels.

Next steps: Jamie will send out updated drawings by Feb. 25. Pam will talk with Elizabeth on historical / cultural implications. In the meantime, Jamie and Pam will thoroughly review the SOBA guidelines so that there is clarity on the requirements of the site development.

### **BULLETIN BOARD UPDATE**

Pam reported this teamlet met on Feb. 2. Participants included Pam Garland, Tony Fuchs, Haley Edwards, Elizabeth Dubreuil, Erika Hunter, and Miriam Decker (PSE); Ann Dunphy and Debra Paul (USFS).

Discussions included identifying the types of messaging that should be on the bulletin boards, areas where there may be duplication of messages, and establishing a process and accountability for ensuring the messaging is stocked and who is responsible for the pieces that may be applicable.

She has distributed notes from this meeting. The bulletin boards are to be installed at boat access sites on Baker Lake and Lake Shannon. The boards have been installed at Baker. They currently contain some required messaging from the USFS and WDFW. We want to standardize the look and messaging across all locations.

These types of information / messaging were identified:

- Water safety info
- Tear sheet maps
- WDFW aquatics invasive species poster (currently posted)
- Bull trout / invasive species
- Concessionaire information
- Driving restrictions on the lake bed
- Temporary messaging sources:
  - Fireworks

- Campfire restrictions
- Noxious weed treatment, etc.

A spot will be provided to post updated WDFW fishing emergency rule changes.

We discussed the optimal layout of the information given the size (40 x 98") of the bulletin boards, the orientation map on the board will include different elements on the map in addition to water safety. We considered devoting the left side of the bulletin board to concessionaire information. The central area would be Boating and Water Safety with the Lake map (separate and enlarged?).

Ann noted that we need to keep in mind who the audience is. For signage, we need to make the existing map larger. In the future we may want to move to a more integrated message. According to the notes from the teamlet meeting the production of the panels would be done by the FS.

At a minimum, for this season, we could have the water safety map tear sheet at 8 ½ x 11" as a takeaway at the Visitor Center. We are also considering making the copies 11 x 17".

Next steps: Finalize the maps. Pam and Haley will work with PSE's creative graphics person to integrate the information based on our discussions. Determine printing and distribution methods for the maps. All plan to meet in the Baker Room of PSE Skagit Office in Burlington on Tuesday March 1 from 10-noon to finalize the layout.

#### **SA 304: WATER SAFETY UPDATE**

Pam explained that the plan for the swim delineation at Horseshoe Cove and Swift Creek Campground is being reviewed by the USFS and the CRAG. The idea is to do this during drawdown immediately following the stabilization process (being contracted out). If the work proceeds as planned, the CRAG has requested we have an archaeologist on site to monitor the work.

We are required to complete this work at both locations prior to this recreation season. The plan is to do this during drawdown. At Horseshoe Cove, PSE will bury nine half ecology blocks (2 ½ x 3') as anchors for the swim area buoys and lines to be attached to once the water rises. The reason for the ecology blocks to be buried is safety to swimmers. At Swift Creek Campground, there will be six half ecology blocks installed in the same way. We will use a track hoe to install the blocks (will be buried on the lake bottom). Brock told Pam that an HPA will be needed to complete this work, as was required for the anchoring of the loon platforms.

Next steps: Pam will send description of the float line buoys, etc. to Ann to review.

#### **OTHER RECREATION UPDATES**

##### **SA 302: Aesthetics Implementation Plan**

This plan was approved by FERC in 2010. The task now is to develop an associated implementation plan (specifying the plant species list, color palette, schedule for screening at Upper Baker and the Lower Baker Visitor Center, etc.) We will be addressing these things this year as the plan must be developed by the end of 2011.

##### **SA 301: Recreation Management Report**

This is currently out for the formal 60 day agency review. Comments are due by Feb 25.

### **JUNE 21, 2011 RRG MEETING TOPICS TO INCLUDE**

- BRCC Update
- Lower Baker Development Update
- Update on Water Safety and Aesthetics Plans
- Site Visit: Swift Creek Campground
- Status of Annual Reports
- Other Topics?
- Evaluate Meeting

### **HANDOUTS**

- November 16, 2010 RRG Draft Notes
- February 15, 2011 RRG Agenda
- Draft Schematics for Lower Baker Development

### **MEETING EVALUATION**

#### **Worked Well:**

- Bulletin board discussion
- Welcome to Debra and Corrina
- Brian's attention and participation via phone was very helpful
- Haley – Cross resource consultation
- Jamie's presentation on Preliminary Ideas for Lake Shannon Developed Recreation Plan
- PSE's foresight and Ed Schild's vision about combining projects to save time and money and minimize impact on resource.
- Adequate facilitation ☺
- Got out early

#### **Do Differently:**

- Need to be able to review handouts ahead of time
- Less caffeine for Brock!