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## **BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE**

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

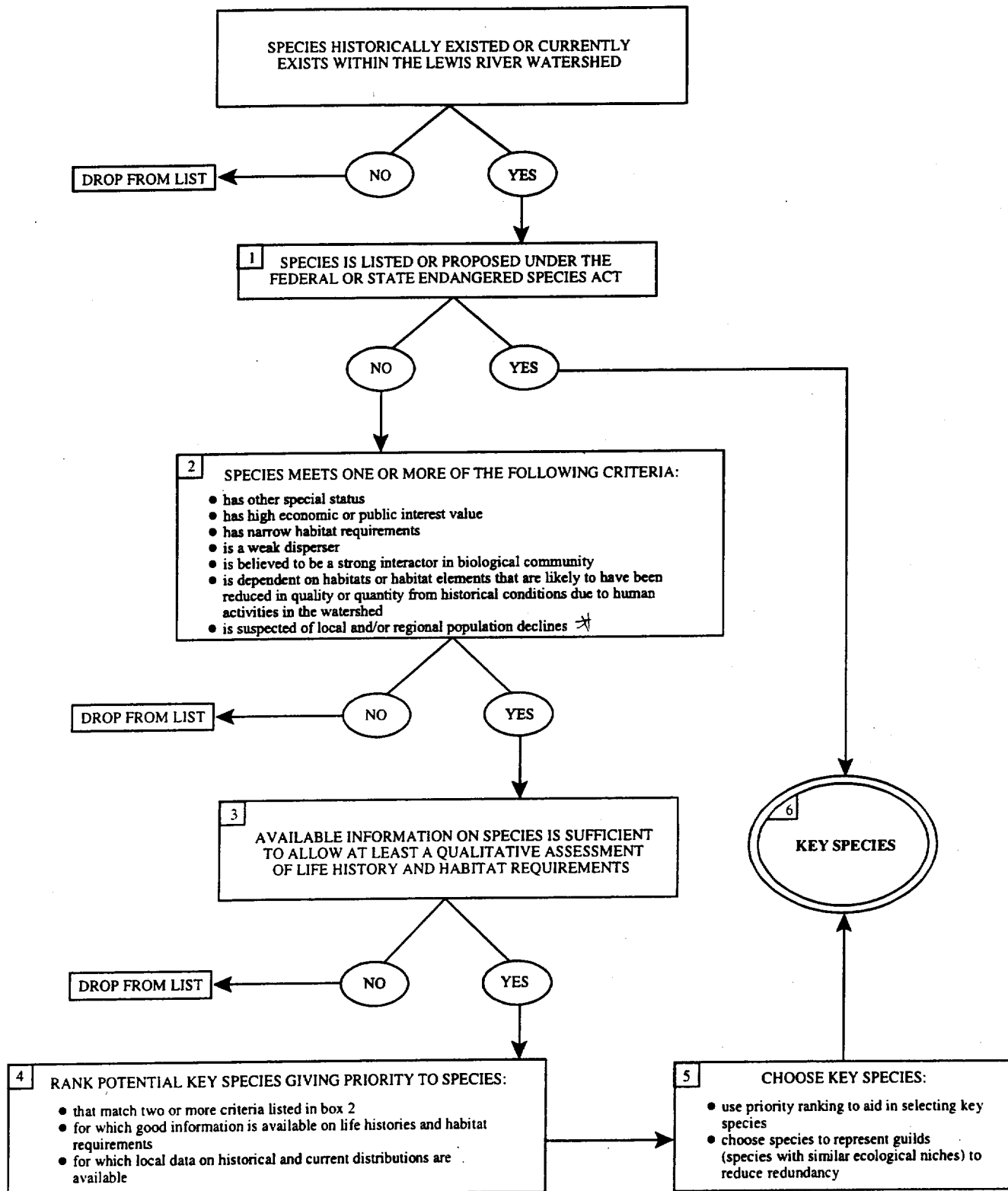
**February 20, 2001 (8:45 a.m. - 1:45 p.m.)  
(Bring Sack Lunch)**

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office, Room 261  
510 Desmond Dr. S.E.  
Lacey, WA 98503  
360-753-4124 (Fred Seavey)**

### **AGENDA**

Review notes/revise agenda
Status report: Action items
Review conceptual model (Lauri, Tony, Marty)
Review proposed studies for 2001 field season (affinitize and prioritize the studies)
Discuss process for refinement and approval of requested studies
Other issues? (e.g. data list)
Set agenda for next meeting (March 20 <sup>th</sup> , back at the USFS office in Mountlake Terrace)
Evaluate meeting

Figure 1.5-A: Decision Tree for Selection of Analysis Species



*Sp. ...  
we may have little info ...  
... to choose (Jen)*

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## BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

### Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group

February 20, 2001

8:45 am – 1:45 pm

US Fish & wildlife  
Lacey, WA

### 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 (E-mail) tfuchs@puget.com

### ATTENDEES

Tony Fuchs (Puget Sound Energy), Patrick Goldsworthy (North Cascades Conservation Council), Lauri Vigue (WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife), Ann Risvold (U.S. Forest Service), Fred Seavey (U.S. Fish & Wildlife), Bob Nelson (Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation), Marty Vaughn (Biota Pacific), Bob Kuntz (National Park Service), Dee Youmans (PSE customer), Lyn Wiltse, facilitator (PDSA Consulting)

The meeting started at 9:00 a.m. and ended at 2:00 p.m.

**NOTE:** Don states that the phone number is 425-744-3236 for the USFS Mountlake Terrace office Monte Cristo Conference Room.

### AGENDA

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February 20, 2001, 8:45 a.m. -1:45 p.m. at U.S. Fish & Wildlife Office, Lacey, WA

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

1. Review notes/agenda
2. Status report: Action items
3. Review conceptual model (Lauri, Tony, Marty)
4. Review proposed studies for 2001 field season (affinitize and prioritize the studies)
5. Discuss process for refinement and approval of requested studies
6. Other issues? (e.g. data list)
7. Set next agenda (3/20, back at the USFS office in Mountlake Terrace)
8. Evaluate meeting

### **NEW ACTION ITEMS**

- ALL: Review model in the context of low/high priority.
- ALL: Review Decision Tree for Selection of Analysis Species
- Set up Technical Working Group(s) to review/combine studies prior to March meeting.
- Marty: revise and send out new version of Terrestrial Group Continuing Impacts Analysis.
- Don: Check Species list against the new Record of Decision... for Survey and Manage species.
- Form Technical Working Group to work with consultant to refine list of Species/Habitats to study
- Bob: Send Vertebrate Species and Vascular Plant Species list to Tony
- Tony: Create new master Species/Habitat list.
- Tony: Meet with authors of priority studies to offer to flesh out prior to March meeting.
- Lauri: Touch base with Dave Johnson re: Washington/Oregon State Habitat Species Associates.

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

- Lauri: Brought copies of WA Department of Fish & Wildlife mitigation policy.
- Don: emailed to Tony a working draft of the Forest Service Existing Information Analysis to the February 20 meeting. (Team leader note: Ann Risvold also sent me the EIA for botanical resources, both of which I have forwarded to you).
- Don: Sent with Ann a list of GIS data base coverage and gave it to Tony. A list of Wildlife data not in PHS database, and vegetation data not in DNR Natural Heritage database, still needs to be developed.
- Tony, Marty, Lauri met to work together to draft conceptual model.
- Bob: Check with Partners In Flight (PIF) re: their species data base

### **REVIEW CONCEPTUAL STUDIES—2001 FIELD SEASON**

Marty distributed a handout entitled: USFS Continuing Impacts Analysis that summarizes the Forest Service Paper discussed by Carl Corey at our December meeting. This model was developed after he, Tony, and Lauri met after our last meeting. Marty reviewed the model. The idea of the model is that you would need to answer each preceding question positively in order to proceed to the next. Discussion followed.

The key steps in the model are: 1) Could the species/habitat/resource have existed in the Project Area prior to Project Development? (2) Would the species/habitat/resource return to the Project Area over the next 30 to 50 years if the Project were removed? (3) Is the absence of the species/habitat/resource in the Project Area

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preventing the attainment of one or more established resource policies, plans or objectives? (4) Could the species/habitat/resource be replaced and the effect on the Baker River Basin reduced or eliminated without removal of the Project or significant alteration of Project operation? (5) Develop mutually acceptable PME measures as part of Settlement Agreement.

**Question 1:** There was an objection to the consideration under the first question that no protection, mitigation, or enhancement measures would be taken for resources not native to the area. It was suggested that there may be some non-native resources that may be desirable. Most of the group agreed to drop #1 from the model.

**Question 2:** There was concern expressed about the second question being too limited in scope since it restricted the forward look to the length of a single license period. We should make progress during licensing period on values lost.

It was suggested that we use the model as a priority setting tool rather than a go/no go model. It was also suggested that we review the study requests and prioritize critical uncertainties.

## **STUDY REQUEST FORMS**

The team categorized study requests according to the following groupings:

- RT1, T7, T8: Basin-wide vegetation
- RT2: Reservoir vegetation
- RT3, 6, 14: Noxious or Rare Plants
- RT4, 11, 12,13: Wildlife Analysis Species Assessment
- RT 9, 10: Recreation
- RT5: Wetland Inventory

## **STUDY NOTES**

**R-T15 (Combination of R-T1 and R-T8) Basin Vegetation Mapping** (both projects and private lands)

- It would be nice to have a comprehensive map to cover types across all agencies.
- Suggestion: Perhaps use 1 to 6000 ft. resolution for project area and perhaps larger resolution for outside project area and later increase resolution to look for PME opportunities.
  - NEED:** - Proposed list of cover types\*
    - Resources available to create comprehensive map (for above reservoirs)
  - \*Consistent across agencies
  - \*Consider the analysis species
- Map should include all surface waters by type (to degree do-able)
- Technical Working Group: Don G., Bob K., Tony/Marty (Team Leader Note: Hamer Environmental and R2 Resource Consultants would be useful to have in the TWG).

## **R-T7 Historic Vegetation Map**

- Include both projects and stay within project area.
- “Historic” pertains to historical record of what was there before the project (as described in request)

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- Use categories listed in the request. These are the broader categories into which T-15 will fit. In general, the more information, the better.

#### **R-T2 Vegetation Assessment in Reservation Fluctuation Zone**

- Have no existing information already; need the first part of R-T15 to be done first.
- Will include lots of herbaceous stuff, some woody shrubs, wetlands, etc.
- Overlap with field effort for noxious weed studies
- End result must be consistent with R-T15
- Need tight elevation contour intervals

#### **R-T16 (combination of R-T3 and R-T14) Project Area Rare Plant Survey**

These studies are very similar; however might be looking at different species.

- Must develop full list of species we are looking for
- Consider seasonality
- Consider geographic scope
- Address unusual growing season this year due to drought
- Consider access and reservoir elevations

#### **R-T6 Noxious Weed Assessment and Control**

- Need to provide list of species
- Need to look at vegetation coverage in drawdown zone
- Also consider project roads, bank erosion, campgrounds, etc.
- Concentrate on introduction of the species (identify the source)
- May need to go outside project boundaries to map contiguous occurrences

#### **R-T4 Analysis Species Assessment**

- To identify data gaps in current information to guide field studies
- Phase 1, will act to guide other field studies, like R-T11, 12, and 13 (phase 2)
- Review existing data. Contact multiple sources to fill in gaps and do studies to fill gaps
- Get idea of distribution pattern
- Do mapping
- Can guide PME recommendations
- Survey for certain species or groups right away (e.g., Oregon Spotted Frog)
- Begin scoping immediately

#### **R-T11 OREGON SPOTTED FROG INVENTORY**

Scope: Includes hydrological connections in the Project Area

NOTE: Defer until After Findings of Wetland Survey (T-5)

- We need to identify whether this is an appropriate species to consider for PM&E. It maybe that the frogs have never lived in/cannot survive in the Baker River basin.

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## **R-T5 WETLAND INVENTORY STUDY**

Phase 1...Delineation, description, hydrologic influences in project area, plus contiguous waters

Phase 2...Wildlife species---specific effects (scoped separately)

- Start with Forest Service Mapping of Wetlands (mostly National Wetland Inventory)

**R-T9, R-T10, R-T12 and R-T13** we did not have time to discuss. Will take them up during the March meeting so that Don can be present.

## **TIMING OF STUDIES**

### **For 2001 Field Season**

R-T15(high priority)

R-T7(Don)

R-T2(Tony)

R-T4 (high priority) (Lauri)

R-T5(high priority) (Lauri)

### **May Defer to 2002 Field Season**

R-T16(?), R-T6, R-T11(?)

## **OTHER ISSUES**

We need to consider how to make available the data amassed in the Forest Service's Watershed Analysis.

## **LIST OF TERRESTRIAL DATA FOR THE BAKER PROJECT**

### **PARKING LOT**

- Will PSE compensate key players to attend these meetings?
- Length of period of license (30 years? 50 years?)
- Review time frame/goals of working groups/milestones
- Definitions of "project boundary", "project effects", "previous environment"
- How do we handle "latecomers" to this process?
- Land Management
- Conceptual Mitigation Approach
- Consider multiple meeting locations
- 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?

## **MEETING PROCESS REVIEW**

**Well-Dones:**

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- Got a lot done
  - People were on same page
  - Felt good
  - Bonding as a group
  - Copying services
  - Location
  - Dee being here

**Need for Improvement:**

- Ran over
- Rushed on some of the studies

**TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

March 20, 2001, **8:15 a.m. –2:00 p.m.** at U.S. Forest Office, Mountlake Terrace, WA

**NOTE New extended expanded meeting hours.**

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

1. Review notes/agenda
2. Status report: Action items
3. Report from Recreation Working Group on R-T9 and R-T10
4. Review Continuing Impacts Analysis
5. Review Decision Tree (re: for Selection of Analysis Species)
6. Discuss RT-11-13; 9,10
7. Approval by Working Group of 2001 Studies
8. Set next agenda (4/17) Note: This meeting will be back at FS office in Mountlake Terrace
9. Evaluate meeting

**OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE MEETING**

- Studies Criteria
- Process/policy presentation of how to approach impacts due to inundation
- Use of Consultants
- WUTC to give "process" presentation