



**PUGET SOUND ENERGY**

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## **BAKER RIVER PROJECT LICENSE IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Terrestrial Resources Implementation Group Technical Meeting**

**December 4th, 2008 (9:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.)**

**WDFW Mill Creek Office  
16018 Mill Creek Boulevard  
Mill Creek, Washington 98012-1296  
Telephone (425) 775-1311**

**Conference Call Line:** 1-888-228-0484, ID: 2821, Password: 4567

**Please tell Tony (425-462-3553 (w) or 206-276-1204 (m)) if you plan to call into meeting**

### **AGENDA**

1. Review notes/agenda/action items from November 6th, 2008 meeting.
2. Review recent BRCC meeting activities and New License review/issues.
  - License update
  - BRCC membership contacts, timing of formalizing resource groups, meeting timing
  - Review TRIG financial process - Paul
  - Next Steps
3. Decisions Required at Today's Meeting: Yes
  1. Decision Item #1: Does the TRIG authorize PSE to pursue the Y Property by preparing acquisition information, such as conducting a Property Appraisal and Timber Cruise, and preparing an assessment of overall cost/value for the property (Decision under LAP process action #4), for elk habitat under Settlement Article 503?
  2. Decision Item #2:
    - Please Designate Proxy to express your view if you cannot attend.
5. Elk Update
  - Update on Property X offer – Ira, Ray
  - Decision discussion for Property Y – outcome of field trip by TRIG members
  - Alternate properties list/data base / status – Ira, Ray, Tony
  - Next steps
6. Botanical Teamlet update
  - Teamlet update – *Carex flava* & Plants of Special Status Plans - Anna and Kathy
7. TRMP Update
  - List of plans and development schedule – Marty and Tony
  - Next steps?

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**Baker River Project License Implementation****Terrestrial Resource Implementation Group  
Final Meeting Notes**

December 4, 2008 ~ 9:00 am - 2:00 pm  
WDFW Mill Creek

**Team Leader:** Tony Fuchs (PSE), 425-462-3553, [tony.fuchs@pse.com](mailto:tony.fuchs@pse.com)

**PRESENT**

Tony Fuchs, Ira McDaniels, Anna Kopitov by phone, Haley Edwards, and Cary Feldmann (PSE); Kathy Smayda (Smayda Environmental); Marty Vaughn (Biota-Pacific); Stan Walsh (SRSC); Bob Nelson and Ray Crosswell (RMEF); David Geroux by phone (WDFW); Patrick Goldsworthy (NCCC); Lou Ellyn Jones by phone (USFWS); Laura Martin (USFS); Chris Danilson (Sauk-Suiattle); and Jamie Riche, facilitator (PDSA).

**DECISIONS** – Notification requirements were met, a quorum is present, and proxies were noted, so we agreed that we can make decisions today. **Proxies:** none.

The TRIG adopted the following decision by consensus of all members present:

- The TRIG authorized PSE to pursue the Y Property by preparing acquisition information, such as conducting a Property Appraisal and Timber Cruise, and preparing an assessment of overall cost/value for the property for elk habitat under Settlement Article 503.

**NEXT TRIG MEETING:** January 8, 2009 (not Jan. 1), First Thursdays through 2009

**NEXT BRCC MEETING:** January 28, 2009

**ACTION ITEMS**

- All - Review TRMP (Article 501) and provide feedback / edits to Marty by Jan. 8
- Haley - Talk with TNC re: Night Roost Survey plans for this year / season
- Jamie - Bring Peanut Butter pie to Jan. mtg.
- Stan - Send comments on Habitat Matrix to Anna by 12/12 (Anna, pls. remind if needed)
- Marty - Email TRMP (Article 501) and updated TRMP implementation schedule to TRIG
- Marty - Send Property Y site map and aerial photos to Ray
- Tony - Bring an updated accounting of TRIG funds (in “today’s dollars,” less any expenditures to date) to the January mtg.
- Tony - Estimate management costs related to Reed Canary Grass, bring to Jan. mtg.
- Tony - Connect w/ Jacob re: Aquatic Riparian Plan (to be ready for review at Feb mtg.)
- Tony - Bring TRIG decision list to Feb. meeting for formal ratification
- Anna - *Work on process for cross-resource distribution of funds.*

## **PREVIOUS – STILL RELEVANT – ACTION ITEMS**

- Marty – Draft a proposal for TRMP language re: financial processes (budget, audit, etc).
- Paul will continue to work on the funding agreement w/ USFS
- Anna/Tony will work on draft for the USFS projects accountability / tracking process

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

BRCC discussed the escalation factor, and Brennan Mueller (PSE) is working on this, but it wasn't quite ready for review today. Tony will bring the updated TRIG funds / budget to the January mtg.

The official rep list for each organization is being handled at the BRCC level, so that action item from last month's meeting is off Tony's plate.

## **BRCC / LICENSE UPDATES**

The BRCC met Nov. 19. Cary reported that Skagit County withdrew their objection to the license; PSE is working with them directly. A private citizen from La Connor did submit a letter to FERC outlining concerns about flood storage. PSE anticipates that FERC may interpret this letter as a request for rehearing, and will dismiss it as being without merit.

There was an update at the BRCC meeting about a brief flood event; this will be discussed further at the ARG meeting next week. The group also discussed the process required to officially authorize the BRCC and the associated resource groups. BRCC will officially form and establish the TRIG, RRG, ARG, and CRAG at their next meeting, January 28, 2009. Read Settlement Agreement Article 601 for details on this process. Once this is done, the TRIG will need to formalize all its previous decisions (probably at the February 2009 TRIG meeting).

BRCC also reviewed a master schedule that shows all the article requirements together on one timeline and discussed the annual reporting cycle for FERC (next two years will be transition years to get us onto a common fiscal year).

## **TRIG Meetings, 2009 and beyond:**

Tony commented that there is still a sufficient concentration of work in the near future to justify monthly meetings. Once our work becomes more about implementation and monitoring / reporting (rather than the current planning and design work), Tony anticipates less frequent meeting needs, perhaps quarterly. Lou Ellyn suggested that, once we move to fewer meetings, we plan one meeting per year near the annual FERC reporting timeline, and Dave suggested this could be complemented with site visit(s).

## **BOTANICAL TEAMLET**

Anna distributed the *Carex flava* and Plants of Special Status plans via email to the full TRIG. Kathy shared that she had some handwritten edits from the last Botanical Teamlet meeting and asked the TRIG for additional edits / feedback. She noted that these are the high-level FERC plans; they are intentionally broad. Details will go into the Procedures documents that are sister documents to the FERC plans. Areas that are yet to be completed in both the Cf and Special

Status FERC plans include: Executive Summary, funding, schedule, and costs. These will be completed and incorporated in the plans when they are sent out for the “official” review period for these plans, which will begin January 15, 2009. Once the FERC plans are complete, the Botanical Teamlet will develop the Procedures documents next.

Laura shared information from the Teamlet’s site visit to the hatchery. They looked at where on the site trees with the *Usnea longissima* lichen are currently located relative to upcoming hatchery construction work. The *Usnea longissima* lichen is on the regional forest rare species list; even though it is fairly common in the Baker basin, it is rare when looked at from a larger perspective. The construction contractor will be able to avoid most of the trees w/ lichen, and the teamlet agreed that the trees with lichen that need to be felled for this project could be felled toward the river and left in place. Ultimately, there is enough of this species on site that the avoidance of most trees and leaving the felled trees in place will be sufficient.

The bigger concern is the infestation of herb Robert on site. The main mitigation for this is that all construction equipment must be washed after operating in infested areas before moving to a new location. In addition, the contractor will use certified weed-free straw and will be thoughtful about the disposition of infested fill. Mobilization for hatchery construction begins March 2009.

Laura noted the need to move forward on native plant propagation work so this is ready as the various projects get underway.

## **ELK PROPERTIES**

**Property Y:** Tony, Chris D., Bob, Lou Ellyn, and Marty conducted a site visit, and Tony walked the TRIG through a review of what they saw. Based on this site visit, Marty recalculated the Elk Forage Equivalency Units related to the property; he estimates that, with management, the site could provide a potential of about 475 of the units (about 150 more than originally estimated). For comparison, he noted that the “initial” property (upon which these Elk Forage Equivalency Units were originally based) provided up to 1,400 units.

Ira shared that there may be a recent appraisal and timber cruise available on this site. The TRIG formally authorized PSE to pursue the Y Property by preparing acquisition information, such as conducting a Property Appraisal and Timber Cruise (if needed), and preparing an assessment of overall cost/value for the property for elk habitat under Settlement Article 503.

## **Reed Canary Grass:**

The group discussed Reed Canary Grass, which is prevalent on the properties in our target area. It is not a listed species and therefore does not mandate a management plan, but the palatability to elk was a matter of discussion. Elk have been known to forage on it, particularly in springtime, but *David Geroux pointed out* it is not a preferred forage species. Total eradication of Reed Canary Grass is not practical or realistic, but in areas where it is possible to bring in equipment, the species could be managed with the integration of other, more desirable foraging species, *but potentially at a significant cost.*

Cary noted that the Settlement Agreement does allow acquisition funds to be applied toward the

enhancement, management, and maintenance of acquired elk forage lands if the TRIG so chooses (see article 503).

Tony will estimate the management costs (above and beyond regular / routine management) associated with reducing the concentration of Reed Canary Grass, using multiple scenarios ... for example, the cost associated with converting an acre to 50% or 80% concentration. He will bring this to the January meeting for discussion.

**Property X:** Ira gave a brief update on Property X; ask Tony for details.

**Alternate Properties:** Tony noted that, to date, the TRIG has taken a “serious look” at five different properties and has “casually reviewed” several others. He also reminded folks that, with license issuance, we are in the general elk land acquisition process, which means we are no longer limited to the “initial pre-license acquisition” criteria in the Settlement Agreement.

Ray and Ira are following the current activities underway in the timber industry, and will bring forward any possibilities that emerge.

**Properties that meet multiple license articles:** We discussed the criteria related to wetland, deciduous forest and aquatic riparian habitat acquisitions and the process for acquiring / managing properties with multiple uses. *Anna will work on process for cross-resource distribution of funds.*

**Next steps re: properties that meet multiple license articles:**

- Anna and Cary – Develop a draft proposal for the process related to properties that meet multiple articles’ interests; bring to January TRIG meeting before presenting to other resource groups and, ultimately, the BRCC. Include in this proposal language about whether it is OK to commit money from articles whose funding is not yet available, and – if it is OK – what that process would be.
- Haley (wetland), Anna (deciduous forest), and Jacob (aquatic riparian) – continue to develop draft plans and criteria; bring to February TRIG meeting

## **TRMP**

Marty commented that we have gone back and forth several times on the plan layout concept (one big plan or many separate plans or one umbrella plan with separate procedures, oh my!). He noted that the issuance of the license, which remained true to the Settlement Agreement, has answered that question for us. We can move forward with one Article 501 TRMP, and the individual plans we have been working on will become appendices to this main TRMP.

Marty distributed (and will email out to all) the current draft of the Article 501 TRMP, which captures everything that must be submitted to FERC. Marty also updated the TRMP implementation schedule to reflect this and will email this out with the TRMP. The goal is to get the next draft of the TRMP back out to folks before all the rest of the appendices (which are due out in April) to avoid a crunch time with too many simultaneous deadlines. Please give Marty feedback by January 8 and he will bring the next draft, without appendices, to the February TRIG

meeting.

## **LOON UPDATE**

This was moved to our January meeting.

## **NIGHT ROOST SURVEYS**

The license calls for night roost surveys during two seasons, which overlap three years starting with year one of the license. Due to the timing of license issuance, we will treat this year as an opportunity to set up survey locations, develop protocols, and formally start the surveys next year. The last hour or two of January's TRIG meeting will be dedicated to a new Eagle Teamlet.

## **HANDOUTS**

- Agenda and November 2008 meeting notes
- TRMP, Article 501 and TRMP Implementation Schedule

## **AGENDA FOR NEXT TRIG MEETING**

**January 8, 2009; 9 am – 2 pm, Mill Creek**

1. Welcome, review agenda, notes, and action items
2. Review TRIG budget (Tony, Paul)
3. Botanical Teamlet – *Carex flava* & Plants of Special Status Plans (Anna & Kathy)
4. Elk land acquisition update:
  - a. Property Y Update (Ira & Tony)
  - b. Review cost estimates for Reed Canary Grass management (Tony)
  - c. Alternate Properties (Ray & Tony)
5. Review Habitat Matrix (Anna)
6. Review draft proposal for multi-article properties (Anna, Cary)
7. Loon Update – location recommendation & design / anchoring update (Anna)
8. Review draft of snag plan (Haley)
9. Eagle Teamlet Meeting
  - a. Determine survey locations
  - b. Develop protocols, next steps
10. Evaluate meeting, set next meeting agenda

## **February 5, 2009 Agenda Items:**

- Review TRMP (Article 501) and updated TRMP implementation schedule
- Review draft plans / criteria for wetland (Haley), deciduous forest (Anna), and aquatic riparian (Jacob)
- *Review habitat criteria matrices (Anna)*
- Ratification of decisions made during interim status (Tony to bring list)

## **EVALUATION**

### **Went Well:**

- Good attendance ... nice to see Laura again (missed Don...)
- Good discussion about elk lands – folks well informed and engaged in process
- Botanical plans lookin' good!
- Off and moving on Article 501

- Food good; thanks, Marty!
- Productive *and* got done a little early

**Do differently:** Phone problems remain ...

**PARKING LOT:** Develop protocol for pre-acquisition field visit



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8. Terrestrial Implementation Schedule

- Schedule for annual reporting - Cary

8. Loon Update

- Location recommendation & design / anchoring update - Anna

9. Evaluate meeting, set location (WDFW Mill Creek) and agenda for next meeting (Jan. 8th, 2008)