
BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Terrestrial Resources Implementation Group Elk Teamlet Meeting

March 7th, 2006 (9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.)

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

Conference Call Line:

(Please tell Tony (425-462-3553) if you plan to call into meeting)

AGENDA

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| 1. Welcome, review notes, action items, agenda |
| 2. Land acquisition update <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Status of initial parcel |
| 3. New Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Lands Program Manager <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Introduction of Tom Macy |
| 4. Discuss land acquisition considerations from WDFW input from last meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Identification of core area▪ Discuss potential elk properties▪ Identify damage areas to avoid▪ Discuss leases and damage management as enhancements from elk funds |
| 5. Identification of alternative initial acquisition properties <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Where? What types of habitats? How many acres?▪ Steps for approaching land owners and making offers |
| 6. Other? |
| 7. Evaluate meeting and set date and agenda for next meeting |

Baker River Project License Implementation

Terrestrial Resource Implementation Group Elk Teamlet Final Meeting Notes

March 7, 2006
9:00 am - 12:00 pm
**U.S. Forest Service Office
21905 64th Avenue West
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043**

FINAL MEETING NOTES

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

PRESENT

Tony Fuchs (PSE); Marty Vaughn (Biota-Pacific); Bob Nelson & Tom Macy (RMEF); Brock Applegate (WDFW); Patrick Goldsworthy (NCCC); Chris Madsen (NWIFC); Todd Wilbur (Swinomish Tribal Community); Jason Joseph (Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe); and Jamie Riche, facilitator / note-taker (PDSA Consulting, Inc).

NEXT MEETING DATES

Tentative (if needed): April 26, 2006 ... 9:00am – 12:00pm, Location TBD (Mountlake Terrace not available)

Date: May 15, 2006 ... 9:00am – 12:00pm at Mountlake Terrace

AGENDA TOPICS

- Land Acquisition Update
- Review WDFW property acquisition considerations
- Identify Alternative Properties

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- Marty – Use TRIG's example to write a 1st draft suggestion of a Pre-Acquisition property survey protocol for the group to start with.

WELCOME / INTRODUCTION OF NEW FACES

We welcomed Tom Macy, the new Lands Program Manager for RMEF for Washington and Oregon, and Brock Applegate, our “new Lauri,” who works in the Major Projects group for WDFW.

REPORT ON OLD ACTION ITEMS:

Tony discussed the question of using PSE elk money on fencing, pointing out that in addition to land acquisition money, we also have \$50k per year earmarked for land management. At \$10k/mile for fencing materials, fencing may be an appropriate use of management money, not acquisition money. PSE's intent is that this group determines the expenditures within the goals of the Settlement Agreement.

LAND ACQUISITION UPDATE

Mike Mueller (RMEF) has continued contact with the landowner of the desired initial parcel, and is being careful not to press too hard. Mike and Tom are transitioning the relationship with the landowner from Mike to Tom. The landowner is still considering alternatives to an outright sale. Tony and Tom have visited this property and others in the general area to view the properties and discuss the various options.

The group discussed the options it would consider relative to our land acquisition interest, including the following: Life Estate, Conservation Easement, Outright Purchase, Trust, and/or Long-term Lease possibilities. Each option would be subject to determination of compliance with FERC requirements for the license, and with conditions of the Settlement Agreement.

If we entertain an alternative to outright purchase, we discussed acceptable and unacceptable uses. Ultimately, our goal is in getting the best-case scenario for elk with the money we have.

- We would want to restrict non-farming ATV & equipment uses
- Livestock – limited if at all, preferably 1½ months mid-summer
- Additional development – not preferred, but is an option if located for minimal impact and necessary for a deal to be struck
- Land Management – must have permission for active management for elk benefit

Tom and Mike will use these interests to equip the RMEF with a list of possibilities to discuss with the landowner of the desired initial parcel and other owners of potential acquisition properties.

We're looking for good winter habitat (for forage more than for cover) because that's most limited by development. We also would consider summer forage options we can actively manage for elk that may use areas year-around.

Tony then reviewed WDFW's input from last meeting, and the Settlement Agreement language, for the benefit of new members at the meeting. Basically, if we choose land in the core area, WDFW's area wildlife biologist has expressed support, since it would be outside of identified elk damage areas. If we want to buy in the periphery, especially near lowland areas near the Skagit River, we may need to provide fencing or other damage prevention measures and run the risk of the adjoining areas being managed for urban growth and agriculture in the future and not for elk habitat. *The WDFW is also interested in us acquiring lands east and south of the town of Concrete (Sauk area).*

ALTERNATIVE LAND OPTIONS

We looked at the aerial photo and ownership maps, and discussed possible alternatives to our original land preference. The geographic area we are focusing our initial acquisition in is from the west shoreline of Lake Shannon, south of the Whatcom/Skagit county line, and within the Baker River and Grandy Creek drainages. DNR and Sierra Pacific own most of the land in the northern portion of this area. We discussed the possibility of buying timber land without buying the timber ... with a plan to actively

manage the property for elk after the harvest. This option has drawbacks in terms of expense of management, but is another possibility for consideration.

Much of the land is already zoned industrial forest, which is good for elk. Other small areas further up the drainage (Whatcom County) and at higher elevation are managed for old growth and makes good summer forage. In Skagit County we'd like to preserve land that is at greatest risk (those that are more inviting to development), with emphasis on lowland areas that provide winter forage.

Our Priorities for Land Acquisition:

- Bear Creek plateau area, plateau near Vogler Lake, area around Lake Tyee
- Quality lowland forage areas in the Skagit valley (note: will have damage issues to address)
- Avoid "Islands," so look for areas above lower area to create connectivity
- Concentrate on pasture/timber lands adjacent to existing big blocks of elk-friendly land
- Complement others' elk and conservation efforts
- Could get "no development" easements to if landowner unwilling to sell
- Explore opportunity to get "First Right of Refusal" of attractive land not currently for sale
- Look for opportunities for Public Education (at viewing areas)
- Thunder Creek may be a possibility (discuss at next meeting)
- Take longest-possible view ... keep in mind future uses of others' land
- Maximize "Bang for our Buck" (easements, agreements, etc)
- Avoid creating/exacerbating problems, whether or not the problem is "ours" (ex: Hwy 20)

Based on this, our Primary Focus for Alternative Sites (assumes initially selected property not available):

- Select areas in the lower portion of our geographic area
- Bear Creek plateau
- Areas to increase connectivity

Talk to Tony about specific properties and ownerships under consideration.

NEXT STEPS

Tony, Marty & Tom will use these preferences to guide RMEF's approach to land owners, and will keep the group informed of any developments. Our next meeting is set for May 15; if anything "hot" happens, we will meet April 26 instead. Tony will let us know.

HANDOUTS

Agenda
December 20 Elk Teamlet Notes

MEETING EVALUATION

What Went Well

Welcome Brock & Tom!
Good participation/conversation
Food ☺ (thanks Marty!)
Great maps

What to Do Differently

Missed Lauri ... and wish her well

AGENDA FOR NEXT ELK TEAMLET MEETING

Tentative: April 26, 2006 ... 9:00 – 12:00, Location TBD (Mountlake Terrace not available)

Date: May 15, 2006 ... 9:00 – 12:00 at Mountlake Terrace

1. Welcome, review notes, action items, agenda
2. Land acquisition update
3. What, if anything, to do re: Thunder Creek
4. Discuss Pre-Acquisition Survey Protocol and schedule
5. Evaluate meeting, set next meeting date and agenda