

# Final LEP Meeting Notes

October 18, 2011 / 12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.



## Baker River Project License Implementation

### Baker Law Enforcement Plan Meeting Final Meeting Notes

October 18, 2011 12:30 – 3:00 pm

Skagit Service Center, Burlington

### DRAFT MEETING NOTES

**Team Leader: Pam Garland, PSE** (pamela.garland@pse.com) 360-661-2243 / 360-424-2912

#### PRESENT

Jeff Turner (Whatcom County Sheriff's Office), Capt. Bill Hebner, Sgt. Rich Phillips, Officer Worth Allen, and Brock Applegate (WDFW), Pam Garland, Haley Edwards, Tony Fuchs, and Scott Heller (PSE), Capt. Kim Kinville, Ann Dunphy, Carol Gladsjo, Greta Movassaghi, and Jeremy Smith, (USFS); Lyn Wiltse, facilitator (PDSA Consulting)

#### NEXT LEP MEETING DATES

Jan. 17 for LEP only: 2011 season wrap-up / data review and pre proposals for 2012 season;  
Feb. 21 (RRG and LEP), and Oct 16 (RRG and LEP) at the PSE Skagit Office in Burlington. We will provide Web-Ex capability for these meetings to facilitate remote attendance.

#### ACTION ITEMS

- Pam Send out link WDFW PowerPoint to all (*Done!*).
- Pam Send out Exhibit G maps of newly acquired properties to all.
- Pam Work with Captain Hebner to coordinate key access to gated on newly acquired properties.
- Worth Forward daily logs to Greta.
- Bill Email PSE **Baker Lake Overtime (BLOT) forms**.
- Jeff Consider how to give extra low band radio to WDFW (Sgt. Phillips).

#### ANNOUNCEMENT

Captain Bill Heber introduced Sgt. Richard Phillips to the group. He has replaced Mike Hobbs on this team and was very involved with patrols this season. Welcome Rich!

#### 502 – 505 FOREST, ELK, AND WETLAND PROPERTIES

Tony Fuchs (Team Leader of the Terrestrial Resource Implementation Group) gave a brief presentation on two properties acquired with terrestrial relicense funds. They are known as the Alder Creek Property

and Burpee Hill Property. These are being managed primarily for elk and forest birds. Tony walked us through a PowerPoint of the Alder Creek Property (276 acres acquired at the end of 2010). They have made Exhibit G maps for FERC. Tony will make sure Pam has these to distribute. Law enforcement issues have been pretty minor. There has been some ATV trespassing. They will be doing some timber harvesting to make foraging habitat for elk. There are PH4 locks on all gates Pam to work with Bill to coordinate key access for LEOs. PSE will improve the property for elk and deer. There are lots of ducks on the property. They have installed two gates.

The Burpee Hill Property (400 acres) was acquired in June of this year. They have built a new access road, There is a fairly extensive road system throughout the property which includes nice forested wetlands. As with the Alder Creek property, deciduous forest provides forest bird habitat. They also intend to perform timber harvesting for elk forage habitat on this property. There are no current recreational restrictions. They are considering a permission system. There is gate access, walk-in only. Discussions are underway with the tribes re. hunting access.

## **SOCKEYE FISHERY**

### **USFS Campgrounds**

Ann walked us through the data collected by Forest Service crews. The first three weekends were peak. She allowed that the numbers may be a little high as they had very few sample data for week days. Parking and day use numbers are up.

### **WDFW Patrols**

Bill invited Officer Worth to walk us through a PPT including photos of the past season and a summary of how WDFW officers spent the 400 OT hours they contracted for with PSE and the USFS for patrols at Lake Shannon and Baker Lake. WDFW feels very good and considers these contracts a huge success. For years WDFW ran the sockeye fishery with many challenges. They were excited about switching the fishery to the lake. This separated recreational fishers from tribal fishers. They expressed thanks to PSE for all of its investments necessary to make the lake fishery happen.

Worth reported hearing complaints about the lack of access to folks without a boat. He also noted the availability of cheap inflatable boats to provided the opportunity to fish. WDFW spent 290 hrs on the water (36 officer-days). Storing the boat at the Kulshan boat ramp worked well. They conducted one boat patrol with Jeremy. There was high compliance at Lake Shannon. Jeremy and Jeff worked the afternoons and nights. WDFW always touched base with campground hosts on Friday and Saturday. They issued 36 tickets for a variety of things – most for lack of life jackets. They observed pretty good compliance with boating safety laws. Some boats were overloaded. They gave out a number of life jackets as loaners so folks could continue fishing as do it in a safe and compliant manner. They logged 70 hours on patrol targeting hunters and recreationists.

Fish and wildlife issues were the highest priority comprising 188 hours. Number of calls for reckless shooting in dispersed camping areas. WDFW presence was appreciated. WDFW checked for invasive species and offered coupons for ice cream to kids wearing life jackets.

There were a few bear issues - mostly on the roads into the campgrounds. Bear sightings became less frequent through the season. Overflowing garbage in non-bear proof dumpsters is a big issue. The New bear trap purchased for the season with RAM funds was immediately put to use. Capt. Hebner thanked

PSE for this and offered to bring the trap for show and tell at our next meeting.

Parking and traffic flow was a big challenge. USFS Signing and striping done for this season was very helpful. It was clear where the folks should be and not be. LEOs found few problems related to traffic. The first three weekends had lots of overflow parking. The campground hosts also did a good job of directing people where to park on the road when parking lots were full. The LEOs fielded many questions about the different passes required for parking.

There were 300-400 boats on opening day. Sgt. Phillips explained that sockeye is a very specialized fishery which should be celebrated. Approximately 90% of the sockeye were caught by 15% of the fishermen. The good fishermen were off the lake by 8am. More Lake Washington fishermen will be on Baker next summer.

Educational issues to address: Fishermen gutting fish in shallow water on east side of the lake. The USFS did not permit guiding this year. They won't be doing this in the future. This did not seem to be an issue this year.

### **USFS Patrols**

Jeremy reported that visitation and law enforcement issues were down compared to last year. The lousy weather helped and we had more patrols out than ever before. In the 234 hours worked there was a total of 133 violations issued. There were 172 warnings and 32 incidents. The largest issues involved drugs and alcohol, campfires, traffic infractions. Warnings often issued to problem group as reported by campground hosts. Calls for actual service were pretty limited.

### **Whatcom County Patrols**

Jeff visited Noisy Creek and Maple Grove 3 times mid-week. Trash in Maple Grove was worse than in Noisy Creek. When we go to fire restrictions, they have fires. This is not the REI crowd. Most calls for service around drug and alcohol violations. This is consistent with last year. The extra enforcement seems to be driving people out further away. There was a pistol whipping at Lower Sandy. Resource violations were minimal.

Pam reviewed the case of the exploding campfire. There were a number of communication problems resulting in a poor response time and the families involved felt like they were left alone. In case of emergency, we need to make sure OT officers feel like they have a stake in the game. A Whatcom County officer happened to be in the area on patrol. The injured persons reported that he did not have a first aid kit and was not helpful. In addition to the 911 call, LEO needs to call the PSE operator and camp host.

### **Summary**

Went Well this Season:

- Plant folks were very accommodating
- Good boat (use the same one in 2012)
- Access and storage of boat worked well
- Successful collaboration - team building and trust building
- LEOs checking in with Campground Hosts
- Education
- Signage and Parking

To Improve for 2012 Season (includes equipment needs):

- Increase coverage on the East side of the lake
- Provide enhanced first aid kits for boat, campgrounds: Combat Lifesaver Bag (CLS)
- Improve signage at boat ramps (cleaning of fish. etc.)
- Whatcom County should be able to use the boat
- OT officer training – response time – PSE fact sheet / expectations
- Education re Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Check Station
- Initiate contracts with WDFW, USFS < PSE sooner
- Provide boat /fish cleaning station at Swift Creek (use State Parks model)
- Improve data collection (consistency, completeness, etc.) from patrols
- WDFW access to fuel for boat (install a separate fuel tank?)
- WDFW needs to be able to communicate with Whatcom County from boat radio
- ORV enforcement on newly acquired lands
- Stabilizing binoculars for the boat
- Expand loaner life jacket program (purchase more to give away and / or to loan to boaters)
- Deer decoy on project
- 2-3 extra PFDs (inflatable and comfortable)
- Satellite phones / cell towers
- Funding for training for boating accidents, investigations
- Night vision goggles

## **TOPICS FOR NEXT LEP MEETING ON JANUARY 17, 2012**

Review of 2011 Season:

- Complete Review of Summary of Data / Trends from Baker Lake Basin Law Enforcement Activity Reports
- What Went Well? What didn't?
- Pre-proposals: Prioritize Spending / Focus for 2012 season

## **MEETING EVALUATION**

**Well Done:**

- Got out early
- Good review of the season
- The equipment we purchased was helpful this season
- WDFW's pictures / PowerPoint
- Jeremy's data
- Jeff's verbal summary
- Good participation

**Do Differently:**

- No suggestions

## **HANDOUTS**

- October 18, 2011 LEP Meeting Agenda

- Jeremy's (USFS) Summary Incident Sheet