



BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Aquatic Resources Working Group

January 11, 2001
(Combined Meeting of the Hydro and Fish Working Groups)

9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Puget Sound Energy's Everett Office
CFS Training Room
1122 75th St. S.W., Everett, WA

AGENDA

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| 1. Review agenda and minutes |
| 2. Review action items/parking lot |
| 3. Update on Process Document |
| 4. Update on Issues and Interests template |
| 5. Update on study screen |
| 6. Set agenda for next meeting (February 8) |
| 7. Evaluate meeting |

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PSE Office, Everett, WA

MEETING NOTES

Hydrological Working Group Mission: *“To identify issues and develop recommendations that provide for the protection and management of water quality, watershed processes, and hydrologic regimes associated with the Baker River Project that address the social, economic, terrestrial, and aquatic values they affect.”*

Fish Working Group Mission: *“To identify issues and develop solutions and recommendations addressing fish and aquatic resource interests related to the Baker River Project and its operations, leading to a settlement agreement.”*

Fish Team Leader: Arnie Aspelund, 425-462-3442, aaspel@puget.com

PRESENT:

Karen Kloempken (WA Dept. Fish & Wildlife), Stan Walsh (Skagit System Cooperative), Dick Raisler (Fidalgo Flyfishers/WA Council-Federation of Fly Fishers), Arn Thoreen (Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group), Steve Jennison (WA Dept. of Natural Resources), Jon Vanderheyden (U.S. Forest Service), Don Schluter (Trout Unlimited by phone), Rod Sakrison (WA Dept. of Ecology), Chuck Ebel (Army Corps of Engineers), Arnie Aspelund (PSE), Nick Verretto (PSE), Doug Bruland (PSE), Cary Feldmann (PSE), Lyn Wiltse (facilitator - PDSA Consulting)

Agenda January 11, 2001

9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

PSE Office in Everett

1. Review notes/agenda
2. Action items
 - Forest Service participation
3. Update on issues and interests template
4. Update on study screen
5. Set agenda for next meeting (Feb. 8)
6. Evaluate meeting

Note: January 12, 2001 is the date of the RESOLVE training make-up session. Anyone who has not had the training, and can attend this meeting, should sign up with Arnie.

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- Nick: Develop an index/bibliography of existing studies.
- Nick: Will check with Bob Barnes re: What % does the Baker make up of Skagit River flow (regulated/unregulated/over all seasons?).
- ALL: Bring list of existing information (studies, reports, databases, etc.) that will help feed into index/bibliography to next meeting.
- ALL: email study requests to Arnie by February 1st.
- Arnie: email study requests to all team members by February 2nd.
- ALL: Review study request that you receive and come to the February 8th meeting ready to discuss.

REPORT ON OLD (COMBINED) ACTION ITEMS

- Stan and Nick: Determined how to proceed on the installation of recorders on the Skagit River. Re: gage installation: They have not yet been installed. Need to survey sites, secure the necessary permits. They will incorporate suggestions from Stan. In the future, some of the sites should allow the linear rate at which water recedes from the bar, in particular the large bar outside the elk field and Pescatore Lane. This will be taken into consideration during the gage placement.

OLD ACTION ITEMS

Jon V.: Check with Brady Green re: Watershed Analysis Presentation at December 14th meeting—(on hold for now)

Gary: - Bring hard copies of sockeye presentation

FOREST SERVICE PARTICIPATION

Jon Vanderheyden reports that the Forest Service final budget numbers are not yet in. The monies they do receive are designated as to how they can be spent. This will, for now, limit their ongoing participation in the Baker River relicensing process.

ISSUES/INTERESTS

Arnie reviewed with the team the work that he, Nick, Stan and Karen had done regarding interests and associated issues for the group. The list of interests/issues has been e-mailed to the working group and incorporates the comments from the working group meetings.

STUDY REQUEST FORM

Nick presented the new version of the Baker River Relicensing Study Request Form. The new form integrates the template developed by the resource agencies with the procedural document developed by PSE. Ideally, Working Groups will discuss what studies need to be done at the Working Group level. If necessary, conflicts will be elevated to the Solution Team or Policy Team.

Jon brought up the challenge to prioritize studies within the entire relicensing process, asking the question, “how can we know that we are committing limited resources to the most important studies covers all Working Groups?” PSE is starting by defining some of the “no-brainer” studies such as those that need to be done to fulfill NEPA requirement.

The group walked through the study request form and revised the wording of some of the sections. Nick will make the final edits as directed by the team and will email them to team members. All members were asked to get their requests for studies (using this revised template) to Arnie by February 1st so he can email them out to team members so they have a week to review them prior to the next meeting on February 8th.

FISH PASSAGE TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP UPDATE

The Fish Passage Technical Working Group is in the process of narrowing the list of possible options for solution that they have generated over the past months. They have factored the diverse interests of the stakeholders into the process. They have asked engineers to come up with conceptual designs of what the various options might look like. These will be renewed at the next Fish Passage Technical Working Group meeting on January 30th. We’ll get another update at that time.

WATERSHED ANALYSIS

The Forest Service Watershed Analysis Document is nearly complete. It contains a good database of information valuable to the process. It also identifies information gaps. The Working Group needs access to this information. PSE will consider how to address making this important information available to team members.

LIST OF MEETING HANDOUTS

Survey Requests:

- Reference #A, 1 Tributary Habitat Mapping/Fish Surveys
- Reference #A, 2 Lower Baker River Habitat Mapping
- Reference #A 3 Reservoir Fish Population Characteristics
- Issues/Interests/Solution Template (emailed to participants)

FUTURE DATES

The team decided to continue to meet on the second Thursday of each month, from 9:30 to 2:30 for 2001: Feb. 8, Mar. 8, Apr. 12, May 10, June 14, July 12, Aug. 9, Sept., 13, Oct 11, etc.

PARKING LOT

- Communication Plan to enlist “reluctant” members
 - Reservoir/watershed:
 - Consider moving meeting locations around—closer to Olympia?
 - Copies of Section 7 of the Federal Register (Corps authority and responsibility)
 - Update on annual flood control agreement
 - Clean Water Act and FERC
 - Clean Water Act and ESA
 - Coastal Zone Management Act (How it interacts with other mandates)
 - State Shoreline Management Act
 - Federal Clean Water Act
 - Federal Clean Air Act
 - State Environmental Policy Act
 - Watershed Analysis- presentation by Brady Green at a later date
We need a strategy to integrate this analysis into the process
 - Feedback on “Salmon on the Baker River” document
 - Different perspectives
 - Discuss posting reviews on web
 - Presentation on Northwest Forest Plan including Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (USFS) at a date to be defined later
- Presentation on Flood Control by USACE/County
- Nick: Will check with Bob Barnes re: “What % does the Baker make up of Skagit River flow (regulated/unregulated/over all seasons?)”

EVALUATION OF MEETING

Well-Dones

- On time
- Jon’s participation
- Completed a task
- People kept individual comments fairly brief
- Nice having the snacks saved time

Opportunities to Improve

- No “in line” stick
- Lack of clarity around study screen review process at start

Tentative Agenda for Next Meeting
February 8, 2001
9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
PSE Office in Everett

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1. Review notes/agenda
 2. Action Items
 3. Update on Process Document (?)
 4. Update on Fish Passage Technical Working Group Meeting of Jan.30, 2001
 5. Skagit Survey Review
 6. Review Study Request Submittals
 7. Set agenda for next meeting (March 8)
 8. Evaluate meeting