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## BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

### **Terrestrial Resources Implementation Group Botanical Teamlet Meeting**

**Thursday January 10, 2008  
(9:00 a.m. to 2:30 pm)**

**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: 5011, Password: 4567  
(Please tell Anna (425-462-3773 or 206-437-9228(cell)  
if you plan to call into meeting)**

### **AGENDA**

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| 1. Welcome, review notes, action items, agenda (30 minutes)   |
| 2. License updates (if any) (15 minutes)  |
| 3. Review <i>Carex flava</i> report and mapping (1-2 hours)   |
| 4. Review specific comments on October 2007 drafts of botanical management plans: (~2 hours) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Draft Noxious Weed Management Plan</li><li>• Draft Special Status Plant Management Plan</li><li>• Draft <i>Carex flava</i> Management Plan</li></ul> |
| 5. Evaluate meeting and set date and agenda for next meeting. (15 minutes)  |



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### FINAL MEETING NOTES

**Team Leader:** Anna Kopitov (PSE), 425-462-3773, anna.kopitov@pse.com

**Present at Meeting:** Laura Potash Martin (USDA-FS), Mignonne Bivin (NPS), Patrick Goldsworthy (NCCC), Haley Edwards (PSE), Tony Fuchs (PSE), Anna Kopitov (PSE), Kathy Smayda (Smayda Environmental Associates)

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4. Review specific comments on October 2007 drafts of botanical management plans: (~2 hours) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Draft Noxious Weed Management Plan</li><li>• Draft Special Status Plant Management Plan</li><li>• Draft <i>Carex flava</i> Management Plan</li></ul>
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#### New Action Items:

- Laura will provide summary of latest Survey and Manage guidance, based on January 8, 2008 conference call and any other relevant sources.
- Laura will provide confirmation of Survey and Manage status of *Hypogymnia duplicata*.
- Anna will discuss the reed canarygrass management measure with Tim Miller of WSU Extension.
- Kathy will provide Laura Martin a copy of the species list from the T2/T5 study report and will contact Joetta at R2 regarding the electronic database with GIS polygon info. Laura may request information on selected species by polygon in the future.

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- Laura will query her database to compile a native plant species list for the entire Project area, as a basis for a plant propagation list for the Project, once the FS transition from old to new databases is complete. Laura will focus on species for seed increase.
  - Laura will provide NRIS location ID numbers to replace the ISMS location ID numbers for special status plant managed sites, once the FS conversion to the new system is complete.
  - Laura will provide draft specifications for weed free straw, mulch, etc. reflecting current FS policy.
  - Tony will update TRIG contact list to include Laura Martin's North Bend office information.
  - Tony to report at next TRIG meeting if funding for special status plant management on newly acquired lands is a delivered item or funding comes from the license article associated with habitat acquisition.
  - Anna will follow up on the possibility of acquiring a low-elevation aerial photograph of the *C.flava* site to be used in the management plan.

#### **Report on old Action Items:**

Anna provided an update on several previous action items. She has contacted the various Tribal representatives regarding the botanical teamlet activity. They would like to continue receiving the draft plans, but are not able to participate in most of the meetings.

Anna contacted Peter Dunwiddie of TNC regarding reed canarygrass management. Peter noted that they do not have staffing at present to take on a reed canarygrass management program.

Anna also contacted Todd Neel at NPS to learn more about the NPS program for reed canarygrass management. They have had some success in reducing reed canarygrass, but have been unable to provide continued funding for the project.

Marty and Kathy have added objectives and places for both Settlement Agreement language and License Article language at the beginning of each chapter. A section has been added that will highlight any differences between the agreement and the license articles.

Kathy included the following items in the update of the noxious weed management plan:

1. The Region 6 EIS on invasive non-natives is cited in addition to the MBSNF EA, wherever the EA is cited
2. A new paragraph on weed prevention was added following the section on Individual Site Management Plans, to address use of BMPs and to emphasize revegetation of disturbed sites resulting from ANY Project-related activities, not solely weed treatment. The MBSNF EA and the R6 EIS standards and guidelines, which include use of locally derived native plants, are each referenced.

Kathy has updated the weed database to the agreed-upon date format; Joetta has updated GIS to the same.

#### **Ongoing Action Items:**

- Once the weed coverage is modified to lump individual sites (points) into groups (polygons) for management purposes, Laura and Kathy will work to create a crosswalk between the PSE and USFS codes.

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- Kathy and Anna will work with Joetta to add the proposed treatment year, or species/site ranking, to the points and polygons, so that they can be displayed graphically.

### Meeting Discussion:

Tony provided an update on the expected license issuance date. NOAA is expected to send the Biological Opinion to FERC this month. License is not expected to be issued until the second quarter of 2008. PSE expects to expend the 2008 budget for implementation, except for items (such as the hatchery construction) that must wait for license issuance to proceed.

The January BRICC meeting will include discussion of the 'decision-making process' for implementation.

### **Carex flava Baseline Mapping and Long-Term Monitoring Methodology Report, January 2007.**

Anna presented a summary of the results of the Carex Working Group Report. During the field work, the decision was made to perform a 100% count, or census, rather than a sampling protocol. A methodology for distinguishing individuals was determined and was used to count a total of 525 individual plants at the site. Monitoring recommendations were provided. Reed canarygrass was mapped within 200' of *C. flava* plants using line transects with perpendicular side transects. Anna provided a GIS map (hard copy) showing the combined results of the *C. flava* and reed canarygrass mapping.

The teamlet reviewed the findings of the final report. The teamlet agreed to the findings of the study, and specifically agreed to the population size of 525 individuals as the population number for the pre-license study. We generally agreed that a re-survey should be done post-license issuance to document baseline population for the *Carex flava* management plan. The teamlet noted that specific methodologies may be modified for the management plan. Some minor concerns were noted and recommendations were made for addressing these concerns in the *Carex flava* management plan to be developed under the new license.

Tony noted some concerns with the accuracy of the reed canarygrass mapping. The occurrence of canarygrass along the base transects and side transects was recorded very precisely in the field notes as distances along each transect. However, the GPS used to locate the base transects was not a mapping grade GPS, and the accuracy may not be adequate for monitoring the reed canarygrass population. Tony suggested that a mapping grade GPS or a survey-grade GPS might be more appropriate for long term monitoring. Survey methods will be evaluated.

Anna recommended using a quadrat-based system for conducting the monitoring of *C. flava*, rather than transect. She also suggested the *C. flava* plan could be strengthened by the addition of a section on the life history or taxonomy of *C. flava*.

The group agreed to the methods developed for distinguishing individual *C. flava* plants. Mignonne suggested that diagrams or photos of the characteristics described in the text on page 4 would be useful for 'visual' learners and for future field crews. Laura noted that the diagrams on page 5 would benefit from labels of their scientific names. Also, if the text on page 5 is used in the *C. flava* management plan, it



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would be helpful to consolidate all comments on leaf sheaths in one section and those on the leaf blades in another section.

Laura noted that the methods section for the *C. flava* management plan should address identification of an individual first, then follow with the protocol for censusing the population.

Finally, Table 4 beginning on page 14 uses an asterisk without definition.

#### **Draft *Carex flava* Plan**

The teamlet reviewed the first draft of the *Carex flava* Plan. This plan is intended to serve as the FERC plan, while the detailed protocols and methodologies would be included in the TRIG-controlled *Carex flava* Habitat Management Plan (*Carex flava* HMP). Revisions were made to the electronic copy of the draft during the meeting.

#### **Draft Special Status Plant Plan**

The teamlet reviewed the first draft of the Special Status Plant Plan (FERC plan). Revisions were made to the electronic copy of the draft during the meeting.

The team agreed to revisit the topic of pre-field review and project initiation forms/protocols in a future meeting. A pre-field review (per FS definition) may not be necessary for NFS lands if PSE will be conducting pre-disturbance surveys on all sites. (The purpose of the pre-field review is to determine whether a field survey is needed.) However, PSE will still need an internal process to identify actions and trigger the performance of surveys, and to notify the FS about proposed actions on NFS lands. The Project Initiation form may serve these purposes. Whatever process(es) is(are) selected, it would be beneficial to include a standard set of procedures in the management plan. A flow chart for this process, and all the process elements of the management plan, would be a good addition to the plan.

The teamlet noted that the Settlement Agreement article and draft license article for special status plants do not address the funding source for special status plant management on newly acquired lands. Is this a PSE deliverable, or would funding come from the license article associated with habitat acquisition?  
(Tony will find out and report at next TRIG meeting.)

#### **Draft Noxious Weed Plan**

The teamlet reviewed the first draft of the Draft Noxious Weed Plan (FERC Plan). Revisions were made to the electronic copy of the draft during the meeting; Kathy will incorporate additional revisions based on Anna's written comments discussed at the meeting.

Laura noted that the neither current plan, nor the Settlement Agreement article, specifically address repeat weed surveys of the Plan Area to detect new populations over the term of the license. The group agreed that approximately every 10 years an area-wide survey might be appropriate. Kathy should draft suggested text and provide to the group in the next draft of the plan.

The Noxious Weed HMP should include an education component, to assist Project staff in identifying and reporting incidental occurrences of target weed species.



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### Other Topics

Tony noted that PSE will present a plan for format changes to the FERC plans and TRIG management plans for all of the license articles at one of the upcoming TRIG meetings. Laura requested that no new versions of the botanical plans be distributed for review until the format changes have been finalized and both plans can be provided at the same time.

**Technical Report on Effects of Plants used for Elk Forage**, Prepared by Laura Potash, Forest Botanist, Last Revised December 13, 2006. This technical report was provided to the TRIG in June 2007. Laura was asked to clarify its expected use in elk forage management for the Baker River Project. The report describes recent changes in FS direction and policy regarding the use of native species. Laura noted that the report was prepared for specific harvest units in the Greenwater River area using the Davis, et al., 2003 report developed for the Baker River area. Table 1 in the Greenwater report reflects those species present in the Greenwater area; these are a subset of the species in the Baker River area. The species listed on tables 2 and 3 of the Greenwater report are not currently recommended for use, although they were included in initial project recommendations for the timber units.

For the Baker River Project, Laura recommends considering all species listed as selected or neutral on Table 1 of Davis et al., 2003 for use in the elk management plan. The plant species lists compiled for the botanical surveys (T2/T5, T6 and T16) may provide some additional species that could be suitable for use in revegetation and/or elk forage.

Tony raised question of using timothy hay as an elk forage species. Laura noted that it would not be appropriate to use on NFS lands, as it is not considered non-invasive; it is a persistent cultivar. On other ownerships, it could be used where compatible with county weed management objectives; one might want to consider the potential effects of introducing in where it doesn't already occur.

### Next Meeting

The teamlet agreed to schedule the next meeting after distribution of the next draft of the botanical plans.

### HANDOUTS:

- Map of *Carex flava* and *Phalaris arundinacea* based on *Carex flava* Baseline Mapping and Long-Term Monitoring Methodology Report, January 2007
- *Carex flava* Baseline Mapping and Long-Term Monitoring Methodology Report, Carex Working Group, January 2007
- Draft *Carex flava* Plan
- Draft Special Status Plant Plan
- Draft Noxious Weed Plan

### PARKING LOT:

Revisit pre-field review, project initiation form, and/or other steps of process identifying and addressing habitat-disturbing activities conducted under the license on NFS and other ownerships.



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**MEETING EVALUATION:**

Welcome Mignonne and Haley!

Accomplished a lot; finished on time.

No deviled eggs; no tea.