
BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Aquatic Resources Group

March 13, 2007

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

USFS Supervisor's Office

21905 64th Avenue W

Mountlake Terrace, WA

(425) 775-9702

Conference Call Procedures-Dial In Info:

1-888-228-0484 (call automatically charged to PSE)-Dial in at the designated date and time –

Conference ID: 6058

Conference Password: 12345

DRAFT AGENDA

1. Review Agenda, Notes, Actions	9:00 – 9:30
2. Fish Facilities Operations Topics	9:30 – 11:00
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Juvenile Fish Facilities Operation Preparations• Juvenile Passage Biological Studies• Sockeye Spawning Beach 3 & 4 Operations• Artificial Incubation Operations• 2007 Sockeye Fry Allocation/Releases• Fish Rearing Inventories & Releases• Adult Trap Protocol Update or Changes• Lower Baker Outage Planned for April	
<i>Break at 10:30</i>	
3. Update on Implementation Activities	11:00 - 12:00
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fish Propagation Facilities Design (Presentation by HDR)	
<i>Lunch (provided)</i>	12:00 – 12:30
4. Implementation Activities (cont.)	12:30 - 1:30
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fish Propagation Facilities Design Update (cont)• Fish Passage Technical WG Report (FSC & Adult Trap graphics, Biological Studies, Connectivity)• Initiate Other Article Plan Proposals in 2007	
5. Relicense Aquatic Studies Update	1:30 - 1:35
6. BRICC/Re-License FERC Process Update	1:35 - 1:45
7. Confirm Date & Agenda for Next Meeting (tent. Apr 10), Mtg Evaluation	1:45 - 2:00

Baker River Project License Implementation

Aquatics Resource Group Meeting Final Meeting Notes

March 13, 2007
9:00 am - 2:00 pm

USFS Mountlake Terrace Office

FINAL MEETING NOTES

Team Leader: Arnie Aspelund, PSE, (arnie.aspelund@pse.com)

PRESENT

Arnie Aspelund, Jacob Venard, Nick Verretto, Cary Feldmann, Dave Jenness and Doug Bruland (PSE); Mike McGowan (HDR); Arn Thoreen (Skagit Fisheries); Ted Thygesen, Rich Johnson, and Kevin Kurras briefly by phone (WDFW); Stan Zyskowski (NPS); Scott Lentz (USFS); Craig Olson (NW Indian Fish Commission); Jon-Paul Shannahan (Upper Skagit); Bob Helton (Citizen); Jeff McGowan (Skagit Co.); Stan Walsh (SRSC); Lyn Wiltse and Jamie Riche (PDSA Consulting, Inc).

2007 MEETING DATES: (*Apr. 10 Canceled*), May 8, June 12, July 10, Aug. 14, Sept. 11, Oct. 9, Nov. 13, Dec. 11

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- Lyn - Bring the brochure from Rod's service
- Cary - Write Jon V. letter re: need for bridge over Sulphur Creek (FSC)
- Cary & Dave - Contact Ernie Brannon re: outside review of hatchery design
- All - Let Arnie know by end of March of any additional feedback you have on his draft outline of the Baker Fish Propagation Facility Plan
- Cary - Bring DVD copies of the FSC film for distribution at the next ARG meeting
- Nick - Look into field trip (overnighter at the lodge?) possibility for May ARG meeting
- Cary - Check on the status of "The Baker Story"
- Jacob - Send out an "all call" for interested parties re: gravel plan

OLD (STILL PERTINENT) ACTION ITEMS

- Nick - Send hard copies of the FPTWG notes to Bob Helton
- Nick - Arrange FSC field trips: May and mid-summer
- All - Let Jacob know if you're interested in joining the Aquatic Riparian teamlet
- Doug B.- Call Jeff re: cleaning up the boat launch

March 13 Agenda

- 9:00 – 9:15 Review Notes, Agenda
- 9:15 – 11:30 Fish Facilities Operations Topics
- Juvenile Fish Facilities
 - Juvenile Passage Biological Studies
 - Sockeye Spawning Beach 3 & 4 Ops
 - Artificial Incubation Ops
 - Fish Rearing Inventories & Releases
 - 2007 Sockeye Fry Allocation
 - Adult Trap Protocol / Changes
 - Lower Baker Outage Update
- 11:30 – 1:30 Update on Implementation Activities
- Fish Propagation Facilities Design
 - *Lunch (provided)*
 - Fish Passage TWG Report
 - FSC, Adult Trap Graphics, Biological Studies, and Connectivity
 - 2007: Initiate Other Article Plan Proposals
- 1:30 – 1:35 Relicense Studies Update (A-38 Native Char & A-09 Instream Flow)
- 1:35 – 1:45 BRICC / FERC Update
- 1:45 – 2:00 Confirm date (April 10) & agenda for next meeting; evaluate meeting

Meeting Schedule

We discussed adjusting our operational topics meetings to bi-monthly rather than monthly.

FISH FACILITIES OPERATIONAL TOPICS

Juvenile Fish Facilities

Doug B (PSE) shared that loon platforms will be installed at Lower Baker; at that time they will be putting in a new guidenet panel along with the other guidenets and a new trap box. These will be deployed by the end of March (Typical start-up at Lower Baker is April 1). At Upper Baker, the gulper's secondary pump is being repaired, and is scheduled to start 3/14. UB gulper and trap usually relies on gravitational flow ... access requirements for new FSC and trap will require installing a submersible pump to maintain flow. The ROV inspection was completed in February; didn't see any problems. This will be the last year for this guidenet and it is in good shape (New Upper Baker passage facilities will be place in 2008). Operation of the facilities (other than the submersible pumps) will remain the same. The Little Park trap (installed early March) was damaged by the recent high-water; repairs are scheduled for late this week. Hope to re-install early next week. Guidenets were lowered Saturday in anticipation of increased flow, and are being raised today.

Fish Rearing Inventories & Release

Doug walked us through the 3/12/07 Fish Inventory matrix. We are starting to receive Coho and Sockeye fry from the incubators. Raceway 1 is ready to receive the 2006 brood sockeye fry from the artificial incubators ... will get half deployed this week and half next week. We will retain 130,000 for the customary extended rearing program. All but 65,000 will be released this spring. We will ad-clip and

retain these until fall. Of these, we will retain 5,000 and mark with a freeze-brand and release them in spring 2008. Raceway 2 is prepared for receiving & feeding the 2006 brood Coho fry, which will be coming in the next week. There are fewer this year (70k this year vs. 200k normal), so there will be fewer to release into Lake Shannon. Raceway 3 (using fry troughs), has received Sockeye fry from incubators for feeding before release to Blue Tarp (today). The trout pond has Rainbow trout with some planned for future distribution to the Tribes, derbies, “trout fest” and charity events and the majority to be released into Depression Lake. **Circulars 1 – 5:** Doug reviewed the freeze-brand / ad-clipped program for Sockeye and Coho. PSE will be addressing the logistical issues to accommodate hatchery construction.

Sockeye Spawning Beaches 3 & 4, Artificial Incubation Ops, and Sockeye Fry Allocation

Ted walked us through Kevin’s handout (see italicized paragraphs below). **Beach 3** is inaccessible due to road washouts, so we can’t plant fry above Blue Tarp, may not be able to even load the beach with adults due to access problems. Beach 4 is being planted according to normal protocol; the fry look healthy and the new fish truck is being used for planting. The beaches were all loaded to capacity. We continue to have counter problems, and Smith-Root is once again working on repair and calibration. We were pleased to learn that there has been no detected IHN virus so far this year. The artificial incubation Sockeye fry are doing well – will release 70% to Baker and 30% to Shannon, per agreement. The adult trap is functioning fine though it hasn’t seen much action. Kevin called in with perfect timing to update us on the 2006 Beach 4 adult loading numbers:

- 4 A = 360 males, 426 spawned females, 44 not spawned females
- 4 B = 355 males, 427 spawned females, 27 not spawned females
- 4 C = 443 males, 522 spawned females, 45 not spawned females
- 4 D = 374 males, 432 spawned females, 42 not spawned females

...so we could anticipate the level of early fry production that could be seen. So far Kevin is seeing similar magnitude of fry between the compartments, even though the numbers don’t demonstrate that from the counters.

Handout submitted by Kevin Kurras:

ARG Meeting 3/13/07

Beach #3 The road is still not passable past “Blue Tarp”, so no inspection of beach #3 has been made. I doubt that we will be able to access the beach for fry planting this season and possibly not even in time to load the beach with adults, should the co-managers decide to load it.

Beach #4 The Smith-Root counters were installed on February 8, 2007 and we are planting according to the normal protocol with adjustments for the weather, snow, fallen trees and road conditions. Whatcom County did grant us a variance to travel over the bridge for planting operations. The fry look healthy and the new fish truck is being used for planting.

In January, there was a small event at the headworks that did deposit some silt into the trout pond but it was not serious enough to trigger the alarm and shut off the water to the spawning beach.

Counters I reported that the counters were delivered to Smith-Root for repair and calibration...I may have slightly embellished that statement. Although the

counters did seem to function while plugged in, sitting on a bench in my warm, dry, office, several of them do not appear to be accurately counting fry. I have adjusted the sensitivity repeatedly and I must report that I only have confidence in two of them. I am currently in contact with Smith-Root seeking any help and support they can offer to rectify the situation. I will follow up at the next meeting.

<i>IHNV</i>	<i>We are sampling according to the protocol and with two sample groups in we have detected no virus yet.</i>
<i>Incubation</i>	<i>The artificial incubation fry are doing well. Each take is ponded into shallows or intermediates, fed, and will be released into Baker Lake or Lake Shannon according to the 70% Baker and 30% Shannon split agreed upon. The 130,000 for delayed release are to be taken from the peak spawn periods, and will be placed into a raceway for rearing. All fry look healthy.</i>
<i>Adult Trap</i>	<i>We have checked the trap several times to verify that it is fishing. The fact that we are seeing low trap numbers did raise our interest and we checked the trap accordingly.</i>

*Kevin R. Kurras
Hatchery Specialist 3
Baker Lake Sockeye Facility*

Adult Trap Protocol

Kirt created a new protocol sheet during the last meeting; we reviewed it and noted that the new document is much easier to understand and follow. There were no changes to the protocol today.

Lower Baker Outage

Arnie reported that PSE is planning on an outage April 9-20 to dewater / inspect the penstock to identify the source of some leakage they're seeing at the old powerhouse site. They will also conduct annual maintenance activities on the unit and include the adult trap annual maintenance during the outage. Depending on what they find inside the penstock, they may initiate repairs at this time, or may schedule repairs for a future date. The timing is good since there is low fish utilization of the trap at that time and they will be using the penstock outage and inspection to conduct maintenance on the trap.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Fish Propagation Facilities – Design and VE Update

Mike McGowan (HDR) walked us through a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the hatchery design that emerged from the Value Engineering session last fall. He also explained that the project will be completed on a Design – Build basis. The plan is to get the Request for Proposal (RFP) out in early to mid April, select an individual or team in early May, and begin construction in 2008 assuming we get the license this year.

A suggestion was made to have an outside peer review of the design before moving to the build phase. Ernie Brannon was mentioned as someone who might offer an expert outside perspective. Cary and Dave

will follow up.

Fish Propagation Facilities Plan

Arnie walked us through his draft outline of this plan, due to FERC within 6 months of license issuance. He asked folks to email him feedback, especially any perceived fatal flaws or omissions. Cary noted that this plan is intended to be high level, using the metaphor: “It is a roadmap, not a description of the trip.”

Arnie pointed out that references to the Settlement Agreement are highlighted in yellow. The outline includes the following sections: Executive Summary, Introduction, Implementation Schedule, Construction and Design, Sockeye Optimization, Implement 20,000 lb Cultured Fish – Programmatic Description, Prepare Fish Facilities Operations Manual, Operating Protocols, Implement Reservoir Nutrient Enhancement, Annual Report of Plan, Periodic Plan Review and Updates, References, Appendixes, Definitions of Acronyms and Abbreviations, and Lists of Tables & Figures.

We discussed risk management / security issues and noted that – by their nature – many of these plans will not be published. Scott suggested looking at decommissioning spawning beaches 1, 2 and 3 earlier than what shows on the schedule due to potential flood events.

Floating Surface Collector and Adult Trap

Cary showed a PowerPoint presentation (“On the Ground and In the Water: Technical Challenges Associated with Implementation” ... charting the history of fish management on the Baker project) and short video he presented to the NW Hydropower Association Meeting last month. He will let team members know when the FSC video is available. He then shared photos of the FSC construction progress while Nick (PSE) narrated and answered questions. Nick walked us through photo-like views of the adult trap design.

FISH PASSAGE TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP REPORT

Nick shared there’s nothing new to report on the biological studies. First release of both Sockeye and Coho was in December. The second release will be March 14. They will do seven consecutive releases at the end of April and will be taking a lot of samples at that time.

We discussed field trip options to look at FSC construction and biological studies – possibly including an overnight at the Baker Lodge and combine with celebration of new license. Maybe a May timeframe in conjunction with the ARG meeting? Maybe a boat tour? Nick will look into this.

Connectivity:

Nick shared that they still have plans to get to this out this year. There are more than 220 samples to look at first ... they’re working with USFWS on the schedule.

2007: Other Article Plan Proposals

Arnie reported that Phil Hilgert (R2) will be helping put together outlines for the aquatics management plans (flow implementation, gravel, large woody debris, maybe shoreline erosion). Jacob is taking the lead on some of these plans and will report back to us as appropriate.

Instream Flow Report

Phil delivered a preliminary draft of this long-awaited report to PSE for review. There was great rejoicing across the land. He will be walking us through it at an ARG meeting in April or May.

BRICC / FERC UPDATE

The BRICC generated a written update rather than coming together to meet in person Feb. 28. Cary shared that there are a number of issues still outstanding:

- 401: ready to be issued, comments have been received
- Shoreline permits: Skagit and Whatcom Counties have issued theirs; the hearing for Concrete's permit has been delayed several times, currently scheduled for April 9. (Fish facilities can be exempted ... Powerhouse would remain)
- CZMA: dependent upon Concrete's shoreline permit, requested deadline extension
- SEPA completed 1/12; adopting NEPA document
- BiOps: have been written, will probably be submitted to PSE next week and the goal is to submit the final BiOps to FERC by 3/19

Cary understands the FERC license order has been drafted – waiting to incorporate the 401 and CZMA. He is hoping we receive the license by the end of June (this would likely be the soonest) ... we're staying tuned. The next BRICC meeting is scheduled for April 25.

HANDOUTS

- Agenda & Notes
- Kevin's written updates
- Baker Adult Fish Trap Protocol (revised 1/09/07)
- Baker Project Fish Inventory (3/12/07)
- Baker River Fish Propagation Facilities Plan
- Baker Fish Hatchery Update (PowerPoint, 3/13/07)

MEETING EVALUATION

What Went Well

- Great PowerPoint presentations: Hatchery, FSC, Adult Trap
- Water slide imagery re: adult trap
- Movie Snacks – Junior Mints yum!
- Got out early
- Kevin's Call-In (thanks!) ... presentation was very efficient

What to Do Differently

- Dots have gone downhill (movie snacks...)
- Double-side copy the handouts
- Missed the Olympia folks USFS, NMFS

AGENDA FOR NEXT ARG MEETING

April 10, 2007 at USFS-Mtlk Terrace ~ 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

1. Welcome, review notes, action items, agenda

2. Fish Facilities Operational Topics
3. Update on Implementation Activities
4. Relicense Studies Update – A-09 Instream Flows
5. Evaluate meeting, set next meeting agenda & location