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## **BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE**

### **Recreational & Aesthetic Resources Working Group**

December 18, 2000

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

PSE Mount Vernon Business Office  
1700 East College Way  
Mt. Vernon, WA

### **AGENDA**

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| 1. Review/revise minutes/agenda             |
| 2. Review action items                      |
| 3. Hydro 101 presentation – Bob Barnes, PSE |
| 4. Solution Team update                     |
| 5. Review timeline                          |
| 6. Continue defining studies                |
| 7. Set agenda for next meeting (January 22) |
| 8. Evaluate meeting                         |

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### MEETING NOTES

**Mission:** *“To develop alternative solutions and recommendations addressing recreation, education and aesthetic resources related to the Baker River Project and its operations leading to a settlement agreement.”*

**Team Leader:** Chris Lawson (Huckell/Weinman Associates) (425) 828-4463,  
clawson@huckellweinman.com

**PSE Contact:** Tony Fuchs: (425) 462-3553, tfuchs@puget.com

### PRESENT

Chris Lawson (Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc.), Ann Dunphy (US Forest Service), Lauri Vigue (Dept. Fish & Wildlife) Jim Eychaner (IAC), Bob Barnes (PSE), Andy Hatfield (PSE), Lyn Wiltse, facilitator (PDSA Consulting)

**NOTE:** 2001 meeting dates are as follows: 1/22, 2/26, 3/26. *Times will be 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.* The location will remain at the PSE office in Mount Vernon, WA

### NEW ACTION ITEMS

- Tony: Will check with PSE Real Estate people re: dam access
- Saul: Contact Nature Conservancy, NCCC, Park Service, City of Concrete, Forest Service re: their interests in outreach and education.

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- ALL: Get comments on PSE 2001 studies forecast, and/or own list of information needs or suggested studies, to Chris by January 11<sup>th</sup>. Keep in mind which studies should be done in 2001 vs. 2002.
  - Chris: Get combined lists of 2001/2002 information needs/suggested studies to team members by January 16<sup>th</sup>.
  - ALL: Give preferred method of being contacted on “SNOW DAYS” (i.e., regarding any weather-based changes in meeting plans) to Tony.

## **REPORT ON OLD ACTION ITEMS**

- Tony: Reviewed the current license re: access across Upper Baker Dam and around north end of Baker Lake. He reported on two license articles that address access across the dam. In 1967, an easement was granted for use of a road across the dam. The Forest Service can prescribe access across the dam for public use. Tony will give us a more specific update at the January meeting (after checking with PSE’s real estate people). Re: access across Baker River above end of reservoir. In 1956, prior to license PSE had an agreement with the Forest Service where they would provide access above the lake. PSE built a bridge across the River in 1961. After 1991, the Forest Service removed the bridge to preserve scenery in the Forest.
- Tony: Confirmed that Wayne Wagner will do a flood control presentation at January 22, 2001 meeting.
- Tony: Contacted PacifiCorp re: studies. They have a very good website. PSE is currently reviewing Pacifcorp.com website to see how they might be able to apply some of their study process to the Baker River Project relicensing process. All members were encouraged to review the site (under Hydro/Lewis River).
- Ann: Checked availability of Watershed Analysis. The Forest Service hopes to get the next draft out in January for a short internal review that would include PSE. The final draft is expected in the Spring.

## **December 18, 2000 Agenda**

### **10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at PSE Office in Mt. Vernon**

1. Review/revise minutes/agenda
2. Review Action Items
3. Hydro 101 Presentation---Bob Barnes
4. Solution Team Update
5. Review timeline
6. Continue defining studies
7. Set agenda for next meeting
8. Evaluate meeting

## **HYDRO 101 PRESENTATION**

Bob Barnes gave a “Hydrology 101” presentation covering the natural hydrology of the watershed, the physical characteristics of the reservoirs, how and why they are operated the way they are, a brief review of market factors affecting project operation, a review of historical and current reservoir operations. He closed with a discussion of some of the operational consequences of the reservoirs on other stakeholder interests. He distributed an outline of his speech, the complete text of the presentation, and various graphs. His notes are available on the web.

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## **SOLUTION TEAM UPDATE**

The Solution Team met for the second time December 13, 2000 at the Forest Service Office in Mountlake Terrace. They finalized their mission statement: *By April 30, 2004, the Baker Solution Team will draft a settlement agreement for relicensing of the Baker River Project that best meets the interests of the signatories.* They also set up their meeting norms and stated their interests. During the meeting evaluation members said they are encouraged by the mutual respect and cooperation demonstrated during the meeting.

## **TIMELINE UPDATE**

Lyn distributed a high-level (generalized) draft of PSE's expected timeline for the Baker River Relicensing process. It was not addressed by the Solution Team at their December meeting, but will be reviewed at their next meeting.

It would be helpful if the timeline showed specifically how long agencies have to comment on documents distributed for review. The only date shown on the draft timeline that is firm is April 30, 2000 for filing the Notice of Intent (NOI).

## **DEFINING STUDIES**

Lyn distributed two draft documents related to studies. The first was a template developed by Stan Walsh and representatives from other agencies. The second was process guidelines put together by PSE. Stan will be meeting with PSE folks to look at merging these documents or re-writing them so they point to each other. We'll get an update at our January meeting.

Chris distributed an outline of PSE's Recreation and Aesthetics Study Forecast for 2001, which was developed as input to PSE's annual budgeting process. The forecast is based on the assumed approach of doing recreation inventory work in 2001, with needs analysis and recreation plan development in 2002, along with aesthetics and land management work. They submitted budget estimates for the following study items:

- Recreation Resource and Facility Inventory
- Recreation Use Inventory Studies
  - Literature review
  - Agency contacts
  - Electronic monitoring
  - Field-based user surveys

The first three items are standard elements conducted to meet FERC information requirements. The electronic monitoring item reflects the assumption that a limited traffic count program would be effective and desired. The last item, field-based user surveys, is not a specifically defined study but a level of effort considered to be sufficient to implement one or more specific survey methods, which was put at 1800 hours over the 2001 field season. Staffing plans for this work have not been developed. It will likely be too much work to be carried out by PSE project folks; possible options include consultants, Volt temps or temporary hires. Lauri expressed a desire that team members have an opportunity to approve/influence selection of consultants. Tony indicated that selection of consultants for specific tasks was open to discussion, but that team members had to have a sound argument if they have an objection to a particular consultant; team members do not have veto power and should not object to a consultant simply because the consultant is under contract to PSE.

Jim said he would provide comments on the study forecast list by e-mail, as he had to leave the meeting early. He noted the list appeared to reflect a classic supply/demand approach and did not address potential

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recreation, and that the Forest Service would want to address project-induced recreation. He also said he had little confidence in traffic counters.

Ann noticed that an assessment of the aesthetics was missing from the 2001 list of studies. Chris responded that there would be ample time to address aesthetics, land management, etc. in 2002, so the focus for 2001 was only on recreation inventory. Ann suggested that doing a constituent analysis in 2001 could benefit the process in 2002. This could include focus groups, mailed surveys, field based surveys, etc. The Forest Service expects PSE to apply SMS (Scenery Management System) as it relates to project effects. The SMS is a fairly new process and the Forest Service is still in the process of outlining its expectations. Ann will give the team a presentation on what is included in SMS as it becomes available. Chris asked the group if they felt we were making adequate progress toward defining studies and developing study plans, so that the plans would be ready by the end of the February meeting to support mobilization for studies in March. If not, we needed to consider convening a technical working group or using some other means to get study plans in process. The team members (minus Jim, at this point) felt a technical working group was not needed, as the team is pretty small to begin with, but agreed that the meeting durations could be extended by an hour to get more accomplished in the meetings. They also identified the new action item of submitting information/study ideas to Chris by January 11 for redistribution.

## **PARKING LOT**

Visioning exercise

Organizational/agency goals

Bounce around with meeting locations

Operationally Define “vicinity”, “watershed”, “project induced”, “dispersed”, or “displaced”

List authorities that this team must be aware of

Be sure someone from Recreational Resources area sits on the Solution Team.

Look at dispersed recreation with the Project as a whole.

**Get guest speaker from Seattle Light**

Tie education piece to ALL Working Groups guest speaker from Seattle City Light

Hold periodic “outreach” meetings for feedback from other groups (hiking, horseback riding, etc.)

Land Management:

Forest Service presentation of SMS

## **EVALUATION OF MEETING**

Things Done Well

- Tony on the phone
- Bob’s presentation

Need for Improvement

- Need more participants

## **TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR JANUARY MEETING**

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**January 22, 2000 Agenda**

**9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at PSE Office in Mt. Vernon**

1. Review/revise minutes/agenda
2. Review Action Items
3. Flood Control Presentation---Wayne Wagner
4. Continue defining studies
  - Define near term 2001 studies
  - Address subsequent study needs
5. Set agenda for Feb. 26 meeting
6. Evaluate meeting

Note: Members present at the end of the December 18 meeting agreed to lengthen our January meeting by starting at 9:30 a.m.; ending at 1:30 p.m.