



Baker River Project License Implementation
Terrestrial Resource Implementation Group
FINAL Meeting Notes

Team Leader: Tony Fuchs (PSE), 425-462-3553, tony.fuchs@pse.com

PRESENT

Tony Fuchs, Haley Edwards, Ira McDaniel, Scott Heller, Will Wharton by phone, and Cary Feldmann (PSE); Brock Applegate (WDFW); Marty Vaughn (Biota-Pacific); Kathy Smayda (Smayda Environmental); Bob Nelson and Bill Richardson (RMEF); Ann Risvold and Don Gay by phone (USFS); Patrick Goldsworthy (NCCC); Lou Ellyn Jones (USFWS); and Jamie Riche, facilitator (PDSA)

DECISION: None today

TRIG MEETINGS: May 5, 2011 by web-x, phone unless the agenda calls for an in-person meeting

ACTION ITEMS

- All RSVP by 6/14 re: RMEF event
- Bill Send Tony the RMEF invitation
- Tony Distribute the RMEF invitation to the TRIG
- Tony Attach PDF of budget spreadsheet to these notes
- Tony / Ira Draft a proposal re: managing public access on acquired lands, vet w/ Tribes, bring to TRIG for review / feedback prior to implementation
- Brock Research liability waivers for public hunting / fishing on private land
- All Review the Alder Creek Program Doc and Elk Forage Mgmt. Plan, consider what habitat assessments are appropriate for the Alder Creek property, be prepared to discuss 5/5
- Tony Coordinate site visit or meeting to ID proposed Alder Creek mgmt. activities in elk forage polygons, invite Bill Richardson, Don Gay ... report back at 5/5 meeting
- Scott Send Don location info re: wetland 17 egg masses
- Haley Email Loon Platform photos to the TRIG

PREVIOUS - STILL RELEVANT - ACTION ITEMS:

- Stan Talk with your constituents re: Property B and Tribal access on acquired lands
- Kim/Gretta Update TRIG re: accounting process for Late Seral Forest money and TERF fund
- Tony, Haley, Scott Compile list of suggested monitoring goals and activities related to Article 514, develop a draft plan for TRIG to review / edit (Tony: elk; Scott: wetlands; Haley: forest)

June 24, RMEF Field Review for Lewis River: Bill distributed an invitation with additional details about the RMEF field review of management activities on lands related to the Lewis River project. He will send it to Tony electronically to distribute to the TRIG via email. RSVP to RMEF by 6/14.

Update on Previous Action Item (Late Seral Forest Left-Over Money)

Don reminded the group that there was \$25k-\$30k left over after the thinning work related to the Late Seral Forest article was completed last November. USFS proposes using \$14,048 of this leftover money to monitor the area (see the proposal emailed to the TRIG 3/11/11). The group agreed to add the following decision item to the 5/5/11 agenda:

- “Does the TRIG authorize \$14,048 of unused Article 515 Late Seral Forest funding to conduct monitoring activities on the thinned parcels, as outlined in the USFS proposal emailed to the TRIG 3/11/11?”

BRCC / LICENSING UPDATE

PSE provides monthly email updates on Resource / Working Group activities to members of the BRCC. The fourth Wednesdays are reserved for BRCC conference calls as needed. In-person meetings are scheduled semi-annually; the next in-person meeting is scheduled for April 27 at PSE Snoqualmie office, with Web-X and the conference call line.

TRIG Budget: Will and Tony walked the group briefly through the updated license-related budget spreadsheet, which will be saved as a PDF and distributed with these notes.

LAND ACQUISITION UPDATE

Property B: Ira and Bill updated the group on their conversations with Property B’s owners. They reported that the dialogue is full and productive. There are a variety of potential agreements that could meet the interests of both the TRIG and the owners. TRIG encouraged Ira and Bill to continue the dialogue and report back when a proposal takes shape.

Property X: Ira reported that property X remains under contract; the closing date has been extended one month to complete the feasibility and due diligence work. Ira reported on progress toward resolving the encroachments and access issues, which are on track to be solved by the new closing date. The application to WDFW for perpetual easement access to the property has been denied. Tony went on-site to evaluate the options for putting a road in to get around the WDFW parcel and reported that there are not many options. He thinks it is physically possible, but probably quite expensive. All is not lost, though. Ray, Ira, and Bill will meet with WDFW folks to identify shared interests, explore options, and resolve this issue.

The Property X Timber Mgmt. Plan was emailed out last week and looks a lot like the Timber Mgmt Plan for Alder Creek (very generic). Brock asked about the wording of the goal in this plan, which states: “This property will be devoted to the growth and harvest of timber with the additional purpose of creating and sustaining wildlife habitat.” Marty responded that putting timber first and habitat second in this sentence does not limit future activities, but does reassure the folks who review and have approval authority for these plans that the property can continue to qualify for the preferred tax status it currently enjoys. No additional questions were raised in the meeting. Tony asked folks to review the plan if they haven’t already and to give him feedback or questions asap.

Access management for acquired lands: Tony spoke with Elizabeth Dubreuil (PSE’s cultural resources lead) re: PSE / Tribal access agreements. To her knowledge, there are not any additional or separate agreements beyond the Settlement Agreement, which notes that nothing in the agreement may abridge Tribes’ rights.

Ira and Tony will draft a proposal re: managing public access, vet it with Tribes, and bring it to TRIG for review / feedback prior to implementation. Brock will research liability waivers for hunting / fishing on private lands.

POST-ACQUISITION UPDATE

Alder Creek: Tony updated the group on work to map the sensitive areas of the Alder Creek property. Bruce has completed the steep slope mapping. There were no wetland or steep slope issues in the polygons designated in the Program Document to be managed for elk forage. Bruce’s assessment also looked at culverts where roads (mostly orphaned) cross streams, particularly the road system that runs above the wetlands on the western parcel. Kathy noted that these *may* need to be briefly re-assessed in summer to identify whether the culverts are in perennial or seasonal streams. Bruce outlined three *potential* alternatives: maintain as-is for limited use, bring up to standard for timber harvest, or remove culverts and decommission the roads. Marty noted that it might be worthwhile to keep some of the roads / culverts in place to prevent

further damage / deterioration due to the reality of ATV intrusions onto the site (if culverts are removed, it may just create “mud pit challenges” for ATV users). The report is still in draft form and cost estimates have not yet been included.

Tony reminded the group that the post-acquisition activities to date have been primarily related to establishing baselines and meeting DNR’s requirements for the long-term plan and alternative forest practices application. This is a pre-requisite to any site work. Tony and Marty will need to meet with DNR to explore options and requirements, estimate costs for potential management activities, and then decide as the TRIG how to draft the long-term application. Tony believes and others in the room agreed that there are a lot of shared interests between TRIG and DNR. He anticipates a good dialogue and opportunities to partner.

TRIG also needs to identify the habitat variables it wants to quantify (forage, vegetation, over-story, etc) in each polygon and which funds would pay for each activity. Once folks agree on this, a study plan could be approved at the June meeting. Bill noted that RMEF might have resources and expertise to support this effort. Scott and Kathy pointed out that a lot of information is already available in the Program Document and all of the studies for the DNR application can be added to the Program Document, making it more robust and increasing its specificity. Concurrently, Marty and Tony could continue to research road options, regulatory requirements, and estimated costs.

PSE will also go back through the related plans and documents to develop a road map for how they feed into one another and to outline where we are (what’s been done, what’s next) within the overall process acquisition process for this property.

EAGLE NIGHT ROOST SURVEY UPDATE

Mel and Haley went out the morning after our last TRIG meeting to evaluate the possible roost identified during the previous sunset survey. Some eagles were present and others came in, but it did not appear to be a night roost. Haley described it as looking more like a staging area than a roost. She also reported that the eagles continue to seem unfazed by the nearby construction.

LOON UPDATE

Haley reported that the Lake Shannon platform was installed 3/23 and she showed pictures. Haley and Mel went out 3/24 to evaluate the Baker Lake (Anderson Creek) platform and found it in good condition; in fact, geese are already nesting there. They will go out tomorrow to improve the vegetation on the Baker Lake (Noisy Creek) platform and Haley will email out photos from that. She noted that Loon surveys start this month and will be combined with Osprey surveys. Let Haley know if you would like to participate.

BOTANICAL TEAMLET UPDATE

Scott will email the notes from the last Botanical teamlet meeting when they are final. He showed photos from his recent visit to the ivy-removal sites. There has been no regrowth of ivy. Sword ferns look like they are doing well and the site is starting to look more natural overall. He will go back this summer for another review. He also noted that it is time for retreatment of the Reed Canary Grass at wetland 17 and showed photos from that site. Good news: At this point, there isn’t any RCG coming up to a treatable level in the treated areas (Yeah!). Scott noted that it is a late spring this year, so there may be some growth still coming, and there’s some RCG coming up in adjacent areas, so eradication will need to be confirmed before re-planting in the area, but it is looking good. He also reported finding egg masses for NW salamander (12) and red-legged frog (4) in the area; he will send more detailed location information to Don.

514 EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING

TRIG confirmed the process for going forward. In the interest of efficiency, PSE (Tony, Haley, Scott) are taking the lead on the project to create a 514 plan. The plan is due to FERC by October 2013 (fifth year after license issuance). They will bring a draft to the TRIG when they have it ready and will ensure there is ample opportunity for TRIG members to contribute to and guide this work at whatever level each would like.

Meeting Evaluation:

- The Bothell PSE location is good for this size group ... centrally located, has the needed technology
- Done early today
- Some déjà vu ... (Was mercury in retrograde?)
- Keep satellite mics close to speakers, even in small room
- Minimize side bars; they make it hard for phone participants to follow along

Draft May 5 Agenda – Web-X, Call

- Agenda, Notes, A.I.
- BRCC / License Updates
- Decision: Late Seral Left-Over Money
- Property X & B Updates
- Post-Acquisition: Alder Creek DNR Application – Activities by polygon
- Access Management
- Botanical Update
- Loon / Osprey Update