



BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Aquatic Resources Working Group

(Combined Meeting of the Hydro and Fish Working Groups)

December 14, 2000

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. Review and discuss merged Issues/Interest spreadsheet (for fish and hydro) |
| 4. Endangered Species Act presentation by Dayna Matthews (NMFS) |
| 5. Review of draft study screen |
| 6. Set 2001 meeting schedule and agenda for next meeting (January 11, 2000?) |
| 7. Evaluate meeting |

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December 14, 2000

9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

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.”*

Hydrological Team Leader: Bob Barnes, 425-462-3096, rbarne@puget.com

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

Present:

Karen Kloempken (WA Dept. Fish & Wildlife), Stan Walsh (Skagit System Cooperative), Bill Reinard (Wildcat Steelheaders Club), Dick Raisler (Fidalgo Flyfishers/WA Council-Federation of Fly Fishers), Steve Jennison (WA Dept. of Natural Resources), Don Schluter (by conference phone - Trout Unlimited), Rod Sakrison (WA Department of Ecology), Lloyd Pernela (PSE), Arnie Aspelund (PSE), Nick Verretto (PSE), Doug Bruland (PSE), Cary Feldmann (PSE), Chuck Ebel (Army Corps of Engineers), Lyn Wiltse (facilitator - PDSA Consulting)

December 14, 2000 Agenda

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

PSE Office in Everett

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1. Review notes/agenda
 2. Action Items/Parking Lot
 - RESOLVE Training update- Make-up session is Jan. 12th, 9:00-3:00p.m. Forest Service Building at Mountlake Terrace.
 - Solution Update
 3. Review Issues and Interests Spreadsheet
 4. Endangered Species Act Presentation- Dayna Matthews, NOAA/NMFS
 5. Review study screen drafts
 6. Set 2001 schedule - Do we continue all day meetings on 2nd Thursday for now?
 7. Set agenda for next meeting, January 11, 2001?
 8. 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.

Bill Reinard shared copies of an article he authored that was published by The Skagit Valley Herald, December 1, 2000: *Apply All the Best Science for True Salmon Recovery*. Some discussion followed reiterating the need to make sure we have reliable baseline data from which we can judge the effectiveness of our subsequent actions.

New Action Items

- All: Get comments to Nick or Arnie regarding Interests and Issues spreadsheet by year-end.
- All: Get comments on the draft study screening document to Stan/Nick/Arnie by year-end.
- All: Get comments on the proposed Skagit R. stage recorder installation to Nick/Stan by year-end.
- Stan and Nick: Determine how to proceed on the installation of recorders on the Skagit River.
- Stan and Nick: Edit draft study screening document for submittal at next meeting.

Report on Old (Combined) Action Items

- Stan, Nick, Arnie and Karen merged Interests/Issues spreadsheets for two working groups into a single file. They brought copies for discussion.

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

Endangered Species Act Presentation by Dayna Matthews

Dayna prefaced his presentation by asking team members what information they were seeking from his presentation. He distributed a handout entitled: *NOAA Fisheries, Introduction to the Endangered Species Act*. The presentation will be made available on the website. If you were not at the meeting and would like a hard copy of the presentation, please ask Arnie. For additional information check the Web at www.nwr.noaa.gov. It contains the following sections:

- Introduction and overview of the 4(d) rule for salmon and steelhead

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- Discussion of future amendments to the final 4 (d) rule
 - General information about submitting a program for a 4(d) limit
 - Specific submittal instructions for the 13 limits in the final 4(d) rule

Update from Fish Passage Technical Working Group

The last meeting of this group was cancelled. The next meeting of this technical working group will be January 30, 2001. We will get a report at our February 8th meeting.

Solution Team Meeting Debrief

The Solution Team met on January 13 for the second time. They finalized their mission statement and completed their team norms. Their mission: *By April 30, 2004 develop a settlement agreement for relicensing of the Baker River Project that best meet the interests of the signatories.* They spent the bulk of the meeting sharing the interests of their organizations.

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.
- All members were asked to review the latest version of the spreadsheet for accuracy and completeness (e.g., last sentence in #9 was incomplete). Keep in mind that an interest without an owner is not an interest. Arnie suggested that interests beyond line 14 might belong to another resource group.
- The teamlet took a preliminary stab at referencing the issues that went with each interest. The last page was solutions. The solution section has not been changed since our last meeting. We will address them as we get to that point in the process. All members are asked to get comments back to Nick or Arnie by year's end.
- Concern was expressed that while this group follows the relicensing timeline, they also need to respect the needs to produce power and protect resources in the interim.
- Lloyd Pernela of PSE shared the high-level timeline for the Baker relicensing process. He assured the group that moving quickly to take advantage of the limited time available for studies was also in PSE's interest.

Study Criteria

- We need a standardized screen to help us prioritize studies that need to be done. PSE put together a draft of guidelines for requesting studies. Stan and agency folks put together a template of Study Criteria for study ideas. These two documents seem complimentary. Stan walked the group through the template: Step 1, answer a, b, c, or d. If you cannot answer one of those, it's probably not a good idea to go forward with a request for the study. The agencies also differentiated between a study and a request for information. (e.g., this study screen would not be used for GIS information). This study screen is aimed at scientific studies. We want to be sure our studies are directed at answering relicensing questions. This template would apply to PSE-initiated studies, including mandatory studies.
- Ideally, the working group will select which studies will be performed. Any points of contention would likely be resolved at the Solution Team level.
- All needs for information should be handled in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

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- You may want to include whether/how the study addresses a particular interest/issue in the “purpose” section of the template.
 - Existing information and data from previous studies should be used in lieu of performing additional, redundant studies.
 - Work groups will consider ideas for studies based on information from Steps 1 and 2.
 - Step 3 is not yet at the study design level.
 - Participants’ comments on the draft study screening should be directed to Stan/Arnie/Nick by year-end.

Proposal to Install Temporary Stage Recorders on the Skagit River

The working group reviewed the Skagit River Stage Recorder installation submittal of 11/29/00 from Sue Madsen (R2 Resource Consultants). The group then authorized PSE to meet off-line with Stan to refine and coordinate the placement of the transducers. The temporary stage recorders on the Skagit River will allow development of a relationship between stage changes at the USGS sites and less-confined sites in the middle reach, producing site-specific stage data relative to the Dalles gage.

Update from PSE Regarding Skagit River Redd Stranding

PSE has been working continuously with the resource agencies, SSC and Seattle City Light since Thanksgiving to provide augmented flows in the Skagit River for the protection of chum and chinook salmon redds. The operation at the Baker Project has been adjusted to provide additional flow in the gaps between peaking operations at Seattle City Light’s Skagit Project. This also has enabled PSE to in-fill the Baker reservoirs slightly and maintain flow for fish despite the unusually low water year.

List of Meeting Handouts

- NOAA Fisheries Introduction to the Endangered Species Act.
- The Skagit Valley Herald article of December 1, 2000: *Apply All the Best Science for True Salmon Recovery*
- Issues and Interests Spreadsheet (revised)
- Study screen drafts (2)
- *Collaborative Processes for Improving Land stewardship and Sustainability*, by Mark Hummel and Bruce Freet
- 11/29/00 Memorandum from Sue Madsen on Skagit River Stage Recorders
- Baker River Relicensing Summary Level Schedule (11/10/00 Draft)
- Updated Aquatic Resources Working Group Member List with contact information

Future Meeting Dates

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

Parking Lot

- Communication Plan to enlist “reluctant” members
- Reservoir/watershed

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- 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

Meeting Evaluation

Well-Dones

- Good meeting- got lots done
- Outstanding study criteria template
- Great NOAA Presentation!

Opportunities to Improve

- Ran over

Tentative Agenda for Next Meeting

January 11, 2001

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

PSE Office in Everett

1. Review notes/agenda
2. Action Items
3. Update on Process Document (?)
4. Update on Issues and Interests template
5. Update on study screen
6. Watershed Analysis Presentation (?)
7. Set agenda for next meeting (February 8)
8. Evaluate meeting