



BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Aquatic Resources Working Group

May 9, 2002

8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

U.S. Forest Service

Conference Room A/B (425-775-9702)

21905 64th Avenue West, Mountlake Terrace, WA

AGENDA

1. Review Agenda and Minutes	8:30 – 8:45
2. Review Study Plans/Requests: A1c, A1a, A26b	8:45 – 10:30
<i>Break</i>	10:30 – 10:45
3. Report from the Instream Flows Technical Working Group (A9), Review Study Plans/Requests: A9c, A9d	10:45 – 11:30
4. Report From Fish Passage Technical Working Group	11:30 - 12:00
<i>Lunch (meeting snacks or bring your own)</i>	12:00 – 12:30
5. Review Study Plans/Requests (cont.): A26a	12:30 – 1:15
6. Action Items	1:15 - 1:30
7. Update from Solution Team Meeting	1:30 - 1:45
8. Additional Issues	1:45 - 2:00
9. Set Agenda for June 13, 2002	2:00 - 2:10
10. Evaluate Meeting	2:10 – 2:15



May 9, 2002

Driving Directions to US Forest Service Office:

- 1) Driving North from Seattle (or South from Everett) on I-5, take the 220th St. SW exit (exit 179).**
 - 2) Turn west (right if from southbound I-5, left if from northbound I-5) onto 220th St. SW.**
 - 3) Drive west about a block and turn right onto 64th Ave W.**
 - 4) The office building is about ¼ block down the street on the right side of the road.**
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May 9, 2002
8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
USFS Office
Mountlake Terrace, WA

MEETING NOTES

***Aquatics 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.”*

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

PRESENT: Arnie Aspelund, Cary Feldmann, (PSE), Stan Walsh (Skagit System Cooperative), Arn Thoreen (Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group), Emily Greenberg and Phil Hilgert (R2), Thom Hardy (Utah Water Research Laboratory), Brady Green (U.S. Forest Service), Gary Sprague (WDFW), Bill Reinard (Wildcat Steelhead Club), Chuck Ebel (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), Lyn Wiltse and Mary Jean Bullock (PDSA Consulting, Inc.)

Note: If unable to attend meetings, please notify Team Leader. If something comes up on the day of the meeting, call Lyn at her new cell phone number: 425-890-3613.

FUTURE DATES AND LOCATIONS

Note: There will be no June meeting

July 11, (Dept. of Ecology, Bellevue office) from 8:30 to 3:00,
August 8 and September 12 from 8:30 to 3:00 at USFS Office in Mountlake Terrace unless otherwise specified.

AGENDA

May 9, 2002

8:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

U. S. Forest Service Office

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1. Review Agenda and Minutes
 2. Review Study Plans /Requests
A1c, A1a, A26b
 3. Report from Instream Flows Technical Working Group (A9)
 4. Review Study Plans/Requests: A9c, A9d
 5. Report from Fish Passage Technical Working Group
 6. Review Study Plans/Requests: A26a
 7. Action Items
 8. Update from Solution Team Meeting
 9. Additional Issues?
 10. Set agenda for June 13, 2002
 11. Evaluate Meeting

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- All: Consider process for addressing it for A26a.
- All: Review Table 10 (A1a) p.36-38 and give feedback on prioritization ratings by May 31.
- All: Let Arnie know ASAP if you plan to attend the May 21 public tour of the Baker River Project. PSE needs a count to they can plan for transportation, etc.
- All: Review A26b and give R2 feedback taking into account what we're doing in other studies. Give feedback to R2 prior to July meeting.
- Ruth: Draft Interest statements and accompanying issues for the Nature Conservancy.
- Emily: Call Reed Glesne about A1a interim report.
- Arnie: Send Fish Passage Technical Group documentation re: upstream options to members to review.
- Arnie: Come up with studies prioritization model.
- Arnie: Send summary of existing PSE data related to A26.
- Brady: Send D. Drake subject and contact information to members.
- Thom: Send Phil info on relevant approaches to data gathering for A26A by 5/28.
- Phil: Send to Arnie summary of available methodologies related to May 31 so he can distribute them to members.
- All: Consider process for addressing questions for A26A.
- Sue: Talk to Stan re: scour monitoring.
- Don: Send what information you have re: cut throat passage to Phil by April 30.
- Brady: Check on possibly meeting at the Government Building in Sedro-Woolley for July 11 meeting.

REPORT ON OLD ACTION ITEMS

- Nick and Bob met with Greta. Brady reported that A-13 will be moved to the parking lot for now.

STUDY REQUEST SUBMITTALS/STUDY PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Study #	Title	Notes/Next Steps
A01.A	Reservoir Tributary Habitat Surveys	Emily distributed the interim report of the tributary habitat surveys performed so far. She also explained the maps she distributed on channel gradients and location of anadromous barriers in the basin. There is still some gradient ground truthing to be done. Culvert information will be appended to the final report. She also familiarized us with Table 10 (p.36-38). This table corresponds to the empty red boxes indicating areas where data are not available as shown on the maps. The group will review the priorities assigned to each location in the matrix and give R2 feedback at the next meeting.
A01.B	Reservoir Tributary Biological Surveys	We will have a draft report this spring.
A01.C	Reservoir Tributary Delta Surveys	Emily (R2) walked us through the addendum to Study Plan A1C They have done one spawning survey on Lake Shannon tributaries and one at Upper Baker tributaries. The water is still too cold for spawning. They are monitoring the warmer streams (Channel Creek, Little Park Creek and Beaver Creek) every two weeks to see when spawning begins. Once spawning is observed in any of these creeks, the spawning survey will be expanded to all tributaries.
A02	LB River Habitat Mapping	No changes since last meeting.
A03	Reservoir Fish Population Characteristics	No changes since last meeting.
A04	LB/Skagit River Flow, Gaging	No changes since last meeting.
A05	Water Quality Sampling	No changes since last meeting.
A06	UB Passage Design Baffle Modification	Complete.
A07	Lower Baker Forebay Bathymetric Survey	Complete.
A08	UB Passage System Evaluation	The study report from R-2 is complete.
A09A	Skagit River Flow and Habitat Assessment (HIGH PRIORITY)	There will be a technical Working Group meeting on May 13 at DOE in Bellevue. (See Instream Flow Meeting report below).
A09B	Salmonid Redd Selection and Maintenance in the Middle Skagit in Response to River Fluctuation from	Not discussed at this meeting. A copy of a report was provided to Stan Walsh on a Seattle City Light study looking at the behavioral

Hydropower Peaking	response of salmon on redds.
A09C Distribution, Timing and Depth of Salmonid Redds	Went out on April 29 at 16,000 cfs—saw some redds. Water levels prohibited further investigation by boat on the following day. They are coordinating with Pete Castle. This survey is ongoing—dreading good weather this weekend.
A09D Distribution, Timing of Salmonid Fry	Still waiting for NMFS collection permit.
A10 Baker River Delta Habitat Assessment-Char	Complete. Note: USFW is concerned with impacts to char and indirectly to bald eagles through chum and also to cutthroat.
A11 Nutrient Addition	Not Discussed. Parking Lot.
A12 Instream Flows for Bio-diversity	Not Discussed. Split between R-A21 & R-A09.
A13A Water Quality Impacts of Human Uses of the Reservoir and Adjacent Shorelines.	Moved to Parking Lot.
A13B Water Quality Impacts on Aquatic Habitat	Not discussed at this meeting. Nick and Arnie will discuss this offline.
A14A Reservoir Shoreline Erosion	Not discussed at this meeting. This survey is being conducted now (field and photo work). We will get preliminary study results to all Working Groups by June.
A15 UB Delta Scour	Not discussed at this meeting.
A16 Lower Baker River Alluvial Fan Assessment	Not discussed at this meeting.
A17 Tributaries Surveys Upstream of Barriers	Not discussed. Request pending; not for 2001.
A18 Baker River Survey Upstream of 1 km.	Not discussed at this meeting. Status as of October meeting: Merged into A-01.A habitat surveys conducted Aug & Sept 2001.
A19 Review Limnological Information	Not discussed at this meeting. Status as of October meeting: PSE is talking to a University of Washington researcher to review existing data.
A20 Large Woody Debris Management	Not discussed at this meeting. Work will begin as soon as possible.
A21 Skagit Wild & Scenic River Values	Not discussed at this meeting. Status as of October meeting: Study Request is under review.
A22 Baker Lake Trout Impacts Evaluation	No longer necessary due to change in management direction in favor of cancellation of non-native trout stocking in the reservoirs.
A23 Baker River Wild & Scenic River	Not discussed at this meeting. Status as of

Values	October meeting: Study Request needs clarification.
A24 Hydrologic and Geomorphic Analysis	Not discussed at this meeting. R2 reviewed and provided a response to Stetson Engineer's comments to final study plan.
A25 Unnatural Predation	Not discussed at this meeting. Carl Hadley is continuing to develop this Study Plan. We will start the field-work next week and go through the middle to the end of May. We did a preliminary look on March 29. Didn't see anything of consequence. Nick will forward the revised Study Plan when he receives it. He welcomes additional comments.
A26A Reservoir Limnology-Production Potential	<p>An updated version of the Study Plan was distributed for our review. PSE thinks what is being proposed in this Study Plan will not answer the questions which were put forth in the Study Request in an efficient and timely manner.</p> <p>What we want to find out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productive capacity of Baker and Shannon reservoirs for sockeye and coho, • Potential salmonid biomass production (complimentary in approach with 26B) • Factors limiting productive capacity. <p>Phil will put together a list of available coho, sockeye methods so we will know what our options are to answer these questions. All will send comments to Arnie on how to proceed in answering these questions by May 31.</p>
A26B Tributary Production Potential	<p>Emily distributed the new draft Study Plan. This is a literature review of plans to estimate production potential. It doesn't include sockeye or resident trout above anadromous barriers. This Study Plan suggests a methodology including available habitat, comparison with similar watersheds, and historical data for estimating production potential in the basin. This specific study does not look at losses associated with the original construction of the dam. This study does not look at without project production potential. We won't proceed with this study until we get</p>

	the data from the Habitat Surveys (AIA) Give feedback to R2 before our July meeting.
A27 Middle Skagit Incubation Flows	Not discussed at this meeting. Status as of October meeting: Covered in A9.
A28 Fish Passage-Reservoir Management	Not discussed at this meeting. This is being further developed in the Fish Passage Technical Working Group.
A29 Estimate Sockeye Production from Different Incubation Sources	Unable to get sockeye samples from the Delta. We have fry sample from each of the beaches and Channel Creek. We need to understand the accuracy with which we can distinguish the groups. We also need to get numbers that would constitute a valid sample site. We could then do otolith sampling.
R-A30 Near-Field Smolt Behavior	Not discussed at this meeting. Coordinated through Fish Passage Tech. Group.
R-A31 Fish Passage-Far Field Smolt Migration	Not discussed at this meeting. Coordinated through Fish Passage Tech. Group.
R-A32 Fish Passage-Kelt Radio telemetry	Not discussed at this meeting. Coordinated through Fish Passage Tech. Group.
R-A33 Fish Passage-PIT Tag Migration	Not discussed at this meeting. Coordinated through Fish Passage Tech. Group.
R-A34 Fish Passage-Downstream Run-Timing Correlation	Not discussed at this meeting. Coordinated through Fish Passage Tech. Group.
R-A35 Fish Passage-Upstream Run-Timing	Not discussed at this meeting. Coordinated through Fish Passage Tech. Group.
R-A36 Native & Wild Inland Fish Population Assessments	Not discussed at this meeting.

INSTREAM FLOWS TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (A9)

This group met on April 22. They walked through the results of A24 and the 2001 Skagit River Spawning Survey Results. A technical teamlet will meet May 13 at DOE to assess list of information needed for relicensing and come to consensus re: methods to gather it.

REPORT FROM FISH PASSAGE TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS

Upstream and Downstream passage meetings occurred on May 7. There were related tours on May 7 and 8. For downstream, they are in their second week of behavioral studies at Upper Baker. They are continuing to work options for solution through filtering process for both upstream and downstream passage. After the discussion on upstream passage, the trap and haul option was the only upstream passage option being advanced through application of the filter. Arnie distributed a technical memo detailing the analysis behind the decision not to advance the combination options of trap and tramways and trap and fish locks.

NOTE: Don Schluter, representing Trout Unlimited did not attend our meeting today. Due to technical difficulties (phones), and a family emergency, he was only able to attend 20-30 minutes of the Fish Passage Technical Working Group this week. He reported to meeting facilitator Dee, and later also to Lyn, that he has concerns that the group's recommendation for upstream passage excludes volitional passage options. He also reported that TU is evaluating their continued participation in the relicensing process.

SOLUTION TEAM UPDATE

May 21 is the date of a public tour of the Baker River Project. Please let Arnie know as soon as possible if you plan to attend. Public meetings to review the Initial Scoping Document (ICD) and Scoping Document #1 will follow on May 21 and 22. A 60-day comment period will follow the public meetings. PSE expects to release the Scoping Document #1 within five days. Comments on both documents will be due July 22.

PSE plans to submit the request to FERC to pursue the alternative licensing process by the end of this week. They seem to have worked out the details re: confidentiality with the tribes. There will be a tribal council review of the Process Document and Communications Protocol the end of this week. The final revisions of these documents will be sent out to Solution Team members early next week

PSE is asking participants in the process to send in their letters of support so they can send them to FERC along with their request to go ALP.

The next Solution Team meeting will be immediately following the Public meeting on May 22.

OTHER ISSEUS: MUDDING

Brady passed out a brochure the Forest Service put together to address off road vehicle activity in the drawdown zone. They are looking for comments and partners in addressing this serious issue.

OTHER ISSUES: STURGEON

Arn is interested in any information anyone has re: the viability of sturgeon in the Baker River system.

MEETING HANDOUTS

- Agenda, April 2002 meeting notes, updated mail list, revised study request index.
- A26a: Review of Existing Data and Development of a Study Plan to Examine Factors Limiting Production of Juvenile Sockeye Salmon, Juvenile Coho Salmon, and Bull Trout in Baker-Shannon Reservoirs (Beauchamp)
- A-01c: Draft of Addendum to Study Plan: Springtime Spawning Surveys at Baker River Project Reservoir Tributary Deltas
- A-01a: Habit Surveys of baker Basin Tributary Reaches Accessible to Anadromous Salmonids Study

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- Technical Memorandum prepared for the Fish Passage Technical Working Group by Montgomery Watson Harza, Summary of Filter #2 Analysis, Date May 8, 2002
 - Mudding brochure, Mt. Baker Ranger District

PARKING LOT

- State agency presentations re: mandates (agency direction)
- Create a master list of possible studies across all working groups and share with all
- Access to the Baker River Project hourly operational model (Charles Howard)
- Participate in Lower Skagit Work Group for native char
- Create Overall “Study Plan” for Studies that will drive the Relicensing Process
- Address Traps & Haul – other species

EVALUATION OF MEETING

Well-Dones

- Got out early
- Between meeting communication and distribution of materials going well. Thanks PSE!
- Nice summary and maps of stream survey data. Thanks Emily!
- Nice spread. Thanks Arnie!

Opportunities to Improve

- Sparse attendance
- Missed Don, Nick, Sue, Rod, Ruth and Steve.
- Evaluation ran on too long

Tentative Agenda for Next Meeting July 11, 2002 at Dept. of Ecology, Bellevue 8:30a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

1. Review Agenda and Minutes
2. Update on Instream Flows meeting and Studies Prioritization model (two hours at least)
3. Review Study Plans /Requests: A15, A26A, any new requests
4. Action Items
5. Update from Solution Team Meeting and Public Meetings
6. Reports from Fish Passage Technical Working Group
7. Additional Issues?
8. Set agenda for August 8, 2002
9. Evaluate Meeting