



BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group Meeting

March 20th, 2003 (8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.)
(Bring Sack Lunch)

U.S. Forest Service Office
21905 64th Avenue West
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043
425-744-3236 (office # 425-775-9702)

Conference Call Line: 1-866-280-6429, code 144995#
(Please tell Tony or Lyn (425-890-3613) if you plan to call into meeting)

AGENDA

Introductions
Review notes/revise agenda/action items
Assess sufficiency of data <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What conclusions can we draw?• Analysis methods?• What additional data needs? Determination of sufficiency of Analysis Species• How might we collect additional data?• What additional analysis needs?• PME refinement (as next step)
Studies Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brief update on existing study reports• New studies and requests: T6 Noxious Weeds, T12 Grizzly, T17b Amphibs ,T21 Elk, T23 Bogs• New Analysis Species request: <i>Carex flava</i>
Confirm April 23rd location and agenda, meeting location/dates for May, June
Evaluate meeting



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8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
USFS Office

Mountlake Terrace, WA

FINAL MEETING MINUTES

Mission: “To develop alternative solutions and recommendations, addressing terrestrial and wildlife resource interests for the Baker River Project and its operations, leading to a settlement agreement that:

- accurately defines and describes the existing environment in relationship to the previous environment;
- identifies project effects (existing and proposed) leading to development of protection, mitigation, and enhancement options.”

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

ATTENDEES

Marty Vaughn (Biota Pacific), Bob Nelson, (Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation), Tony Fuchs and Cary Feldmann (Puget Sound Energy), Lauri Vigue (Washington Dept. Fish & Wildlife), Laura Potash and Don Gay, (USFS), Patrick Goldsworthy (North Cascades Conservation Council), Kathy Smayda (Smayda Environmental for the Louis Berger Group), Tom Hamer (Hamer Environmental), Stan Walsh (Skagit System Cooperative), Ron Tressler (EDAW) , Gene Stagner (USFW) by phone, Bob Koontz (National Park Service), Dee Endleman (Agreement Dynamics), Lyn Wiltse, facilitator, and Mary Jean Bullock, notetaker, (PDSA Consulting)

SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

Regular meetings: April 23, May 15, June 19 (location?), July 17, Aug. 21 (location?), Sept. 18, Oct.16, Nov. 20 (location?)

PLEASE NOTE: THE NEXT MEETING IS ON *WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23* INSTEAD OF THURSDAY, APRIL 17 AS WAS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED.

THE CONFERENCE CALL LINE WILL BE OPEN DURING ALL THESE MEETINGS. PLEASE CALL 1-866-280-6429 AND ENTER PARTICIPANT CODE: 144995 #. Let Lyn know before the meeting starts if you are calling in (call her at 425-890-3613).

Agenda for March 20, 2003 Meeting
PSE Office in Mountlake Terrace

8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

1. Introductions
2. Review notes/agenda/action items
3. Assess sufficiency of data
 - What conclusions can we draw?
 - Analysis methods

What are additional (data needs?) Make determination re: sufficiency of Analysis species

 - How might we collect additional data?
 - What additional analysis needs?
 - PME refinement (as next step)
4. Studies Reports
 - New Study Request: *Carex flava*
5. Confirm location and set agenda for our April 23, 2003 meeting
6. Evaluate meeting

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- ALL: Give Kathy input re: terrestrial interests related to the HYDROPS model.
- Erin: Write up species analysis report for Yellow Sedge and its interaction with Reed Canary Grass prior to our April meeting (April 23rd).
- Tony: Post T13 to the web and notified members by email.
- Tony: Post T15 map on R-2's FTP site and let members know when it is there.
- ALL: Reviewed T2/T5 reports and T16 reports by next meeting (April 23.)
- Tony: Sent out email with instructions for accessing the FTP website (note on subject line).
- Tony: Post T7 Report to PSE website.
- Ron: Revise Grizzly study plan to reflect comments expressed during the meeting, and re-issue it to the group (through Tony).
- ALL: Review the Grizzly study plan and let Tony know if they feel a conference call teamlet is necessary
- Tony: Re-issue February minutes with additions.
- Kathy: Check into status of HYDROPS runs and report at April meeting
- Lauri: Continue checking into getting DNR road information. She talked with Ron and is still trying to determine who the contact person is to provide us with these data.
- Don: Check with Skagit County/Fire Department re: residence maps.
- Tony: See that a Study Plan is drafted to assess influences of change in reservoir levels on the bog.
- Tony: Bring up Live Link application at next PSE Team Leaders meeting.
- Tom: Set up teamlet (Laura, Tony, Carl, etc.) to discuss Analysis Species *Carex flava*.
- Marty: Line out an approach for developing details around loon PME (work with Lauri).
- Don: Set up a teamlet with Lauri, Gene, Bob K. to come up with potential actions for Spotted Owl and Marbled Murrelet.

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- Tony: Check with TNC, Skagit Land Trust, and SCL re: land use (projected).
 - Tony: Create (PSE) Shoreline Management Plan draft for Lake Shannon for review at our May meeting.
 - Kathy: Bring sample Shoreline Management Plans to May meeting
 - Tony: Create a teamlet (Lauri, Don, Patrick, Joetta, Laura?) to discuss updating constraint maps to reflect terrestrial values.
 - Lyn: Follow up with Steve J. re: DNR data request at the Solution Team meeting.
 - Don: Set up BAWG meeting prior to April 23 Working Group Meeting.
 - Tony: Find out availability of members to attend additional meeting (if it comes to that) between out April 23 meeting and May 1.)

REPORT ON OLD ACTION ITEMS

- Tony: Confirmed Mountlake Terrace location for our March 20 meeting (*Team leader note: I confirmed the location, and we are "on" at Mountlake Terrace!*)
- Kathy: Talked with Cary re: topics/scenarios for HYDROPS runs. She will update us in the status of these runs at our next meeting.
- Bob: Got CD to Ron containing elk-related GIS data.
- Tom: Got CD with Forest Service data to Ron to see if he can use it (elk telemetry). Ron doesn't need it,. Instead he will be looking at section by season.
- Ron: Got UFSF data from Don re: seasonal use of trails (noting those of high usage), and all FS roads that are drivable. No gate information is included. He will work with Joetta (R2) re: mapping these seasonal closures, etc.
- Ron: Wrote up Grizzly Study Plan ASAP.
- Tom: After incorporating comments, sent out CD with final reports (T2/T5 and T16).
- Tony: Posted figures from draft final reports to R2s FTP website.
- Marty: Sent out more complete report on T7b on Mar. 18. He also brought hard copies.
- ALL: Reviewed reports and began to identify some alternatives that make sense.
- Tony: Asked Andy for a summary of seasonal recreation use. The following distribution of local recreation use of the five Baker Lake developed campgrounds during 2001: May = 7%, June = 8%, July = 35%, August = 33%, September = 16%, and October = 1%.
- Ron: Contacted Steve Bratz (Crown Pacific) re: road closures information on non-federal lands.
- Ron: Revised the Elk Study plan to reflect Don's comments and sent it out by March 3.
- Don: Reviewed historical photos for indication of other bogs.
- Lauri: Checked out Hood Canal bog contact – Keith DeBlanca. He will be working with Michele Stevens, a bog expert, and let us know. She also checked with Bill Leonard, an amphibian expert who also has some bog expertise. Stay tuned.
- Patrick: Sent British Columbia Bog Group contact information to Tony to distribute.

LIVE LINK

Live link is a web-based search engine that provides access to documents. It is being used by the Fish Passage Technical Working Group as it allows multiple people to comment on a document simultaneously. It requires a license for each user.

There may be an application for this Working Group. We will consider this going forward.

ASSESS SUFFICIENCY OF DATA

- What conclusions can we draw?
- Analysis methods
- What additional data needs? How might we collect it?
- What additional analysis needs?

ANALYSIS SPECIES

Regarding the **T4: Analysis Species**, members generally feel comfortable with the suite of species and associated habitats.

VEGETATION

Members feel that **T7** and **7b** provide a good base of information for species whose effects are habitat-based, in the project area. We are also confident with the data (GIS layers) provided by **T2: Vegetation Mapping in Project Area**.

T5: Wetlands – Tom Hamer says that current report covers high value wetlands and unique areas. Note: The categorization of what's important may change after the survey of 10 wetlands this summer. **Next Steps:** Do a field trip to come up with site specific recommendations.

Possible PMEs: we might also look at sealing off existing wetlands to protect it from the influence of draw down. We might also want to enhance wetlands outside the influence of the reservoir and then look at long term monitoring/adaptive management based on how the new rule curve influences the wetlands. This could be monitored through the Terrestrial Enhancement Research Fund (TERF).

WDFW advocates we start with doing PMEs on stable wetlands, e.g., those that are hydrologically independent of the reservoir as a first cut. Exceptions would be where it can be demonstrated that wetlands can be protected/enhanced within the area of reservoir influence.

T16: Rare Plant Surveys- The Rare Plant Report is basically complete. Next Step: Do survey of 10 wetlands and *Carex flava* areas. (*Team Leader Note: Laura Potash suggests we discuss and finalize these surveys at our meeting on April 23rd*). Discuss analysis species: *Carex flava*. We are still awaiting Natural Heritage Database information on rare plants, in terms of finalizing the report.

T15: Basin Vegetation Mapping — The basic map is done. This study covers three views – cover types, seral stage, and wetlands. We are using this in the elk study and grizzly study. We feel good about this.

T6: Noxious Weeds – We have a start on this from the rare plant survey. The Study Plan is now final. The actual survey will start June 15. **Next Steps:** Do pre-field review meeting to review maps, etc. before starting field work.

T7b: Without Project - Marty distributed the latest draft of this report and walked us through the methodology used in coming up with the February 24 draft proposed actions. There doesn't appear to be a need for additional data here.

LOON/LOON NESTING PLATFORMS

We seem to be clear about the need/effects analysis here. **Next Steps:** Talk with Rocky Spencer, others, re: design, siting, management, etc.

SPOTTED OWL, MARBLED MURRELET

These were notably absent in the draft proposed actions. Don will take the lead on coming up with potential actions here (PMEs).

LAND USE

Tony reported that the Recreation Working Group has finished with their analysis on this. There is interest in the Terrestrial Working Group to develop the information further. We have information on current land use/zoning. The challenge is to visualize how these might translate into the future. Do we want to determine properties at risk for development over the next license period? At the Cross-Resource Workshop, Steve Hocking discussed with Stan the idea of creating a Lake Shannon Shoreline Management Plan. Establishing riparian zones and limiting dock development could help reduce shoreline development. This could become part of the settlement as a PME (might include conservation/easements). Once we have identified specific parcels, we may want to gather additional data in terms of neighboring properties, etc.

Next Steps: Get data from other utilities that have prepared shoreline management plans, as well as groups like The Nature Conservancy, Skagit Land Trust, and Seattle City Light. It was suggested that PSE take a whack at putting together the initial draft of Shoreline Management Plan for Lake Shannon

RECREATION IMPACTS TO WILDLIFE

We reviewed the constraint maps developed for the Recreation Working Group. The maps show the various levels of constraints (wetland, riparian, bald eagle buffers, etc.) in relation to existing and proposed recreation sites and trails.

Next Steps: Tony will create a teamlet to review these maps and add terrestrial values to them. (e.g., for elk, rare plants, etc.), and to begin to deal with any cross resource issues identified.

NEOTROPICAL BIRDS

Adaptive management? We agreed to call this out specifically in the Terrestrial Education and Research Fund (TERF).

T21: ELK HABITAT MAPPING

Ron Tressler reported that he is working to get the necessary GIS data to Ron Davis. They are still waiting on DNR. We have received the telemetry data from Lou Bender. Road and trail information needs to be limited to the study area. **Next Steps:** Create maps of general elk ranges and movement corridors, (using Lori Farrow data), link with DNR and Crown Pacific re: land use for Ron Davis' analysis of his plot data. Ron Davis has all biomass data compiled re: land use for Ron Davis's analysis of his plot data.

T12: GRIZZLY SPRING FORAGING HABITAT VALUE

Some of the context for this study revolves around road closure (access management). PMEs might include acquisition of additional spring forage habitat to compensate for the habitat that would emerge if the project went away. We need to include a qualitative judgment of this habitat in our PME. The goal is to provide a comparable level of forage volume. This won't necessarily translate into an acre-for-acre accounting (as cover doesn't necessarily define forage). The group decided to change the methodology

of the study plan to measure forage volume instead of aerial coverage. Ron Tressler will modify the methodology of the study plan, and reissue the plan to the working group.

Next Steps: Use GIS coverage maps to look for habitat polygons that are currently available and select appropriate polygons for the clip plots to get forage volume data. We could carry this study forward for lands we end up acquiring.

T17: AMPHIBIAN STUDIES IN RESERVOIR FLUX ZONE

Data gaps – Elevation in the reservoir where egg masses found/suitable breeding habitat.

PME DEVELOPMENT

At the end of the cross-Resource Workshop, the members came up with this action plan to create a second draft proposed actions by May 1:

- Get agreement on issues to address – Do we have all the “buckets”?
- Commit to certain issues to be addressed through management plans after the license has been issued.
- If can't agree on all details at least get agreement on range of actions.
- Develop details - second draft PMEs

Next Steps: The BAWG will meet prior to our next meeting on April 23. They will review the draft proposed actions and come up with a response. We will discuss this at our next working group meeting.

REPORT ON STUDIES

Study #	Title	Notes/Next Steps
T2	Vegetation Mapping in Project Area	See discussion above.
T4	Analysis Species Assessment	See discussion above.
T5	Wetland Inventory Study	This is combined with T-2. See above.
T6	Noxious Weed Assessment and Control Plan	See discussion above.
T7	Historic Vegetation of the UB and LB Projects	See discussion above.
T7b	Future vegetation mapping	See discussion above.
T-9,10	Recreation use, effects on Mt. Goat Habitat use	Did not discuss at this meeting. Don has drafted a PME for our review with regard to mountain goats.
T11	Oregon Spotted Frog Inventory	Did not discuss at this meeting.
R-T12	Grizzly Bear Spring Foraging Habitat Value	See discussion above.
T13	Survey and Manage Terrestrial Mollusk Survey	Did not discuss at this meeting. The final report is complete. It will be posted to the relicensing website.
T15	Basin Vegetation Mapping	See discussion above.
T16	Project Area Rare Plant Survey	See discussion above.
T17	Amphibian Studies in Reservoir	See discussion above.

	Fluctuation Zone	
R-T18	Breeding Bird Surveys	Did not discuss at this meeting. (Combined with T-19.)
R-T19	Habitat Evaluation Studies	Did not discuss at this meeting.
RT21	Elk studies	See discussion above.
RT22	Fluctuation Zone Enhancement	We will go forward with this as part of a PME.
RT23	Sphagnum Bog Survey	Not discussed at this meeting. Study planning will be developed prior to the April meeting.

HANDOUTS (Those that will be posted to the website are bolded.)

- Rationale for Habitat Acreage Targets in PSEs February 24, 2003 Draft Proposed Actions
- Scenarios Numbers 1,2,3,4,5,6 Summary of Analysis Species Habitats
- DRAFT 2 – Potential Future Vegetation of the Baker River Project Area – Re-license Study T7-B Final Report
- Table 1. Grizzly Bear Spring forage HABITAT Study: Number of Polygons sampled in each cover type.

PARKING LOT

- Conceptual Mitigation Approach (PMEs)
- Review time frame/goals of working groups/milestones
- Definitions of “project boundary”, “project effects”, “previous environment”, “project area”, NEPA definitions
- Watershed Analysis Presentation
- Land Management – Do study?
- Make list of all available relevant data. Create a subset of those data for Tony to always bring to meetings for group to continually reference.
- Are transmission lines in or out of FERC boundary?
- Changing Climate Patterns
- Determine land management allocations within Project boundary
- Interface with Access Management Plan
- Come up with optimal reservoir operation scenario(s) from Terrestrial perspective (HYDROPs)
- Set up “face to face” meetings with Russ Paul to review our proposals

MEETING EVALUATION

Well-Dones

- All were patient- especially Don
- Don’s focus and facilitation
- We’ve done a lot in the last two years
- Happy as Heck!

What to Change for Next Time

- Ran extra late
- Plant discussions scattered throughout- try to keep them together
- Limited time for discussions –fear of being rushed

WHAT'S HOT?

- Shoreline Management Plan for Lake Shannon
- Some confusion re: schedule
- PDEA is coming out before all study results are in

STUDIES STATUS FOR SOLUTION TEAM

- Doing the Bear “thang”
- Elk study is on its way
- Noxious weeds – start in June 15
- Follow up rare plants begins June 15
- Getting hydrology monitoring in at the bog locations

Agenda for April 23, 2003 Meeting

USFS Office in Mountlake Terrace

8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. (Potentially longer, if needed for PME development)

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

1. Introductions
2. Review notes/agenda/action items
3. PME Refinement
 - BAWG report
 - Work through all four levels:
 - Get agreement on issues to address – Do we have all the “buckets”?
 - Commit to certain issues to be addressed through management plans after the license has been issued
 - Agreement on range of actions.
 - Develop details - second draft PMEs
4. Confirm location and set agenda for our May 15, 2003 meeting (at MLT)
5. Evaluate meeting