

BRCC Members

As there wasn't a request for an in-person meeting or conference call in August, below is an update of the past month's Baker River Project Resource Group activities.

Aquatic Resource Group (ARG)

The ARG did not meet in August. The next meeting is scheduled for September 10th at the PSE Skagit Service Center.

Plans

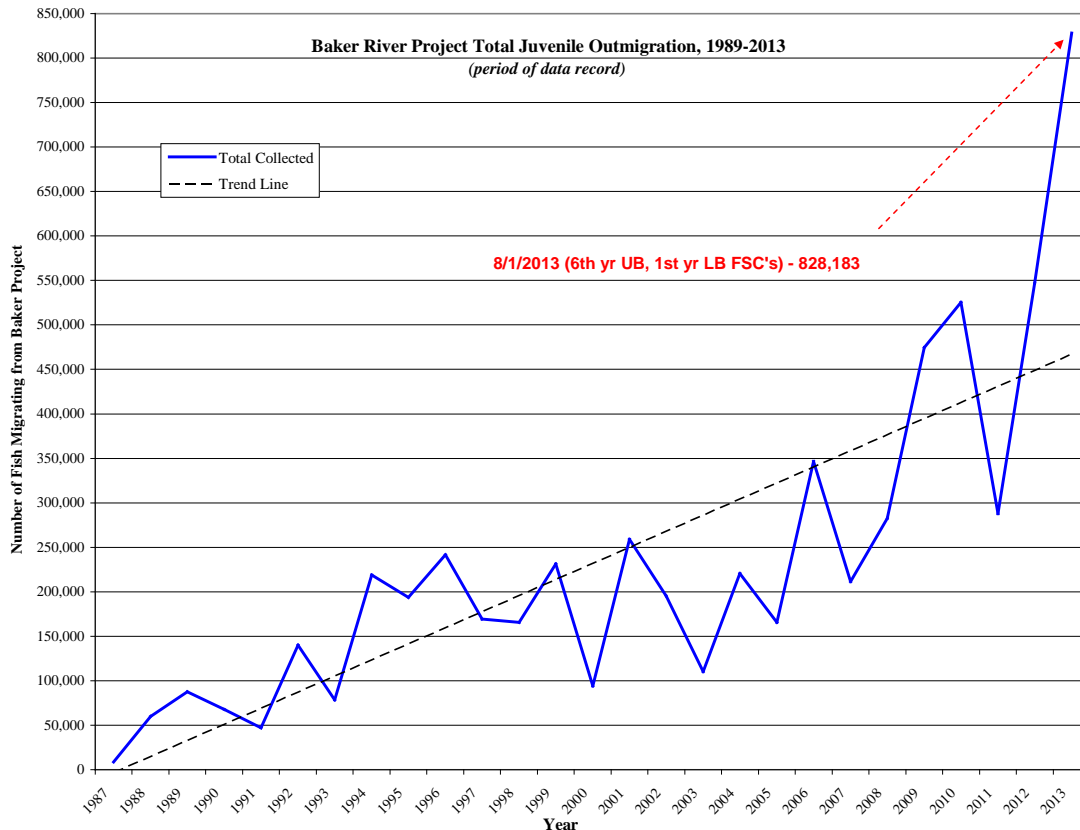
- PSE submitted the SA 103 Upstream Fish Trap Post-Construction Evaluation Plan to FERC on August 30th.
- Nearly all the aquatic-related plans have been through the ARG at this point and most have been approved by FERC.

Reports

PSE submitted the 2012 article report for SA 505 Aquatic Riparian Habitat (due July 31) and SA 602 Required Funding (due July 31) to the ARG and comments are due August 30th. PSE will be sending out reports for SA 103 Upstream Fish Passage and SA 104 Connectivity (both due August 31). This fall's reports will include SA 101 Fish Propagation (due Oct. 31), SA 105 Downstream Fish Passage and SA 106 Flow Implementation (both due November 30). Plans and reports are located at: [http://pse.com/aboutpse/HydroLicensing/Documents/Plans_and_Studies/Plan and Study List.pdf](http://pse.com/aboutpse/HydroLicensing/Documents/Plans_and_Studies/Plan_and_Study_List.pdf)

Fisheries

The juvenile fish outmigration season has ended, notifications of shutdown for both FSCs were provided to the USFWS, and FSC facilities annual maintenance preparations have begun. In 2013, new records were set at Upper Baker FSC (625,876), at Lower Baker FSC (202,307) and for total (828,183), all species combined. Preliminary counts by species indicate about 765,000 are sockeye and 61,000 are coho, and the remainder a mix of other species including trout and char.



An update on results including the LB FSC performance evaluation, flow preference, tissue collection for coho smolt ATPase analysis, and fry and smolt FTOT is being planned for the September ARG meeting.

PSE is compiling the season's results of weekly smolt morphological data collected, plus numerical data, discussed as the study approach for SA 101c2. The ARG will get an update of the preliminary results, at the September ARG meeting.

Spawning Beach Decommissioning: Decommissioning site work continues. Weirs and intake components of the old spawning beaches were removed and five LWD structures were installed in the main channel alignment as part of the in-water work. Decommissioning is on track for completion by November 2013. The ARG will get another update of the progress, at the September ARG meeting.

Hatchery and Spawning Beach Operations: PSE is preparing a final project report of the completed repairs at the hatchery headworks that restored water and added a protective graded filter at the intake area to the hatchery water supply.

The hatchery and spawning beach are fully operating, and the facility has been receiving sockeye adult broodstock. Sockeye adult broodstock collection based on the Fish Co-managers loading schedule for the season has met the 6,000 target (2,215 are in the Spawning Beach and 3,801 are in hatchery adult holding ponds). The inventory of

juvenile fish at the hatchery consists of approximately 117,000 sockeye and 93,000 coho fingerlings in raceways, as part of the extended rearing program.

Upstream Fish Trap Operations: The adult sockeye return is winding down. 12,219 adult sockeye have been counted at the Upstream Fish Trap through August 26th.

Other license-aquatics plan implementation activities:

- SA 101: The fish co-managers will support the development of an MOU mechanism for implementing the SA 101 nutrient enhancement funding. PSE is working on a draft of an MOU.
- SA 108 Gravel: PSE reported that this will be the second year of gravel monitoring and invited any ARG member interested to join them in the gravel bar surveys in September (Wohlman pebble counts and subsurface armor ratio).
- SA 109 Large Woody Debris: PSE distributed a draft allocation guidance protocol for managing requests for Large Woody Debris (LWD) and asked for feedback. Initial feedback had three suggestions: 1) review requests for LWD during the annual ARG-TRIG (SA 505) process; 2) ask PSE to maintain a basic inventory of available material by size categories and presence / absence of root ball; and 3) specify that Article 505 projects get priority over other requests. PSE has noted these suggestions. The first collection of wood will happen this summer.
- Article 110 Shoreline Erosion: PSE has been working with USFS on a project to stabilize the bank near Swift Creek campground. They are looking to modify the project design, with construction tentatively slated for next fall.
- Article 505 Aquatic Riparian Habitat: PSE announced that contracts are up and running for all six projects that have been approved (three projects in each of the last two years). The RFP process begins again this fall.

Terrestrial Resources Implementation Group (TRIG)

The TRIG did not meet in August. The next meeting is scheduled for September 5th at the PSE office in Burlington.

Terrestrial activities during July included:

- PSE conducted an osprey nest platform review of the artificial platforms on Lake Shannon on August 29th, in order to determine if any maintenance is required. PSE will provide an update at the next TRIG meeting.
- On August 1st, PSE received the Notice of Decision approval for the Burpee Hill Long-Term Forest Practices Application from the DNR. PSE can now conduct the forest practices authorized under the permit over the next 15 years (August 1, 2013 to August 1, 2028).

- The 5-day Notice of Operation for the new Alder Creek access road segment (road BI-36-10) to be constructed on the west parcel was sent to the DNR on August 30th. The new access road will be constructed mid-September.
- The SA 514 Effectiveness Monitoring Implementation Procedures document draft was completed and sent to the TRIG for a 2-week notice of decision for adoption on August 20th. The decision is queued up for the September 5th TRIG meeting.
- Noxious weed treatments are ongoing throughout August, and the follow-up treatment for knotweed on the Burpee Hill property occurred on August 28th.
- The *Carex flava* site was inventoried August 20th – 23rd, and included surveys and mapping of all *Carex flava* plants and reed canarygrass stands.

Cultural Resources Advisory Group (CRAG)

The CRAG met on August 21st at the Skagit Service Center in Burlington. Highlights of CRAG activities in August included:

- Lower Baker Compound Project: Budget is still pending, but currently sits as a phased project with studies to be completed in 2014. PSE budget meetings to finalize projects for the next five years are scheduled for the fall.
- Lower Baker Dam Crest Improvement: The FERC asked PSE to halt flood wall construction and PSE is currently discussing the overall plan for the Lower Baker dam with FERC. PSE and FERC are working to pin down details and firm guidelines and requirements from FERC in order to move forward. The current MOA is still in place and if additional impacts to the dam are considered, the CRAG could either amend the existing MOA or move forward with a new one. These details will also be decided once more details on the design of the Lower Baker Dam Crest Improvement project are approved.
- Spawning Beaches Decommissioning: Contractors are onsite and decommissioning is underway. An archaeological monitor is working with the contractors to monitor underground work and disturbance.
- Pool change update: The CRAG was sent a letter and maps explaining the need for an amendment to the License. Overall CRAG members felt the changes were insignificant to archaeological resources, but did ask that archaeological sites continue to be monitored to insure no effects are occurring. PSE has an annual monitoring program and includes all archaeological resources in that review. CRAG members were reminded that they had until September 4th to formally respond to the amendment proposal.
- Baker Club House: The Lower Baker Powerhouse contractors demobilized and removed the trailers that were located next to the Baker Club House. In addition, the historic district, which was used to stage equipment and materials was also cleaned-up. The area looked great and the contractors did a good job removing their staged items and not damaging the historic district. Only one trailer on

wheels remains (the PSE office) and it will be rolled out once the project is complete.

- Concrete Heritage Museum project: PSE worked with the State Archives to scan all Concrete Heralds available between 1913 and about 1970. These scans were given to the museum and there are plans to make them available for use on a website (John Boggs is working on those details). PSE currently has copies also which can be made available by request. The files are in both tif and PDF files.

Recreation Resource Group (RRG)

The RRG did not meet in August. The next RRG meeting will be held on October 15th, 9:00 a.m. to noon, followed by the Law Enforcement planning (LEP) meeting. The LEP meeting will review the recreation season enforcement patrols, identify gaps in patrols and to begin establishing needs for the upcoming year.

- PSE will be submitting SA 305, Lower Baker Developed Recreation Plan and the SA 312, Developed Recreation Monitoring and Funding Plan to FERC for approval by October 17, 2013. Both draft plans have been reviewed by the RRG and comments have been received.
- The Baker Lake Sockeye Fishery will be ending on September 2, 2013. The fishing season has been good, despite the lower numbers of fish.
- The Kulshan Camp Hosts will be completing their season on Labor Day.