



Baker River Project License Implementation **Terrestrial Resource Implementation Group**

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

PRESENT

Scott Heller, Tom Flynn, Haley Edwards, Mel Walters, and Ira McDaniel (PSE); Stan Walsh (SRSC); Theresa Mathis (USFS); Lou Ellyn Jones by phone (USFWS); Emily Wirtz (Sauk Suiattle); Brock Applegate by phone (WDFW); Bob Nelson by phone (RMEF); and Jamie Riche, facilitator (PDSA).

DECISIONS TODAY: Does the TRIG adopt the SA 514 Effectiveness Monitoring Implementation Procedures (August 2013) as our current implementation procedures document? This decision was postponed. See below.

QUOTES OF THE DAY:

“Elk Pellet Counts ... There’s an app for that!”

“Elk Forage: If you build it, they will come.”

2013, 2014 TRIG MEETINGS

Quarterly - Dec. 5, 2013 and March 6, June 5, Sept. 4, and Dec. 4, 2014– with conference calls scheduled as needed.

OTHER MEETINGS

- Oct. 23 BRCC Meeting (at Snoqualmie)
- Nov. 12 Article 505 Aquatic Riparian Habitat Working Group

ACTION ITEMS

- Scott Resend 514 doc as an attachment, queue up e-decision
- Haley Talk with Emily re: frequency of song bird monitoring and tie-in with management actions
- Haley Send Loon update to TRIG
- Haley, Tony: Check that TRIG email lists are up to date
- Haley Send Emily the 502/514 song bird monitoring report
- Ira Confer with Tony re: process for authorizing pre-acquisition surveys

PREVIOUS - STILL RELEVANT - ACTION ITEMS:

- Stan Coordinate mtg between PSE and the Tribes re: access on acquired lands (still in the works)

UPDATE ON PREVIOUS ACTION ITEMS

- WhoHoo! All of last meeting’s action items were complete. Today’s agenda includes reports or discussion about the article 514 work, land acquisition work, and the plan for upcoming road work at the Alder Creek property.

SAFETY MOMENT

Tom shared a reminder to check your garage and any other places you store chemicals. Be sure to store combustibles a safe distance from flames/sparks (including furnace / water heater pilot lights). Bob shared

that he chose to turn around and stay home today when the driving conditions were not safe; be willing to adjust plans when conditions warrant it. And Theresa reminded folks that nearby Cook Rd. is under construction; please be extra cautious.

BRCC / LICENSING UPDATE

The fourth Wednesdays will continue to be reserved for BRCC conference calls as needed. In-person meetings are scheduled semi-annually (spring and fall). Tom shared a few highlights from the recent BRCC update, pointing out the record-breaking fisheries work and progress on major projects. The next in-person BRCC meeting is scheduled for October 23 in Snoqualmie.

ARTICLE 514 EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING PROCESS

Haley reported that she, Tony, Theresa, and Brock met July 23 to review a draft 514 Process and provided great feedback and revisions. Those revisions have been incorporated into the version under consideration today. The group agreed that it is challenging to identify monitoring activities when the group is still considering management options. Haley pointed out that while the license requires us to complete this document by October 2013, it is one of our “living documents” that, once approved, will guide the TRIG and PSE’s work and can be updated at any time as needed without requiring a FERC review.

Some attendees were unable to access the document since it linked within the meeting notice rather than sent as an attachment. The group agreed to postpone the decision to approve the document so that everyone has time to review and consider the document first. Scott will work with Tony to send out an updated notice of decision, this time to be managed electronically.

Scott and Haley walked the group through the document, paying extra attention to areas with recent revisions. A few additional revisions were considered at the meeting; Scott took notes and will incorporate those into the updated document before calling for an electronic decision to adopt the process. There was dialogue about the purpose of the document and whether it should address and define the conditions on acquired lands and/or describe the process for defining those conditions on acquired and future lands. Tom will talk with the PSE team about this.

Next steps:

- Incorporate revisions
- Send out for review by the end of the month
- Send out notice of 2-week review and e-decision

BOTANICAL UPDATE

Scott shared an overview of the botanical work that has occurred since the last TRIG meeting

- June 27 Reed canarygrass stem count monitoring in WB-17 and 30
- July 2 Canada and bull thistle treatments at sites around Lake Shannon
- July 9 Canada and bull thistle treatments at sites near the Upper Baker compound
- Aug 7 Burpee Hill knotweed site visit prior to treatment, Alder Creek site visit to view the wild chervil treatment
- Aug 16 Canada and bull thistle site monitoring at sites near the Baker River floodplain
- Aug 20-23 Carex flava census occurred, site visit by PSE on 8/22
- Aug 27 Burpee Hill knotweed treatment

The group focused on a few items for additional dialogue. Scott noted that the previously identified noxious weed sites were under water this year, so no weeds there but one new site was identified. The knotweed treatments have been very successful and the group agreed, “Scott knows his knotweed.” Also, 2013 is a *carex flava* census year. Scott learned that he needs to work with PSE’s water resources group (which sets the reservoir levels within the limits of the license) to schedule the census so he can be sure workers come out when the reservoir is between 719 and 725 feet of elevation. Scott will add this to the protocol for future

census years. The Carex Working Group found 395 stem count, which is better than the 362 baseline set in the first census, so the news is good. A more full report will be coming.

Upcoming:

- Carex flava census report
- Reed canarygrass treatment planning, hopefully selection of a site this fall (outside of reservoir fluctuation zone).
- 508 Noxious Weeds HMP update, 2014-2018 version

LOON UPDATE

Haley reported that loons were observed in the following areas on Baker Lake: *Panorama Pt.*, *Sandy Creek*, *Baker River*, and *West Pass Dike/boat Launch*. None were observed near the nesting platforms and there were no observed nesting attempts.

On Lk. Shannon, no loons were observed until the fisheries started on Baker. A couple were observed near Thunder Creek and the north end of the lake. Four loons were observed during the *August osprey* survey, though. They were near the Bear Creek platform ... maybe “house hunting” for next year?

Haley showed the group a report compiling the *observations* since 2009, showing greatest activity on Baker near *Panorama Pt.*, *Sandy Creek*, *Baker River*, and the *Boat Launch*. On Shannon, the observations were more scattered in regard to location, but consistent in terms of timing (after the Baker fisheries start). She showed photos of each platform ... except the Noisy Creek platform, which has disappeared into a cloud of mystery.

Haley will send out the Loon report via email for those who couldn't see the photos due to technology problems.

OSPREY UPDATE

Mel reported that the Osprey population remains stable, with 6-7 active nests, all have moved to our snags ... which is great! We want them to use more natural nesting structures, but now the platforms only serve Canada geese. The license requires ongoing maintenance of these platforms, which isn't easy. At some point, TRIG may want to consider abandoning those platforms.

Eagles are noted whenever they are observed during osprey surveys. There are *five known active nest territories on Baker Lake at Maple Grove, Panorama Point, and the Baker River outlet, and on Shannon at Thunder Creek and North Lake Shannon. All nests had some evidence of activity during the 2013 nesting season.*

502/514 SONG BIRD MONITORING UPDATE

Haley reviewed the 502/514 monitoring report, which she distributed to the TRIG last week. She briefly reviewed the protocol, map of monitoring sites, and *table* demonstrating diversity and abundance. There will be another season of monitoring at Burpee Hill next year. Emily expressed interest in the possibility of continuing the surveys for more than two years. Haley and Emily will talk offline and may bring forward an updated/expanded monitoring schedule for the TRIG to consider. Theresa also requested a high-level overall summary be added to the report.

ACQUISITION UPDATE

Ira updated the group about parcels the TRIG has talked about previously and new opportunities to consider. One site in particular was of sufficient interest to warrant pre-acquisition surveys. Those present at the meeting gave Ira the go-ahead to initiate those activities. He will talk with Tony about the process for authorizing this work and will circle back to the TRIG if a more formal process is appropriate.

POST-ACQUISITION UPDATE

Scott shared the following update from Tony, who is on vacation today:

Goshawk surveys of the Burpee Hill property were completed in Unit 6 on June 3rd (Haley, Tony, Peter, and Chris Danilson) and July 15th (Tony and Peter), with no detections. On the July 15th survey we did a couple of stations in the Unit 2 lowlands, one in the area of knotweed control, and the other about 300' to the north of that station, also with no detections. We plan to do spring and summer surveys next year.

Mowed at Alder Creek lower pasture area on June 20 and July 25th. Thistle and bracken fern have been knocked back significantly and the mowing has prevented the thistle from flowering so far this season. We plan to mow a couple of times next year.

We received the Notice of Decision on August 1st for the DNR LT FPA (long term forest practices application) step 2 application, and the permit application was approved (WhoHoo!!), so now we have our DNR FPA for Burpee Hill. It is good through August 1, 2028. All DNR documents have been added to PSE's FTP site.

Road maintenance and improvement work are planned at the Burpee Hill property access road in mid-September, followed by construction of the new access road (BI-36-10) on the west parcel of Alder Creek. Scott projected a map of the property and showed attendees where the roads are.

2012 Annual Report review period was July 31-Aug 31 for SA 508, 515, 516, 517. On July 23, a SA 514 Teamlet meeting occurred in Burlington.

Work Plan Update

Scott briefly reviewed the 2013 work plan. The TRIG confirmed the plan to plant some willow stakes along the banks near the treated knotweed site on the Burpee Hill property this fall; the group can talk again in December to identify additional species for plantings next spring. The 2014 work plan will be reviewed at our December meeting.

Budget Update – O&M Funds:

- 502 – \$10,707 remains after knotweed treatment and planting
- 503 – \$21,249 – remaining planned 2013 work will likely consume most of this
- 504 Wetlands – \$159,530
- 602- \$8,172 is available in the TERF fund.
- 511 - \$59,112

Budget Update – Capital Funds:

- 502 – \$154k, nothing spent this year
- 503 – \$1,030,011 Next and final infusion of cash will bring the account to about \$2.5 million.
- 504 – \$67,190
- 505 – \$2,419,661

Meeting Evaluation – Worked Well

- Thank you, phone callers, for hanging in through tech problems

Meeting Evaluation – Do Differently

- Technology was a significant distraction again today
- Complete set up before the meeting so we can start on time
- Send docs as email attachments or FTP postings; we learned that embedded links don't always work

Draft TRIG Agenda, December 5, 2013

- Welcome, Safety, Agenda, Action Items

- License / BRCC Update
- Botanical Update
- Osprey, Loons, Legacy Wood Updates
- 505 Update
- Acquisition Update
- Work Plan Update
 - ID additional species for BH plantings next spring
- Budget Update