
BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Terrestrial Resources Implementation Group Botanical Teamlet Meeting

**Tuesday, November 2, 2010
(9:00 am to 1:30 pm)**

**PSE Skagit Service Center
Baker Room
1660 Park Lane
Burlington, Washington 98233**

FINAL MEETING NOTES

Team Leader: Scott Heller (PSE) 425-457-5578, 206-437-6042 (cell), scott.heller@pse.com

Meeting attendees: Ann Risvold (USFS), Scott Heller, Tony Fuchs, and Haley Edwards (PSE), Kathy Smayda (Smayda Environmental)

1. Welcome, introductions, review notes, agenda
2. SA 509 Plants of Special Status, Habitat Management Plan (HMP) live edit (1.5 hours)
3. SA 508 Noxious Weeds update- English ivy, reed canarygrass (30 minutes)
4. SA 510 Carex flava Conservation Management Plan (CMP) live edit (1.5 hours)
5. Other items or extended time for previous items (30 minutes)
6. Evaluate meeting, set date, and agenda for next meeting

New Action Items:

- Scott will check with Andy Hunting (editor) regarding standard language for reporting on implementation plans. The local implementation plan is approved by the TRIG; approved plans and modifications will be provided to FERC (for information only) as part of the annual reporting on the associated FERC Plan.
- Kathy will update the Plants of Special Status Habitat Management Plan (HMP) and individual species plans to reflect the following: 1) the 2001 list of Survey and Manage species, per current direction from the Forest Service; 2) the Forest Service Natural Resource Inventory System (NRIS) tracking numbers provided by Ann Risvold; and 3) and other typographical edits and revisions discussed during the meeting. NRIS codes will be provided to Joetta Zablotney at R2 so that the GIS database can be updated. The revised plan will be distributed to the TRIG for review.
- Ann will check on availability of daily survey and EO forms online.

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- Ann will check with FS engineering staff regarding equipment staging at the Chadwick Creek *Peltigera pacifica* site.
 - Scott will confirm with Tim Miller of WSU Extension the best spring application timing for reed canarygrass glyphosate treatment. Then Scott will provide a proposed treatment schedule for 2011 to Ann for purposes of NPDES permitting.
 - Kathy will revise the *Carex flava* Conservation Management Plan (CMP) with comments from today's meeting. After formatting, it will be provided to the botanical teamlet for additional review.

Ongoing Action Items:

- Kathy and Scott will send Ann a GIS shapefile of the current noxious weed 'Plan Area' boundary.
- Kathy and Scott will update the draft weed management plans to reflect the FS approval of two additional herbicides.

Not reported during meeting. Summary below has been updated from the November 13, 2009 list:

- Scott and/or Tony will investigate opportunities for low elevation orthophotography of the *Carex flava* site at Baker Lake. This may be expanded to include the seven reed canarygrass wetlands and the newly acquired Alder Creek property.
- Tony will investigate whether a Terrestrial folder can be established on PSE's ftp site for future use in exchanging large documents.

SA 509 Plants of Special Status, Habitat Management Plan (HMP)

The draft Plants of Special Status Habitat Management Plan (revision date 10-25-10) was reviewed.

Scott will check with Andy Hunting on use of standard language for reporting on implementation plans. The local implementation plan is approved by the TRIG; approved plans and modifications will be provided to FERC (for information only) as part of the annual reporting on the associated FERC Plan. It may be useful to clarify the process for future TRIG participants.

Ann reported that Survey and Manage is still undergoing legal challenge. The current direction is to use the 2001 list of species. The Plants of Special Status HMP and individual species plans currently reflect the 2003 ASR, and will need to be reviewed and updated as needed.

Ann provided the Forest Service NRIS numbers for individual rare plant sightings at the Baker River project. This replaces the former Interagency Species Management System (ISMS). The Plants of Special Status HMP and individual species plans will be updated with the new numbers.

The group discussed the specific locations that require special status plant site management plans. Several of the species have not been relocated despite repeated site visits. Ann recommended that these sites be dropped from the list of site management plans. The sites include the following:

- *Hypogymnia duplicata* near Welker Creek (observed as litterfall; not relocated in 2007; source tree not located)
- *Peltigera pacifica* near Noisy Creek recreation site (recorded on species list (not as an actual sighting (EO) so precise location not known and ID not confirmed; not relocated in 2005)
- *Platanthera sparsiflora* near Noisy Creek (historical sighting; not relocated after several attempts)

There are other sites where additional resurvey/monitoring visits should be conducted before making a determination that the rare plant population is no longer present. These include the following:

- *Platanthera orbiculata* var. *orbiculata* site near Sandy Creek. Fifteen plants were observed at this site in 2003; one plant was observed in 2007. No plants have been observed during annual surveys conducted since 2007, including one visit in 2009 (July 22) and three visits in 2010 (May 19, June 15, and August 4, 2010). It was agreed that monitoring surveys would be conducted in 2011 and 2012, for a total of five years since the last observation. If the species is not detected, then the management plan will be discontinued.
- *Platismatia lacunosa* near Little Sandy Creek and WB-23. This lichen was found as litterfall during the 2002 relicensing survey and a resurvey in 2005 detected one thallus as litterfall. The source red alder tree has not been located. It was agreed that a monitoring survey will be conducted in 2011, with an emphasis on searching for the source tree. If the tree is not located, the management plan will be discontinued.
- *Schistostega pennata* near Swift Creek. This species was observed on two rootwads in 2002, but was not observed on any rootwads in 2005. It was agreed that a monitoring survey will be conducted in 2011. If *Schistostega* is not observed at the site, the management plan will be discontinued.

The process for identifying ground- and habitat-disturbing projects was discussed; the draft project initiation form was also reviewed. Scott will discuss this topic with Kim Lane and seek to formalize the method for notification.

The list of appendices for the HMP was reviewed and discussed. It was agreed that hyperlinks should be used wherever possible for documents that are subject to periodic update, such as special status species lists and data forms.

It was agreed that site maps for the species plans are not necessary, and they would present sensitive information on locations of rare plants. The teamlet has access to site maps through PSE when needed for field work or analysis. Detailed site maps will not be prepared for the HMP and its appendices.

It was also agreed that one of the rare plant species, *Usnea longissima*, will be managed differently from the others. This species is locally common in the Baker basin. Therefore, it will be managed by implementation of site-specific BMPs at sites where a population is at risk of effects from construction, clearing, etc. This is the approach that was used for the Baker Hatchery renovation project. BMPs will be implemented as prescribed for the duration of the activity; once the activity is completed, the site will no longer be monitored. No long-term management plans are anticipated for this species.

The Plants of Special Status HMP and associated appendices will be revised per comments received at today's meeting. The revised version will be distributed to the TRIG for review.

SA 508 Noxious Weeds update- English ivy, reed canarygrass

Scott provided a brief update on the noxious weed activities conducted this year. PSE staff has tackled most of the Scotch broom sites. English ivy at the spawning beaches was treated and the site replanted with sword fern; follow-up surveys will be conducted next year (2011) and the site will be retreated as needed. Tansy ragwort sites were revisited; no tansy ragwort was observed; this activity will be documented for recordkeeping. Weeds were also treated at the 1106 Road junction site.

Weed management priority for 2011 will continue to be NFS lands, *and close coordination with the FS is necessary in order to avoid conflict with other ongoing activities*. The highest priority will be Canada thistle (12 sites recorded in 2003). Herb Robert (16 sites in 2003) will be given a lower priority, due to the fact that it is more widespread across the vicinity. Scotch broom is also a high priority. Most sites on the project (PSE and NFS lands) were treated in 2010; 2011 activity will include monitoring of 3 NFS sites and retreatment as needed.

Reed canarygrass management trials have been initiated at WB-17 and WB-30 by treatment with aquamaster (without surfactant) applied in fall. These sites will be retreated in the spring and fall of 2011; a surfactant will be used. (Agridex, which is currently approved for use on NFS lands, was not available to PSE at the time of application this fall.) Scott will confirm the best application time with Tim Miller, WSU Extension, and will provide scheduling info for the spring and fall 2011 applications to Ann so that she can begin work on the NPDES permit.

Scott noted that another activity for 2011 may be a trial using the grass-specific herbicide POAST. A site with *Carex* growing intermixed with reed canarygrass could be used to test the effects of the herbicide on both species. This herbicide is not currently approved for use on NFS lands, so a site on PSE ownership would be selected.

SA 510 *Carex flava* Conservation Management Plan (CMP)

The group reviewed the draft *Carex flava* Conservation Management Plan. Key comments provided by Ann Risvold are noted below; revisions discussed at the meeting were made on the electronic copy and will be incorporated into the next version.

- *Carex leptopoda* discussion: Clarify that this is the species formerly known as *Carex deweyana*.
- Section 4.2.4: Replace discussion of reed canarygrass cover 'up to 99 percent', based on visual estimate, with the actual values determined in the 2009 Carex Working Group Reed Canarygrass study.

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- Section 5.3: Consider whether this information is, or can be, addressed in sections 5.1 and 6.0. If so, this section could be eliminated; it is largely repetitive now.
 - Section 6.4: Reformat with bulleted action items, and include work accomplished in 2010.

The *Carex flava* CMP will be revised per comments received during the meeting, and will be sent to the botanical teamlet for an additional review before bringing it to the TRIG for review.

Next Meeting

The next Botanical Teamlet meeting will be scheduled for early 2011. The meeting will focus on weed management activities scheduled for 2011, including herbicide trials and treatment of known sites. Jason Schmidt of PSE, who supervised the weed treatment work, and Sarah Prince, the new weed specialist on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, will be invited to participate.