

Final LEP Meeting Notes

October 16, 2012 / 12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. / Skagit Service Center, Burlington, WA



Baker River Project License Implementation

Baker Law Enforcement Plan Meeting

Final Meeting Notes

October 16, 2012 12:30 – 3:00 pm

FINAL MEETING NOTES

Team Leader: Pam Garland, PSE (pamela.garland@pse.com) 360-661-2243 / 360-424-2912

PRESENT

Jeff Turner and Mason Stafford (Whatcom Co. Sheriff's Office); Sgt. Rich Phillips and Capt. Bill Hebner (WDFW); Pam Garland, Elizabeth Dubreuil, Haley Edwards, and Miriam Decker (PSE); Capt. Kim Kinville, Ann Dunphy, and Carol Gladsjo (USFS); and Lyn Wiltse, facilitator and note taker, (PDSA Consulting)

NEXT LEP MEETING DATES

- Feb. 19, 2013 (RRG and LEP) at the PSE Skagit Office in Burlington.
- June 18, 2013 RRG Meeting/Cultural Resources LEP Training at the PSE Skagit Office in Burlington.
- Oct. 15, 2013 (RRG and LEP) at the PSE Skagit Office in Burlington.

Note: We will provide Web-Ex capability for these meetings to facilitate remote attendance.

ACTION ITEMS

- Bill Send invoices to PSE and USFS and offer how to interpret.
- Bill Send any creel / parking lot / trailer counts to Ann.
- Bill Work in fast tracking the contract process with PSE and USFS.
- Bill Consider if there is a way to delay the formal start of the fishing season AFTER the Fourth of July.
- All Send pre-proposal info to Pam by end of January, 2013
- All Come prepared to discuss pre-proposals for LE funding. For FS LE funds, their recreational articles are for campgrounds, dispersed rec areas, and recreation on the lake. Carol encouraged all to demonstrate this nexus in their proposals.
- Pam Work with Carol / Ann to combine LE data for the 2012 season.
- Pam Find out more about how to report "public safety rescues" to FERC and send instructions to all.

- Ann Talk with Kim about adding possible regulations such as having to camp within a certain number of feet of the fire ring. Discuss also requiring campers to have their own poo containers.
- Ann Look into changing password for message line and update the packet accordingly (on the bottom of calendar of who is working each day).
- Carol Check to see if \$1500 that had been allocated for optics and lights for patrol rifle can be converted to \$1,000 for rifle plates and carrier for Mason.
- Carol Invite Greta to attend next meeting and we can celebrate her contributions and retirement with cake!
- Pam Provide cake for all – celebration of Greta’s and Jeff’s contributions.

REVIEW OF AGENDA AND MEETING NOTES

The finalized meeting notes from our last meeting on February 22, 2012 have been posted to the PSE website at <http://pse.com/aboutpse/HydroLicensing/Pages/Baker-River-Licensing.aspx>.

INTRODUCTIONS

Tom Flynn introduced himself as the new licensing manager for PSE. He has been in this position for three months now. He previously worked at UW and has been at PSE for the last four years, mostly in the area of compliance having to do with the operation side of things (hydro, wind farms and combustion turbine plants).

Jeff introduced us to Mason Stafford who will be his replacement in the field over the next 4 years. Mason grew up in Bellingham and is very familiar with the area. He looks forward to working with everyone. He and Jeff are good friends and Jeff intends to continue to attend these meetings.

FOREST SERVICE REVIEW OF 2012 SEASON

Ann walked us through a PowerPoint review of the 2012 season. She reported there were between 300 and 400 boats mostly in the upper Lake. Panorama and Swift Creek were the most popular. Jeff received multiple complaints about the Panorama Boat Ramp (steep drop off). Ann reported there is an ongoing problem. It always develops the same hole created in the gravel as people power out of the water.

2010 was the first big sockeye fishing season and 2011 was the first season Swift Creek campground came online. They got more fishermen this year and kept the campgrounds full all week. Day use fees show the biggest increase. Dispersed sites (40-50 sites in the Upper Basin) were at and over capacity, with larger groups and more boats than in prior years. The Forest Service put up 6 bulletin boards at dispersed sites around the lake to communicate messages to folks. They installed 8 tent pads at some of the dispersed sites with help from NC Wild (youth group). They have had box toilets there. They need a new process for the toilets. They have been using red worms in the waste (we are developing this but have not tested it yet). They may need to go to some kind of tank system. They are reviewing third world and alternate technologies. They are trying to make larger sites more attractive and more compact. Ann will talk with Kim about adding possible regulations such as having to camp within a certain number of feet of the fire ring and having to have their own waste containers.

Summary of Activity:

- Forest Service FPOs – Had two out there every weekend and supplemented it more during the peak. 52 x 10-hr shifts with a lot of time not accounted for.
- Issued 180 warning notices (e.g., NW Forest Passes)
- Filed Incident reports (fires, litter, etc.)
- Answered questions at boat launch, helped people park, etc.
- Whatcom Co. 9 x 10-hr shifts. 13 weekday shifts. No weekend shifts.

OT deputies looked like they were getting into campgrounds more, spreading out, and doing more people contact. This was really good. Good emphasis on dispersed sites. Got good feedback from the maps that we put into their packages. Doing more fishing license checks, etc.

ORIENTATION PACKETS

These were well received and the maps proved to be very helpful. The message phone service wasn't used. Ann will look into setting it up again for next year. AI: Ann to look into changing password for message line and update the packet accordingly. The information in the packet helped with 911 calls.

WDFW REVIEW OF 2012 SEASON

Rich walked us through the WDFW season review. He explained that all of the WDFW LEP funding went toward the fishery. As summer went along, people stopped using Lake Shannon. There was an increase in dispersed sites after the fishery closed. He credits the weather for this.

He offered congratulations to the USFS and PSE for the great fishery! Last year there were 24K sockeye. This year they got 42K!

WDFW set up an aquatic invasive species station where they physically inspected over 50 boats. No invasive species were found. They had many opportunities to provide education to boaters.

There were lots of bear sightings. WDFW only removed one black bear and released it up near the trailhead. They made the bear's time in activity as uncomfortable as possible, making it fear humans again. They put a tag in the bear's ear so they can then easily identify the repeat offenders (and euthanize them). They release the bears as close to the local site as possible – where they know their social group, locations of dens, etc. WDFW's policy is if it is "just being a bear", then they leave it alone. Had a sow and 2 cubs hanging around Kulshan most of the summer. They didn't bother anyone. WDFW wants feedback on sightings. Going to bear-proof dumpsters will cure 99% of the issue with bears.

There was one mountain lion complaint. They didn't have to do anything with it. Sierra Pacific land has a lot of bear damage to commercial timber land. They peel the trees.

Special Highlights:

- Float plane landed on the lake
- Goats in boats (enough said!)

Stats:

July 260 hrs fish and wildlife, 175 boat safety, 10 for aquatic invasive species. 77 for recreation
July 103 boat inspections, 45 warnings, 19 citations, 4 assists

Aug 262 hrs fish and wildlife, 175 boat safety, 77 for recreation

Aug 33 boat inspections, 33 warnings, 11 citations, 6 assists, 4 naked people, 2 boater assists, 1 warrant arrest

Sept/Oct 134.5 hrs fish and wildlife, 125 boat safety, 126 for recreation

Sept/Oct 20 boat and safety inspections, 8 warnings, 5 citations, 5 assists, 1 bear bait

Oct 260 hrs fish and wildlife, 175 boat safety, 10 for aquatic invasive species, 77 for recreation

Oct 103 boat inspections, 45 warnings, 19 citations, 4 assists

19 hrs on Lake Shannon. Also working many non-contract hrs (WDFW funded):

16 Warnings, 10 citations, 9 boat safety inspections.

Tribes (Swinomish and, to a greater extent, Upper Skagit) get first crack at the fish and 50% of the escapable harvest.

Snags are a public safety issue. There were a few low-speed boat collisions. There didn't seem to be any (illegal) guiding this year.

WSFW contacted 1824 people in all. They issued 40 citations, 108 warnings, provided 16 assists, and conducted 50 boat inspections. They were happy to be part of the team.

Ann reported the USFS really appreciated WDFW support on the Lake. It has made the season a lot safer and also helped alleviate the burden of a busy sockeye fishery. This helped provide coverage when USFS didn't have their people out there. WDFW officers started patrol at 4am. They also helped provide around the clock coverage to provide better coverage with Whatcom County.

WaHOOO!

- Being able to fuel boats on site.
- Law enforcement parking at Kulshan.
- Orientation packet.
- Staggered scheduled time of day and day of week – good coverage across all agencies.
- WDFW has the capacity to increase hours even more as needed, including other days of the week.
- Whatcom County seemed to be better informed in covering some of the key areas.
- WDFW could park the boat at PSE facility under locked and covered storage. The vessel was the right vessel (met their needs).
- The appropriate level of emphasis with the number of people there.
- Clean fishery as far as WDFW regulations. Boaters knew they would get checked.

NEED TO IMPROVE

- Need to get FS FPO folks to be better at filling out the form .
- Consider an email tree to improve communication with WDFW from USFS – get a weekly email?
- Decoy patrols were busy – caught someone who had stolen wood off PSE Property. Some work can be done in this surrounding area during fall hunting season.
- People are illegally cutting firewood.

OTHER

Hunting:

Bill explained hunting is a legitimate recreational activity. And with it comes illegal activity. Decoys may be a good fit for RAM funding. With new lands and hunting comes the need for asset protections.

Waste Containers

Since the end of the 2012 season, PSE has not been able to get the proper wildlife resistant containment needed from Waste Management. They have one camp host with 108 sites. The containers have plastic lids that don't latch or lock. PSE was able to keep things clean despite these inadequate dumpsters. Then Pam asked if they would service containers if PSE purchased them. There are obligations in the license to keep things clean. RAM funds will be used to purchase bear-proof containers for the 2013 season.

POSSIBLE ITEMS FOR NEXT EXPENDITURES

- RAM – Boat launch repair – Panorama

- LE – Night goggles for boat
- RAM / LE – Deer decoys
- LE – Trail camera

TOPICS FOR NEXT LEP MEETING ON OCTOBER 19, 2013

In anticipation of 2013 Season:

- Discuss Pre-proposals: Prioritize Spending / Focus for 2013 Season
- Cultural Resources Training (4 hrs)

HANDOUTS

- October 16, 2012 LEP Meeting Agenda
- June 19, 2012 Draft LEP Meeting Notes

PARKING LOT

- Presentation on management of bear complaint resolution process – triggers and how WDFW manages these – when to release on site or take out of the area, etc.

MEETING EVALUATION

- Got out early
- Great presentations from USFS and WDFW