



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

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

PRESENT

Tony Fuchs, Jacob Venard, Scott Heller, Haley Edwards by phone, and Joel Schleppi (PSE); Stan Walsh (SRSC); Doug Couvelier (Upper Skagit); Peter McBride (Swinomish); Emily Wirtz by Lync Online (Sauk Suiattle); Lou Ellyn Jones by phone (USFWS); and Jamie Riche, facilitator (PDSA).

DECISIONS: None today.

2015 TRIG MEETINGS

Quarterly on first Thursdays: March 5, June 4, Sept. 3, Dec. 3, 2015, with conference calls as needed

PERSONAL UPDATE

Todd Wilbur, SRSC Wildlife Policy lead, passed away and a memorial was held last week. Our hearts are with his family and loved ones.

ACTION ITEMS

- Haley Check with Theresa re: the info she requested about raptor nests around the project (3/6); does she still need any information?
- Tony Coordinate a site visit to the latest possible acquisition (Property “S”); invite TRIG
- Tony, Joel, Scott, Haley Conduct basic pre-acquisition surveys on Property S
- Stan Talk with Brock, WDFW about WDFW’s guidance re: their Core Area and TRIG acquisition target areas
- Tony Send out Draft 2015 Work Plan; request comments, finalize/review at March TRIG meeting
- Tony Send out proposal to TRIG re: seed mix for BH; seek feedback
- Tony Schedule another license docs refresher in spring, after April 1; invite Peter (and all TRIG)

PREVIOUS / ONGOING ACTION ITEMS:

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

SAFETY MOMENT

Be intentional about safety. Tony pointed folks’ attention to the “Nobody Gets Hurt Today” banner in the meeting room, and noted that the culture of safety is meant to extend beyond the workday into people’s overall behavior. Take a moment whenever you are going to engage in a new or potentially risky activity; consider unintended consequences and take the few extra moments to mitigate those with appropriate safety gear or mindfulness.

BRCC / LICENSING UPDATE

The BRCC met 10/22 in Snoqualmie. The meeting was lightly attended and consisted of routine updates. The next meeting will be held in April up here in Burlington. Jacob reported that PSE is waiting on FERC’s approval of the revised reporting schedule, which was submitted to them in September. He also noted that the

Swift Creek erosion control work is complete. The in-water structures have been installed and will fill in with gravel and debris to slow erosion. He shared photos of the work.

Attendance: Tony noted that we were missing a few regulars today and asked if folks had any ideas about why attendance was lower than usual. It was noted that folks are busy, and this project takes a lower priority now that it is in the implementation phase than it did when it was in the relicensing phase. Stan suggested an additional reminder the Monday before each meeting wouldn't hurt. It was also noted that the attendance might also reflect a comfort with the direction and work underway. Agencies have limited resources, and it is hard to get away. Jacob asked about the content of the meetings and level of detail; the feeling in the room was that both seem to be appropriate. Stan also pointed out that the meetings have settled into a core group of people who are most directly involved in the work of the TRIG; this seems appropriate, too.

FTP Site: Tony also asked whether anyone uses the FTP site; Stan said, "Yes, but not lately." A few meetings ago, TRIG asked for documents to be posted in advance when possible, so Tony posts documents that pertain to upcoming meetings in that site. Tony wanted to be sure folks know how to access the site, so he walked through the process:

- Go to the "Page" button
- Choose "Open FTP Site in Windows Explorer"
- You can copy/paste as usual to copy docs onto your own computer / server

He includes instructions in each email that references the site, and will continue to do so.

Article 505 Update: Scott reported on activity at the Article 505 Aquatic Riparian Habitat Working Group (ARHWG) meeting held Nov. 13. Five projects came forward and Scott shared a high-level overview of them. There was productive conversation about all the projects; none seemed to be rejected outright. Full proposals are due January 15, and the next ARHWG meeting, which will include time for Q&A with the project proponents, is scheduled for January 27. Scott suggests Brock and Stan review the pre-proposals and talk with project proponents as needed in prep for the January ARHWG meeting. Joel updated the group about work related to the latest acquisition and easement work related to the Hansen Creek project.

BOTANICAL UPDATE

Scott reported that there were no new weed species or sites identified in 2014! And 27 sites were eradicated along the Lake Shannon shoreline!! All areas that have twice been documented as being free of infestation will continue to be monitored in general, but will no longer require site-specific monitoring.

There was no need for herbicide treatment at the Burpee Hill knotweed site, since there was nothing to treat (he pulled two lonely stems). Scott will check back next year and treat as needed. Willow plantings have taken well. At Alder Creek, Wild Chervil is very difficult to control, let alone eradicate. PSE will continue re-treating aggressively, trying earlier in the year if possible (need a dry day over 50 degrees, which are hard to come by in early spring ... but Scott will try!). A small orange hawkweed site jumped to a new site; PSE will re-treat.

The Spawning Beach Decommissioning work is complete. The project walk-through was Nov. 21 with USFS. Scott showed before and after photos of the revegetation work, noting that replanting was done in three units with species mix appropriate to each area. Caitlyn is working with the contractor and USFS to close out any final punch list items.

2015 will be another *carex flava* census year. Scott showed aerial photos with 2009, 2011, and 2013 survey plots identified and an area identified as being likely sites if *cf* has spread to new locations.

LOON UPDATE

Platform maintenance is complete. The monitoring report will come out in December; *no new information* since the Sept. TRIG meeting *update*.

OSPREY UPDATE

Nothing new to report re: Osprey, either. Expect to see the two-year structural review report coming out by *December 31st*.

ARTICLE 410 THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

Haley reported that PSE received the letter of concurrence *from FWS* re: the Kulshan Boat Ramp *project*. (Thank you Lou Ellyn!). Work can now proceed.

502/514 SONG BIRD MONITORING

Nothing new to report since the last meeting; expect an update in March.

514 ELK MONITORING and 503 ELK ENHANCEMENT UPDATES

Tony projected a map of the west parcel of Alder Creek Unit #5 (SW corner), showing the monitoring plots that were established to track elk usage before the thinning work was done. He noted that he also set up a trail cam on plot #2. He showed stills of the thinning / chipping work done by West Coast Heavy Equipment (using an excavator with a brush grinder attachment) captured by that camera. He also showed before / after pics of the thinning work conducted in Unit #5 by the Upper Skagit Tribe team (using chainsaws and a commercial chipper, followed by a bobcat with brush hog mower). Tony found that both methods worked well.

He showed photos of deer and elk caught in the trail cams. Some images showed well over a dozen elk, and elk usage doesn't seem to be hampered by human activity in the area. He noted that at the sites baited with apples that a bull tended to kick the cows off the pile of apples, and then eat them all himself.

Burpee Hill: Tony also showed a map of Burpee Hill, pointing out where culvert removals, replacement, and road improvement work was completed. He zoomed in on Units #4.1 and #6.1.3, which are being harvested. He pointed out the buffers for stream, steep slope, and a Legacy Wood reserve area around the old Goshawk nest tree. The contract included creation of ten snags. Stan asked how much we'd make off the harvest. Tony replied that it cost about \$300k to do the work. PSE has received about \$369k so far. The contractors say the work is taking longer than expected because there was more timber than the cruise originally indicated, so Tony expects there may be a change order coming in. He anticipates that when it's all done, receipts from the mills could total \$500k - \$600k. As agreed years ago in the TRIG, net proceeds from timber harvests are deposited into the SA 503 elk management funds. There will be 26 acres to seed when this harvest is complete. Tony is thinking about asking RMEF if they'd like to round up a volunteer day this spring.

DOCUMENT UPDATES

The Plants of Special Status Habitat Management Plan must be reviewed and updated every five years. The comment period closed in November, but Scott is expecting some additional comments to come in. He will continue to accept comments this month and will update the document as needed before sending it out for final approval. He reminded the team that this is a living document and can be updated at any time, for instance to update state or federal plant listings.

Tony reported that he continues to update the Burpee Hill Management Program Document. The latest updates include new harvest units and other features (like the new gravel pit) that weren't identified when the original plan was established. This means that new maps will be needed. He plans to work with Joetta and R2. Tony expects to have an updated draft to TRIG after the first of the year (*later in the meeting, we decided to add the newly acquired Burpee Hill South property to the above management program document, so the updated draft will likely be made available to the TRIG for review sometime during summer 2015*).

ANNUAL 501 TRMP REVIEW

Article 501 calls for an annual review of the Terrestrial Resources Management Plan (TRMP) for the first ten years of the license. The TRMP is the over-arching document, which includes all the other TRIG-related management plans. Tony asked if there were any questions or concerns. Peter would like to schedule another

document refresher / review session next spring, after April 1. There were no revisions or additional review of the TRMP requested at this time.

ACQUISITION UPDATE

Joel updated the group about Property G (Goodyear Nelson), noting that the purchase is final as of November 26th, 2014!! The group celebrated the addition of 91 acres into TRIG's management portfolio. Tony noted that Article 503 calls for updating the management section of the TRMP after each newly acquired property within 12 months of closing. We have achieved this by developing a management program document for each of our previously acquired sites, and will use the same process for this one. This will require a cultural resources survey, which Tony will coordinate with Elizabeth. Also, we will need to survey streams, wetlands, roads, etc. Tony asked whether this acquisition needs to be treated as a third separate management property, or whether it should be treated as an extension of the original Burpee Hill parcels. The group agreed that this site could be like Alder Creek, which includes two parcels under the same management document. It was agreed that these new parcels will be called Burpee Hill South and be managed together with the other Burpee Hill parcels. Tony will number the new management units accordingly and update the existing Burpee Hill Management Program document to include the new parcels.

Joel also updated the group about other potential acquisitions, including a parcel the group wants to explore further, which the TRIG is calling Property S. Have questions about any acquisition activities? Call Joel or Tony.

WORK PLANS

Tony shared the spreadsheets highlighting the draft 2015 work plans. They show the work sorted by month and funding article. PSE deposits \$50k/year into the Elk O&M fund, and Tony created a placeholder (\$250k) for the net proceeds of timber harvests, which will be deposited there, too. He also highlighted additional heavy thinning planned for Alder Creek, similar to the work done in Unit 5 there this year.

At Burpee Hill, he highlighted some baseline monitoring scheduled for the spring, knotweed treatment, and replanting work. Most work will be associated with bringing Burpee Hill South into our fold with post-acquisition studies and mapping.

Rob Janicki, whose company conducted this year's timber harvest at Burpee Hill, has made a conceptual proposal to PSE that they shared with the TRIG to consider harvesting stands of alder in several units at Burpee Hill, thus creating a mosaic of forage areas. Tony will work on this and bring forward a specific proposal for the TRIG to consider.

BUDGET UPDATE

Tony very briefly reviewed the budget spreadsheet, noting that much of the fall's work isn't showing in the expense column yet since this report is accurate only through Q3. The next TRIG meeting will include all work done this fall and will reflect a larger change in some of the accounts (especially revenue from log sales).

O&M Accounts:

Article 502 Forest: \$16k
Article 503 Elk: \$78k, with more timber revenue expected
Article 504 Wetlands: \$201k
Article 505 ARHWG: \$323k
Article 508 Weeds: \$101k
Article 511 Legacy Wood: \$76k
Article 514 Effectiveness Monitoring: \$99k

The TERF Fund has about \$8k (already allocated for elk collaring/monitoring project)

Capital Accounts:

Note: There have been acquisition approvals that are not shown here because they have not been completed.

Article 502 Forest: \$163k

Article 503 Elk: \$2.125m

Article 504 Wetlands: \$67k

Article 505 ARHWG: \$1.9m

Meeting Evaluation

- We missed some of our usual members
- Going to miss Lou Ellyn, and wish her a great retirement!
- BP Pie and coconut prawns were hits (prawns went fast!)
- Happy with Elk Management work underway; good job, PSE team!

Draft TRIG Agenda, March 5, 2015

- Welcome, Go Round, Safety, Agenda, Action Items
- License / BRCC Update
- Standard Updates: Botanical, Osprey, Loons, Legacy Wood, 505
- Set aside time to talk about the Trig's philosophy re: remaining capital fund dollars
- Acquisition Update
- 2015 Work Plan, Budget Updates