



BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Terrestrial Resources Implementation Group Technical Meeting

December 7th, 2006 (9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. (or 1:00 p.m. if possible))

**U.S. Forest Service Office
21905 64th Avenue West
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043
425-744-3236 (office # 425-775-9702)**

Conference Call Line: 1-866-297-7238, ID: 225370, Password: 7610 until 12:15pm, then
ID: 3839391, Password: 4204 after 12:30 until 2pm.

Please tell Tony (425-462-3553 (w) or 206-276-1204 (c)) if you plan to call into meeting

AGENDA

- | |
|---|
| 1. Review notes/agenda/action items from October 26th, 2006 meeting |
| 2. Review recent BRICC meeting activities, FEIS issuance
Any updates on BiOp? |
| 3. Land Acquisition Update
Report on meeting with RMEF
Lands selection discussion and planning for 2007 |
| 4. Revisit draft TRMP and Settlement Articles
Discuss process for finalizing TRMP within 6 months of license issuance
Articles 515- 517 update/refreshers |
| 5. Other? |
| 6. Evaluate meeting, set date and agenda for next meeting |

Baker River Project License Implementation

Terrestrial Resource Implementation Group Final Meeting Notes

December 7, 2006
9:00 am - 2:00 pm

FINAL MEETING NOTES

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

PRESENT

Tony Fuchs (PSE); Kathy Smayda (Smayda Environmental Associates); Lou Ellyn Jones (USFWS); Brock Applegate (WDFW); Bob Nelson (RMEF); Laura Potash & Don Gay (USFS); Fayette Krause & Cathy Baker (TNC); Marty Vaughn (Biota-Pacific); and Jamie Riche (PDSA Consulting).

NEXT MEETING DATES

TRIG Meeting: January 4, 2007, 9 am – 2 pm, Mtlk Terrace

Feb. 1, Mar. 1, Apr. 5, May 3, June 7, July 5 (reschedule?), Aug. 2, Sept. 6, Oct. 4, Nov. 1, Dec. 6

Elk Teamlet Meeting: January 25, morning, location TBD

Osprey/Loon Teamlet: January 25, afternoon, location TBD

AGENDA TOPICS

Review Notes, Agenda

BRICC /FEIS Update, BiOps

Land Acquisition Update, RMEF mtg., Land selection & planning for 2007

Revisit Draft TRMP – process for finalizing w/in 6 months of license issuance

Settlement Articles – Update/refreshers on Articles 515-517

Teamlet Planning: Aquatic Riparian and Loon / Osprey

Evaluate meeting, Set next meetings & agenda

NEW ACTION ITEMS

All - Review the TRMP for discussion at the January 4th TRIG meeting ... re-send any TRMP comments that you don't see reflected in the current draft to Tony & Marty

Don – Send your vegetation management protocols to all

Don – Send Lou Ellyn the TRIG’s rationale for S.A. money
Lou Ellyn – Send Lewis’ vegetation management protocols to Tony
Marty – Ask Doug for the loon study/report; send to Tony for distribution (electronic).
Marty & Tony – Look at adding land acquisition criteria from elk teamlet notes to the elk sections of the TRMP
Tony – Talk with Chris about the items we assigned to him (below – in previous action items)
Tony – Finalize location and logistics for January 25 meetings
Tony – Bring laptop and projector to January 4 TRIG mgt for the TRMP review
Tony – Work w/ Lynn Bell to develop Baker’s vegetation management protocols
Tony & Brock – Invite Mike, others to Jan. 25 Elk Teamlet Mtg
Tony – Send everyone the most recent version of the TRMP
Tony – forward information about all potential land acquisition parcels to elk teamlet with a reminder about the need for confidentiality of all such information
Tony – Coordinate a meeting with PSE’s legal folks and Kathy, Marty and Connie to discuss the detail necessary for the final TRMP as well as the review and revision process

PREVIOUS – STILL RELEVANT – ACTION ITEMS

All – In reviewing the TRMP land acquisition sections, consider how to list primary and secondary decision criteria.
Chris – Bring information about historical Nooksack elk lands and telemetry locations to Jan. 25 Elk Teamlet meeting
Chris & Mike D – Bring information about current land use / elk distribution to Jan. 25 Elk Teamlet meeting so we can identify areas that are good candidates for land acquisition
Jacob – Coordinate with Tony & Arnie to schedule a joint ARG/TRIG meeting for Aquatic Riparian Habitat

BRICC

Tony gave us an update of the recent BRICC (Baker River Interim Coordinating Committee) meeting. There was much discussion about the high water events, local jurisdictions’ interest in flood control issues, and legislative issues around flood control. They also discussed our operating definition of a quorum. Cary Feldmann (PSE) will bring together a teamlet to discuss this and bring a recommendation to the next BRICC meeting. Tony will keep us informed. The next BRICC meeting will be February 28, 2007.

Biological Opinions

Lou Ellyn shared that the USFWS is working with USFS on the Biological Opinions. She shared that while this process entails a lot of work, it is her office’s highest priority. She noted that the informal (“handshake”) agreements inherent in the Settlement Agreement are challenging since USFWS doesn’t have anyone in the office familiar with those agreements. She will continue to work with other TRIG members to gather the detailed information necessary to complete the BiOps.

Land Acquisition Update

Tony and Bob shared that Tom is tied up with other projects and doesn’t have enough time for our project. So, Mike Mueller is back and RMEF will hire someone to move our project forward. Between now and our January 25 Elk Teamlet mtg., Mike will meet with Tom to get caught up and will re-start

conversations with the heirs of our initial parcel's landowner. He will be on the agenda on the 25th.

Tony noted that at this point, we have evaluated four parcels for potential purchase. He also shared some additional information about other lands he's researched as possibilities for future consideration.

Easements vs. Ownership

Tony shared that PSE's preference is land ownership over conservation easements. We discussed the *land* management difficulties inherent in easements; especially given the cost relative to outright purchase (easements can cost 80-90% of the fair market value). Although we noted that easements can provide a larger quantity of land for preventing development, our primary interest is in providing elk forage – which necessitates land management. Therefore, we are in consensus that while we are open to easements and other creative protective measures, our preference is for land acquisition with outright ownership.

Land Acquisition Criteria

In our elk teamlet meetings, we developed criteria for land acquisition (including geographic and habitat preferences) which may be helpful to add to the TRMP.

TRMP Finalization

TRMP should be finalized within 6 months of license issuance. After that, it is to be reviewed and updated periodically and formally reviewed every five years.

We discussed the issues of level of detail within a "final" TRMP and the process for future review and revision. Tony will arrange a meeting with Marty, Kathy and Connie with PSE's attorneys to understand the level of detail required for a final TRMP and clarify our procedures for review & revisions of the TRMP going forward. They will report back to the group at our January 4th meeting.

It would be helpful for each of the agency folks to be thinking now about the process for moving the TRMP through internal review processes.

Articles 515 – 517: Update and Refresher

Don walked us through a refresher of articles 515-517 and shared updated information about USFS plans relative to these articles.

Article 517 – Grizzly Bear Road Management

Don shared highlights of the USFS road management plan. Using maps of the area, he pointed out the roads USFS is planning to decommission and/or gate, using both RMEF and other grant dollars as well as about \$100k in 2007 license implementation dollars. Their criteria for selecting roads included each road's use for accessing important recreation sites, slide hazard issues, and habitat needs. *At the moment, the USFS plans to use RMEF grant money to close roads that reside north and south of the west part of Baker Lake and west of this imaginary "line." The USFS will use the SA's and other grants' monies to close roads located east of that "line." USFS believes that the RMEF's money should help close roads in areas with elk. If some grant monies do not materialize, the USFS may use the SA money for road closures in different locations highlighted on the map.*

Article 515 – Early Seral Forest Growth

Don noted that USFS thinning at the lower elevations will occur throughout the entire unit, but at higher elevations 25-90% of the unit would be thinned depending on level of planting failures. These trees are all pre-commercial, between 15 and 30 years old. *The USFS has a well-established road system to all of pre-commercial thinning units, so minimal road construction should occur.* Tony noted that PSE is in the process of developing the 2008 budget, and will acquire funding so Don can begin doing this project in 2008.

Article 516 – Mountain Goats

Don shared that the USFS is planning to emulate the crown burn (over snow) that happens in nature to increase the ground level forage production for mountain goats. He used a GIS query to identify the best locations for this activity (steep ground, trees close enough to transfer the fire upward, *mountain hemlock stands near the treeline*, etc) and will work with experts to develop prescriptions (weather conditions, etc) and other guidelines. *Don pointed out that all prescribed burns would reside outside of spotted owl habitat and management circles.* USFS will conduct an EA (environmental assessment) including public comment periods prior to implementation.

Teamlet Coordination:

Article 505 Aquatic Riparian Habitat Teamlet

Tony asked for interested parties to participate in the Aquatic Riparian Teamlet, noting the need to represent our terrestrial interests in this group (other teamlet members will be bringing an aquatic viewpoint). We discussed our Terrestrial interests and the history behind the land acquisition PME's (protection, mitigation and/or enhancement measures) in the Settlement Agreement. Don noted that the TRIG developed a rationale to make the case for the money they (the TRIG) proposed during the S.A. negotiations process. He will send this rationale to Lou Ellyn ... he, Marty and Lou Ellyn will meet after today's meeting to go into greater depth on this issue.

Brock, Tony, Cathy, Don, Lou Ellyn and Bob expressed interest. Marty and Kathy will participate as needed. Tony noted that the first teamlet meeting will likely be February and will notify folks in advance.

Loon / Osprey Teamlet

Tony noted that the Osprey nest is a fairly uncomplicated matter; nine already exist and he has all the materials for the tenth. He will bring a proposed location to the teamlet for review and input. The loon needs are more robust, with decisions to be made relative to design, placement, installation, mooring, and monitoring protocol of the platforms. Tony asked for volunteers interested in the nuts and bolts of this topic. Volunteers include Brock and Don. Tony will come to this meeting with an Osprey recommendation.

The Loon / Osprey teamlet will meet January 25 after the Elk teamlet.

HANDOUTS

- Agenda
- TRIG October 26, 2006 Meeting Notes
- TRIG contact information sheet

PARKING LOT

Develop protocol for pre-acquisition field visit

MEETING EVALUATION

What Went Well

Good attendance
Great food (love the salmon!)
Welcome Cathy!
Nice job avoiding and/or explaining acronyms
Don “the sniper” Gay’s great presentation on Articles 515-517

What to Do Differently

Still missing tribal folks ... hope for future representation
Need plates, utensils, etc.

AGENDA FOR NEXT TRIG MEETING

January 4, 2007, Mountlake Terrace

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

1. Welcome, review notes, action items, agenda
2. Discuss legal mechanism for filing and reviewing/revising the TRMP
3. Chapter-by-Chapter TRMP Review (using the clean copy)
 - a. Unresolved issues
4. TRMP “finalization” plan
5. Other?
6. Evaluate meeting, set next meeting date and agenda