



BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group Meeting

**October 16th, 2001 (9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.)
(Bring Sack Lunch)**

**WDFW Mill Creek Office
16018 Mill Creek Blvd.
Mill Creek, WA 98012
(425-775-1311)**

AGENDA

Review notes/revise agenda/action items
Solution Team Update
Update on ongoing studies
Carl's Presentation: Northwest Forest Plan and Watershed Analysis
Review updated study requests: R-T16 (rare plants) and R-T18 (breeding birds)
Review new study requests: R-T19 (habitat evaluation) and R-T20 (drawdown wildlife use)
Land Use Update (Recreation Working Group)
2002 Studies Update: review previously proposed study requests as to status
Set agenda and finalize the location for the November 15 th (NWIFC office in Lacey) meeting, and finalize location and time for the December 18th (Mountlake Terrace) meetings
Evaluate meeting

BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group

October 16, 2001

9:00 am – 2:00 p.m.

WDFW Office

16081 Mill Creek Blvd., Mill Creek, WA 98284

FINAL MEETING NOTES

Mission: *“To develop alternative solutions and recommendations, addressing terrestrial and wildlife resource interests for the Baker River Project and its operations, leading to a settlement agreement that:*

- 1. accurately defines and describes the existing environment in relationship to the previous environment;*
- 2. identifies project effects (existing and proposed) leading to development of protection, mitigation, and enhancement options.”*

Team Leader: Tony Fuchs (Phone) 425-462-3553, tfuchs@puget.com

ATTENDEES

Tony Fuchs (Puget Sound Energy), Cary Feldmann (PSE), Don Gay (USFS), Carl Corey (USFS), Patrick Goldsworthy (North Cascade Conversation Council), Stan Walsh (Skagit Systems Cooperative), Lauri Vigue (WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife), Fred Seavey (USFish & Wildlife), Martin Vaughn (Biota Pacific), Tom Hamer (Hamer Environmental), Lia Kruger (Hamer Environmental), Robert Kuntz (National Park), Bob Nelson (Rocky Mt. Elk Foundation), Ann Risvold (USFS), Rhonda Hilyer (Agreement Dynamics, Inc.), Lyn Wiltse, facilitator (PDSA Consulting)

INTRODUCTIONS:

The group welcomed Lia Kruger of Hamer Environmental, and Rhonda Hilyer (Agreement Dynamics).

SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS:

November 15

NW Indian Fisheries Commission office in Lacey- Start at 8:30 a.m.

December 18

Mountlake Terrace

January 17, 2002

Switch to 3rd Thursday of each month for 2002

****Starting in January 2002, this group will shift to each 3rd Thursday, which would make it possible for Laurel Baldwin (Whatcom County Noxious Weeds Control Board) to attend the meetings.****

AGENDA

October 16, 2001, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

1. Review notes/agenda
2. Action Items
3. Solution Team Update
4. Carl's Presentation: Northwest Forest Plan and Watershed Analysis
5. Update on ongoing studies
6. Review Updated Study Requests: RT-16 (Rare Plant Survey) and RT-18 (Breeding Birds)
7. Review New Study Requests: RT-19 (Habitat Evaluation) and RT-20 (Drawdown Wildlife Use)
8. Land Use Update (Recreation Working Group)
9. 2002 Studies Update: Review status of previously proposed study requests
10. Set agenda and confirm location for November 15 meeting (Lacey) and December 18 meeting (Mountlake Terrace)
11. Evaluate meeting

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- ALL: Review R-T19 study request (Habitat evaluation) and send comments to Lauri prior to next meeting.
- ALL: Send any interests you feel may be excluded by the Forest Service definition of *continuing* impacts to Tony prior to the next meeting.
- ALL: Send list of habitat/species that we feel need to be assessed. Send list to Lia at liakruger@hotmail.com, 19997 Hwy 9, Mt. Vernon, WA, 98274.
- Tony, Tom, Don: Look at re-writing RT-12 – Look at vegetation studies results for reference.
- Tony: Work with Lauri to draft study request for Phase II of T-5.
- Tony: Form teamlet of Laurel, Bill, Ann, etc. re: RT6.
- Tony: Share climate information with other team leaders.
- Tony: Get draft T15 data from Joetta.
- Carl: Send PowerPoint presentation to Tony to post on PSE Baker Relicense Website.
- Tom: Send list of Fred's federally listed species of concern to Tony to distribute.
- Lia: Make a list of habitat types (based on Johnson and O'Neill) that exist in the Basin or have the potential to exist over the license period.
- Marty: Put together a technical work group to review/approve of the guilding process used by Lia (Lia, Lauri, Fred, Bob, Don, Stan)
- Tony: Call Joetta re: mollusk maps.
- Ann: Check with Ann Dunphy re: map of dispersed Recreation Sites.
- Don: Get copy of LSR Assessment to Tony to distribute.
- Don: Prepare list of potential mountain goat enhancements.

-
-
- Tony, Tom, Marty: Prepare proposal for data management

REPORT ON PAST ACTION ITEMS.

- Patrick distributed climate change information related to the 30-50 year license period prepared by Conway Leovy, Professor Emeritus, Atmospheric Sciences and Geophysics. Tony will share this information with the other Working Group Team Leaders, as it relates to several resource areas. We appreciate Patrick's efforts in calling this important topic to our attention.

SOLUTION TEAM UPDATE

The Technical Working Group has finished making edits to the Communication Protocol and Process Documents. Both documents have been distributed to Solution Team members for review prior to the next meeting which will be October 24, at the Forest Office Mountlake Terrace. In the meantime, PSE's attorney is getting the attorneys of the major agencies together to hammer out the legal lingo re: confidentiality, definition of consensus, and evidence.

NORTHWEST FOREST PLAN AND WATERSHED ANALYSIS PRESENTATION

Carl Corey gave a very informative presentation on the **NW Forest Plan** as it relates to relicensing the Baker River Project Relicensing Process. His presentation (Power Point) will be available on the Website. The Forest Plan is primarily concerned with old growth ecosystems. It focuses on species viability. The first question is whether it is possible to maintain species viability with existing structures/processes in place. If that is not possible, then efforts would be made to restore function and processes needed to ensure species viability.

The **Watershed Analysis** focuses on understanding the ecological structure, functions, processes and interactions occurring within a watershed. It is concerned with understanding reference conditions. Terrestrial findings (as paraphrased by Carl) include:

- LSR's (Late-Successional Reserves) Habitat connectivity disrupted by the project
- Habitat diversity reduced due to inundation of productive riparian and upland vegetation types
- Riparian structure and function also impaired by inundation, disruption in connectivity
- Grizzly bear – points to limiting recreational use within BMU – middle Swift Creek core area. Spring foraging habitat limiting
- Noxious weeds – occurrence enhanced due to inundation zone and relationship to project-related recreation use
- Sensitive Survey & Manage plant species – lack of information re: high potential for occurrence due to high diversity of productivity of areas adjacent to reservoirs
- Big Game – low elevation, productive and riparian sites inundated. Best habitat lower in watershed, but private/agricultural concerns. Opportunity to manage inundation zone for enhanced forage.
- Project-related recreation – potential botanical species impacts, possibly mountain goats (?)

UPDATE ON ONGOING STUDIES

STATUS OF:

T-4: Analysis Species Assessment

Tom distributed an update on this assessment. We reviewed the Analysis Species Matrix. Species that made the list were either listed or that met two or more of the criteria we identified. Lia: Make a list of

habitat types that exist in the Basin or have the potential to exist over the license period , based on Johnson and O'Neill

Marty: Put together a technical work group to review and approve/approve of the guilding process used by Lia (Lia, Lauri, Fred, Bob Don, Stan). All members were asked to send list of habitat/species that we feel we need to be assessed. Send list to Lia at liakruger@hotmail.com, 19997 Hwy 9, Mt. Vernon, WA, 98274.

T2: Vegetation Mapping in Project Area

The vegetation above the drawdown zone for Baker Lake was mapped by October 2, for Shannon Lake by November 2. We are starting to put these data into GIS format. We hope to have this complete by year-end.

T5: Wetland Inventory Study

Forest Wetlands will be split into deciduous and conifers for the sake of consistency. When the lake is drawn all the way down, we will identify three zones (upper perennial, intermittent, and lower perennial). These modifiers are listed in the study plan. The zones will help identify wet areas in the drawdown zone that we may want to conduct studies in, and will aid in continuing impacts discussions.

T17: Amphibian Studies inn Reservoir Fluctuation Zone

The second visits will be completed by November 8. These are being done in mostly riparian and stream areas above the drawdown zones. The drawdown zone amphibian studies will be conducted in the late winter/spring of 2002.

T11: Oregon Spotted Frog Inventory

There will be a summary report this spring.

T13: Survey and Manage Terrestrial Mollusk Survey

This study will start shortly. The survey crew is awaiting maps from Joetta. Tony will contact Joetta to remind her of the high priority around this study.

REVIEW UPDATED STUDY REQUESTS

R-T16 Rare Plants

Ann discussed the revisions she made to the scope of this study. She now suggests the areas be:

- Current and proposed dispersed recreation sites adjacent to the reservoir
- Proposed developed recreation sites within the project boundary
- All wetland areas hydrologically linked to the reservoir.

Most of the existing developed sites have already been surveyed. The intention of this study is to survey every dispersed site that is project related. Surveyors would make their own determination according to protocol as to the area people are using associated with each study site. The surveyor could extend out the survey as suitable habitat was identified. The group approved this Study Request. It will move to the design phase after Ann distributes the final version to Tony. Hamer Environmental will draft the Study Plan with Ann before it is distributed to the Working Group for review.

R-T18 Breeding Birds

After some discussion, we agreed to continue to discuss this study at our November meeting.

STUDY REQUESTS FOR 2002

- T5(b): Wetland Monitoring (No study request, but need one, second phase of T5)
- R-T6: Noxious Weed Assessment and Control Plan
- R-T7: “Potential” (future) Vegetation of the UB and LB Projects
- R-T9/10: Recreation Use/Mountain Goat Enhancement (develop concept)
- R-T12: Grizzly Bear Spring Foraging Habitat Value
- R-T16: Project Area Rare Plant Survey
- R-T18: Breeding Bird Survey (could be a modeling effort, potential for measuring Project impacts to habitats and development of a PM&E, could include species beyond the “analysis species” list, and could be used to monitor compliance with land management issues)
- R-T19: Habitat Evaluation Studies
- R-T20: Drawdown zone wildlife use (PSE)

POTENTIAL 2002 STUDIES (no Study Requests at this time)

- Elk foraging - Chris
- Land Management – Could be 2003 – (Recreation Working Group Land Use Study)
- Riparian Habitat – Lauri (actually, Lauri is proposing this to be part of the HEP study, and not a separate study).
- Spotted Owl, etc. (Section 7) – info needed for consultation (timing?) - Fred
- Lower Skagit Wetlands - Fred
- Settlement Agreement – Tony (could include PM&E proposals, land acquisition - opportunities in Skagit Basin, etc.)

HANDOUTS

- Comment on FERC Relicense Application for Baker Reservoir Dam: Impact of Global Warming – by Conway Leovy, Professor Emeritus, Atmospheric Sciences and Geophysics
- Progress Reports on:
 - T2 Vegetation Mapping in Project Area
 - T4: Analysis Species Assessment
 - Amphibian Surveys – 2nd Visit Summary

PARKING LOT

- Conceptual Mitigation Approach (P/M/Es)
- Review time frame/goals of working groups/milestones
- Definitions of “project boundary”, “project effects”, “previous environment”, “project area”, NEPA definitions
- Watershed Analysis Presentation
- Land Management – Do study?
- Make list of all available relevant data. Create a subset of those data for Tony to always bring to meetings for group to continually reference.
- Are transmission lines in or out of FERC boundary?
- Changing Climate Patterns

-
-
- Determine land management allocations within Project boundary

MEETING EVALUATION

Well Dones:

- Good participation
- Carl's Presence/Presentation
- Lia!
- Making progress on substantive issues

Need for Improvement:

- Ran over
- Raspberry Milanos were bad!
- Missed Chris
- Missed cinnamon rolls
- Need bagels!

TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR OUR NEXT MEETING

NWIFC Office, Lacey, Washington

November 15, 2001, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

****NOTE: NON-PSE MEMBERS WILL CAUCUS RE: REFERENCE CONDITIONS FROM 8:30 TO 9:15**

1. Review notes/agenda/action items
2. Solution Team Update
3. Update on Ongoing Studies
4. New Study Requests: R-T19 (HEP), R-T20 (drawdown zone wildlife use)
5. Update on existing Study Requests
 - R-T18 (Breeding Birds)
 - R-T16 (Rare Plants)
 - Others (R-T6, 7, 9, 10, 12)
6. Data Management
7. Terrestrial reference conditions
8. Terrestrial study needs on Skagit River below the project
9. Land Use Update (Recreation Working Group)
10. 2002 Studies
11. Set agenda and confirm location for December 18 meeting and January 17 meeting
12. Evaluate meeting