
BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

AQUATIC RESOURCES WORKING GROUP MEETING

**December 16, 2004
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
PSE Building, Bellevue, WA
Boardroom, 12th Floor**

FINAL MEETING NOTES

Team Leader: Arnie Aspelund, PSE (arnie.aspelund@pse.com)

ATTENDEES: Arnie Aspelund, Cary Feldmann, Nick Verretto (PSE), Stan Walsh (Skagit River System Cooperative), Arn Thoreen, (SFEG), Gene Stagner and Lou Ellyn Jones (USFWS), Mike Stansbury (Skagit County Public Works), Phil Hilgert (R2 Consultant), Steve Fransen (NOAA Fisheries), Ruth Mathews (for TNC by phone), Scott Lentz (USFS) by phone, Lyn Wiltse, facilitator and Mary Jean Bullock, note taker (PDSA Consulting Inc.)

INTRODUCTIONS

We welcomed Lou Ellyn Jones to the group. She will be attending the next several meetings along with Gene to provide a smooth transition as he retires. Lou Ellyn's background with USFWS includes working with the ACOE in flood control projects. She is now working full time on Hydro Projects.

Future 2005 Baker Aquatic Meeting: March 17, 2005, USFS Mountlake Terrace Office 9:00 to 3:00

NEXT SOLUTION TEAM MEETING: 9:00 to 3:00 on February 15, at a location to be determined.

Agenda for December 16, 2004 (9:00-3:00 p.m. PSE Building in Bellevue)

1. Review agenda, notes, actions
2. Fish Passage Technical Working Group Report
3. Settlement Agreement Update
 - Formation of the BRCC
 - Transition and future schedule for ARWG

4. Study Updates:
 - A09C: Middle Skagit Spawning Survey Results
 - A15: Upper Baker Delta Scour: Move to Finalize Report
 - A38: Bull Trout Field Survey Results
5. Set Agenda and date for next meeting
6. Evaluate meeting

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- Cary: Talk with Connie on getting announcement of February 15 Solution Team Meeting out.
- Arnie: Continue to keep us posted on shoreline permitting process. Required for CZMA and 401? (Bob W. has shared with us his perspective that shoreline permits need to be handled by local jurisdictions before the State can issue CZMA.)
- Arnie: Let folks know if March 16 for Baker River Committee stands.
- ALL: Reserve March 17, 2005 for next ARG meeting.

REPORT ON OLD ACTION ITEMS

- Arnie: By Aug. 26, sent out notice of meeting taking place (or not) on Sept. 2.
- Arnie: Sent copy of A15 report to Chuck Ebel.
- Arnie: Sent Floating Surface Collector design to Scott.
- ALL: Let Arnie know if you were interested in attending any of the fish passage physical model witness tests scheduled for Sept. 13 and Sept. 29.
- Lyn: Called Connie re: "3 Megabyte rule" (Pamela's email was too large to be opened)

FISH PASSAGE TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP REPORT

Nick distributed an updated schedule. Changes include: March 1, 2008 of Phase 1 of downstream passage at Upper Baker. Phase 1 at Lower Baker will start up in 2012. Launch site permits should be complete by mid-March.

Nick also distributed Plan Design drawings for the Floating Surface collector and discussed the engineering and the construction schedule. The technical design memos for the Floating Surface Collector and the Net Transition Structure will be discussed on January 11. They are currently at the 20% design level. Comments are welcome. This is a critical piece as it sets the stage for future direction.

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT UPDATE

Cary reported that the next Solution Team Meeting will occur on February 15. There will be an announcement out on the details of this meeting in the near future. That meeting will mark the beginning of the transition to the Baker River Coordinating Committee (BRCC).

Immediate and ongoing work is in the area of fish passage and hatchery. Other immediate work is plan development to support many of the license articles. These will also be permitting activities and engineering interface to support construction projects.

At the February meeting of the Solution Team, we will develop a schedule to support future ARG activities. This will take the place of the ad-hoc Baker River Committee. Note: The next two scheduled meetings of the Baker River Committee are January 19 and March 16.

Arnie pointed out that the schedule he sent out includes placeholders for ARG meetings in 2005.

STUDY UPDATES

A09C: Middle Skagit Spawning Survey Results

Phil presented a PowerPoint presentation of the results of this survey. He explained the process of first doing an aerial survey and following that up with a jet boat survey. He also explained that getting accurate redd counts was difficult due to flow conditions, turbidity, and fog. These conditions have frequently been present during the surveys over the past 3 years. They were able to successfully conduct 2 surveys in 2004 (with the required 3 ft. visibility).

Phil reported that this presentation will be incorporated into a report by the end of January and eventually posted to the website.

A15: Upper Baker Delta Scour

Phil reminded us that Sue did a PowerPoint presentation of this report at our June Meeting. This report was also distributed at that meeting and was sent out electronically as well. To date, no comments on this report have been received.

Phil suggested (and we agreed) waiting until the end of the year and then posting the report as “final”. Any comments that come in after the first of the year would be appended to the report (in accordance with our process).

A38: Bull Trout Field Survey Results

Phil walked us through a PowerPoint presentation of the results of this survey.

A total of 121 char were sampled between 2002 and November, 2004. Samples were from Upper Baker River, Baker Lake sub-basin, Lake Shannon sub-basin and Lower Baker River adult trap.

83 char were tagged *with numbered Floy spaghetti tags* and 9 *tagged* char were observed or re-captured. *Snorkel surveys have been conducted in the upper Baker River and Sulphur Creek.* Most fish *in the upper Baker River* were found in the large pool at the confluence of Sulfide Creek and the large pool at the confluence of Crystal Creek. A *summary* report will be out by the end of January. At that time, we'll review the report and discuss next steps.

CELEBRATION UPDATE –

January 20 is still the date for the “white collar” celebration up at the Skagit Valley Casino.

January 28 is still the date for the “blue collar” celebration. The location has been changed to the Baker Lodge. Part of the celebration will include the co-creation of a tile mosaic to be placed in the Visitor Center. Cary reported that there is a possibility of a third celebration as well. The intent is to see that all people are properly honored for their contribution to the process.

More details will follow. Invitations to both events will be mailed out before the holidays.

MEETING EVALUATION

What Went Well

- R-2's salmon!
- Phil's presentation
- Mike's presence
- Welcome to Lou Ellyn!
- Lyn's presentation on Global Healing Conference in Bali

What Needs to be Changed

- Small attendance
- World Peace Report is not yet out

HANDOUTS

- A09C – Middle Skagit Spawning Surveys PowerPoint Presentation
- A38 – Native Char PowerPoint Presentation
- Aquatic Resource Final Notes, August 12, 2004
- Aquatic Resources Working Group List December 16, 2004
- Aquatic Working Group Long-term Schedule December 16, 2004
- 2004 Baker River Basin, Native Char Investigations, December 2004
- 2004 Middle Skagit River Salmon Spawning Surveys, December 2004
- PSE Baker River Hydroelectric Project, Floating Surface Collector – Plan
- Site Plan and Drawing Index for Floating Surface Collector.

Tentative Agenda for March 17, 2005 (9:00-3:00 p.m. USFS Building in Mountlake Terrace)

1. Review agenda, notes, actions
2. Fish Passage Technical Working Group Report
3. Update on TDG Survey to support water quality
4. Settlement Agreement Update
 - Report from February 15 Solution Team Meeting
 - Formation of the BRCC
 - Transition and future schedule for ARWG
5. Study Reports
 - A09C: Middle Skagit Spawning Survey Results
 - A38: Bull Trout Field Survey Results
6. Set Agenda and date for next meeting
7. Evaluate meeting