
BAKER RIVER PROJECT LICENSE IMPLEMENTATION

Aquatic Resources Group

July 10, 2007

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

USFS Supervisor's Office

21905 64th Avenue W.

Mountlake Terrace, WA

(425) 775-9702

Conference Call Procedures-Dial In Info:

1-888-228-0484 (call automatically charged to PSE)-Dial in at the designated date and time –

Conference ID: 6058

Conference Password: 12345

DRAFT AGENDA

1. Review Agenda, Notes, Actions	9:00 – 9:30
2. Updates Fish Facilities Operations Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Juvenile Fish Passage Facilities Operations (Bruland)• Sockeye Spawning Beach 3 & 4 Operations (WDFW)• Artificial Incubation Operations (WDFW)• Fish Rearing Inventories & Releases (Bruland)• Adult Trap Protocol Update or Changes <i>Break at 9:30</i>	9:30 – 10:30
3. A-09 Draft Instream Flow Summary Report Q & A (R2-Phil)	10:30 - 11:30
4. Hatchery Design Update (PSE-Jenness)	11:30 - 12:00
<i>Lunch (provided)</i>	<i>12:00 – 12:30</i>
5. Fish Passage Technical WG Update (PSE-Verretto)	12:30 - 1:00
6. Update on License/ Implementation Activities	1:00 - 1:30
7. Confirm Date & Agenda for Next Meeting (tent. Aug 28 U. Baker Lodge), Mtg Evaluation	1:30 - 2:00

Baker River Project License Implementation

Aquatics Resource Group Meeting Final Meeting Notes

FINAL MEETING NOTES
July 10, 2007 ~ 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
USFS Office, Mtlk Terrace, WA

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

PRESENT

Jacob Venard, Cary Feldmann, Doug Bruland, and Dave Jenness (PSE); Phil Hilgert (R2); Ted Thygesen, Brett Barkdull, Rich Johnson, and Kevin Kurras (WDFW); Bob Helton (Citizen); Craig Olson (NW Indian Fish Commission); Chuck Ebel (USACE); Stan Walsh (SRSC); and Lyn Wiltse, Candace Wilson and Jamie Riche (PDSA Consulting, Inc)

2007 MEETING DATES: Aug. 28/29 (hold both, location and schedule TBD- will include a site visit at Baker); Sept. 11, Oct. 9, Nov. 13, Dec. 11

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- All - Note August meeting dates and locations (changed from previous notes)
- Doug - Research why our LB recovery numbers were so good
- All - Review Instream Flow report, send comments or questions to Arnie by 9/11
- Jacob - Ask Arnie/Nick about date and logistics for next ARG / FPTWG meeting

OLD (STILL PERTINENT) ACTION ITEMS

- Cary & Dave – Contact Ernie Brannon re: outside review of hatchery design
- Cary - Bring DVD copies of the FSC film for distribution at the next ARG meeting
- Cary - Check on the status of “The Baker Story”
- Jacob - Send out an “all call” for interested parties re: gravel plan

New Location for FPTWG

The July 17th FPTWG meeting will be held at the FSC, *not* Sea-Tac as listed on the schedule.

FSC Video

Cary shared that the FSC video will be posted shortly to the PSE website. He will still have DVDs available for participants who request it.

FISH FACILITIES OPERATIONAL TOPICS

Juvenile Fish Passage Facilities Operations

Doug walked the group through the current juvenile fish passage numbers. This was not a big year for sockeye (especially compared to last year). Upper Baker: We had about 81k no-mark sockeye return, and an additional 30k fall released ad-clipped sockeye. At Lower Baker we recovered 18k fall no mark sockeye from Lower Baker. Branded groups percent recovery is pretty good. At UB 50.8% Left V brand Coho and 47 % Right V brand Coho were recovered so far. 4.9 % of the branded fish released at Upper Baker were recovered at Lower Baker. We had 33.5% recovery of the freeze-branded fish released in Lake Shannon, which is the best percent recovery we've seen at Lower Baker in the last six years.

We should be getting a better idea of what a migrant is as a result of the biological data (currently being analyzed in Oregon). These data will be released to R2 for processing / analysis.

Juvenile Chinook numbers are down. Also we are not getting the numbers of sockeye fry; they are coming later and the numbers are low. We noted that there are many variables that may contribute to this, and speculated that when the new FSC is up and running, the screens will be better able to collect fry (keeping them from going through pumps).

We are continuing to fish the juvenile trap through July. There is no gravity flow through it at this point, are using pumps. Everything we see today should be different next year: new guide nets, new trap, new FSC!

Sockeye Spawning Beaches 3 & 4, and Artificial Incubation Ops

Kevin noted that we still can't get to Beach 3. The access road is impassable with anything but a tracked vehicle. The Forest Service has made some road material available.

Beach 4 disinfection went well, gravel was clean, and we're back online. There were two counter head failures (not repairable); these will be replaced in advance of this year's out-migration. As of July 9, we've had 875 adult Sockeye return. We are at the mid-season point and the updated prediction for this year is between 4,800 and 6,000.

Artificial Incubation

The co-managers agreed to fill up everything except the coho stacks. Looks like we have the capacity for between 1.8 and 2 million eyed eggs (if we get the fish). Kevin shared that he's been sitting in on the hatchery meetings, is coordinating between PSE and Fish Pro, and reported that process is moving along well. He is also working with Scott Lentz to figure out how to access Channel Creek for fry release.

Fish Rearing Inventories and Releases

Doug walked us through the trout planting and salmon planting history handouts. Rainbow trout, coho and sockeye are released in stages. There is a new brood stock at the hatchery now. Trout: We get 21k fish, first 1,000 went to the tribes, we then released the rest of last year's fish into Depression Lake. PSE's annual Troutfest occurred June 9; good event, well attended. We have 350 rainbow trout left, being retained at this point for Cascade Days and the Eagle Club fishing derbies.

Released coho at Skagit River. All freeze brand, ad-clipped and study group fish were released. The Baker project fish inventory handout detailed the sockeye, coho and rainbow releases. 65k Sockeye will be ad-clipped in September and released in October. Remaining fish will be marked for studies. 60k coho – which is enough for our program. Rainbow trout were received in June, are now split into three circular ponds and will be reared throughout the year (release some in the fall, save others for studies, release the rest in the spring). If we start the construction at the hatchery next year, some of these fish will be on site. We'll need to decide when to release these fish and how to handle next year's brood during the construction phase.

Adult Trap Protocol

No changes at this time.

BRICC / LICENSING UPDATE

USFW submitted their Biological Opinion (BiOp) a couple weeks ago; still awaiting the BiOp from NMFS. FERC will not issue the license until they receive that BiOp. We are now thinking it may be the end of October before they issue the new license. In the meantime, early implementation activities are continuing in order to be ready when the license is issued. (Ex: the terrestrial group is working on acquiring elk property).

The Town of Concrete issued a construction permit. The Department of Ecology has issued the 401 and CZMA consistency plan. Concrete's permitting process, as well as the 401, was appealed by Diking Districts 2 and 12, and the cities of Burlington and Mt. Vernon. The court date is set for November; these legal proceedings should not affect license issuance.

The June Baker River Interim Coordinating Committee (BRICC) was cancelled. The next meeting is currently scheduled for August 22 in Mountlake Terrace.

INSTREAM FLOW REPORT

Phil presented the long-awaited report at the ARG's May meeting. Arnie and Phil asked folks to review and provide feedback, and Phil shared that his first bit of feedback came in this morning. It is a hefty report and many participants noted that they haven't had time to review it in detail. We asked that attendees send any questions or comments to Phil via Arnie, and agreed to set the cut-off date for review and input at September 11, 2007.

All agreed upon the value of the data in this report. One attendee noted: "This plus the scenarios we ran through HYDROPS are what got us to settlement."

It was suggested we add a blurb to the report acknowledging potential flow changes as a result of climate change (reference to the report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). Any changes are more likely to result in timing differences than flow volumes. We noted that the flow agreement includes contingencies for high and low flows and outlines resulting procedural changes. Phil pointed out that section 7.3.4 of the report addresses what PSE's response would be to various changes to reservoir inflow. We have built buffers into the reservoir pool levels far beyond what we would expect to need, including

results of minor climate change. Any catastrophic climate changes would be dealt with through adaptive management.

Other suggestions included to clarify the aim of the report in the executive summary and add a list of acronyms.

HATCHERY DESIGN UPDATE

Dave J. (project manager, PSE) gave the group an update of progress on the hatchery project. We are expecting final design from HDR shortly, and will be issuing the RFP early next week. PSE is planning to engage in a design/build contract. They sent out a request for qualifications and had four well-qualified teams respond: MWH, McDougal (FSC builders), KCM/Tetratek, and ESM. These firms all have experience with sockeye hatcheries. They would also prefer the contractor have hatchery experience. Work plans should impede current fish operations as little as possible. Should get proposals back by the end of August and be able to select a contractor in early September (hopefully in time for the Sept. 11 meeting).

Dave estimates the 30% design to be available November/December 2007 and 60% design by the end of 2007. We'll have another Value Engineering (VE) session at that point, and the ARG requested an opportunity to review the design and provide input both before and after that process (at the 30% and after the VE review). We will aim to extend the November 13 ARG meeting to all-day to allow for hatchery design review and discussion. We will do the same at our Jan/Feb 2008 ARG meeting to allow for a review of the 60% post-VE design.

We should be at 90% design by February 2008. Construction would then be able to start in March or April 2008, pending issuance of the license from FERC and special use permit from USFS. The aim would be to have the adult raceways up and running by spring 2009; and we should have a fully operational facility by 2010. Dave shared the current site plan and noted that the design has changed very little since the last report to this group.

We discussed timing issues relative to operations and contingency planning, such as keeping eggs separated, using alternate methods, and ensuring that construction phases align with (don't negatively impact) fish operations.

Next steps: getting a Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) from WDFW and other permits from Whatcom County.

FISH PASSAGE TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP UPDATE

Jacob reported that the FSC construction is proceeding on schedule. The July 17th FPTWG meeting has been moved to the FSC (originally scheduled in Sea-Tac) to allow the team to see how the screens fit, etc.

HANDOUTS

- Agenda & Notes
- ARG Baker River Project Long Term Planning Schedule (July 2007)
- ARG Baker River Project Long Term Planning Schedule (June 18, 2007)

- Baker Beaches Arrival and Disposition
- Trout Planting History
- ARG Status Report: Baker Fish Operation Topics, Relicensing, and Implementation Activities (June 12, 2007)
- Baker Project Fish Inventory (July 9, 2007)
- PSE Baker Project Salmon Planting History (1983 – 2007)
- 2007 Upper Baker Available Fish Trap Data 2007
- 2007 Lower Baker Juvenile Fish Trap Data 2007
- Little Park out-migrants 2002
- Baker Fish Hatchery Renovation Overall Site Plan (June 19, 2007)

MEETING EVALUATION

What Went Well

- Got out early
- Adequate facilitation
- Very pun-ny!

What to Do Differently

- Need crackers
- Unprepared for discussion on Instream Flow Report
- Many participants (NMFS and USFWS) missing
- No analogies :(

AGENDA FOR NEXT ARG MEETING

Date and location TBD

1. Welcome, review notes, action items, agenda
2. Fish Facilities Operational Topics
3. Update on License / Implementation Activities
4. Q & A – Instream Flow Report
5. Evaluate meeting, set next meeting agenda & location