



BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group Meeting

**January 16, 2001 (8:45 a.m. - 1:45 p.m.)
(Bring Sack Lunch)**

**U.S. Forest Service Office
21905 64th Avenue West
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043
425-775-9702**

AGENDA

Review notes/revise agenda
Status report: Action items
Comments on Carl's handout
Review working draft of study request form/guidelines
Review PSE's and other's lists of proposed studies for 2001
Run combined list of species, habitats, and processes through "screen," combine with above studies to come up with overall draft list of studies.
Time Lines/Schedule: Field Season 2001, 2002, etc., prioritize studies by year (at least ID 2001 studies).
Other issues? (e.g. data list)
Set agenda for next meeting (February 22nd at the USFWS office in Lacey, Room 261.)
Evaluate meeting



BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group Meeting

January 16, 2001

8:45 am – 1:45 pm

US Forest Service Office
Mountlake Terrace, WA

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 (E-mail) tfuchs@puget.com

ATTENDEES

Tony Fuchs (Puget Sound Energy), Patrick Goldsworthy (North Cascades Conservation Council), Stan Walsh (Skagit Systems Cooperative), Lauri Vigue (WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife), Don Gay (U.S. Forest Service), Bob Nelson (Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation), Marty Vaughn (Biota Pacific), Lyn Wiltse, facilitator (PDSA Consulting)

The meeting started at 9:00 a.m. and ended at 1:20 p.m.

NOTE: Don states that the phone number is 425-744-3236 for this room (Monte Cristo Conference Room)

AGENDA

January 16, 2001, 8:45 a.m. -1:45 p.m. at Mountlake Terrace Forest Service Office

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

-
-
1. Review notes/agenda
 2. Status report: Action items
 3. Comments on Carl's handout
 4. Review working draft of study request form
 5. Review PSE's initial list of proposed studies for 2001
 6. Run through master (combined) list of species, habitats, processes through the screen. Come up with overall draft list of studies.
 7. Timeline/Schedule: Field season 2001, 02 etc. Prioritize studies by year (ID 2001 studies first)
 8. Other issues (e.g. list of existing information) Watershed Analysis
 9. Set next agenda (2/20) Note: This meeting will be in Lacey WA, Room 261; 8:45-1:45p.m.
 10. Evaluate meeting

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- ALL: members will start their organizations' list of goals/directions related to that process.
- ALL: Send list of other existing data/studies to Tony prior to next meeting.
- ALL: email study requests to Marty by **February 13th** (at least the studies needed to start in 2001)(Team Leader note: I will be out of the office from February 5th through the 20th, so Marty will be Team Leader while I am on vacation. Marty's e-mail is: mvaughn@biotapacific.com).
- Marty: Forward study request forms on to team members by February 14th.
- ALL: Review study request that you receive and come to the February 20th meeting ready to discuss.
- ALL: Consider contractors to recommend for studies (including justifications).
- Tony: Send email copy of updated study request form after this meeting.
- Tony: Bring updated list of existing information (bibliography) to next meeting.
- Lauri: Bring an updated copy of WA Department of Fish & Wildlife mitigation policy.
- Lauri: Check with Fred Seavey re: his participation on this team, and how he feels about the mitigation/enhancement discussion from today's meeting.
- Don: Bring a working draft of the Forest Service Existing Information Analysis to the February 20 meeting.
- Don: Bring list of GIS data base coverage, Wildlife coverage not in PHS database, vegetation not in DNR Natural Heritage database.
- All: Set up Technical Working Group(s) to review/combine/finalize study requests prior to March meeting.
- Tony, Marty, Lauri meet to work together to draft conceptual model.

REPORT ON PAST ACTION ITEMS

- Tony: Follow up re: potential WUTC presentation at public meeting.

COMMENTS ON CARL'S HANDOUT

- Baseline for mitigation = Current Conditions as per 9th circuit decision on 8/99 in American Rivers vs. FERC
- Enhancement is wide open. The aim of enhancement is to lessen impacts overall.
- It is key to consider what will happen during the new license period---not what was there before.
- New impacts ---what PSE proposes to do during new license period (vs. baseline) must be mitigated for.

-
-
- The Forest Service suggests looking back as reference for future conditions.
 - North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC) is interested in looking back to pre-project conditions as a basis for action (not merely as a reference).
 - The Tribes want to see a careful evaluation of without project alternative. Then see what the protection/mitigation package might be and see how they match up. As per Treaty of 1855, the protection mitigator, the PME enhancement alternative needs to be comparable (acceptable to tribes) to the without project alternative. This is required for the Tribes to support the settlement agreement.
 - The entire project will be treated with this approach. “Off site” lands can be considered if a mitigation/enhancement can’t be accomplished within the FERC boundary.
 - “Off site” and “Out of Basin” are two different things. There would be a hierarchy: (in the project, adjacent to the project, whatever makes ecological sense).
 - Tony suggested this group talk about “enhancements” instead of “mitigation” for now. Any member who feels the need to distinguish among PME can do so.

The aim of this Working Group is to focus on the mitigation/enhancement plan through the collaborative process.

STUDY REQUEST FORM

Tony distributed the working draft of the study request form. This form is the result of a combined effort of PSE and the agencies. Team leaders will be responsible for coding and tracking studies from their Working Groups. The group walked through the form within the context of a PSE-proposed study for vegetation cover type mapping. The study request form is only the high-level concept of the study. It is not the actual study design, which would likely be done by a consultant. When citing references attach them if possible. We should prepare our study request forms and distribute them to all members prior to the February working group meeting, affinitize and prioritize the study requests during the February meeting, then have a Technical Working Group meet to finish priority study requests. We hope that at our March 20th meeting, we can approve priority studies for the 2001 field season.

SPECIES, HABITATS, PROCESSES

Tony distributed the list of WDFW Baker Project Terrestrial Species and Habitats prepared by Lauri Vigue. The group reviewed the list to check to see if the interests of their organization were included in the WDFW list.

The following is a listing of acronyms:

- SS = State sensitive
- SC = State candidate
- SE = State endangered
- SM = State monitored
- ST = State threatened
- FT = Federally threatened
- FSC = Federal Species of Concern
- FE = Federal endangered
- PHS = Priority Habitat and Species

The majority of these species are included in the Project Information Package published by PSE in 2000. Common species (not on the list) could also be considered for studies. Lauri suggested we review this list

in terms of project-impacted habitats. Marty suggested adding “2nd growth Conifer” to the list of habitats. He also suggested breaking “riparian” down into “forested riparian” and “non-forested riparian.” Lauri suggested adding “snags” to the WDFW list of habitats.

To implement the Forest Service continuing impacts process we would need to develop a conceptual model of the impacts: What could be there if the reservoir were taken out. The model would develop a list of what habitats and species would potentially occur in the Project Area in the “without project” condition. From there we would develop a list of general habitat types we were interested in. From there, we could associate species with the habitats. Then we would relate the habitats and species to the objectives of the various stakeholders.

In other words, we need a conceptual model of ongoing project effects to initiate the Forest Service process. It would become an iterative process.

USE OF CONSULTANTS

For wetlands, PSE uses consultants from Associated Earth Sciences (they also do botanical work). For most vegetation and wildlife studies, PSE is using Hamer Environmental (does a lot of Forest Service and other agency work). Hamer also uses various sub-contractors as needed. PSE proposes to use Hamer Environmental to be the Principal for conducting studies and for administrative control. (Team Leader Note: Tony has a current Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) for Hamer Environmental if anyone is interested in learning more about their company. Ask Tony for a copy if you are interested). If any team member would like to suggest a different consultant that would be better suited to do a particular study, please let Tony know who and why so he can work to get them under contract with PSE to do the work. However, it was suggested that, to work within PSE’s bureaucracy, the proposed consultant could sub-contract to Hamer Environmental. Hamer would also manage field crews and the study processes (to help the group maintain control of the research, process, and budgets).

OTHER ISSUES

We need to consider how to make available the data amassed in the Forest Service’s Watershed Analysis.

LIST OF TERRESTRIAL DATA FOR THE BAKER PROJECT

Tony will bring an updated list of data available on the Baker Basin and Baker Project to February 20 meeting. All team members need to have a working knowledge of and access to as much information as possible to support the team’s work.

PARKING LOT

- Will PSE compensate key players to attend these meetings?
- Length of period of license (30 years? 50 years?)
- Review time frame/goals of working groups/milestones
- Definitions of “project boundary”, “project effects”, “previous environment”
- How do we handle “latecomers” to this process?
- Land Management
- Conceptual Mitigation Approach
- Consider multiple meeting locations
- 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?
 - Scoping of areas for enhancement opportunities.

POTENTIAL STUDIES

Baseline study re: present conditions and future trends of harvestable plant species

MEETING PROCESS REVIEW

Well-Dones:

- More coffee
- Lyn's facilitation
- Lauri will talk to Fred re: his participation
- Got out early!
- Got a lot done!

Need for Improvement:

- Needed more coffee
- Need more participants

TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

February 20, 2001, 8:45 a.m. -1:45 p.m. at USFWS in Lacey, room 261

8:45 to 1:45

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

1. Review notes/agenda
2. Status report: Action items
3. Review proposed studies for 2001 field season (affinitize and prioritize the studies)
4. Review conceptual model (Lauri, Tony, Marty)
5. Other issues?
6. Set next agenda (3/20) Note: This meeting will be back at FS office in Mountlake Terrace
7. Evaluate meeting

OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE MEETING

- Use of Consultants
- WUTC to give "process" presentation