
BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Aquatic Resources Working Group

September 12, 2002

8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

US Forest Service Office
21905 64th Avenue West
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043

AGENDA

1. Review Agenda and Minutes
2. Settlement Process
3. Report from Instream Flows Technical Working Group
4. Review Study Plans /Requests: A9b&c, A14a, A16, A26a, A24, A25, A29, A37
5. Action Items
6. Update from Solution Team Meeting
7. Set agenda for October 16 and 17 retreat (Day 1=Studies; Day 2= Draft PME's)
8. Evaluate Meeting



BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Aquatic Resources Working Group

September 12, 2002
8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
U.S. Forest Service
Conference Room A/B (425-775-9702)
21905 64th Avenue West, Mountlake Terrace, WA

MEETING NOTES

***Aquatics Working Group Mission:** “To identify issues and develop solutions and recommendations addressing fish and aquatic resource interests related to the Baker River Project and its operations, leading to a settlement agreement.”*

Fish Team Leader: Arnie Aspelund, 425-462-3442, arnie.aspelund@pse.com

PRESENT: Arnie Aspelund (PSE), Nick Verretto (PSE), Cary Feldmann (PSE), Doug Bruland (PSE), Rod Sakrison (WA Dept. of Ecology), Arn Thoreen (Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group), Sue Madsen and Phil Hilgert (R2), Bill Reinard (Wildcat Steelhead Club), Steve Fransen (NOAA Fisheries), Dick Raisler (Fidalgo Fly Fishers), Brady Green (USFS), Margaret Beilharz (USFS) by phone, Gary Sprague, (WDFW), Lyn Wiltse and Mary Jean Bullock (PDSA Consulting, Inc.), Dee Endelman of Agreement Dynamics.

FUTURE DATES AND LOCATIONS:

October 17, Thursday – Regular meeting at Baker Lake Lodge (10–7:00 with 1 hr. for lunch)

October 18, Friday – PMEs with Dee at Baker Lake Lodge (8–4:00 with 1 hour for lunch)

PLEASE LET ARNIE KNOW IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND EITHER OR BOTH OF THESE MEETINGS AND IF YOU INTEND TO SPEND THE NIGHT (Oct. 16 and/or Oct. 17)

Nov. 14 from 8:30-3:00 at USFS Office in Mountlake Terrace

AGENDA

September 12, 2002
8:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
U.S. Forest Service Office, Conference Room A/B
Mountlake Terrace, WA

1. Review Agenda and Minutes

-
-
2. Review license schedule
 3. Settlement Process – PME Scoping
 4. Report from Instream Flow Technical Working Group (A9)
 5. Review Study Plans/Requests:
 A14a, A16, A24, A25, A26a, A29, A37
 6. Action Items
 7. Update from Solution Team Meeting
 8. Additional Issues? (None)
 9. Set next agenda
 10. Evaluate meeting

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- ALL: Let Arnie know your intentions re: October 17, 18 re: meals, overnight?
- ALL: Send Phil any information you have re: when fish choose fidelity to a site (day/night).
- Ruth: Draft Interest statements and accompanying issues for the Nature Conservancy.
- Rod: Send copy of paper to Phil.
- Lyn: Call Mark Downen and invite him to attend our meetings.
- Nick: Look into having HYDROPS model demonstration at the Lodge at our meeting on October 17.
- Arnie: Send expense reimbursement form to Dick Raisler.
- Arnie: Bring Contact Log form sample to October meeting.

REVIEW LICENSE SCHEDULE

Arnie distributed the most recent version of the relicensing schedule and the schedule for aquatics studies. It was suggested that, for future aquatics meetings, Arnie distribute only the single summary sheet. This will save paper and make it easier to review the schedule at a glance.

SOLUTION TEAM UPDATE

Arnie distributed the FERC approved versions (dated August 2002) of the Communication Protocol and Process Document. They are bound as they won't be confused with the many previous drafts.

The Solution Team has delayed their October meeting to October 30 to give Working Groups as much time as possible to come up with their draft PMEs.

SETTLEMENT PROCESS

Dee facilitated the group in initiating the "sorting process" *of the brainstormed list of PME options* based on the following:

- Is it *(the option)* legal?
- *Does it address a Project impact, protection or enhancement need?*
- Is *it* technically feasible?

We listed the following assumptions *in reviewing the brainstormed list*:

- Project stays in place
- Flood control at least at current level

- Legal requirements have to be addressed

We reviewed the list silently and then shared our findings. We made it through page two, amending the Potential PME options as necessary in order to pass the legal and feasibility tests.

Next steps: Continue sorting the **spreadsheet**. We agreed to do this by meeting all day, Oct 18 at the Baker Lake Lodge. We will meet on October 17 for our regular meeting to discuss studies, etc. All are encouraged to come up and spend the night if they can attend both meetings. Let Arnie know as soon as possible.

REPORT FROM INSTREAM FLOWS TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

See A9 in matrix below.

STUDY REQUEST SUBMITTALS/STUDY PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Study #	Title	Notes/Next Steps
A01.A	Reservoir Tributary Habitat Surveys	Linked to A26b. ACTIVE
A01.B	Reservoir Tributary Biological Surveys	ACTIVE
A01.C	Reservoir Tributary Delta Surveys	The results of the spring 2002 field efforts will be incorporated with A-01a, A-01b and A-26b into a single report. ACTIVE
A02	LB River Habitat Mapping	ACTIVE
A03	Reservoir Fish Population Characteristics	Links to A19 and A26a.
A04	LB/Skagit River Flow, Gaging	Links to A9. ACTIVE
A05	Water Quality Sampling	ACTIVE
A06	UB Passage Design Baffle Modification	Complete.
A07	Lower Baker Forebay Bathymetric Survey	Complete.
A08	UB Passage System Evaluation	Complete.
A09A	Skagit River Flow and Habitat Assessment (HIGH PRIORITY)	Main Stem: Transects were tentatively selected in July and confirmed during a site visit on August 16 with Stan, Cary, Brad and a Forest Service contractor; two transects were re-located to better represent the range of habitat conditions in the middle Skagit. On August 22, the transects were brushed out and surveyed and measurement procedures were coordinated with field crews. We put in pressure sensors at Deadman's slough inlet and also at Lower Day creek and in the mainstream of the river near Lower Day Creek inlet. We are checking for water level and temperature changes due to changes in river flow stages. August 27-30 we collected data on velocities, bed profile, and stage at all mainstream cross sections at

	<p>11,500 cfs.</p> <p>Next week will be surveying the channel profiles along the banks and classifying substrate and cover at each vertical along all 26 transects.</p> <p>We will be collecting data on low flow conditions in early October and hope to look at high flows the end of October (hoping for rain).</p> <p>Off Channel Habitats: We will be measuring habitat conditions and velocities at six side channels and sloughs as described in a handout describing field procedures. On August 21, 22 we installed transects and surveyed cross sections and longitudinal profiles at three side channel inlets at approximately 11,000cfs.</p> <p>We hope to monitor low flows in early October and high flow conditions in late October.</p> <p>Sue distributed a draft of the Study protocols that will be used for off-channel habitat surveys.</p>
A09B Salmonid Redd Selection and Maintenance in the Middle Skagit in Response to River Fluctuation from Hydropower Peaking	Phil will meet with Stan to discuss how to address the issue of behavioral responses. ACTIVE?
A09C Distribution, Timing and Depth of Salmonid Redds	We are continuing with the spawning surveys. We feel like we have pretty good coverage. We will be doing these surveys every 10-14 days. We expect to start seeing many chinook. Gary warned us that these runs might be late this year. ACTIVE
A09D Distribution, Timing of Salmonid Fry	Not discussed at this meeting. We just got the NMFS collection permit (August 2002). ACTIVE
A10 Baker River Delta Habitat Assessment-Char	Complete. Note: USFW is concerned with impacts to char and indirectly to bald eagles through chum and also to cutthroat.
A11 Nutrient Addition	Tie to A26.
A12 Instream Flows for Bio-diversity	Split between R-A21 & R-A09.
A13A Water Quality Impacts of Human Uses of the Reservoir and Adjacent Shorelines.	Removed from list of studies we will address. Brady reported the USFS will not pursue this.
A13B Water Quality Impacts on Aquatic Habitat	Removed from list of studies we will address.
A14A Reservoir Shoreline Erosion	AESI will do a presentation of the final report at our October meeting. ACTIVE
A15 UB Delta Scour	<p>Not discussed at this meeting.</p> <p>Proposed 2002 mapping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey residualized sockeye in Lake • Survey for other species? Chinook, Bull trout, and

	<p>Coho?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There may be overlap with A1B <p>Proposed 2002 scour monitor efforts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install scour monitors only near full pool elevation prior to drawdown • Install stable headpins and survey transects at approximately 5 -ft elevation intervals across delta right and delta left channels (720-700 ft MSL) • Repeat surveys at approximately 2 week intervals from Sept. thru Nov., and thereafter as accessible through March
A16 Lower Baker River Alluvial Fan Assessment	<p>Sue distributed Skagit System Cooperative's original request to look at current functions supported by the alluvial fans and what would happen if the dams went away.</p> <p>She noted that A24 gives us relevant information on processes. The current condition of the fan is an "existing condition." However, there are opportunities for enhancement over existing conditions.</p> <p>Sue guesses that the interest of the Study Request was "natural conditions". She suggests we focus on enhancements we could do in terms of existing conditions. We will do some research on existing literature to identify what actions and conditions make sense given the land-form. We need to look at what is feasible and will be effective given the hydrologic conditions and the presence of the weir. We will be coordinating efforts with the Corp and SFEG. Sue will discuss this direction with Stan and Devin (SSC) and perhaps assist them in revising the initial study request. We will discuss this at our October meeting.</p>
A17 Tributaries Surveys Upstream of Barriers	Study request pending from USFS. This is related to A36. Brady is in the process of re-working it.
A18 Baker River Survey Upstream of 1 km.	Merged into A01a and A01b. ACTIVE.
A19 Review Limnological Information	This study has been combined with A26.
A20 Large Woody Debris Management	ACTIVE
A21 Skagit Wild & Scenic River Values	This is being addressed by A9 and A24.
A22 Baker Lake Trout Impacts Evaluation	No longer necessary due to change in management direction in favor of cancellation of non-native trout stocking in the reservoirs. Removed from list of studies we will consider.
A23 Baker River Wild & Scenic River Values	This is being addressed through A15.
A24 Hydrologic and Geomorphic Analysis	ACTIVE

A25 Unnatural Predation	Still awaiting comments on the Study Request. Nick will get with Stan and review its status. Additional comments are welcome.
A26A Reservoir Limnology-Production Potential	Nick talked with Brady, Stan, Gary and Phil. They came up with a consensus to send this to a new consultant. The scale data is still being entered – will be ready by end of September so we are running two weeks late from the original schedule. All other data are ready to go. Nick is putting together a list of possible consultants for Stan and Gary to review. We should know who the consultant is by our October meeting.
A26B Tributary Production Potential	Emily will be collecting outstanding data the week of September 16. We are putting together a model looking at stream length, gradients and widths. We will be presenting a recommendation for fish densities at our October meeting. We will need to make a decision shortly after so we can get the production estimates set up by fall.
A27 Middle Skagit Incubation Flows	Addressed in A9.
A28 Fish Passage-Reservoir Management	This is being developed in the Fish Passage Technical Working Group. ACTIVE
A29 Estimate Sockeye Production from Different Incubation Sources	We are still awaiting comments on the Study Request. Nick will meet with Stan to discuss.
R-A30 Near-Field Smolt Behavior	Coordinated through Fish Passage Tech. Group. 2002 Field effort completed, data analysis underway-preliminary results expected in August.
R-A31 Fish Passage-Far Field Smolt Migration	Coordinated through Fish Passage Tech. Group. 2002 Field effort completed, data analysis underway-preliminary results expected in August.
R-A32 Fish Passage-Kelt Radio telemetry	Coordinated through Fish Passage Tech. Group. 2002 Field effort completed, data analysis underway-preliminary results expected in August.
R-A33 Fish Passage-PIT Tag Migration	Coordinated through Fish Passage Tech. Group. 2002 Field effort completed, data analysis underway-preliminary results expected in August.
R-A34 Fish Passage-Downstream Run-Timing Correlation	Coordinated through Fish Passage Tech. Group.
R-A35 Fish Passage-Upstream Run-Timing	Coordinated through Fish Passage Tech. Group.
R-A36 Native & Wild Inland Fish Population Assessments	This is related to A17. Brady is working with Mark Downen of the WDFW to rework this.
R-A37 Without Project Alternative (evaluation of Aquatic & Riparian Habitat)	There is an opportunity to collaborate with the Terrestrial Working Group (T7) here to see if important aquatic habitat parameters can be added to terrestrial habitat considerations. Nick will meet <i>on</i>

	<i>9/30 at 9 a.m. at the R2 Resource Consultants, Inc. office in Redmond, WA</i> with Brady, Sue, Tony and Marty of the Terrestrial Working Group and possibly Gary to discuss.

REPORT ON OLD ACTION ITEMS

All: Reviewed updated PME matrix sent out by 8-23 teamlet and send additions to Arnie so he can send them out to all so we can be ready to begin evaluating at our September meeting.

ALL: Let Arnie know if you want a copy of the IPP.

ALL: Reviewed proposed transect locations and let Sue know by August 14 if you are uncomfortable with any that R2 is proposing.

ALL: Got Nick feedback on A25, and A29 draft study plans by the September meeting.

ALL: Provided R2 information to confirm the identification of key spawning, off channel, secondary and rearing areas to aid in selection of off-channel survey sites.

Arnie: Emailed out A9 Progress Report to participants.

Stan and Phil: Worked on resolving A9b.

Sue: Prepared update on A16 for September meeting.

MEETING HANDOUTS

- Agenda, September 12, 2002 meeting notes, updated mail list, schedule, revised study request index
- Updated matrix of Draft PMS Measures
- Norms for PME discussions
- The official, final, and FERC-approved versions of the Communications Protocol and Process Document
- Progress Report 12 September 2002, A09-Middle Skagit River Instream Flow Study
- Draft Study Plan T7b Potential, Future Vegetation of the Upper and Lower Baker Projects
- Summary Schedule – Baker River Relicensing, FERC #2150
- Study Request A16-Lower Baker River Alluvial Fan Assessment

PARKING LOT

- State agency presentations re: mandates (agency direction)
- Create a master list of possible studies across all working groups and share with all
- Access to the Baker River Project hourly operational model (Charles Howard)
- Participate in Lower Skagit Work Group for native char
- Create Overall “Study Plan” for Studies that will drive the Relicensing Process
- Address Trap & Haul – other species

EVALUATION OF MEETING

Well-Dones

- Got out early
- Phone participation by Margaret
- Food
- Nick’s fish

-
-
- Steve's presence (NOAA Fisheries)

Opportunities to Improve

- Keep room cool
- Missing corps, County, Tribes
- Missed Gene (USFWS)

What's Hot?

- What changes are being considered in flood protection?
- Instream Flows (A9)

Tentative October 17 Agenda

10:00 – 7:00 p.m. at Baker Lake Lodge

1. Review Agenda and Minutes
2. Review Relicensing Schedule
3. Fish Passage Technical Working Group Report
 - 2003 Downstream Fish Studies
4. Instream Flows Update (A9)
5. Studies: A14, A16, A20, A25, A26a, A26b, 29, (36 and 17), 37
6. HYDROPS model demonstration
7. Action Items
8. Update from Solution Team Meeting
9. Additional Issues?
10. Set next agenda
11. Evaluate meeting

Tentative October 18 Agenda

8:00 – 4:00 p.m. at Baker Lake Lodge

Continue the sorting process (working through the issues matrix, starting with page 3)