



BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group Meeting

May 15th, 2003 (8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.)
(Bring Sack Lunch)

U.S. Forest Service Office
21905 64th Avenue West
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043
425-744-3236 (office # 425-775-9702)

Conference Call Line: 1-866-280-6429, code 144995#
(Please tell Tony or Lyn (425-890-3613) if you plan to call into meeting)

AGENDA

Introductions
Review notes/revise agenda/action items
Debrief of May 14 Workshop
PDEA update/Hydrops update
Studies Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update on T4, 12, 21• Comments on Study Reports: T2, 5, 7b, 16, 17, status of HEP approach (R-T19)• New rare plant surveys: 10 other wetland
Second Draft PME's <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where do we want to go from here?
Confirm June 19th (Mountlake Terrace) agenda, meeting location/dates for July, August
Evaluate meeting



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USFS Office

Mountlake Terrace, WA

FINAL MEETING MINUTES

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:

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

Team Leader: Tony Fuchs, (Phone) 425-462-3553, tony.fuchs@pse.com

ATTENDEES

Marty Vaughn (Biota Pacific), Bob Nelson, (Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation), Tony Fuchs and Cary Feldmann (Puget Sound Energy), Lauri Vigue (Washington Dept. Fish & Wildlife), Gene Stagner (USFWS), Laura Potash (USFS), Patrick Goldsworthy (North Cascades Conservation Council), Kathy Smayda (Smayda Environmental for the Louis Berger Group), Tom Hamer (Hamer Environmental), Lyn Wiltse, facilitator, and Mary Jean Bullock, notetaker, (PDSA Consulting, Inc.)

SCHEDULE FOR REGULAR TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS (At USFS Building in Mountlake Terrace from 8:30 to 2:00 unless otherwise specified)

June 19, July 16, Aug. 20, Sept. 18, Oct. 16, Nov. 20 (location?)

***NEW SCHEDULE FOR RESOLVE WORKING GROUP MEETINGS!!!

June 20 (8:30 – 12:30), July 17 (8:30-2:00), August 21 (8:30-2:00). These meetings will be at the USFS Office in Mountlake Terrace.

THE CONFERENCE CALL LINE WILL BE OPEN DURING ALL THESE MEETINGS. PLEASE CALL 1-866-280-6429 AND ENTER PARTICIPANT CODE: 144995 #. Let Lyn know before the meeting starts if you are calling in (call her at 425-890-3613).

Tentative Agenda for May 15, 2003 Meeting

USFS Office in Mountlake Terrace

8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. (Potentially longer, if needed for PME development)

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

1. Introductions
2. Review notes/agenda/action items
3. Debrief of May 14 Workshop
4. PDEA information needs
5. Next Steps: PDEA
6. Next steps: Settlement
6. HYDROPS Update
7. Studies Update: T2, 5, 7b, 16, 17
8. Set June 19 Agenda
9. Evaluate meeting

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- Tony: Post all latest versions (with dates) of GIS products on R2's FTP site.
- Kathy: Summarize level of land use information that is needed for the EA
- Don: Check with Skagit County/Fire Department re: residence maps
- Tony: Post T7 and T13 Reports to the PSE website and notified members by email. He will do this as soon as the server problem was fixed and was receiving new data. Ongoing problems. He will report on this at June meeting. In the meantime draft reports are being emailed out.
- Tony: Create a teamlet (Lauri, Don, Patrick, Joetta, and Laura?) to discuss updating constraint maps to reflect terrestrial values.
- Cary: Send Tony historical native fish run – timing and bio mass (by species) so he can distribute with the Final minutes.
- Tony: Talk to Andy re: constraint maps. Do they need our (Terrestrial) input?
- Gene: Let Tony know what you need for the without project scenario for ESA.
- Tony: Button up with Kathy re: "Duck" costs
- Dee: Put together a list of sample norms and a summary of how to use RESOLVE process (no more than four pages) and send to Tony to distribute prior to our next meeting.
- Dee: Also create a one page summary of the RESOLVE process for attorneys.
- Dee: Call Stan, Bob K, Carl and Don re: our decisions to start RESOLVE sessions next meeting. Direct them to the minutes for a list of topics.
- Kathy: Bring license article language on 1.3.1, 1.3.4 and 1.1.2 to our June meeting.
- ALL: Get Marty your comments on T7b asap
- Marty: Update datum changes (NAVD) to studies T7, T7b prior to our next meeting.
- Lauri: Run finalization of T7b by BAWG
- Tom: Update studies affected by NVAD (T2, T5, T17).
- Tony: Invite Ron and Chris to July meeting.
- Tony: Bring sample management plans to June 20 RESOLVE session
- Tony: Meet with Frank L. re: ortho photo interpretation for suitable amphibian breeding habitat.
- Tony: Email out wetland spreadsheets for Baker and Shannon.

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- ALL: Let Tony know if you want hard copies of priority analysis species.
 - Tony: Update contact list to show Ron's new phone number.

REPORT ON OLD ACTION ITEMS

- Kathy: Sent electronic version of PDEA schedule to Tony to distribute. This went out as an attachment to the notes.
- Laura: Reviewed *Carex flava* Analysis Species Report and sent comments back to Hamer by April 30. Tom made the changes and sent out a report.
- Lauri: Reviewed Sphagnum Bog Analysis Species Report and sent comments back to Hamer by April 30. Tom incorporated changes and the report is now out for review.
- Tony: Had AESI put together draft study plan for T5b monitoring study of wetland WB 30 prior to our May 15 meeting. This was done and sent to Lauri.
- Kathy: Sent website link for FERC guidelines for Shoreline Management Plan to Tony to distribute.
- Lyn: Brought up Shoreline Management Plan for Shannon at the May 14 workshop. There was general consensus to pursue this. Connie/Andy Hatfield will lead.
- ALL: Gave Tony input re: terrestrial interests related to the HYDROPS model.
- Tony: Sent out digital version of amphibian habitat photos.
- Marty: Produced a red-line version of "duck" (Initial Draft Proposed Actions) for all to review by April 25.
- ALL: Got Tony feedback on the revised "duck" by noon May 1.
- Thomas: Touched base with Tom Hamer re: a plan for additional surveys for *Carex flava*. Tom reported that we have all the information we need on this. Laura is satisfied with the report.
- ALL: Reviewed T2, 5, 7b, 16, 17 and gave comments on these reports by our May 15 meeting.

PDEA Update

The initial partial PDEA (existing conditions) went out for Solution Team review on May 1. Anyone who has comments can get them to Tony by May 30. Next steps will be to revise existing conditions section and then do the effects section. They will use a specific operations scenario with the PMEs. PSE will provide Louis Berger this scenario by June 1. The "no action" (existing project) alternative will be the baseline. The effects section will be listed by issue based by resource.

FERC's view of the sufficiency of the applicant's proposal will be determined by mitigation on resources for operations effects. We will also show other Basin-wide concerns and how they are being addressed. The de-commissioning scenario will be listed as an alternative "considered but eliminated from detailed study".

A without project scenario is necessary for the USFWS to use for Section 7 of the ESA.

There are two ways to look at without project: 1. What would things look like if the project had never been built; 2. What would things look like if we removed the project? Gene will let us know what he needs on this by the next meeting.

Regarding the preparation of the next draft PDEA (scheduled to be out in early August for internal review and then out in late September for the official 90-day review), we agreed to have the Louis Berger Group use the initial draft actions, also known as the "Duck" for the next draft of the PDEA. In the meantime, we will continue to finish up studies and work on the Settlement Agreement.

Note from Stan (We called him on break). “This is the applicant’s proposal and is not agreed to by all in the process. Negotiations (RESOLVE process) with the agencies are still underway.”

We intend to work with each other and not make “end runs” to each other’s bosses during the RESOLVE process. We also need to be really clear about the license article language before it goes to attorneys. We need to be sure that the intent isn’t lost in any lawyer “translations” or edits. We will need some norms around RESOLVE sessions to deal with the need to find ways to represent the interests of absent members when decisions/agreements are made.

We decided to begin holding separate RESOLVE sessions, starting in June. See the list of dates at the beginning of these minutes.

ISSUES TO RESOLVE AT JUNE MEETING (from 8:30 to 12:30)

- Mountain Goat
- Format and Content of Terrestrial Management Plan
- Old Growth Forests
- Review Initial License Article Language (drafted by Kathy)
 - 1.3.1 Provide nest structures for osprey at Lake Shannon
 - 1.3.4 Support the development of bald eagle nest management plans
 - 1.1.2 Evaluate the potential for establishing beneficial vegetation in the fluctuation zones

PROJECT-INDUCED RECREATION QUESTION

We will be getting copies of a white paper written by Chris Lawson on this topic. It includes a recommended range of “project relatedness” of various recreation sites. This will have implications for elk and mountain goats.

HYDROPS UPD ATE

PSE is in the process of testing the latest (and final) beta version of the HYDROPS software. They expect to be processing working group requests for runs by early June.

STUDIES

Study #	Title	Notes/Next Steps
T2	Vegetation Mapping in Project Area	Includes T5. Tony reported that PSE has decided to update the North American Vertical Datum (NAVD) to the 1988 reference. This means a change of plus 3.77 feet at Upper Baker and plus 3.75 feet at Lower Baker. Joetta is aware of this change. For this study, this will mean a larger area of lacustrine (mostly in gentle slope areas) and a smaller area above full pool in our survey area. (T7 and T7b acreage numbers will also change. Stay tuned for further implications.
T4	Analysis Species Assessment	<i>Carex flava</i> is out for review.

		<p>The sphagnum bog ecosystem analysis/literature review is also out.</p> <p>Two beetles: Awaiting input from experts. This should be out by the end of May.</p> <p>These conclude our species analysis assessments!</p> <p>Next Steps: Tony will bring a box of these papers along with finished reports to future meetings.</p>
T5	Wetland Inventory Study	This is combined with T-2. See above.
T6	Noxious Weed Assessment and Control Plan	These surveys are starting in June. They are getting together site identification maps, etc. We will review maps and survey methods with Laura before starting the survey.
T7	Historic Vegetation of the UB and LB Projects	This study is complete and has been approved. Marty will produce a new final report with revised numbers (NAVD) by the June meeting.
T7b	Future vegetation mapping	Marty reported that other than editing the numbers to align with the NAVD, this report is complete. He will have the NAVD changes made by our June meeting and bring a new hard copy with the new numbers to that meeting for our review. All were asked to get Marty comments on this report by our June meeting.
T-9,10	Recreation use, effects on Mt. Goat Habitat use	Did not discuss at this meeting. Don has drafted a PME for our review with regard to mountain goats.
T11	Oregon Spotted Frog Inventory	This study is complete and has been approved.
R-T12	Grizzly Bear Spring Foraging Habitat Value	<p>Ron expects to get the sampling data by early June for analysis. He will need a database for queries on plants and weights. Tom is building the database for him.</p> <p>Sampling is underway for 5 cover types and 24 polygons. We expect to finish by the 1st week in June (on schedule).</p> <p>Tom reports they should be able to start drying pretty much right away (within 24 hours) after they resolve the Scirpus issue (difficult to distinguish in the early growth stage).</p> <p>They are currently air drying the samples according to methods suggested by John Cook.</p>
T13	Survey and Manage Terrestrial Mollusk Survey	This study is complete and has been approved.
T15	Basin Vegetation Mapping	This is complete. It helped us identify critical information for grizzly and elk studies. An additional use for this data set might be helping us understand how many acres of riparian habitat are available for different stream classes.
T16	Project Area Rare Plant Survey	<p>We have surveyed wetlands that we know have a hydrologic connection to the project (Category A and B).</p> <p>During this survey some category C wetlands were also surveyed. The survey person suspected that those wetlands listed as not connected to the reservoir may, indeed be connected (due to her field observations). This could also be</p>

		<p>due to some wetland identification protocols between Hamer and AESI.</p> <p>We agreed that AESI will re-visit all Category C wetlands with Level 2 confidence (where 2 = uncertain). If AESI decides to change their confidence to Level 1, they will provide documentation to explain why. If AESI is still uncertain, rare plant surveys will be done during the summer of 2003. AESI will make their assessment when reservoir is at full pool or by June 7, whichever comes first.</p> <p>Any wetlands they still have doubts about will be surveyed this summer. Tony will keep us updated through email before starting.</p> <p>WNHP rare plant data has been received and is being put into the report. Laura suggests we use the WNHP buffer protocol for showing locations of rare plants in the report that goes to the public. We will use more specific data for our own purposes.</p> <p>Any additional rare plant sitings will be addenda to the report, or we could finalize the report with this year's data. Tom will address this with Joetta.</p> <p>Next Steps: Review maps and survey methods with Laura before starting the survey. Do also for supplemental rare plants and T6 noxious weeds.</p>
T17	Amphibian Studies in Reservoir Fluctuation Zone	<p>Phase 1: What was found (existing conditions)</p> <p>Tom distributed an egg mass table that will be integrated into this phase of the report.</p> <p>Phase 2: Possible Project Effects.</p> <p>There is not yet consensus on how the project effects section of the report was written. It was suggested that it may be more appropriate to include some of the language here in an appendix rather than as a project conclusion in the main body of the report.</p> <p>Kathy asked if we could call out suitable habitat locations and the approximate number of acres?</p> <p>We will discuss this further (with Don) at our June 19 meeting.</p>
R-T18	Breeding Bird Surveys	Did not discuss at this meeting. (Combined with T-19.)
R-T19	Habitat Evaluation Studies	Did not discuss at this meeting.
RT21	Elk studies	<p>Tony reported that we are on schedule to look at results by the end of June. The DNR data issue is resolved. We will have the data normalized by 5/16.</p> <p>Ron's new phone # is 206-267-7741</p>
RT22	Fluctuation Zone Enhancement	We will go forward with this as part of a PME.
RT23	Sphagnum Bog Survey	AESI set up monitoring devices at different elevations in the WB-30 Bog. They have buttoned up with Lauri and Tony

		on this and are drafting a bog monitoring plan for working group review.
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HANDOUTS (Those that will be posted to the website are bolded.)

- Flow Chart – PMEs to License Articles & Settlement Agreement – Date revised 5/13/2003
- Table 1. Amphibian Egg Mass Records from Spring Surveys 2002.

PARKING LOT

- Conceptual Mitigation Approach (PMEs)
- 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
- Interface with Access Management Plan
- Come up with optimal reservoir operation scenario(s) from Terrestrial perspective (HYDROPs)
- Set up “face to face” meetings with Russ Paul to review our proposals

MEETING EVALUATION

Well-Dones

- Food!
- Made progress on Settlement Process (We RESOLVED it!)
- We agreed on how to approach the 10 wetlands
- We agreed on how to handle PDEA

What to Change for Next Time

- Missed Stan, Don, Carl, Bob K

WHAT’S HOT?!

- This summer will be intense
- We developed our Settlement Process

STUDIES STATUS FOR SOLUTION TEAM

- On track!

Tentative Agenda for June 19, 2003 Technical Meeting

USFS Office in Mountlake Terrace

8:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

1. Review notes/agenda/action items
2. HYDROPS Update
3. Technical discussion of data from studies: T2/5, T7, T7b, T17, *T19*, T4/23
4. Other? (*New PME proposals?*)
5. Set agenda for July 17, 2003
6. Confirm RESOLVE meeting agenda (June 20 from 8:30 to 12:30)
 - Mountain Goat
 - Format and Content of Terrestrial Management Plan
 - Old Growth Forests
 - Review Initial License Article Language:
 - 1.3.1 Provide nest structures for osprey at Lake Shannon
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7. Evaluate meeting.