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## **BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE**

### **Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group Meeting**

**June 19, 2001 (8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.)  
(Bring Sack Lunch)**

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office, Room 215  
510 Desmond Dr. S.E.  
Lacey, WA 98503  
360-753-4124 (Fred Seavey)**

### **AGENDA**

Review notes/revise agenda
Status report: Action items <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review mission statement</li><li>Terrestrial WG Interest List, Solution Team feedback</li></ul>
Recreation Use Study/Recreation Site Inventory Update
Update from Cultural/Historical Working Group
Review Preliminary Study Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>T2, 4, 5, 11, 13, 15, 17</li></ul>
Discuss study requests R-T6, R-T16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Status of T-7, 9, 10, 12</li></ul>
Set agenda for next meeting (July 17th, in Mountlake Terrace (?), from 8:30am to 2:00pm)
Evaluate meeting

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## BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

### Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group

June 19, 2001

8:30 am – 2:00 p.m.  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Building  
Lacey, WA

### FINAL 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, [tfuchs@puget.com](mailto:tfuchs@puget.com)

### ATTENDEES

Tony Fuchs (Puget Sound Energy), Patrick Goldsworthy (North Cascades Conservation Council), Lauri Vigue (WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife), Stan Walsh (Skagit System Cooperative), Fred Seavey (U.S. Fish & Wildlife ), Martin Vaughn (Biota Pacific ), Don Gay (U.S. Forest Service), Bob Nelson (Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation), Tom Hamer (Hamer Environmental), Robert Kuntz (National Park Service), Chris Madsen (Commission of NWIFC), Lyn Wiltse, facilitator (PDSA Consulting)

The meeting started at 8:40 a.m. and ended at 2:00 p.m.

### AGENDA

#### June 19, 2001

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

1. Review notes/agenda
2. Review mission statement
3. Solution Team Report  
Relicensing scope of Scientific Studies

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#### 4. Action Items

Recreation Use Study Update  
Update from Cultural/Historic Working Group

#### 5. Study Designs:

Review T2, T4, T5, T11, T13;  
Finalize T15, T17

#### 6. Review Study Request T16

##### 6.5 Review Parking Lot

#### 7. Set agenda, location for July 17, and August 21 meetings (Note: Mountlake Terrace Forest Service Office is not available in July)

#### 7. Evaluate meeting

### NEW ACTION ITEMS:

- **ALL:** Give Tom feedback on revised T-5 by end of June
- **Lauri:** Check availability of the Washington Department of Fish Wildlife Mill Creek Office for July 17 meeting.
- **Don:** Reserve Mountlake Terrace Forest Service Office for August 21 meeting
- **Stan:** Find out if we cover culturally sensitive resources in this Working Group's Study or if a separate study will be done.
- **Lauri:** Draft study request for BBS.
- **Ann:** Draft study request for RT-16.
- **Tony:** Send out final study plans, including updated excel spreadsheet for species analysis
- **Tony:** Review T-17 protocol with Fred Seavey re: next steps.

### REPORT ON PAST ACTION ITEMS

- **Fred:** Scheduled location for June 19 meeting in Lacey. Sent directions to Tony.
- **Tony:** Followed up with Bob re: Park Landbird Inventory Monitoring Data.
- **Tony:** Updated contact list and sent it to team members (shared with cultural/historical Working Group).
- **Tony:** Attached statements of qualifications from proposed contractors to appropriate studies.
- **Tony, Don, Chris Lawson:** Continued to discuss recreational study synergies in relation to R-T9 and 10. (These study requests are on the Solutions Team's agenda for discussion).
- **Jessie:** Got input from Cultural/Historical Working Group re: vegetation mapping.
- **Don:** Sent cover types list(s) to Tom and Shari.
- **Tom:** Summarized list(s) of cover types for basin wide mapping and project area mapping for our review.
- **Tony:** Added Shari Brewer to distribution list for this Working Group.

Studies Note: Be sure all Study Plans are dated and that they have been reviewed by the author/submitter before being shared with the Working Group members.

### DISCUSSION OF MISSION STATEMENT:

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The team reviewed the mission statement. Tony took exception with the portion stating: “1) Accurately *accurately defines and describes the existing environment in relationship to the previous environment*; “We decided to defer this discussion until we receive direction from the Solution Team.

## **SOLUTION TEAM REPORT**

The agencies published their new drafts of the Communication Protocol and Process Document just prior to the last Solution Team meeting. PSE has emailed out their response. The next step is for interested parties to get together to try to develop a document that everyone can support. These documents outline the process and roles of teams in the relicensing process.

At the Solution Team meeting, Tony presented a digital topography map of the FERC boundary at 5 ft. contour intervals. This will be useful reference data for resource-related studies.

## **PSE’s SCOPE AND CONTENT OF SCIENTIFIC STUDIES**

Tony distributed PSE’s interpretation of FERC law in a paper entitled “Scope and Content of Scientific Studies”. This paper will be distributed and discussed at the next Solution Team meeting. This paper speaks to pre-project requests for data. PSE believes FERC’s requirement for baseline data will be based on existing conditions. PSE’s view is that the no project option is not really a baseline for assessing project impacts. Under NEPA you can set alternatives to review. No project might be an alternative. T-7 and T-12 were listed as examples of Study Requests that, under this interpretation of FERC law, would not be appropriate, since they are based on pre-project conditions. There was some discomfort expressed by team members that the Terrestrial Group studies are being used as examples in this document when they are still under review by this team. It would have been nice to show examples from other Working Groups since they are also wrestling with this issue.

## **TRANSMISSION LINES**

PSE is petitioning FERC to have the transmission lines removed from the FERC boundary. These lines were under construction during the definition of the existing FERC boundary so they were included in the existing license as Project features. PSE believes they no longer meet the criteria of primary project lines, so PSE is asking that they be removed. Some members expressed a desire to see the transmission lines mapped and cover typed. PSE is waiting to hear from FERC on the disposition of the transmission lines (whether they would be considered project features).

## **OTHER WORKING GROUP UPDATES**

### **Recreation Working Group:**

They are doing a lot of site inventory work and user surveys. They have reviewed the two mountain goat study requests from this group. They meet again tomorrow. The mountain goat issue may have to be resolved at the Solution Team level. There have been communication challenges between the Recreation Working Group and other Working Groups.

### **Cultural Working Group:**

There seems to be some reluctance to do an actual study request to identify cultural terrestrial resources. Stan will find out whether there will be directions for this Working Group or whether there will be an independent ethno-botany study.

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**STUDIES PROTOCOL NOTE:** We'll always have both metric and English specifications. English will be listed first with two exceptions: (1 When citing a study originally done in metric and (2 When defining study protocol that calls for metric. In these instances, metric will be listed first.

**STATUS OF:**

**R-T16: Project Area Rare Plant Survey**

Tony and Ann Risvold will be working on the study request in the next month. We hope to review prior to our July meeting.

**R-T2 Vegetation Mapping In Project Area**

We agreed on objectives 1,2,3 of this study. The purpose of this study is not to encompass all data needs for analysis species. The results of this study will form the background information for more detailed habitat assessments later on.

Appendix I: Drop "elevation" since we already have it on maps; remove "soil drainage" and "hydrologic regime". To "Topographic Position" add 10) fluctuation zone. Define "animal use" and "disturbance". "Disturbance" includes recreation, logging, natural geological, mass wasting/slope failure/erosion, erosion due to reservoir fluctuation, fire, road failure, woodcutting, illegal dumping, poaching. If can't provide specialized training on how to identify culturally modified trees, don't attempt to track. If we do track, list under "other".

Appendix II: Note predominant ground cover type (or lack there of). Change 1% to 10%. (Team Leader Note: This issue was still unresolved at the end of the meeting, and has been refined by e-mail by the interested participants. See soon-to-be-sent-out "final" study plan for details on methodology). We agreed on the coverage classifications and corresponding definitions. Tony will send out "final" version of this study plan and we'll formally approve it at our next meeting.

**R-T5 Wetland Inventory Study**

Coverage classification table is consistent with T-2. Give Tom feedback by the end of the month (after Tony sends out revised forms based on determinations made by the team for T-2 )

**R-T4 Analysis Species Assessment**

Proceed with Phase I (filling in table with information that is readily available). Tony will send out excel Spread sheet , adding "historically existed" for members to review prior to next meeting. (Leah, Lauri, Bob, Marty will form technical work group.)

**R-T11 Oregon Spotted Frog Inventory**

Watershed = Study area. Would not survey above 2,000 feet. Training session is set up for July 3. Get comments to Tom by June 30. Tony will send out "final" version of this study plan and we'll formally approve it at our next meeting.

**RT17 Amphibian Studies In Reservoir Fluctuation Zone Study Design**

We reviewed the second draft. Sampling protocol changed. We will be using funnel traps. We have received the State Fish and Wildlife sampling permit for this study. Review protocols with Fred Seavey to determine next steps. We hope to do adult stage sampling in

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July. Tony will send out “final” version of this study plan and we’ll formally approve it at our next meeting.

### **R-T15 Basin Vegetation Mapping**

Need to make sure that general cover types are as consistent as possible with T-2 and T-5. Need to include wetland types in Appendix B. (Four classes of wetland from T-2) Omit crown closure stuff on Appendix B. Otherwise, Tony will send out “final” version of this study plan and we’ll formally approve it at our next meeting.

### **HANDOUTS**

- Relicensing Issues – (PSE) Scope and content of scientific studies, June 19, 2001 FERC Project No. 2150
- Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group Wetland Inventory Study T-5 Baker River Relicensing Project, prepared by: Associated Earth Sciences, Inc.

### **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”, “project area”, NEPA definitions
- How do we handle “latecomers” to this process?
- Culturally significant species
- Watershed Analysis
- 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?

### **MEETING PROCESS REVIEW**

#### **Well Dones:**

- Food
- Thank you, Fred for hosting the meeting, making copies. We appreciate your cheery countenance, the yummy day old cake
- Got through a lot
- Thanks to members for careful review
- Done early
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#### **Need for Improvement:**

- Need bananas
- Mint Milanos
- Cinnamon rolls

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- **Increase room size**

### **TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

July 17, 2001, **8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.** Location - WDFW Office in Mill Creek, WA ??

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

1. Review notes/agenda
2. Solution Team Report
3. Action Items
4. Study Designs
  - Approve: T-2, T-11, T-17, T-15, T-5
  - Review: T-4, T-13
5. Study Requests
  - Review T16
6. Review PARKING LOT
7. Set agenda and location for August 21 and September 18
8. Evaluate meeting

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE MEETING TOPICS**

- Process/policy presentation of how to approach impacts due to inundation
- WUTC to give "process" presentation