



BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group Meeting

**June 6, 2002
6pm to 8pm**

**PSE's Baker Lake Lodge
PSE will provide dinner (Pizza and refreshments)**

AGENDA

Review notes/revise agenda/action items
Report on Existing Studies, maps
Teamlet Reports – T16 Rare Plants, T7 Historic Vegetation
New Studies – T6 Noxious Weeds, T7b Future Vegetation map (?)
New Study Requests – Elk, other?
Confirm field trip itinerary to assess wetlands, potential for monitoring
Evaluate Meeting
Social hour (or two) at Lodge

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June 6, 2002
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

PSE Baker Lake Lodge
Baker Lake, 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:*

- 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

ATTENDEES:

Don Gay (USFS), Stan Walsh (Skagit Systems Cooperative), Tony Fuchs (Puget Sound Energy), Lauri Vigue (Washington Dept. Fish & Wildlife), Laurel Shiner (Whatcom County Noxious Weed Control Board), Tom Hamer and Lia Kruger (Hamer Environmental), Martin Vaughn (Biota Pacific)

SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS:

July 17, August 21 (*or 22; date to be determined*)

AGENDA

Baker Lake Lodge, June 6, 2002, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

1. Review notes/revise agenda/action items
2. Report on Existing studies, maps
3. Teamlet Reports - T16 Rare Plants, T7 Historic Vegetation
4. New Studies – T6 Noxious Weeds, T7b Future Vegetation map (?)
5. New Study Requests – Elk, other?
6. Confirm field trip itinerary to assess wetlands, potential for monitoring
7. Evaluate meeting
8. Social Hour

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- Tony: Send updated Study Index to all team members
- Tony: Send all the list of possible mixed forest species prepared by Lia
- Tony: Send out pdf format of vegetation type cover maps (when complete)
- Patrick: Research applicable early County maps
- All: Review the Draft T6 Noxious Weed Study Plan and provide comments to Tony
- Marty: Distribute copies of the most current T7 Historic Vegetation study plan to all

OLD ACTION ITEMS

- All: Send specific mollusk and amphibian study data desires to Hamer, ASAP
- Lauri: Send Chris Elk Study model information from Lewis River relicensing effort.
- Tony: Send a copy of Forest Service/WDFW telemetry study for elk to all members that request it.
- Tony: Forward Don's write-up on methodology for goat habitat burn options to other team members.
- Tony: Bring updated Study Index to our next meeting
- Marty: Check with US Fish and Wildlife Service and Don Gay re: need to do Section 7 on Peregrine Falcon
- Lia: Ask entire membership of this WG for literature citations relevant to Analysis Species.
- Lia: Come up with some species options for deciduous forest young and shrubs by May 17 and send to Tony to forward to the group for review.
- Patrick: Research applicable early County maps
- Tony: Send out pdf format of vegetation type cover maps (when complete)
- Tony: Get list of all aerial photos to members
- Tony: Email out draft of field trip itinerary
- Lyn: Draft new norms re: back and forth in meetings and polite comments

All old action items were completed, except those carried forward to new action items.

TEAMLET REPORTS / REPORTS ON EXISTING STUDIES

T-13: Survey and Manage Terrestrial Mollusk Survey

Work is continuing on the final report.

T17: Amphibian Studies in Reservoir Fluctuation Zone

Photos of the unidentified salamander found during the field survey were sent to Kelly McAllister at WDFW for identification. Nearly all field data have been entered into the digital database. The report is still expected by late July. **Lauri requested that Hamer Environmental or other consultants/participants please cc her when they consult with other WDFW biologists (e.g., Kelly McAllister).**

T16: Rare Plant Survey

The T16 teamlet met to prioritize dispersed recreation sites for surveys. They eliminated those dispersed recreation sites they agreed were not associated with the Project. Field work will begin on June 17. Classes in lichen, grass and sedge identification will be conducted for the surveyors prior to the surveys. It is anticipated the field work will be completed by a crew of three working for three months. The crew

will evaluate progress after the first week to determine whether additional personnel and/or time will be needed.

T6: Noxious Weeds

A draft study plan was distributed to the group. The group will comment prior to the next meeting. Work on noxious weeds in 2002 will be limited to that portion of the study plan that can be completed concurrent with the T16 Rare Plant Survey. Any remaining work will be done in 2003, and sufficient funding will need to be in place to complete the work during the 2003 field season.

T15: Basin Vegetation Mapping

Tony presented a draft of the Basin Vegetation Map. He noted that his review of recent aerial photos showed several wetlands in the basin that did not make it onto the Basin Vegetation Map because they are not on the NWI wetland maps. He provided the locations of the additional wetlands to R2 resources, and they will be adding them to the Basin Vegetation Map.

T2: Project Area Vegetation Mapping

Tony presented a draft of the Project Area Vegetation Map. It is still in draft form. R2 will be making a number of minor edits to finalize the map.

T7: Historic Vegetation Mapping

Marty summarized the status of the T7 study. The Teamlet met to finalize the process by which the consultants (AESI and R2) will compile the maps. Pre-project vegetation for the Baker Lake area will be determined directly from aerial photos dated 1957 and 1959. Site conditions beneath Lake Shannon will be estimated from topographic maps and the GLO notes from 1892. The Working Group will then use the estimated site conditions to make assumptions about the types of vegetation that could have been present. The 1892 GLO notes can also be used to “verify” the assumptions in the few locations where vegetation was reported. Future vegetation conditions (without-Project scenario) will be determined on an as-needed basis after the analysis species list is finalized. Lauri provided a list of potential references for predicting vegetation patterns at the landscape level. It was also noted that the Recreation Working Group will be considering a study of potential land use in the Baker basin. Lauri will interface with the Recreation Working Group to determine whether **the land use study** will provide information useful to the prediction of potential future vegetation.

NEW STUDY REQUESTS

Chris Madsen and Stan Walsh are working on a study request for summer and winter forage for elk.

PLANNING FOR THE WETLAND FIELD TRIP

Lauri noted she is interested in seeing wetlands where amphibians are negatively impacted by the seasonal fluctuations of the reservoir. We decided to look at wetlands dependent on the reservoirs, as well as wetlands with separate hydrology that are affected by the fluctuation of the reservoirs. The latter category will address Lauri’s interest. Because of time limitations, we will limit the field visit to Baker Lake. Wetlands below West Pass Dike get their hydrology from Baker Lake, and are therefore dependent on the reservoir. Wetlands along the west side of Baker Lake get their hydrology from upslope of the reservoir, but they are partially inundated (i.e., negatively impacted) when the reservoir is filled.

HANDOUTS

- List of potential references for predicting vegetation.

PARKING LOT

- Conceptual Mitigation Approach (P/M/Es)
- 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
- Tony to set up Wetland Field Trip

MEETING EVALUATION

There was no formal evaluation, although everyone managed to choke down at least one piece of pizza. From Annie’s Pizza!

TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR OUR JULY 17 MEETING

Mountlake Terrace, Washington

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

Bring a sack lunch and we’ll work through!

1. Review notes/agenda/action items
2. Report on June field trip
3. Solution Team Update
 - Field trip debrief
 - Public meeting debrief
 - Settlement Process Development
4. Report on Existing Studies
 - Status of previous studies
 - Teamlet Reports—T16 Rare Plants
 - New Requests/Plans
5. Review/Amend Norms and Parking Lot
6. Set agenda/location for August 21 (22?) meeting
7. Evaluate meeting