

---

## BAKER RIVER PROJECT LICENSE IMPLEMENTATION

### Aquatic Resources Group

May 8, 2007

8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
Hampton Inn & Suites  
Eagle Meeting Room  
1860 S. Burlington Blvd  
Burlington, WA  
(360) 757-7110

#### Conference Call Procedures-Dial In Info:

1-888-228-0484 (call automatically charged to PSE)-Dial in at the designated date and time –

Conference ID: 6058

Conference Password: 12345

#### DRAFT AGENDA

1. Review Agenda, Notes, Actions	8:00 – 8:30
2. Updates Fish Facilities Operations Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Juvenile Fish Passage Facilities Operations (Bruland)</li><li>• Sockeye Spawning Beach 3 &amp; 4 Operations (WDFW)</li><li>• Artificial Incubation Operations (WDFW)</li><li>• Fish Rearing Inventories &amp; Releases (Bruland)</li><li>• Adult Trap Protocol Update or Changes</li></ul> <i>Break at 9:30</i>	8:30 – 9:30
3. A-09 Draft Instream Flow Summary Report Walkthrough (R2)	9:30 - 11:45
4. Confirm Date & Agenda for Next Meeting (tent. June 12), Mtg Evaluation	11:45 - 12:00
<i>Lunch (provided)</i>	<i>12:00 – 12:30</i>
Fish Passage Technical WG Topics (see FPTWG agenda)	12:30 - 5:00

---

---

## **Baker River Project License Implementation**

### **Aquatics Resource Group Meeting Final Meeting Notes**

#### **FINAL MEETING NOTES** May 8, 2007 ~ 9:00 am - 12:00 pm **Hampton Inn and Suites, Burlington, WA**

**Team Leader: Arnie Aspelund, PSE,** (arnie.aspelund@pse.com)

#### **PRESENT**

Arnie Aspelund, Nick Verretto, and Doug Bruland (PSE); Frank Postlewaite and Phil Hilgert (R2); Arn Thoreen (Skagit Fisheries); Jed Varney, Rich Johnson, and Kevin Kurras (WDFW); Jon-Paul Shannahan (Upper Skagit Indian Tribe); LouEllyn Jones (USFW); Ed Meyer (NOAA); Stan Zyskowski (NPS); Stan Walsh (SRSC); Lyn Wiltse and Jamie Riche (PDSA Consulting, Inc).

**NEXT ARG MEETING:** June 12, 2007 ~ 9 – 3, at USFS Office in Mountlake Terrace

#### **NEW ACTION ITEMS**

- Arnie - Ask who wants an electronic copy of Instream Flow Report (4MGB), and send it or send CD as requested.

#### **OLD (STILL PERTINENT) ACTION ITEMS**

- Nick - Send hard copies of the FPTWG notes to Bob Helton
- All - Let Jacob know if you're interested in joining the Aquatic Riparian teamlet
- Doug B - Call Jeff re: cleaning up the boat launch
- Lyn - Bring the brochure from Rod's service
- Cary & Dave – Contact Ernie Brannon re: outside review of hatchery design
- All – Give Arnie any additional feedback you have on the Baker Fish Propagation Facility Plan
- Cary - Bring DVD copies of the FSC film for distribution at the next ARG meeting
- Cary - Check on the status of "The Baker Story"
- Jacob - Send out an "all call" for interested parties re: gravel plan

#### **May 8 DRAFT AGENDA**

- 8:00 – 8:35 Review Notes, Agenda
- 8:30 – 9:00 Fish Facilities Operations Topics
  - Juvenile Fish Facilities
  - Sockeye Spawning Beach 3 & 4 Ops

- Artificial Incubation Ops
- Fish Rearing Inventories & Releases
- Adult Trap Protocol / Changes

9:00 – 11:45 A-09 Draft Instream Flow Summary Report Review  
 11:45 – 12:00 Confirm date (June 12) & agenda for next meeting; evaluate meeting  
 12:30 – 3:30 Fish Passage Technical Working Group

## **FISH FACILITIES OPERATIONAL TOPICS**

### **Sockeye Spawning Beaches 3 & 4, and Artificial Incubation Ops**

Kevin noted that we're up over 1.9 million sockeye fry out of Beach 4, and allowed that he thinks this number is a little low. We continue to have counter issues. The latest issue is whether the water at Baker is of such a corrosive nature that it is possibly damaging the counter heads. At this point, we have a counter tunnel on loan and Kevin reported he is continuing to work to resolve this accuracy issue with the Smith-Root counters. We discussed the frustration around not being able to get a reliable count. Some felt that the number of out-migrating smolts was what really matters. Also, no IHN has been detected in the sockeye fry.

Kevin also reported that the beaches will be shut down by the end of the month. The adult trap maintenance has been done and is online. The artificial incubation sockeye fry were released per agreed (30% to Shannon, 70% to Baker) with 300,000 released to Shannon, 749,000 to Baker, and 130,000 were kept at the Upper Baker rearing facility for the delayed release program.

Kevin shared that he needs direction from the co-managers re: this year's sockeye adult beach loading plan. His proposal is 850 sockeye in three sections and 1,000 in one section. He would like to lower the brood stock for artificial incubation by 200 fish to a total of 1,100 adults. The inability to access Beach 3, due to the road washouts will likely keep from using it for adults. Even if we are able to reach Beach 3, we agreed that, though it is a good release site for sockeye fry, we don't want to put fish there (water quantity is undependable).

### **Juvenile Fish Passage Facilities Operations**

After the Aquatic Resource Group tour<sup>1</sup> yesterday, the Upper Baker juvenile trap is back up after being down for testing. Doug reported that there are about 6,000 juvenile fish in the trap right now. We are nearing the peak; it should be soon. We are currently pushing 60,000 total smolts counted. Pit-tagged Coho and Sockeye are going out weekly; the third release will be tonight. Our major aim is to be able to identify with certainty which fish qualify as migrants. The State is coded-wire tagging Coho (more than 200/day). Doug announced that we should have some preliminary information about migration progress and the biological migration studies in time for our June 12 meeting.

---

1) Footnote about the tour: About 16 participants of the ARG and Fish Passage Technical Working Group visited the Upper Baker Floating Surface Collector assembly site on May 7th to get a close-up view of the developing stages and walk onboard and through the various flow and fish-way sections while it is still on dry land. The groups also visited the current gulper, juvenile trap and site of the biological testing, although the trap was temporarily shut down while testing involving Upper Baker was completed.

## **Fish Rearing Inventories & Release**

Doug reported that they just recently released a lot of their groups; he anticipates having a written report for the June 12 meeting. Ad-clipped Coho: 45,000 out of the three circulars. Of the 16,000 Rainbow in the trout pond, 5,000 were released to Depression Lake (the water level has been down). At the creel survey, Doug noted that folks were catching well from the banks of the lake. There is a limited on-site population (typical for this time of year); the main focus is working the traps.

About 126,860 Sockeye were received from the artificial incubation; there will be a spring release of 60,000, a fall release of another 60,000 and 5,000 held until spring 2008 for continuing migration studies. At the fall release, will hold back what we need for biological studies as well as for freeze-brands. Raceway 2 has 73,000 Coho from the incubation program. Doug reported that we didn't get much for brood stock this year. Egg mortality ended up at 15% (had been holding at around 10% through the season), but we did get enough for our program. We plan to release 13,000 surplus Coho to Lake Shannon by the end of May. There was discussion around where to release surplus Coho – maybe to Baker instead of Shannon? PSE will be looking for release strategy decision from the co-managers from this. Note: After the new fish passage facility is complete, more sockeye will be released to Shannon; we may need to develop a permanent release site at Shannon.

## **Adult Trap Protocol**

We were reminded that the changes Kirt Hughes WDFW made to this protocol at our November meeting were made in anticipation of the Steelhead listing (which just occurred).

## **Hatchery Update**

Arnie shared that PSE is in process of completing a draft design criteria package to submit as a Request for Proposal to potential design-build contractors. The RFP is scheduled to go out later this month. A design / build contractor will be selected and design and permitting process will move forward from the current 15% level in July. The goal is to start construction March 2008.

## **INSTREAM FLOW REPORT**

Phil walked us through the long-awaited report. Arnie and Phil asked folks to review and provide feedback in the next 60 days. Phil shared that this report documents the process and thinking behind the interim- and long-term flow plan agreed to in the Settlement Agreement. Therefore, a lot of this report is about field and modeling processes. The preferred flow scenario relies on new turbines, so there is an interim flow plan until that happens.

## **HANDOUTS**

- Agenda & Notes
- Baker Adult Fish Trap Protocol (revised 1/09/07)
- Fry Production, Beach #4

## **MEETING EVALUATION**

### **What Went Well**

- Phil's presentation  
... and the animated model (too cool ... thanks, Stuart!)

- Site visit plus two meetings together
- Done early!
- Location

### **What to Do Differently**

- Some confusion around start time ... June 12 starts at 9 am
- Improve turnout
- No boiled eggs ... full fare next time :)
- Stop use of off-brand facilitator sticky flip chart paper
- Consider location trade-off?

### **AGENDA FOR NEXT ARG MEETING**

**June 12, 2007 at USFS Office in Mountlake Terrace ~ 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

1. Welcome, review notes, action items, agenda
2. Fish Facilities Operational Topics
3. Update on License / Implementation Activities
4. Q & A – Instream Flow Report
5. Other?
6. Evaluate meeting, set next meeting agenda & location

**2007 MEETING DATES:** June 12, July 10, (no meeting in August), Sept. 11, Oct. 9, Nov. 13, Dec. 11