

BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Recreational & Aesthetic Resources Working Group

May 21, 2001

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

USFS Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Headquarters

21905 64th Ave. West

Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043

AGENDA

1. Review/revise minutes/agenda
2. Review action items
3. Review study plans for study requests R14 and R9
4. Status report on site inventory (R12) and survey study (R13)
5. Set agenda, location for June 25 meeting and July and August meetings
6. Evaluate meeting

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FINAL MEETING NOTES

Mission: *“To develop alternative solutions and recommendations addressing recreation, education and aesthetic resources related to the Baker River Project and its operations leading to a settlement agreement.”*

Team Leader: Chris Lawson (Huckell/Weinman Associates) (425) 828-4463,
clawson@huckellweinman.com

PSE Contact: Tony Fuchs: (425) 462-3553, tfuchs@puget.com

PRESENT

Chris Lawson (Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc.), Ann Dunphy (U.S Forest Service), Ardis Bynum (U.S. Forest Service), Jim Eychaner (Interagency Committee for Recreation), Lauri Vigue (WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife) by phone, Kristen Schuldt (PSE), Andy Hatfield (PSE), Tony Fuchs (PSE), Lyn Wiltse, facilitator (PDSA Consulting)

NOTE: SCHEDULE CHANGES

9:00-2:00 Move June meeting to **Wednesday, June 20, USFS Mountlake Terrace, WA**

9:00-2:00 **July 23, at Baker Lake Lodge (location tentative)**

9:00 2:00 Move August meeting to **Monday, August 20, USFS Mountlake Terrace, WA**

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- All: How might the survey instruments be edited? Give Chris feedback ASAP so we can improve the survey before Memorial Day weekend.
- Chris: Secure Park and Recreation contact from Whatcom and Skagit Counties

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- Ann: Snail-mail “Meaningful Measures Table” information to Chris by week of June 2nd
 - Andy: Email facility operational inspection matrix to members
 - Andy: Order and set up two additional drop boxes for visitor center and ranger station
 - Ardis/Chris: Revise survey information sheet down to single page, ASAP
 - Lyn: Call Ann with Solution Team agenda
 - Ann: Get Chris Rockport State Park use data.
 - Chris: Review existing site inventory data re: wetlands
 - Tony: Send Don mountain goat Study Request Form to team members
 - Tony: Check with Cheryl re: July meeting at Lodge
 - Ann: Let Andy know if Panorama Point will be hosted.
 - Chris: Give Ann copy of field procedures for all the different activities.
 - Chris: Get additional feedback from Nancy re: surveys

REPORT ON OLD ACTION ITEMS

- Chris: Talked to Ken Wilcox re: his participation on this team. He may attend future meetings. He was disappointed that the meeting location had been moved from Mt. Vernon.
- Andy: Will share facilities operational inspections, matrix with folks at the resort. He doubts its widespread applicability for our purposes. He’ll email it to Chris to distribute to members this week.
- Chris: Distributed a draft of an announcement of visitor surveys for the group to review. Andy reported that survey drop boxes have been put up. For hosted campgrounds, they are near the host site. Otherwise, they are near existing bulletin boards/restrooms. We’ll add a mail-back address to the surveys to give folks the option to return them after they’ve left the area. It was suggested we revise the announcement so it fits on a single page.
- Chris: Sent out revised survey form for all to review prior to May 1, 10:00 conference call.
- Chris: Has not yet sent out draft study plans for R-9 and R-14

May 21, 2001 Agenda

9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at USFS office, in Mountlake Terrace, WA

1. Review/revise minutes/agenda
2. Review Action Items
3. Study Requests – R-9; R-14
4. Look at preliminary data from site inventory
5. Look at preliminary data from other surveys
6. Other: Lake level; operational model
7. Set agenda, review schedule, location June 25 (Mountlake Terrace), July and August
8. Evaluate meeting

HANDOUTS:

Baker River Project Relicense Recreation Visitor Survey draft bulletin board posting

Most recent R-9, R-14 Study Requests (previously distributed)

Most recent version of the Recreation Visitor Survey (dated May 4, distributed electronically May 9)

STUDY REQUESTS

R9: RECREATION USE SURVEY – ELECTRONIC MONITORING

We haven't done anything with this since the original study request form that was last revised on March 14. At our March 26 meeting, we decided to move this to the study plan phase. We could buy a classifying counter for about \$1,500. This study is aimed at getting an idea of the total traffic into the basin, by type. A permanent counter just north of the Road 12 junction at Rocky Creek would be most helpful in getting this information. Other movable counters could give us ratios/indices of traffic splits (vs. total numbers). Other monitors may have permanent sensors but not always activated. Based on surface conditions, we would use loops or tubes and move these counters around to various locations to get an idea of trends.

It was agreed to go ahead and purchase two monitors. We'll get the monitor at Rocky Creek installed as soon as possible. Possible roving monitor locations are South of Road 12 junction, Day Use at Horseshoe Cove, and Anderson Creek Road. We agreed to use Anderson Creek Road as the initial location for our "roving" monitor.

R7 +R8 = R14: Secondary Data Collection

Aim: Contact providers and ask them about patterns of use and search existing literature for additional information. All members were asked to let Chris know about any relevant information. This information will be used to analyze needs - look at constraints and opportunities, projected use, etc. We agreed to move this forward to the study plan phase. Chris will send out the study plan for review in a couple of weeks.

Preliminary Data from Developed and Dispersed Site Inventory (R12)

Chris distributed the latest version (sent out May 9) of the Developed and Dispersed Site Inventory study plan. Lauri commented that the ownership of the Vogler Lake access is incorrectly stated, it is not WDFW ownership. She also questioned the habitat description on the Dispersed Site Inventory Individual Site Form. She suggested we add "wetlands" as an option to describe habitat. After some discussion, the group decided that the form was sufficient as it is. Items 3 f and g on the form ask the (non-biologist) surveyor to note any bodies of water within 200 feet including wetlands. Chris will review these data to see how often wetlands are called out. (Note: Lauri was not satisfied that the form was not amended to include wetlands more specifically.) These data will be shared with the Terrestrial Working Group that is doing cover typing. Lauri suggested that there will need to be a study done either by this group or the Terrestrial Group of project-related impacts to wetlands.

So far 76 dispersed sites have been inventoried. The crew should finish by the end of the week. They found a maximum of 18 sites at one location. The east side of Baker Lake from Lone Pine down to the bottom remains to be done. There were only three dispersed site locations at Lake Shannon, and one site location at Everett Lake. The dispersed site inventory includes campsites in the drawdown zone. We think we're getting these in the inventory because the crew was there while the water was sufficiently low. Jim expressed his appreciation for how responsive PSE has been on the site inventory issue.

Preliminary Data from other Surveys (R13) Recreation Visitor Surveys

Chris distributed the most recent version of the Recreation Visitor Survey study plan (dated May 9) for discussion. The interviewers will talk with the hosts at each location to get a sense of what kind of support they need and if they have any questions. They have begun to use the observation forms. Chris

labeled each type of form and made sure the instructions for each was clear. It appears to be working. Ann mentioned that she appreciated the hard work Chris has put in on this Study Plan and survey instruments.

Chris distributed hard copies of the most recent version of surveys for review. Chris found that he needed thirteen minutes to complete the in-person interview. Survey respondents are finding the interview to be too lengthy. People are also reluctant to provide data re: *characteristics of party* questions. People are suspicious about how this information will be used.

Folks are also indicating a preference of drop-box forms to live interviews. We'll have a better sense of how this is going after this weekend. We need a good return from both types of survey because they target different audiences. We discussed how to deal with these issues. Suggestions included making the survey shorter, and allowing surveyors to gather information by informal chatting and/or observation.

Chris read through a list of potential questions to drop from the in-person interview.

Where possible, Nancy [PSE survey staff] will ask the multi-possibility-answer question in an open format and indicate their responses without reading through the list (except as needed for prompting)

PARKING LOT

- Visioning exercise
- Organizational/agency goals
- Bounce around with meeting locations
- Operationally define "vicinity", "watershed", "project induced", "dispersed", or "displaced"
- List authorities that this team must be aware of
- Look at dispersed recreation with the Project as a whole.
- Look into getting guest speaker from Seattle City Light
- Tie education piece to ALL Working Groups
- Hold periodic "outreach" meetings for feedback from other groups (hiking, horseback riding, etc.)
- Land Management
- Get a National Park Service rep
- Forest Service presentation of SMS
- Need good maps of the project area
- Consult with Jim Johnston (with WDFW)
- Trail head surveys

EVALUATION OF MEETING

Things Done Well

- Good participation
- Ended on time
- Mint Milanos!
- Discussed many substantive issues

Need for Improvement

- Need to better involve people on phone/be more sensitive to difficulties associated with conference calling.
- Have Nancy [Smaridge, PSE field crew leader] at meeting? Involve her more by email?

TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR JUNE MEETING

BAKER RIVER HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT FOR 5/21/01 MEETING NOTES

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June 20, 2001 Agenda

9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at USFS office, in Mountlake Terrace, WA

NOTE: BRING LUNCH; BE PREPARED TO WORK THROUGH

1. Review/revise minutes/agenda/ location?
2. Review Action Items
3. Review interests
4. Studies: R-9, R-14
5. Update on survey work
6. How are we analyzing the data?
7. Next studies: R-5, R-11, others?
8. Set agenda/review schedule/location for July 23 meeting and location for August 20.
9. Evaluate meeting