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## BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

### Aquatic Resources Working Group

April 12, 2001

9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife  
Mill Creek Office  
16018 Mill Creek Boulevard, Mill Creek, WA

### AGENDA

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|---|
| 1. Review agenda and minutes                      |
| 2. Review action items/parking lot                |
| 3. Status on Fish Passage Technical Working Group |
| 4. New study requests                             |
| 5. Status of existing study requests              |
| 6. Set agenda for next meeting (May10)            |
| 7. Evaluate meeting                               |

*April 12, 2001*

#### Driving Directions to WDFW Mill Creek Office:

- 1) From I-5 (southbound or northbound) take Exit 183 onto 164<sup>th</sup> Street SE.
- 2) Continue eastbound about 1.5 miles. At bottom of hill, turn left onto Mill Creek Boulevard.
- 3) Office is located 1 ½ blocks north, directly across from the Bank of America.
- 4) Limited parking is available at the office and on the street, car-pooling is recommended.



## BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

### Aquatic Resources Working Group

April 12, 2001

9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

WDFW Office, Mill Creek, WA

### MEETING NOTES

***Aquatics Working Group Mission:** “To identify issues and develop solutions and recommendations addressing fish and aquatic resource interests related to the Baker River Project and its operations, leading to a settlement agreement.”*

**Fish Team Leader:** Arnie Aspelund, 425-462-3442, aaspel@puget.com

#### **PRESENT:**

Karen Kloempken (WA Dept. Fish & Wildlife), Stan Walsh (Skagit System Cooperative), Steve Fransen (National Marine Fisheries Service), Bill Reinard (Wildcat Steelheaders Club), Dick Raisler (WA Council-Federation of Fly Fishers/Fidalgo Fly Fishers) Arn Thoreen (Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group), Jerry Louthain (City of Anacortes, Skagit PUD), Rod Sakrison (WA Dept. of Ecology), Brady Green (U.S. Forest Service), Arnie Aspelund (PSE), Cary Feldmann (PSE), Sue Madsen and Phil Hilgert (R2 Resource Consultants), Bob Wright (WA Dept. of Ecology), Bob Barnes (PSE), Lyn Wiltse (facilitator - PDSA Consulting)

**Note:** The May 10 meeting will be at the Forest Service Building, Mountlake Terrace, WA (back-up location will be PSE Building, Everett, WA)

**Agenda April 12, 2000**

**9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.**

**Washington Department Fish & Wildlife Office, Mill Creek, WA**

**Bring Lunch**

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1. Review agenda and minutes
  2. Review Action Items
  3. Interests List Submittals from Solution Team
  4. Study Request Submittals/Study Plan Development
  5. Fish Passage Technical Working Group Discussion
  6. Parking Lot
  7. Set agenda for next meeting (May 10)
  8. Evaluate meeting

### **FUTURE DATES AND LOCATIONS**

The team decided to continue to meet on the second Thursday of each month, from 9:00 to 2:30: May 10, June 14, July 12, Aug. 9, Sept. 13, Oct. 11, etc.

### **NEW ACTION ITEMS**

- ALL: Provide feedback to Arnie on R-A01.A, B and R-A02 by May 2.
- Arn: Give Orrell's contact information to Sue.
- R-2: Complete Task 1 of R-A01.A by June 30
- Arnie: Email copies of R-A01.A, B and R-A02 to team members ASAP
- Chuck: Notify team members when delta field survey is to take place.
- Rod: Check with Ecology Office in Bellevue for June meeting.
- Sue: Bring a map of gage locations to the May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **REPORT ON OLD ACTION ITEMS**

- All: Three new study requests were submitted since the March meeting. Discussed later in minutes.
- Phil: Met with USFS and DOE to develop instream flow study request proposals.

### **OLDER ACTION ITEMS**

Jon V.: Check with Brady Green re: Watershed Analysis presentation at December 14th meeting - (on hold for now)

Gary: Bring hard copies of sockeye presentation.

### **INTERESTS LIST SUBMITTAL FROM SOLUTION TEAM**

The team briefly reviewed copies of the latest versions of interest statements from Solution Team members. They will work to meet these interests when they get to the point of suggesting options for solution.

### **ARTICLE UPDATE**

Bill Reinard read aloud an April 6, 2001, Skagit Valley Herald *Voices of the Valley* article he authored. The article was entitled "Salmon Still Threatened by Over Harvest". He distributed copies of this article, along with copies of the Skagit Valley Herald April 10 editorial. He reiterated his desire to see that this group consider nutrient addition as per R-A11.

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## **FISH LIFE HISTORY AND HABITAT INTERSECTIONS**

Brady Green and Steve Fransen reported that the Resource Agencies got together to examine fish species life history stages and habitat reach segment intersections to help identify information gaps that indicate study needs. They organized a systematic analysis of seven species of fish in the Baker River system. They plan to review 15 life history stages over 18 river segments and will review the intersections to see if critical data are missing. The intent of this review will be to see that nothing falls through the cracks in our study process for the relicensing proceeding. It will also help prioritize future study plan. Arn applauded this effort and he along with the rest of the team look forward to seeing their work product (matrix-style checklist). Stan has already run pre-spawning adult sockeye through this checklist.

## **CURRENT TURBID DISCHARGE AT LOWER BAKER**

Bob Wright investigated a complaint Ecology received re: the seldom seen sediment syndrome at Lower Baker. This team has an opportunity to study this effect (from a water quality, fish, visual, and Wild & Scenic River standpoint). Disruption of sediment transports by the dam also needs to be looked at. This issue is very complex. There are likely positive and negative effects associated with this phenomenon.

## **GROUTING MATERIAL SPILL**

Bob Wright was called in by PSE to investigate a spill of the grouting material, Scotch-Seal Chemical Grouting 5610, being used to fill voids in the tunnel. PSE employees reported the problem as soon as they noticed it. They also boomed off the area. The contaminated “foam” has since dissipated. PSE and Ecology are still in the process of determining levels of toxicity associated with the contamination.

## **NOTE ON INTERIM STUDY APPROVAL PROCESS**

We will handle this on a case-by-case basis.

## **STUDY REQUEST SUBMITTALS/STUDY PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

<b>Study #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Notes/Next Steps</b>
A01.A	Reservoir Tributary Habitat Surveys	Sue distributed and discussed the Study Plan for R-A01.A. Proceed with Task 1 (the literature review). Sue will be working closely with Brady Green and welcomes anyone to send her relevant information and contacts.
A01.B	Reservoir Tributary Biological Surveys	Proceed with Study Plan. Phil made available copies of protocol for determining bull trout presence. Phil suggested for Upper Baker, we use the informal procedures outlined in the document. These will be referenced in the study that will be distributed prior to the next meeting.

A01.C Reservoir Tributary Delta Surveys	Pending.
A02 LB River Habitat Mapping	Due to turbidity challenges, they will wait until Fall to do this survey. Members were asked to review this study plan and provide feedback at the May 10 meeting.
A03 Reservoir Fish Population Characteristics	Proceed with Study Plan/pending – Look for study plan by May 10th meeting.
A04 LB/Skagit River Flow, Gaging	March 29 at 7800 cfs, Sue and Doug installed all gages (according to locations discussed at last meeting). Sue will bring a map of those gage locations to the May 10 <sup>th</sup> meeting. The frequency of readings will correspond with varied river flows (from 5,000 – 20,000 cfs).
A09 Skagit River Flow and Habitat Assessment (HIGH PRIORITY)	On April 3 <sup>rd</sup> Technical Working Group met to discuss this study. They created a table around the questions posed by the study. The direction by the work group today is to proceed with developing the Study Plan. This study relates to A-12; A-20; & A-04. The plan will include descriptions of what alternative methods were considered/adopted/and why/why not?
A05 Water Quality Sampling	Merged with A-13. Hope to have study request by next meeting.
A06 UB Passage Design Baffle Modification A08 UB Passage System Evaluation	Design work is progressing, baffle work is scheduled to be completed by the end of May. The evaluation study will start in June. Fish groups have been marked for that (2-week) study. They are planning to report in June. Technical Working Group will meet in July to discuss results and formulate 2002 study.
A07 Lower Baker Forebay Bathymetric Survey	Pending – proceeding by June 1 <sup>st</sup> .
A10 Baker River Delta Habitat Assessment-Char	Proceeding ...
A11 Nutrient Addition	Parking Lot- not for 2001

A12	Instream Flows for Biodiversity	Split between A21 and A09
A13	Water Quality Assessment	Connected with A05? ...How and if they need to be defined
A14	Reservoir Shoreline Erosion	Not for 2001-Needs further development
A15	UB Delta Scour	Target to begin August/September, 2001. Discuss at next meeting.
A16	Lower Baker Delta/Channelization	Pending - Not for 2001
A17	Tributaries Surveys Upstream of Barriers	Coordinate methodology with A01
A18	Baker River Survey Upstream of 1 km.	Coordinate methodology with A01
A19	Review Limnological Information	Pending
A20	Large Woody Debris Management	Pending
A21	Skagit Wild & Scenic River Values	Pulled out from A12 – Pending
A22	Baker Lake Trout Impacts Evaluation	Probably defer to 2002 – Discuss at next Meeting
A23	Baker River Wild & Scenic River Values	Pending/Also recreation issue

## **FISH PASSAGE TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP DISCUSSION**

They will begin looking at upstream passage in the near future.

## **LIST OF MEETING HANDOUTS**

- Baker River Project Relicensing; Study Plan A-01.A; Reservoir Tributary Habitat Surveys
- Baker River Project Relicensing; Study Plan A-02; Lower Baker Physical Habitat Mapping
- Study Title: Water Quality Assessment – R-A13
- Study Title: Skagit Wild & Scenic River Outstandingly Remarkable Values – R-A21

## **ADDITIONAL ISSUES**

Water Quality/Quantity during planned maintenance outages

Water Quality/Quantity during unplanned outages

## **PARKING LOT**

- Watershed Analysis presentation by Brady Green (Aquatic findings- share in June or July?)

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- We need a strategy to integrate this analysis into the process
- Feedback on “Salmon on the Baker River” document
    - Different perspectives
    - Discuss posting reviews on web
  - Chinook Working Group- Skagit River Chinook Recovery Plan
  - Presentation on Northwest Forest Plan including Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (USFS) in fall?
  - Presentation on ESA (direct relationship to 4(d))
  - State agency presentations re: mandates

## **EVALUATION OF MEETING**

### **Well-Dones**

- Started and stopped on time
- Stayed on topic
- Food
- “She” to “Sue” save (You had to be there!)
- Entertaining meeting
- Nice facility

### **Opportunities to Improve**

- Facilitator started shouting (You had to be there!)
- Deer staring at group (You had to be there!)
- No phone/windows

### **Tentative Agenda for Next Meeting**

**May 10, 2001**

**9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.**

**Forest Service Building, Mountlake Terrace, WA**

**Bring Lunch**

1. Review agenda and minutes
2. Review Action Items
3. Continue review of Study Plans and Requests
4. Set agenda for June 14 (location TBD)
5. Evaluate meeting