



BAKER RIVER PROJECT RELICENSE

Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Working Group Meeting

**November 15th, 2001 (8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.)
(Bring Sack Lunch)**

**Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
6730 Martin Way E.
Olympia, WA 98516-5540
Phone: (360) 438-1180**

AGENDA

****Note: Non-PSE Members will caucus RE: Reference Conditions, from 8:30 to 9:15****

Review notes/revise agenda/action items
Solution Team Update
Terrestrial Reference Conditions
Update on ongoing studies
Review new study requests: R-T19 (habitat evaluation) and R-T20 (drawdown wildlife use)
Review updated study requests: R-T16 (rare plants) and R-T18 (breeding birds)
Review previously proposed study requests as to status (R-T6, 7, 9, 10, 12)
Land Use Update (Recreation Working Group)
Set agenda and finalize the locations for December 18th (Mountlake Terrace) and January 17th meetings
Evaluate meeting

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8:30 am – 2:00 p.m.

Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
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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

ATTENDEES:

Don Gay (USFS), Patrick Goldsworthy (North Cascade Conversation Council), Lauri Vigue (WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife), Fred Seavey (U.S. Fish & Wildlife), Martin Vaughn (Biota Pacific), Tom Hamer (Hamer Environmental), Lia Kruger (Hamer Environmental), Bob Nelson (Rocky Mt. Elk Foundation), Ann Risvold (USFS), Stan Walsh (Skagit Systems Cooperative), Chris Madsen (Northwest Indian Fish Commission), Laurel Shiner (Whatcom County Noxious Weed Control Board), Tony Fuchs (Puget Sound Energy), Kristen Schuldt (Puget Sound Energy), Lyn Wiltse, facilitator (PDSA Consulting)

INTRODUCTIONS:

The group welcomed Laurel Shiner of Whatcom County.

SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS:

December 18 Mountlake Terrace

January 17, 2002

Switch to 3rd Thursday of each month for 2002

****Starting in January 2002, this group will shift to each 3rd Thursday.****

AGENDA

Lacey, Washington

November 15, 2001, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

****NOTE: NON-PSE MEMBERS WILL CAUCUS RE: REFERENCE CONDITIONS FROM 8:30 TO 9:15**

1. Review notes/agenda/action items
2. Solution Team Update
3. Land Use Update (Recreation Working Group)
4. Update on Ongoing Studies
 - New Study Requests: RT19 (HEP), RT20
5. Update on Proposed Studies
 - RT18 (Breeding Birds)
 - RT6 (Rare Plants)
 - Others
6. Data Management
7. Terrestrial reference conditions
8. Terrestrial study needs on Skagit River below the project
9. Land Use Update (Recreation Working Group)
10. 2002 Studies
11. Set agenda and confirm location for December 18 meeting and January 17 meeting
12. Evaluate meeting

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- Don – Reserve Mountlake Terrace for January 17th and February 21st meeting
- Tony: Form teamlet of Laurel, Bill, Ann, etc. re: R-T6.
- Tom: Send list of Fred's federally listed species of concern to Tony to distribute.
- Tony: Worked with Lauri to draft study request for Phase II of T-5.
- Don: Prepare list of potential mountain goat enhancements.
- All: Send questions you'd like to be answered (by database) to Tony.
- Tony, Marty: Draft proposal of process to implement Continuing Impacts strategy.
- Tony, Don, Lauri, Joetta: Continue with R-T15
- All: Review R-T2 clarification differences provided by Tony & give him feedback by next meeting December 18th.
- Marty: Call meeting of T4 teamlet (Lia, Lauri, Fred, Bob, Don & Tony) meet & come up with habitats & species groups that might come into existence over 50 years.
- Don: Email land bird analysis stuff to Tony to distribute
- Lauri: Send Tony list of available models for HEP analysis (or web site link).
- Ann: By February convene teamlet re: R-T16
- All: Review the 1/26/01 R-T7 Study Request and identify the deficiencies/additional considerations that need to be included to make this study "future reference condition."

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- All: Review R-T12 Study Request and identify the deficiencies/additional considerations that need to be included to finalize this study request.

REPORT ON PAST ACTION ITEMS.

- ALL: Reviewed HEP information and sent comments to Lauri.
- ALL: Sent interests you felt may be excluded by the Forest Service definition of *continuing impacts* to Tony.
- ALL: Sent list of habitat/species that we felt need to be assessed. Sent list to Lia at liakruger@hotmail.com, 19997 Hwy 9, Mt. Vernon, WA, 98274.
- Tony, Tom, Don: Looked at re-writing RT-12 – Looked at vegetation studies results for reference.
- Tony: Shared climate information with other team leaders.
- Tony: Got draft T15 data from Joetta.
- Carl: Sent PowerPoint presentation to Tony and posted on PSE Baker Relicense Website.
- Lia: Made a list of habitat types (based on Johnson and O'Neill) that exist in the Basin or have the potential to exist over the license period.
- Tony: Called Joetta re: mollusk maps which are now complete.
- Ann: Checked with Ann Dunphy re: map of dispersed Recreation Sites.
- Don: Got copy of LSR Assessment to Tony and was distributed.
- Tony, Tom, Marty: Prepared proposal for data management – will use Access 2000

SOLUTION TEAM UPDATE

The Solution Team met October 24th and semi-finalized the Communication Protocol and Process Documents with exception of confidentiality issues that the attorneys are still working on. Drafted list of questions for FERC rep to address on November 28th at Skagit Co. Admin. Building in Mount Vernon 9am-3pm.

TERRESTRIAL REFERENCE CONDITIONS

We agreed that we are not going after mitigation for original impacts. We will use a forward-looking process. We will gather some historical data to assist us in predicting what may be possible in the future without the project over the license period. This is based on the continuing impacts approach advocated by the Forest Service. Issues that may not fully be addressed by this (e.g. ESA) may need to be handled separately.

REVIEW OF NEW STUDY REQUESTS

RT-19: Habitat Evaluation Studies

Lauri walked us through the revised study request, having incorporated the input she received from Stan. Aim: Measure habitat value over time – Quantifies baseline for PM&E measures. We will create a teamlet to hammer out the detail of this study, incorporating the analysis species assessment data and cover type data. Lauri recommends waiting until Spring to flush this out into a study plan. We agreed to move this to the next stage.

RT-20: Wildlife Use in the reservoir Drawdown Zone

Aim: To identify existing wildlife uses within the drawdown zone to assist us in determining PM&E measures. We discussed the various protocols that may need to be called out depending on the species we determine we need to study. We will tie this request to the Analysis Species Assessment. We will defer discussion of this request until then. As a next step we might survey elk in Spring while conducting general recognition of other species while out there.

UPDATE ON ONGOING STUDIES

STATUS OF:

T-2: Vegetation Mapping in Project Area

Tom distributed an update of work done on this study. Just completed the field work. Working on database entry forms (for Access database). Finished all of fieldwork at Baker Lake and Lake Shannon. They will do drawdown work in the Spring. Asked for feedback on definitions he provided for the various vegetation cover type classifications that had been referenced, but not defined in the study plan.

T-4: Analysis Species Assessment

Lia distributed a list of habitats found in the Baker River Watershed with the definitions of the habitat associations she used. She also passed out the Johnson & O'Neal definitions of the vegetation mapping cover types. The next step will be to make a list of potential future habitats & species that may come to exist over the next 50 years.

T-5: Wetland Inventory Study

They went back and did new plots according to modifications we discussed making to forested wetland types (i.e. deciduous and coniferous). Six wetland polygons at Shannon still need to be complete by year-end. (Team leader note: I checked on this after the meeting, and there are about 10 left to do at Lake Shannon and the mouth of the Baker River at Concrete).

T-11: Oregon Spotted Frog Inventory

Completed. Still awaiting data from amphibian studies.

T-13: Survey and Manage Terrestrial Mollusk Survey

Got maps from Joetta. Surveyed all of Baker (2 plots per 10 acre usage). Found 2 Survey & Manage species. Will be doing second visit in Spring (same units different plots).

T-15: Basin Vegetation Mapping

Joetta at R2 has lots of GIS datasets on Basin Vegetation Mapping. We are still awaiting information from Crown Pacific (cover type), & DNR (WNHP). We are also awaiting updated information from WDFW (old growth maps, streamnet information, PHS polygons, wildlife heritage points, etc.). Tony posted GIS maps he'd received from the FS & Park Service. He distributed cover type maps he received from other sources (DNR & FS).

We have 3 basic needs:

- Site Potential
- Non-Forest values (FS grizzly habitat/Pacific Meridian data, wetlands, etc.)
- Seral Stage

T-17: Amphibian Studies in Reservoir Fluctuation Zone

Summer and Fall work completed - finished early November. In Spring will do 3rd visit (drawdown zone mostly).

REVIEW UPDATED STUDY REQUESTS

R-T16 Rare Plants

Ann R checked with the Recreational Working Group members and found that they have not clearly defined “dispersed sites.” They do, however, have a nearly complete list/map of them that we can use to help define our survey area. Hamer Environmental will work with Ann to begin drafting this study design. This study will be ongoing, as we are able to integrate other survey areas. There is an advantage to waiting as long as possible on this as the Survey and Manage list changes. We expect the new list sometime in the first quarter 2002.

R-T18 Breeding Birds

We will use the habitats defined by Don’s teamlet (Analysis Species) to define the survey area. We could also use control vs. impacted sites to look at effects of recreation. We need to figure out how data from this survey could help us determine PM&E. This study could be a PM&E. We will revisit this after we complete the analysis species work.

REVIEW PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED STUDY REQUESTS AS TO STATUS

R-T6: Noxious Weed Assessment and Control Plan

Aim: Find, control & plan for future prevention of noxious weeds in the Project Area. The actual assessment work will likely begin in mid summer. We still need to define area & protocol. Teamlet members are: Ann, Laurel, Tony, & Bill with Skagit County Noxious Weed Control.

R-T7: Future Reference Condition Vegetation of the UB and LB Projects (new name)

Need to button up with Continuing Impacts teamlet. Review 1/26 Study Request & identify the deficiencies/additional considerations that need to be included to make this the “future reference conditions” study.

RT-12: Grizzly Bear Spring Foraging Habitat Value

Need to review Study Request & identify the deficiencies/additional considerations that need to be included to finalize this study request.

LAND USE UPDATE (Recreational Working Group)

This will be a product of the Recreational Working Group.

HANDOUTS

- Study updates (see attached)

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

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- 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

MEETING EVALUATION

Well Dones:

- **Ended on time**
- **Krispy Kreme donuts!!**
- **Laurel!**
- **Chris!**
- **Got through a lot!**
- **Tackled significant issues**

Need for Improvement:

- **Fred missed caucus**
- **Lyn needs her whip**

TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR OUR NEXT MEETING

Mountlake Terrace, Washington

January 17, 2002, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Bring a sack lunch and we'll work through!

1. Review notes/agenda/action items
2. Solution Team Update
3. Teamlet reports
4. Results of vegetation/wetland mapping
5. Updated Study Request
6. Update on Ongoing Study Requests
7. New Study Requests
8. Set agenda and confirm location for January 17 and February 21 meetings
9. Evaluate meeting