

Rocky Reach Meeting Minutes

To: Distribution List
From: Michelle Smith
Date: October 26, 1999
Subject: Recreation, Socioeconomic and Land Management
Attendees: Refer to Sign-Up Sheet
Location: Chelan PUD 2nd Floor Conference Room, Wenatchee

RECREATION

Meeting Overview

Michelle Smith, Chelan PUD (PUD), stated that the goal for today's meeting is to review and finalize the Recreation Plan Outline prior to developing the recreation and milfoil study plans. Debby Howe, Howe Consulting (Howe), will be presenting the preliminary results from the Recreation Use Assessment. In addition, the working group members did not have any changes or revisions to the meeting minutes from the previous meeting.

Recreation Use Assessment

Debby Howe began presenting the summary of the assessment by stating that the results were gathered from the data collected during the peak season. The peak season is defined as May 30 through September 9 and approximately 300 surveys were conducted. Debby summarized the preliminary report and Michelle (PUD) stated that the detailed preliminary report is available on the Web site.

Alex Martinez, US Forest Service (USFS) would like to see the survey expanded to include dispersed sites and what impacts are project-related and project-induced. Debby responded by saying that the surveys are only being conducted within the project area. She continued by saying that one of the survey questions was that if the campground where they were staying was their first choice and if not where was the first choice. Dispersed use can be gathered from that question. Alex (USFS) clarified that he would like the surveys to be conducted outside the project area to determine what they are doing in those dispersed sites. Bob Whitehall, city of Entiat indicated that next year Entiat Park will have someone stationed at the gatehouse and could monitor the boat launch and a survey could be done. The survey would be able to determine where the day users are coming from. Gregg Carrington (PUD) suggested that the survey include a question to find out if the Entiat River sites were their first choice, or was it their second choice because they were turned away at Entiat Park because it was full. Ardis Bynum (USFS) said that another goal of the survey is to determine if people are drawn to the area because of the Columbia River for the flat-water boating experience, and to determine what their camping preference is. Gregg continued by saying there is a difference between project-induced and water-induced recreation. Although both are water-related activities they are both different, because when the PUD increases the pool it is only increased by 1300 acres and doesn't change the Entiat River from a high-flushing rate to flat water. He continued by saying the Project does not have a significant change on the water experience people are having on the Rocky Reach pool. In turn, it is likely that if the Project and parks were not there, people would still be boating in the Rocky Reach.

Doug Allan, Trout Unlimited, mentioned that boating and other water activities have been discussed, but wondered what the efforts were to capture the fishing statistics. He continued by saying that at the time the surveys are being

conducted, the anglers are already out fishing. Debby (Howe) responded by saying that boat runs will be conducted next summer and exact documentation of what they are doing will be recorded. Jim Fisher, US Bureau of Land Management (BLM), mentioned that the problem with capturing accurate angler data is that during the survey hours of 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., 75 percent of the anglers are going to be missed. He indicated most fishermen are fishing by daybreak and gone by 10 a.m. and then return in the evening. Gregg (PUD) stated there are car counters going into the boat launches and that data can be used to anticipate whether there is a demand associated with fishing. Debby informed the group that boats runs are going to be conducted from Rocky Reach to Wells Dam next fall, spring and summer. The time of day of the runs will be discussed in order to capture the angler data. Jim (BLM) indicated that seasons also affect angler data. Michelle (PUD) responded by saying that she and Debby Howe are working in coordination with the PUD's Fisheries Department and with Tony Eldred, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), regarding seasons and what potential fishing could be occurring and will be included in the recreation study. Gordon Brett, Douglas PUD asked if the fish and wildlife groups are conducting a creel survey. Gregg replied that they are doing a year-long creel survey. Gordon (Douglas PUD) suggested the data from the survey would pick up much information requested regarding fishing. Debby stated that the results from the creel survey could be included in the final report in conjunction with the survey results. Michelle stated she would touch bases with Jeff Osborn on the creel survey so that the fisheries working group was aware that the recreation working group would be using some of their data.

Keith Vrandenburg and John Huselton, Entiat Focus Group raised the question whether water skiing is project-induced or water-induced. Their opinion is that it is project-induced because of the flat water but a small current is being created. In observation while driving along the reservoir, Gregg (PUD) noticed areas of waves and around the bend it is smooth. He believes that it is not a velocity issue, but rather wind induced. He concluded by saying that boating activities are likely to occur on the river whether the Project is there or not.

The group continued by reviewing the site rating, primary activity rating, activity comment and visitor graphs. In clarification of the graph on page 2, Rocky Reach Dam and Chelan Falls Park are only day use parks. Jim Eychaner, Washington Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC), indicated that the assessment is primarily a camping assessment and not necessarily a recreation use assessment. He recommended changing the title to "Camping or Park Use Assessment". Debby responded by saying that the focus is on all recreation sites and this is just the beginning of year-round monitoring and more dispersed use data will be collected as well as all Project-area use. Michelle (PUD) informed the group that the study plan, the survey being used, and the preliminary results report are available on the website.

Gregg asked the group for any comments or suggestions regarding the presentation of the results. Debby will take the recommendations and make the modifications to the presentation. Michelle stated that the next full Relicensing Team Meeting will be held in November and suggested that recommendations regarding the presentation be made prior to that meeting in order to eliminate any similar questions that the Recreation Working Group members may have had. In regard to the full team meetings, Michelle mentioned the need for a spokesperson to present the materials at those meetings. The group decided that Michelle would be the spokesperson for the November 18 meeting. For future full team meetings, the group will make spokesperson recommendations based on the material that would be presented.

Recreation Inventory Study Plan Outline

The purpose of the outline is to give us a summary of the information we are looking for. The outline information will then be used in developing the study plan. Michelle referred to the handout "Comments on the Recreation Study Plan Outline" which reviewed comments received in writing regarding the study plan outlines. All of the comments will be incorporated into the final study plan. Ardis (USFS) recommended identifying Entiat explicitly in the study plan. Gordon (Douglas PUD) mentioned that Douglas PUD parks should also be recognized as they get spill over from Rocky Reach. Gregg concurred and suggested adding a bullet item in the study plan under "study area" to state "the Project inventory area will include areas within the Project boundary, immediately adjacent and will also include Entiat River Forest Service campgrounds and the lower Wells Reservoir (Douglas PUD) and Confluence State Park. The group agreed to include Confluence Park to the inventory outline because of the spill over to it as well. Michelle will address all of these recommendations in the study plans.

Milfoil Inventory Outline

The purpose of the study is to determine the effect milfoil and other aquatic weeds have on recreation. The working group that is working with botanical issues will handle the milfoil issue, but this working group will look at the results and determine what effects they have on recreation. Ardis (USFS) suggested to Michelle that Cultural Resources because of renovation issues be kept in the loop. Michelle noted the suggestion and will make sure that Scott Kreiter is aware of the issue for attention by the cultural working group.

Other Issues

Jim (IAC) indicated the need to develop a mechanism to regularly review, update and revise the management plan on a consistent basis. He had an additional concern regarding trail opportunities and would like to address the issues at the next working group meeting on December 6, 1999.

The working group decided to put the development of the Recreation Plan on hold until relevant studies have been completed.

Additional Studies

Gregg recommended to the group adding a survey at the Entiat boat launch to help determine how much displaced recreation is occurring. The goal is to have a study plan in place by March 1, 2000. The PUD will design and conduct the survey to determine displaced recreation. A separate study plan will need to be drafted because the survey questions are going to be different for this survey than in the Recreation Use Survey. Michelle stated she would complete the draft study plan outline for this additional study by November 22, 1999.

Action Items

- Group to define Project-induced and water-induced recreation activities at the next meeting.
- Determine what time of day surveys will be conducted for November boat runs and next spring/summer to ensure accurate angler data and work with fisheries working group to incorporate creel survey data.
- Michelle and Debby to talk to Jeff Osborn regarding creel survey.
- Michelle to draft Entiat Study Plan Outline by November 22, 1999.
- Debby to incorporate creel survey results in Recreation Use Assessment.
- Gregg to talk to fish and wildlife group regarding interaction of wildlife and recreation.
- Michelle to talk to cultural working group about the effects of milfoil harvesting. Are the effects being considered?

Socioeconomic & Land Management

Meeting Overview

The goal of the today's meeting is to review and finalize the Socioeconomic and Land Management Study Plan Outlines in order to draft the study plans.

Presentation by BST Associates

Michelle introduced Paul Sorensen of BST Associates, who is a consultant that is working on the Socioeconomic Study for Lake Chelan. The group will help select a consultant as the group moves toward doing a study for Rocky Reach.

Paul gave a brief background on BST and previous studies they have done. He stated that BST was formed in 1986 and specializes in market research and economic development studies. They work with both large and small communities, but primarily water-oriented communities. They approach the studies by looking at the overall regional economy and then narrow it down to the study area. What they try to do is document how the economy has grown over time and define the market shares and what is thriving on those shares. Finally, they assess what type of growth opportunities is a potential and what would it take to accommodate those opportunities.

Paul explained what was studied for Chelan, but for Entiat (both incorporated and unincorporated areas) he stated that first they would look at what the current economy is and at what type of growth potential is available. John

Huselton, Entiat Focus Group, stated that the study should focused on the history because when the dam was built, much business was lost. By looking at the history, it could then help determine on what the opportunities are to make Entiat a viable community again. Jeff Davis, Entiat School District added to also look at missed opportunities. Paul added that all of the issues to be studied would be from a recommendation by the working group.

Socioeconomic and Land Management Study Plan Outline Comment Reviews

The group reviewed the comment handout for both study plan outlines. The only recommendation the group had was on the Socioeconomic Outline under "Level of Analysis." The group agreed to change the first and second bullet items to read:

- If possible, ascertain lost revenues from the lands inundated at the city of Entiat from construction of the dam.
- Examine current allocations of privilege taxes by the state at the city of Entiat.

Michelle stated that the next step is to draft a detailed study plan for review and approval by the working group. She will mail out a draft study plan for the working group to review by November 22.

Meeting Conclusion

Michelle will schedule 2 to 3 additional consultants to give presentations at the next working group meeting. She stated that once the group has developed the draft study plan and short list of possible consultants, it can then be sent out for bid.

The next recreation meeting is scheduled for 1:00 p.m., December 6, 1999. The next socioeconomics/land management meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m., December 6, 1999.

Reference materials are posted on the web site, www.chelanpud.org/relicence. Please contact Rosana Sokolowski, (888) 663-8121, Extension 4290, if hard copies are required.

- ✓ Project Outlines – Recreation Use Inventory, Socioeconomic and Project Lands Management
- ✓ Matrix on Comments Received for each of the study plan outlines above
- ✓ Sign-up Sheet
- ✓ Distribution List