
Rocky Reach Meeting Minutes

To: Distribution List
From: Michelle Smith
Date: March 28, 2000
9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Subject: Rocky Reach Recreation, Socioeconomics & Land Management
Attendees: Refer to Sign-Up Sheet
Location: Materials Management Conference Room, Wenatchee, WA

SOCIOECONOMICS

Purpose

Kickoff meeting with socioeconomic consultant to review tasks, methodology and schedule for the Rocky Reach Socioeconomic Study.

Socioeconomic Study

Michael McHugh and Reed Hansen, McHugh and Associates were present to discuss the Socioeconomic Study elements.

Michael explained there are two parts to the study, the first is determining the economic operating characteristics of the project and the second part being how the project impacts socioeconomics within the project area. Reed added there is a major sub-component to the first part and that is the translation of operating characteristics to assess direct and indirect effects on the regional economy and the primary impact area within the region. The primary impact area is defined as the Rocky Reach boundary and immediately adjacent communities, as well as Wenatchee because of Alcoa's direct linkage to the dam. A regional analysis will include Chelan and Douglas counties and will assess indirect and direct impacts within the region. Chelan Falls, Waterville, and Orondo will all be included within the study of the counties with the main focus on Entiat and Wenatchee. Reed continued by saying that identifying the direct impacts will be a major portion of the study. As part of the study, an economic and demographic baseline for the two county region will be established to look at socioeconomic trends in order to make comparisons in any changes that are identified in the indirect and direct analysis.

Once all of the direct effects are determined they are translated through a model to determine the indirect effects and induced effects.

A retrospective study of the project development and operations with respect to city of Entiat and the impacts associated as a result of the project will also be done. The study will involve an effort to understand what has happened since the development, construction and operation of the dam. Reed will review archived agreements and mitigation's to get a better understanding of those as well as assessing the change to the economic base as a result of development of the dam. A search through the State auditor has already been initiated to provide archival city budget information from 1950-1990 with the intent to request more recent documents from the city. He added that he would make an effort to provide fiscal impacts to show the public sector effects, which is the best way to characterize the changes that took place over time and that would include property value changes, population changes and business population changes.

Recreation and other issues that have had major influences on Entiat will also be studied. Reed mentioned that the Entiat study is going to require a lot of assistance from the local level. The working group established a list of contacts for his assistance and Michelle will provide him with a Stakeholders list. Reed stated that he would be working within the Entiat community shortly.

Jack Speer, Alcoa noted that the project output is provided to not only Alcoa, but also a number of utilities and asked if the study would look at the future impacts of those entities that benefit from the project's low cost power. Michael explained that the operating characteristics of the study would include alternatives in respect to revenues and dissemination of the power. They will rely on the PUD for power purchaser contract information.

McHugh and Associates will provide a research information update at the next working group meeting. A target date of August 1, 2000 has tentatively been set for the final report.

RECREATION/LAND MANAGEMENT

Purpose

To review Entiat Park Survey, discuss winter survey issue and the possibility of a trail study.

Entiat Park Survey

The purpose of the survey is to determine if there is a relationship between boat launch users and Forest Service campsites. The group reviewed and refined the survey questions. It was decided that "Question 10" is the key question and it should be made the third question, and also list options to be more specific. Karen Whitehall (USFS) recommended to provide choices including up valley sites to "Question 9" and the group agreed to include the most obvious sites and also give an "other" choice.

The decision was made and the gatehouse will be moved from the current location to a new location in order to capture the park and boat launch users. Michelle (PUD) stated the PUD will look into the possibility of getting necessary power to the gatehouse. Bob Whitehall (city of Entiat) said the city will be responsible for moving the gatehouse to the main entry location.

There was a concern expressed by Jim Eychaner (IAC) that on the big weekends when visitors are turned away or see the "park full" sign they may be a missing a key group. Bob Whitehall (city of Entiat) stated that other than big holiday weekends it is rare that the park is full. Michelle (PUD) suggested that by conducting the survey at Forest Service campgrounds we may capture that group. The working group agreed that the survey should be conducted simultaneously at the Forest Service sites and Entiat Park. Bob recommended that the survey be conducted May 15 – through Labor Day.

The Forest Service Survey will be conducted at Lake Creek, Box Creek and Silver Falls and survey methodologies are still being determined. Jim (IAC) stated that it is imperative to use the same questions on the Forest Service survey as the Entiat survey in order to measure equally. Karen (USFS) stated the survey needs to be identified as a "Chelan County PUD Survey" and not Forest Service survey.

Jim (IAC) asked for clarification from the USFS that if the camper answers "yes" to the question about whether this was their first choice of a place to stay then they are "NOT" displaced. Karen (USFS) stated that is correct.

He continued by saying that if the answer is "no," then they were displaced from somewhere, not necessarily the project area. Karen added it may even be another Forest Service campground. Jim agreed that if a visitor's first choice was a different Forest Service campground that is not a so-called project induced recreation event. Karen (USFS) agreed. But, if the visitor drove from Entiat all the way up the Entiat Valley because they want a campground they most likely would not want a dispersed site but a place that is managed. He continued by saying that given this, it begs the question of who in the end are we going to serve from this (survey results) information? Is it going to serve the recreating public that is being put in this position of extreme inconvenience (meaning people who have to drive from Entiat to USFS sites to use a campground) or to simply figure out a payment to the Forest Service because people are showing up at Forest Service sites? Karen (USFS) responded by saying that through the process it will better serve the public and that's what we're looking for. Jim (IAC) said he hoped we all were looking

out for the public's best interest. He then cited an example that if we need to expand Entiat Park or another county park somewhere along the river so people do not have to drive great distances to camp, that would be a solution that would be in the public's best interest, regardless of whether the Forest Service was reimbursed. Karen (USFS) agreed. Barb Jackson (USFS) added that there may not be a lot of expansion potential at the upper Rocky Reach campgrounds.

Bob Whitehall (city of Entiat) said that the main purpose is to determine if there is enough camping available in the area. Karen Whitehall (USFS) added if there is the desire for people recreating to have both the USFS camping and the boating experience at the same time then an improvement at Pine Flats may be a better option for the public so they only have to go 12 miles up river instead of 20 miles. Jim Eychaner (IAC) said that his point is that we're listening to the public and doing the best for the recreating public.

A meeting was scheduled with Bob Whitehall (city of Entiat), Barb Jackson (USFS), Karen Whitehall (USFS) and Michelle Smith (PUD) to coordinate survey schedules on April 13, 2000 at 2:00 p.m. at the USFS Headquarters Building, Fire Conference Room.

Winter Survey Issue

Michelle (PUD) explained that at the February 24, 2000 full team meeting Phil Archibald (USFS) brought up the issue of the potential need for a winter survey to determine the use of the reservoir for winter walleye fishing and waterfowl hunting. She continued by saying the issue will also be discussed within the Natural Resources Working Group. Bob Whitehall (city of Entiat) said he talked to Jeff Osborn about that and he has information from everyone using the boat launch. Michelle (PUD) then asked if there were any thoughts from this working group on how the issue could be addressed or existing information that may be available. Bob Whitehall (city of Entiat) said there may be other parks that collect information during the winter, or box surveys could be set up. Jim (IAC) recommended that it should be acknowledged in the studies that there is minimal winter recreational use occurring. He also stated that most likely this use will be addressed when the PUD updates its recreation plan that it is required to do on a regular basis through its Form 80 requirements. Within the current studies for relicensing, he suggested we should look if changes are taking place and list issues to assess in the future. He then stated that in essence it's adaptive management. Everyone agreed this is the best approach since the amount of use in the winter is minimal at this time but should be monitored and reviewed at regular intervals in the future.

Trails Discussion

Michelle mentioned that in the issue identification process the potential for trails was brought up and currently there are no studies for this. She said that early on in the process there was discussion of possibly developing trails for educational and interpretive purposes on wildlife mitigation lands and on other project lands. Robert Todd (Entiat Chamber of Commerce) mentioned that previously there were plans for a proposed trail from the south end of Entiat, under the bridge up the Entiat River to the Kiwanis ball park and that it was one piece that couldn't get any funding. Bob Whitehall replied by saying that in their park plan it's scheduled as one of the first goals to have a trail from the gravel mine along the waterfront to the mouth of the river that was originally in the Exhibit R.

Jim (IAC) said that the SCORP document lists *non-motorized trails associated with water (to, along, in view of, etc.)* as the number one recreational need on a statewide basis. Therefore, he would propose looking at what are the opportunities for non-motorized trails associated with project lands and water, including mitigation lands and lands immediately adjacent to the project boundary, like BLM lands. He went on to say that opportunities for the PUD to participate in off site kinds of projects would be worth looking at. He also said we should look at local plans, agency proposals and other proposals that are already in existence. He said at Chelan for example, there was no sense in replicating what was done by the Chelan Trails Group, but in this case looking at and plugging into the body of literature either collected through studies or a literature search makes sense. John Huselton agreed that it's important to not ignore plans already in existence. Michelle responded by suggesting that instead of spending a significant amount of money on a specific trail study that possibly trails could be tied in to the recreation and land use inventories where a literature search could summarize plans already in existence and potential trail opportunities could be identified. Jim agreed and he will work with her on how to tie that into the study.

Next Meeting

June 5, 2000, 10:00 a.m.

Action Items

- ✓ Michelle will provide Reed Hansen the stakeholder list and recreation use assessment results
- ✓ A meeting to coordinate the Entiat Park and USFS Survey was scheduled for April 13 with Bob Whitehall (city of Entiat), Karen Whitehall and Barb Jackson (USFS) and Michelle (PUD). The meeting will be held at 2:00 at the Forest Service Headquarters Building. Michelle will send out a reminder on April 10.
- ✓ Michelle (PUD) and Jim Eychaner (IAC) will work out details for inclusion of trail opportunities in the recreation and/or land use inventory studies.
- ✓ Michelle will talk to Jeff Osborn regarding the winter survey decision.
- ✓ A socioeconomic study update will occur on June 5.

Reference materials are posted on the web site, www.chelanpud.org/relicense.

Please contact Rosana Sokolowski, (888)663-8121, Ext. 4290, if hard copies are needed.

- Sign-up Sheet
- Distribution List
- Entiat Park Survey