



**Date:** January 2, 2004

**To:** Members

**From:** Tom Martin, License Implementation Coordinator

**Subject:** Habitat Advisory Group Nov. 19, 2003 Final Meeting Summary

***Attendees:***

Dennis Hadaller, Lewis County Commissioner	Lou Ellyn Jones, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	Hal Beecher, Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
Jeff Boyce, Meridian Environmental (for Tacoma Power)	Pat McCarty, Tacoma Power	Mark LaRiviere, Tacoma Power
Tom Martin, Tacoma Power		

**Summary**

The meeting convened at 1:00 PM. After introductions, Tom explained that there were two people that have indicated that they will participate in the Habitat Advisory Group (HAG), but that could not attend this meeting. They are Michelle Day, representing NOAA Fisheries and Jim Tuggle, representing Trout Unlimited and American Rivers. None of the other settlement parties elected to participate.

Mark reviewed the history and background for this license article. He noted that fish habitat was an interest of the Fisheries Technical Team (FTT) formed during relicensing, that this issue came up late in the license negotiations, and that habitat protection priority is in recognition of the prime rearing and spawning habitat that exists on the Cowlitz River. He explained that the stretch of the river from Toledo down to the Toutle River is in essentially the same channel it has been for the last 100 years and that above the Toledo, the channel has been shifting. Mark explained that the FTT and Harza Engineering did a great deal of work in the 1997 to 1999 timeframe visiting and documenting side channel sites at different flow levels. Hal noted that the focus and interest was on the side channels and how they could continue to provide good habitat.

Tom read and reviewed the license article that created this group and process- Settlement Agreement Article 11. In discussing paragraph (b) about coordinating with Lewis County for purchases of land or easements and funding Lewis County personnel to conduct the acquisition

of land rights, Denny stated all three commissioners and the chief administrative officer of Lewis County have agreed to use part of a staff person's time to assist Tacoma Power as the license article envisions. It was agreed that Tacoma Power will prepare a draft memorandum of understanding (MOU) for this purpose for the commissioners consideration. The MOU will include the role of this person and Lewis County. Pat advised that there already is a provision in Tacoma Power's agreement with Lewis County for mitigation payments to fund such a person.

Pat said that the fund has been established as a separate account with monthly interest accrual. Tom said it is Tacoma's intent to do as much as possible with this money. To that end Tacoma is soliciting ideas for partners to leverage the fund as much as possible.

A discussion ensued about criteria for selecting both sites and proposals from groups for restoration or preservation of habitats. It was noted that the Salmon Recovery Fund Board (SRFB) and the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board (LCFRB) have and use such criteria. It was decided to get copies of those criteria to assist in preparing same for the HAG.

Mark then gave a Power Point presentation on the license article and the sites on the river that have been recommended for protection by the FTT. A map handout was used to assist with river mile locations. Mark noted the benefits of the side channels are that they provide a place with cover for coho salmon to go to escape the high velocity water and provide prime spawning areas. He noted that the pictures in the presentations were taken this summer and fall. Denny noted that Lewis County is purchasing this year's DNR aerial photos, some of which will have the river channel in them. Additional photos could be purchased from DNR for this purpose. Approximately a dozen sites were viewed and discussed in Mark's presentation. The site photos consisted of both aerial and ground photos.

A discussion about site selection criteria resumed at this point. Hal noted that different criteria were needed for handling different types of sites- revetments versus unprotected banks, campgrounds versus pastures, etc. Pat stated that a habitat site shouldn't be purchased if there is no chance of development or other impacts.

The group brainstormed ideas for selection criteria. A table of these is attached to this summary. It was proposed that if the sites recommended by the FTT meet all of the biological criteria, they should be the top priority for acquisition.

Tom brought up establishing a meeting and decision protocol for the group. The Fisheries Technical Committee model was discussed. It was agreed that Tacoma Power would prepare a draft proposal for the group's consideration at the next meeting.

The schedule for the plan preparation was discussed and a Gantt chart was distributed to the members. The plan would be available for public review through the Public Information Plan process currently out for comment/review as proposed by Tacoma

It was agreed that the second meeting would be scheduled in February 2004. A notice will be sent in January.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 PM.

ATTACHMENT