

**HANFORD REACH NATIONAL MONUMENT
FEDERAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary: Session # 15
Thursday, December 4, 2003
Washington State University Tri-Cities
Consolidated Information Center, Rooms 120 & 120A
Richland, WA**

The Hanford Reach National Monument Federal Planning Advisory Committee met on Thursday, December 4, 2003 from 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Washington State University Tri-Cities Consolidated Information Center in Richland, Washington.

The purpose of the meeting was to hear presentations from subcommittees on draft Monument management objectives.

Welcome and Introductions

Greg Hughes, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) Designated Federal Official (DFO) and Project Leader, Hanford Reach National Monument, opened the meeting and welcomed Committee members, the public and other attendees. Mr. Hughes introduced Jim Daily from the US Department of Energy (DOE), who is acting as Lloyd Piper's temporary replacement until a permanent replacement is named. Mr. Hughes briefed the Committee on the status of the re-charter process. The re-charter package is still in Washington D.C., and the Secretary of the Interior's office is in the process of finalizing the appointments.

Alice Shorett, facilitator, reviewed the day's agenda, noting that the purpose of the day's session was to hear from each of the subcommittees on their draft products for discussion by the Committee. After the presentations, the Committee would discuss the subcommittee products in preparation for Committee action at the next meeting in January.

Jim Watts, Committee Chair, reviewed the public comment process and reminded those making public comment that there was a five-minute time limit. He stated that the public comment period was scheduled to immediately follow the opening of the meeting and Committee business. A public comment sheet was available at the sign in table for those interested in giving comment. He also reviewed the Committee's purpose and charter.

Meeting Minutes from Session #14

Mr. Watts asked the Committee for any changes to the summary from Session #14 as drafted. There were no suggestions. The Committee approved a motion to adopt the meeting summary as drafted.

<p>Action: Committee members adopted the meeting summary from Session #14 as drafted.</p>
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Public Comment

Armand Minthorn, Member Board of Trustees, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), addressed the Committee. As many forums and processes are planning to be used by the Committee, he wanted to reiterate the need for consultations so the Tribes could be fully engaged at the policy level to make decisions.

The discussion at the last Committee meeting he attended included talk about the fisheries and cultural resources. As a representative of affected Tribal government, it is important that the CTUIR be kept apprised of the actions the Committee takes. Government-to-government relationships are very important. Mr. Minthorn noted that the management plan would set a precedent for how the Monument will be managed in the long run. Knowing the plan will be in place when we are all gone, it is important the plan clearly address all the roles of those involved, especially the Department of Energy. Mr. Minthorn stated that contaminated groundwater is moving toward the Columbia River. The Department of Energy is moving forward with an accelerated cleanup plan. The Tribes need assurance that this area will be clean when the Department of Energy walks away. The management plan must acknowledge that the US Fish and Wildlife Service is not responsible for cleanup activities. The plan must acknowledge that the Department of Energy is responsible for cleanup.

The Tribes consider fisheries management a priority because of their Treaty rights and Treaty resources. The CTUIR is trying to stay engaged with the Committee, and wants to continue doing so. It is important that the Tribes be consulted. He stated that they look forward to a process of consultations and to continuing a dialogue to reach a means of assurance that the plan will be consistent with existing laws, Treaty rights, and long-term enforcement of the management plan. Mr. Minthorn closed by saying that the CTUIR hopes to stay involved because of the importance of the Reach, and what it means to them.

Draft Management Objectives

Context for Management Objectives

Mike Marxen addressed the Committee and provided them with some information on how the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis process will impact the development of the Hanford Reach National Monument Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) (Attachment A). He explained that it is a complex process and that he does not expect the Committee to track all the details. However, he did want to highlight a few topics.

Currently, the Planning Team is in the planning step of formulating and analyzing alternatives. It is an iterative step process requiring consideration of impacts, a reasonable range of alternatives and issues. He reminded the Committee that there are currently four draft management alternatives: current management (No Action), a restoration emphasis, concentration of facilities on the perimeter of the Monument, and a public use emphasis.

Mr. Marxen responded to a question from the Committee on how long-term restoration to historic conditions could be established in a document that is looking 15 years into the future. He replied that the Service employs adaptive management practices within the 15-year plan to achieve desired long-term goals.

Mr. Marxen reminded the Committee that it will be a little over a year until selection of the preferred alternative. Prior to that, the Service is required by law to look at a “reasonable range” of alternatives and give each alternative equal treatment in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Once the analysis is complete, the Service will share findings and ask the Committee for advice on the preferred alternative.

Currently, the focus is on a key component of the CCP alternatives in objective statements. These are actions or recommendations in the Plan. Objectives are what the Service wants to achieve, when and where the Service wants to achieve it, and who is responsible. The Service has guidelines on drafting objectives using “SMART” criteria: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Fixed. Mr. Marxen stated that good objectives are written clearly, and are more easily monitored and evaluated.

Mr. Marxen further explained that objectives fit within a planning hierarchy. Objectives support the goal statements. They also support agency missions, the Proclamation, and the vision for the future. At the Monument, the planning hierarchy is as follows:

Agency Mission
Monument Proclamation
Vision
Goals
Objectives
Strategies and Projects

The next immediate step for the Service is to look at the set of objectives and apply several questions of criteria, such as:

- Are objectives or actions missing;
- Which actions should be common to all alternatives;
- What are the effects of each of these actions on the environment;
- Are the actions cumulatively realistic and achievable; and
- What advice do they agree with, what advice do they not agree with and why?

Mr. Marxen finished by saying that there are some next steps in the planning process the Service will focus on after they receive the Committee advice in January. For example, the Service will continue consultations with the Tribes to discuss Tribal interests, concerns and their response or recommendations for various components in the Plan. They will continue to work with the Cooperating Agency technical team and contractors to analyze, write and package the EIS. The Planning Team will start to assemble the alternatives chapter including preparing a more detailed written description of the alternatives. Finally, they plan to revisit the issues that have been raised in the planning process and integrate or document how those issues are or will be addressed. This is an iterative process in that some of those issues will need to be brought back to the Committee for their advice.

Overview of Format/Discussion on Subcommittee Products

Alice Shorett continued the meeting by reminding the Committee of the subcommittee assignment from the last meeting on September 25, 2003. At that meeting, subcommittees were

charged with helping the Planning Team refine issues in the Plan by acting as a sounding board, and provide feedback to the Service in writing the Draft Plan by reviewing, considering and making recommendations for change or edit to the draft management objectives.

Five subcommittees were assembled: Terrestrial Natural Resources, Aquatic Natural Resources, Public Use & Access, Cultural & Historical Resources, and Valid Existing Rights. The subcommittees met, in some cases multiple times, and produced draft products for review and discussion at today's Committee meeting.

Ms. Shorett explained that each of the subcommittees would have 45 minutes in total, anticipating that subcommittee chairs would spend 20 minutes presenting their recommendations with the remaining 25 minutes reserved for discussion and comment. The role of the Committee in hearing the recommendations is to understand the range of objectives across the action alternatives (B, C and D) and examine whether their representative interests are addressed. Ms. Shorett clarified that the Committee would not be picking a preferred alternative, and that they were not editing the subcommittee products.

Ms. Shorett finished by saying that the Committee would be taking formal action and advice on objectives at the January meeting. In the time between the meeting today and the January meeting, subcommittees would meet at least one more time to consider all the comments from Committee members in an effort to finalize their recommendations for the January meeting.

Subcommittee Presentations

Mr. Watts asked each subcommittee chair to present their material to the full Committee. He added that if needed there would likely be some extra time for discussion, as the Valid Existing Rights subcommittee was still working on their formal recommendation, and would not be presenting anything at the meeting today.

Terrestrial Natural Resources (subcommittee chair Rick Leaumont)

Rick Leaumont presented the subcommittee product. The subcommittee focused on analyzing the objectives to determine how they could differ across the range of alternatives (Attachment B). They were assigned goals 1, 3 and 11. The subcommittee discussed whether a temporal or geographic differentiation was more important for a given action. The subcommittee was focused on long-term preservation and restoration of native plants.

Some topics the subcommittee addressed included trying to understand the level of comprehensiveness in step-down management plans. The subcommittee felt it did not have a good understanding of this concept, and struggled with what would be a reasonable objective and what might be part of a strategy in a step-down plan. The subcommittee worked on the assumption that the Service would make that decision.

The subcommittee recommendations for the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan focused on the need to control the spread of invasive species and on an initial attack of the more aggressive non-native species that interfere with the health of native species. The subcommittee report asks the Service to put the exact language from the IPM Plan's goals into the objectives.

Monitoring was another area of focus for the subcommittee. The subcommittee felt it was important for the Service to have a good picture of the existing health of native plant communities across the Monument. From this baseline information, they could monitor the ways in which restoration or recreation activities affect those plant communities.

In order to reach a long-term goal of a thriving and intact native plant community, the subcommittee noted it would be important to develop cooperating partnerships and to be good stewards of the land to neighboring landowners. Having good relationships with partners and neighbors would also address the goal of establishing and maintaining connectivity with surrounding lands.

Finally, in order to facilitate research compatible with resource protection, the subcommittee stated that a set of standards is needed to force compliance on researchers to clean up after project completion. The Service should also benefit from the research done on the Monument that could facilitate monitoring and adaptive management practices.

Aquatic Natural Resources (subcommittee chair Leo Bowman)

Leo Bowman presented the subcommittee report. He stated that the subcommittee's initial reaction to the draft management objectives was that not all the activities under alternative A matched the activities under alternatives B-D. Members of the subcommittee felt it was important to make sure these match in future iterations of the draft objectives (Attachment C). The subcommittee was charged with evaluating objectives under goals 2, 3 and 4.

Overall, the subcommittee tried to determine whether the concept of the objective fit the goal, and that the range of objectives matched the alternatives. In some cases, members felt it was not as important to differentiate on the basis of time, as it was to focus geographically on identification of restoration and protection activities on sensitive areas and where recreation would occur. Subcommittee members noted that they could discuss appropriate time scales for action, but that the Service would need to sit down in the end and assess the recommendations from all the subcommittees to determine what was feasible and realistic given funding and staff levels.

The subcommittee's recommended changes to the full Committee are all in line with making the objective more consistent with the alternative. For example, when the Service is conducting an inventory and developing monitoring plans for aquatic species on the Monument, the inventory would be more comprehensive Monument-wide under alternative B, and less comprehensive in scope under Alternative D, focusing on areas where recreation activities would occur first.

Public Use & Access (subcommittee chair Mike Lilga)

Mike Lilga presented the subcommittee report for Committee discussion. He said that the subcommittee considered objectives under preliminary management goals 6, 7 and 8 (Attachment D). Again, the subcommittee focused on the appropriate way to differentiate among the objectives, and that the range matched the alternatives. Many of the subcommittee suggestions attempt to clarify what the objective was specifically addressing.

The subcommittee did recommend adding a new objective under goal 6 to “provide a rich variety of educational and interpretive opportunities for visitors to gain an appreciation, knowledge and understanding of the Monument.” Subcommittee members thought it was appropriate for the Service to study the need for a second interpretive center on the north end of the Monument within 8 years of Plan adoption.

Similar to other subcommittee reports, this subcommittee stated that it was important to develop partnerships with Tribes, other land management agencies, non-governmental organizations and neighboring landowners. For instance, partnerships with agencies that have jurisdiction on surface water uses will help provide high quality recreation opportunities on the Columbia River compatible with resource protection. Equally important was the notion of monitoring the impacts recreation activities have on the Monument resources.

The subcommittee addressed the elk issue by suggesting provision of a special permit hunt under alternative D, the public use emphasis. Under alternatives B and C, no hunting would be allowed on the ALE management unit. The subcommittee dealt with boat launch development at Vernita by tailoring the objective in accordance with the alternatives. For example, under alternative B, the boat launch would be left undeveloped. Under alternative D, the boat launch would be fully developed and include a developed camping area. With regard to hiking, the subcommittee members felt it was more important to provide for connectivity to developed areas outside the Monument, and to differentiate by the number of developed hiking opportunities provided, than it was to determine how many miles of hiking trails would be analyzed under each alternative.

Cultural & Historical Resources (subcommittee chair Michele Gerber)

The subcommittee considered draft objectives under preliminary management goals 4, 5 and 9 (Attachment E). Like the other subcommittees, it focused on assessing whether the current draft objectives match the range of alternatives. The subcommittee focused on ensuring a balanced approach to historical interpretation, and that monitoring activities were in place to prevent from cultural, historical or paleontological resource degradation.

Some examples of specific recommendations the subcommittee presented to the full Committee include developing cooperating partnerships to mitigate future island and shoreline erosion. The subcommittee added an objective to synthesize existing data on regional and local geological and paleontological data, and provide technical information to help protect the distinctive resources of the Monument.

For the goal to protect and acknowledge the Native American, settler, atomic and Cold War histories of the Monument, the subcommittee draft report suggests adding a phrase to ensure that varied interpretations of historical significance incorporate a balance of viewpoints. Where public use would be more developed, the subcommittee suggested objectives that provide for interpretive materials to help teach visitors about the significant historical and cultural resources on the Monument. The subcommittee also focused on providing for close cooperation with affected Tribes to protect key cultural and religious sites from visitation and theft damage.

Finally, the subcommittee draft report recommends deleting goal #9 altogether. The subcommittee members felt that honoring Treaty rights was beyond a goal the Service and DOE would strive to achieve. Rather, these are rights that will be honored and obeyed by both agencies, and should be addressed as foundational in a beginning section.

Discussion of Subcommittee Reports

Following the individual subcommittee reports, the Committee took time to review each report and provide suggestions in a brainstorm session. The brainstorm discussion notes are included as Attachment F. Subcommittees will use the comments in revising reports prior to the January Committee meeting.

Summary of Themes

The Committee continued its discussion on some central issues in developing the Plan, and overall themes emerging from the subcommittee presentations. Two particular issues the Committee was eager to address were elk management, and river access and management.

Regarding elk management, the Committee raised several issues that need to be addressed in finding short- and long-term solutions. The Committee members felt that any solution would need to address two related topics: the resource management issues; and the socio-political and economic issues related to the herd. The Committee and decision-makers need to know more such as where they are, how many there are, and the carrying capacity of the herd. Any damage the herd is causing needs to be quantified and studied. The elk management topic is so important, it could be identified for thorough review either in a subcommittee or through convening a summit on the topic, or some other means similar to the White Bluffs landlides.

As noted earlier, developing partnerships would be a major asset in long-term resource management for the Service. The Committee acknowledged the notion that the draft objectives were representative of the range of alternatives for a reasonable analysis in the EIS.

Some general themes that could become part of the final Committee advice in January:

- The need to prioritize and focus the intensity of research and monitoring where public activities will occur first, then move to other areas. All information from research and monitoring should be made available to the Service in order to implement the principles of adaptive management. It would be important for the Service to recognize the difference between and importance of a temporally focused objective versus a geographically based one.
- The importance of differentiating among alternatives based on geography, rather than time scale of implementation.
- Honoring Treaty and valid existing rights is bigger in scope than a goal for the management agencies. These are rights that will be honored and should be addressed up front in the Plan.

As a follow-up item to the September Committee meeting, Jim Watts presented the Committee with a sample of appreciation for Committee service to be sent to Ed Rykiel on behalf of all Committee members, the Service and Department of Energy. A framed Monument logo, a cancelled stamp and a card for signature were circulated among Committee members.

Report on Refuge Activities

Greg Hughes addressed day-to-day management topics. He stated that the elk management issue is a good example of how those decisions straddle the daily decision-making process, which is outside the realm of the Committee charter, and the long-term management with which the Committee is providing the Service advice. He was in favor of continuing the discussion in the Committee forum, reminding the members that there were no simple or cheap solutions to such complex issues like elk management. The Service would continue to work with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife on a management solution.

Mr. Hughes introduced Phillip Leitz, Mayor of Royal City, and in attendance, as a potential new Committee member. Mr. Hughes informed the Committee that he would be leaving for a two-month detail in Washington D.C., and would be discussing the new Committee appointments when there. He announced that in his absence, Paula Call would fill in as Designated Federal Official for the January meeting.

Mr. Hughes also thanked all the subcommittee members, from the Committee and public, for their hard work over the last five to six weeks. Many of the subcommittees met numerous times and had very thoughtful discussions on the products presented today. He recognized that many of the Committee members had been eager to massage some details of the plan, and that the Service was ready for their input on these tough issues.

Restoration activities were continuing out on the Monument. Mr. Hughes mentioned that a new batch of native plants had just been delivered the day prior from a local nursery that propagated the plants using a locally derived seed bank. Many volunteers would be out on several planting and restoration projects across the Monument in the coming weeks to get them into the ground, including planting around the new Monument signs.

Summary and Next Steps

Mr. Watts asked Ms. Shorett to summarize the meeting proceedings. She reported that the Committee heard from four of the five subcommittees on their draft products regarding preliminary management objectives for the thirteen goals of the Monument. The subcommittees received many comments from Committee members, and would be finalizing their products in the coming weeks in preparation for Committee action on advice at the January meeting.

Ms. Shorett directed Committee members to send additional comments on the subcommittee products to Derek Van Marter at Triangle Associates by Wednesday, December 10, 2003. Triangle would work to compile all comments and distribute those to subcommittee chairs by Thursday, December 11. She recommended subcommittees finalize their products by the first week of January 2004 in preparation for Committee advice on January 15, 2004.

Ms. Shorett indicated that the next three Committee meetings were scheduled for the following dates, all at the WSU-CIC:

- Thursday, January 15, 2004 from 9:30 – 4:30
- Wednesday, February 25, 2004 from 9:30 – 4:30
- Thursday, April 29, 2004 from 9:30 – 4:30

Public Comment

Mr. Watts asked if there were any others in attendance that would like to address the Committee. Mr. Dave Goeke accepted the Chairman's offer. Mr. Goeke encouraged the Committee members to consider the "perimeter" of the Monument under alternative C include the river and major arterials. These would be major access points that should not be ignored. Mr. Goeke also reported that when he was managing the lands that are now part of the Monument, at times the elk herd numbered 800-900 animals. He witnessed their migration highways at ten feet wide in some places, and other localized damage. He pointed out that at times with those numbers, the herd could cause damage to the Monument resources.

Mr. Hughes thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

Approved by:

Greg Hughes, DFO

Jim Watts, Chair

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Committee Seat	Member	Alternate
K-12 Education		Royace Aikin
Cities		<i>vacant</i>
Conservation/Environmental	Rick Leaumont	Mike Lilga
Counties	Leo Bowman	Frank Brock
Economic Development	Jim Watts	Harold Heacock
Outdoor Recreation	Rich Steele	
Public-at-Large		
Scientific/Academic	Michele Gerber	
	David Geist	
	Gene Schreckhise	<i>vacant</i>
State	Jeff Tayer	Ron Skinnerland
Native American	Rex Buck	<i>vacant</i>
Utilities/Irrigation		<i>vacant</i>
Designated Federal Official	Greg Hughes	

Participants and Invited Speakers

U.S. Department of Energy	Jim Daily
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Mike Marxen

Facilitators

Triangle Associates, Inc.	Alice Shorett	Derek Van Marter
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Meeting Support

U.S. Department of Energy	Janine McKeever
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Observers

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Paula Call
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Dan Haas
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	David Smith
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Ron Crouse
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Jenna Gaston
U.S. Department of Energy	Tom Ferns
U.S. Department of Energy	Dana Ward
CTUIR	Armand Minthorn
CTUIR	Tom Bailor
Nez Perce	Kristie Baptiste
Nez Perce	Michael Sabotta
Nez Perce	Rico Cruz
BPA	Mary Hollen
Benton County	Adam Fyall
City of Richland	Rita Mazur
Energy Northwest	John Arbuckle

*Hanford Reach National Monument
Federal Planning Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary*

Backcountry Horsemen of WA
Richland Rod and Gun Club
Tri-City Herald
South County Sun
KNDU-TV
Public

Final
December 4, 2003

Linda Smith
Eugene Van Liew
John Stang
Phillip Leitz
Andrea Nguyen
Dave Goeke
Maynard Plahuta

DISTRIBUTED MATERIALS

Committee's Packet of Materials

Meeting Agenda (December 4, 2003)

Draft Meeting Summary: Session #14 (September 25, 2003)

Subcommittee Products on Monument Management Objectives:

- Terrestrial Natural Resources
- Aquatic Natural Resources
- Public Use & Access
- Cultural & Historical Resources

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Hierarchy of Guidance for Hanford Reach National Monument Comprehensive Conservation Plan (Mike Marxen)