

**Columbia River Treaty 2014-2024 Review
Stakeholder Listening Session
September 27, 2011; 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Spokane, WA**

Summary of Dialogue

Attendees:

Sovereign Representatives and Staff

Heidi Helwig, BPA
Tom Karier, State of Washington
Matt Rea, USACE
Rick Rolf, BPA
Nancy Stephan, BPA

Stakeholders

Alayna Becker, Senator Cantwell's Office
Scott Cave, Columbia Basin GWMA – City of Quincy
Steve Doherty, DOI
Andy Duran, LRF
Ray Ellis, Lincoln County Electric
Joel Freudenthal, Yakima County
Eric Johnson, Washington State Association of Counties
Terry Keenhan, Yakima County
Keith Knitter, Grant County PUD
Bob Lafferty, Avista
Mike Leita, Yakima County
Pat Maher, Avista
Laura Merrill, Pend Oreille County
Michael Normandeau, BPA – Spokane
Rachael Osborn, Center for Environmental Law and Policy
Tim Personius, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Rudy Player, Adams County
Bryan Raines, Senator Cantwell's Office
Nancy Schimmels, BPA – Spokane
Stephen Snedden, Berg & McLaughlin

Purpose and Overview of the Listening Session

This Listening Session was designed to hear from the region's stakeholders regarding the alternatives that will be analyzed through the Columbia River Treaty Review process. This was one of three such sessions held throughout the region in September-October 2011.

The meeting began with a presentation from Matt Rea, Treaty Review project manager for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Matt provided background on the Treaty Review process, as well as information about the preliminary alternatives under consideration and the iterative process

that will be used to evaluate those alternatives. A copy of Matt's presentation can be found on the Treaty Review website at: www.crt2014-2024review.gov

After the presentation, attendees divided into small groups to share their questions and comments about the alternatives. Participants divided themselves according to ecosystem interests and power interests. At this meeting, a group of representatives from various counties throughout the State of Washington also met together and shared their comments on both the process and the alternatives. Each group was led by a neutral facilitator. After about an hour of discussion, all of the attendees reconvened to hear reports from the group facilitators regarding the comments and questions raised.

The following is a summary of the comments made during the session.

Ecosystem-Based Function Alternatives

- We're very happy that ecosystem function is in the mix for analysis.
- We need to expand to look beyond just fish, considering all of the habitat functions of the river system.
- Do we have a real vision and mission for the Columbia River? How is continued population growth and development being considered and analyzed in Treaty Review?
- The Columbia River Management Program should be fully accounted for in the review.
- The Columbia River isn't a single ecosystem. There are upper, middle, and lower sections. Each has a different function and operates differently. If you "push a button at the Dalles," how is the entire system affected? When will we see that in the analysis?
- The Biop is a constantly moving target and it is important to recognize that.
- Expectations are high and wide around the ecosystem analysis. We need some kind of a concrete measure to be weighing alternatives against. Where is that measure?
- Iterations 2 and 3 are crucial; you need to allow enough time to complete them.
- It is very important we do not do this in a vacuum. Need to understand Canada's needs and issues around ecosystem. How do we factor that in on the US side?
- We need to understand what the river fluctuations would be without a Treaty. There could be severe impacts; those have to be factored in to the analysis.

Comments from County Representatives

- Counties manage most of the functions being studied through Treaty Review – ecosystem, flood control, irrigation. We can provide a knowledge base that could be really helpful to the process. We manage the impacts of all of these needs and functions coming together in one place.
- One element that appears to be missing is future population growth and development. Where is that being factored into the alternatives?
- How fixed is the U.S. Entity on the primary drivers being ecosystem, flood control, and hydropower? Where is water supply for irrigation? Could we think about water supply in aspirational terms? How creative could we get?
- The tributaries are so vital to overall understanding and function of the river system. Where are they being factored in to the process?

Hydropower Alternatives

- Do the alternatives look at solutions to problems? We need those kinds of answers.
- If the analysis demonstrates that flood control is too expensive under called upon, then you do need to consider and analyze other options for flood control.
- The timeframe for completing the iterations is crucial; need to allow enough time to get them finished.
- In the preliminary alternatives, it appears that changes to flood control operations could be glossed over. Those really need to be better understood and analyzed.
- Canadian operations need to be included and modeled in this effort. They have room to install additional turbines, for example, but have some other constraints. And, they might very well operate differently without the power benefit from the U.S.
- The Biop and Habitat Conservation Plans need to be fully incorporated into the alternatives. How will you mirror the mechanics of the AOP, DOP, etc., in the absence of a Treaty? You need some way to measure and manage river operations.
- Will ratepayers bear the cost of incorporating ecosystem needs into a revised Treaty?
- For those counties highly dependent on river levees (Yakima County, for example) – will there be an evaluation of the economic impacts if those water levels are raised? New flood mapping? How will these costs and impacts be captured?
- It's important to recognize future generation needs and impacts compared to current generation. And, the shape of that generation is important to consider. The Mid-Columbia utilities are concerned about the analyses related to: Hanford Reach; HCP's; current operational constraints; spill; protection of flows; availability of late summer flows.