

**Columbia River Treaty 2014-2024 Review
Stakeholder Listening Session
September 30, 2011; 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Portland, OR**

Summary of Dialogue

Attendees:

Sovereign Representatives and Staff

Mark Bagdovitz, US Fish & Wildlife
Heidi Helwig, BPA
Rick Pendergrass, BPA
Matt Rea, USACE
Rick Rolf, BPA
Stephen Smith, UCUT
Nancy Stephan, BPA
Mary Lou Soscia, EPA
Linda Ulmer, USFS

Stakeholders

Dick Adams, Pacific Northwest Utility Coordinating Committee
Annick Chaliier, BPA
John Anderson, Idaho Power Company
Jill Arens, Columbia River Gorge Commission
Sonya Bruce, Resource Writers
Ruth Burris, Portland General Electric
Geoff Carr, Northwest Requirements Utilities
Catherine Corbett, L Columbia Estuary Partnership
Scott Corwin, Public Power Council
Kerri Coulton, AECOM Consulting
James D. Crammond, USGS Oregon Water Science Center
Robert Cromwell, Seattle City Light
Margaret Filardo, Fish Passage Center
Chris Goodell, West Consultants
Liz Hamilton, Northwest Sports Fishing Association
Brandon Hardenbrook, PNWER
Jim Harper, Brown & Caldwell
John Harrison, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Dave Hendricks, Multnomah County Diking District
Ian Hunter, Snohomish PUD
Christopher Lapp, USFWS Ridgefield NWR
Debrah Marriott, L Columbia Estuary Partnership
Kristin Meira, Pacific Northwest Waterways Association
Kurt Miller, Portland General Electric
Keith Morisette, Tacoma Power

Tom Myrum, WSWRA
Fred Heutte, NW Energy Coalition
David McClure, Klickitat County
Kim Ogren, OSU
Kori Olson, Port of Portland
Kevin O'Meara, PGE
Julie Parrish, State Rep HD 37
Clare Peny, COE
Kimberly Pincheira, Senator Cantwell's Office
John Precott, PNGC Power
Jim Ruff, NPCC
Gina Schroeder, Federal Caucus
Mike Schwisow, WSWRA
Kevin Scribner, Salmon-Safe
John Shurts, NPCC
Craig Simpson, ECBID
Zabyn Towner, PNGC Power
John S. Velimesis, GHD, Inc.
Elmer Ward, CTWSRO
Anita Winkler, Oregon Water Resources Congress
Byron Woltersdorf, MCDD

Purpose and Overview of the Listening Session

This Listening Session was designed to hear from the region's stakeholders about the alternatives that will be analyzed through the Columbia River Treaty Review process. This was one of three such sessions held through 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, power interests, and flood risk management interests. At this meeting, a group of people interested in irrigation concerns also met together to share their comments. Each group was led by a neutral facilitator. After about an hour of discussion, the all participants 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

- You need to be sure and capture the effects on estuary rearing and function, not just in-out migration.
- We need to understand the effects on reservoir operations and resident fish.
- What will the outputs look like on E1, E2, and E3?
- In F3 & F4 – will you consider the purchase of land in the flood plain rather than just construction of more levees? We need a more balanced approach to that issue; incorporating natural storage and aquifer recharge. We need to look at flood inundation as an ecological function. Flooding adjacent wetlands has an ecological benefit, so if we are going to model ecosystem function, we need to consider floodplain function as well.
- The outcome of the Treaty Review could limit future BiOp decisions. Treaty Review could be considering new and different possibilities for the BiOp.
- What is the ongoing discussion and evaluation process with Canada? How will the Pacific Salmon Treaty be discussed with Canada, for example? We should try to determine the concerns/issues in Canada to see if they are similar/different than in the U.S.
- The Mid-Columbia Habitat Conservation Plans need corrections; they need to be modified in order to increase fish survival.
- Do the ecosystem function alternatives take into account an historical view of the river? We should be expanding our goals beyond the current conditions.
- Where are we measuring the adequacy of existing infrastructure to deal with high flows? Can the system be reconfigured? Is there new technology available?
- Judge Redden's order in August 2011 requires that the region get more aggressive in its approach to habitat, including flow augmentation and the possibility of dam removal. Those changes have to be taken into account.
- Sediment transport at higher flows should also be evaluated. High flows can create, and destroy, fish habitat along the mainstem Columbia. We need to understand how this happens at various flow rates. Specially, we need to look at the Hanford Reach to determine how additional flows can help reduce juvenile salmon stranding, and whether sediment transport can create additional fish habitat. The flow targets may also influence the operations at Grand Coulee, which also have direct effects on fish survival and fish habitat in the Hanford Reach.
- Do the current alternatives provide a wide enough range/contrast to identify differences between them?
- Forecasting and adaptive management should be part of the modeling effort. Could we vary the flow target depending on the water year?
- We should try to incorporate climate change into Iteration #2 at E1- E3. Current and future hydrology can be modeled and incorporated into Iteration #2 without much difficulty.
- Can ecosystem function be adequately modeled/represented within the timeframe of this process? We *have to get to* Iteration #3. If not, it's possible that Ecosystem Function falls off the table. That's unacceptable.
- Are we looking at re-introduction of salmon and steelhead above Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph Dams? If so, we need to consider what flows and project operations will be necessary for this re-introduction to be successful. This would include flows from the Canadian reservoirs and reservoir fluctuations at Lake Roosevelt, and Lake Rufus Woods.

Flood Control/Navigation Alternatives

- We need to provide some perspective for comparison – how do 450/600 kcfs compare to previous high water/100 year floods?
- We should consider negotiating with Canada to keep the current flood control benefits, but do so under a new payment structure. Did the '64 and '96 floods require the use of Canadian storage? How often have we used Canadian storage in the past, and what would it look like downstream if we didn't have that storage?
- In F4 – what pressure does that bring to bear on Brownlee? Snake River & proximity to reservoirs? What does “effective use” mean to dam operations?
- In F4 – there are many unknowns related to irrigation projects. What are the impacts if you draft reservoirs that are currently used for irrigation?
- 600 kcfs will have significant negative impacts on navigation, Port facilities, barge operations, sediment transport, dredge costs & restrictions, pool conditions, higher currents. There are related erosion and levee concerns. There will be costs associated with mitigation for these impacts.
- You need to take into account the potential impacts on Lake Roosevelt.
- Which models will you be using for flood risk management assessment?
- How much flood control benefit can we get from normal Canadian power operations? Can we analyze this possibility?
- In the U.S. – is the use of what would have been entitlement power being considered? Where does it go and who benefits? How much would we pay for called upon if we aren't paying for entitlement?
- Between the iterations – how will you make decisions on what stays and what gets dropped? Will you share your decision process with us?
- Are you looking into the possibility of additional water supply from Canada?
- How do we build climate change into these & when?
- Who sets the acceptable level of flood risk?
- Who pays for potential increase in costs for more U.S. flood control?
- Who pays for habitat mitigation improvements?

Hydropower Alternatives

- More coordination should take place between Treaty Review and the legislative branches and energy committees in all of the states. They could add a different perspective than the executive branch of government.
- The alternatives seem about right. Make sure you consider the impacts of renewable energy and conservation.
- The combined alternatives in Iteration 3 are really important – make sure you allow the time needed to get to them.
- It's really important to understand the interaction between flood control and power. For example, if the Treaty is terminated, what flood control benefits can still be achieved?
- All of the modeling outputs will be valuable. The key will be to find the highest probable outcomes of the combined alternatives – in relation to the identified risks.
- It's really important to have a transparent process related to the modeling inputs you are using.

- What is the net power benefit from the existing Treaty?
- We are interested in the quantity and shape of the power that is generated from Grand Coulee.
- If the Treaty is terminated, will the U.S. Entity recommend expansion of new infrastructure within the U.S.?
- Consider called upon impacts on operations. How do we put a price tag on this?
- Clarify what H1, H2, and H3 are (with/without BiOp) (treaty/no treaty)? Clarify optimum in dollars.
- How would you add additional spill (existing BiOp)?
- If the Treaty is terminated, the Canadians are likely to maximize their operations for power revenue. The Entity should analyze what would happen should this be the case.

The Hydropower groups also weighed in on the metrics of most importance to them:

- Weighting of metrics – how will this be done?
- Quantity of power.
- Rate impacts to BPA.
- CO2 emission impacts of power generation.
- Called upon flood operations – how is this a metric? How are we going to translate changes to ecosystem into dollars? Analyze flood control costs?
- Intercustomer equity – how costs are allocated.
- Balance reserves in wind power.
- Impacts on hydro capacity and operational flexibility -- how will you evaluate?
- Energy may not be as valuable as capacity, balancing, etc.
- Should include all NW Hydro projects, not just the federal system.
- Firm vs. non-firm in evaluating alternatives.
- What is the metric for resource acquisition? This is a broader question than just costs.
- How to measure non-cost impacts affected by power generation.

Comments from Irrigation Interests

- We are skeptical about this process. Water supply should have been included as part of a four-legged chair rather than the three-legged stool we are seeing here.
- Make sure the water supply and demand study currently underway in the State of Washington (Derek Sandison, State Department of Ecology) is fully included in the Treaty Review analysis. There are also studies underway for Yakima and Hood Rivers; that information needs to be acknowledged and incorporated as well.
- You should include flow scenarios that account for increased diversions from the system. As the region grows, for example, and we need more water for irrigation – how will we be meeting those needs?
- Timing is very important for irrigation, and this needs to be understood. We need storage during the winter for irrigation during the summer. We are looking for opportunities to be working more directly and compatibly with habitat requirements in this regard.