

**Meeting Summary
 Susitna–Watana Hydroelectric Project
 Social Sciences TWG Meeting
 March 5, 2013, 8:30 a.m.-2:15 p.m.
 AEA Offices
 813 Northern Lights Blvd
 Anchorage, AK**

Attendees:

Organization	Name
ADPH	Paul Anderson
AEA	Sandie Hayes
AEA	Betsy McGregor
CIRI	Dara Glass
CIRI – Stoel Rives	Rachel Cox*
Coalition for Susitna Dam Alternatives	Becky Long
DOWL HKM	Maryellen Tuttell
ERM	John Gangemi*
HDR	Tracie Krauthoefer
McDowell Group	Donna Logan
MWH	Kirby Gilbert
MWH	Heather Williams
Self	Jan Konigsberg*
Newfields	Marci Balge
Newfields	Kathe Boucha
Northern Economics	Jonathan King
NPS	Cassie Thomas*
NPS	Harry Williamson*
Southcentral Regional Advisory Council	Judy Caminer**
URS	Tim Kramer
Van Ness Feldman	Chuck Sensiba
Veritas Economics	Matt Bingham*
Veritas Economics	Jason Kinnell*

* by telephone

** briefly in the afternoon only

Kirby Gilbert (MWH) facilitated introductions and gave an overview of the meeting objectives, which were to provide status on the study plan documents, study progress and next steps. He noted that on February 1st, 2013 FERC other than the recreation and aesthetics plans, FERC

accepted all social sciences Revised Study Plans as submitted, except they requested some reworking of tables and presentation in the subsistence study plan.

Transportation

Maryellen Tuttell (DOWL HKM) presented transportation status slides, indicating that there had been no 2012 study, that the 2013 study plan has been approved, and that data collection is underway. The transportation study team is coordinating closely with the recreation and socioeconomics study teams. Air, rail, road and river modes of transportation are all being addressed in this comprehensive study.

Air Quality

Maryellen Tuttell presented an air quality status slide, indicating that data gathering is underway, there is no field work planned, and they are coordinating closely with ADEC and EPA.

Health Impact Assessment

Marci Balge (Newfields) presented HIA status slides, indicating that some ground-truthing of literature search information (i.e. is a particular health facility currently staffed) is taking place during community assessments for efficiency. Frameworks for the work efforts are based on state HIA guidance. They are coordinating closely with the ADF&G subsistence team for efficiency. The HIA study team is working through telephone conversations with ADF&G as needed regarding health portions of survey instruments rather than sending HIA teams to some of the smallest communities. There will be a lot of data collection in 2013. Traci Krauthoefer (HDR) asked if HIA team is in Skwentna now. Marci answered that only ADF&G is in Skwentna.

Regional Economic Evaluation and Socioeconomics

Jonathan King (Northern Economics) presented regional economics status slides, indicating that data collection is underway. Design and pre-testing of survey instruments was conducted on an accelerated schedule over the last few weeks. Concerted efforts by McDowell Group and Veritas Economics were acknowledged. He reported that everything is on track at this time. Hunting data gathering refinements may lag a bit later in the year due to the timing of data availability.

Kirby Gilbert asked whether all regional economics questions are now in the recreation mail survey instrument. Jason Kinnell (Veritas Economics) confirmed that they are all in and were submitted to Bob Koenitzer (McDowell Group). They are now with AEA for review. Kirby Gilbert indicated that the plan is to put both the intercept and the mail surveys on a public website on March 7th for a FERC required 15-day review period. There will be a pre-test in Talkeetna conducted March 15-16th, with a debrief telecom on March 18th from 2-3pm Alaska time to go over the results. Jonathan King noted that the debrief would be of interest to him.

Harry Williamson (NPS) asked about the differences between the intercept and mail survey, as he had not yet seen the draft mail survey. Jonathan King responded that there are common core questions between the two surveys, but the mail survey doesn't collect spending information since it targets recreational users outside of the project area. Tim Kramer (URS) confirmed that the two are very similar from a recreational standpoint, and differ in the socioeconomic area. Kirby Gilbert noted that both draft instruments will be posted March 7th with an email notification requesting comments.

Subsistence

Tracie Krauthoefer (HDR) presented subsistence status slides, indicating in some detail the status of the subsistence efforts by community. In FERC's February 1st study plan determination, they requested a clarification of the presentation regarding the information in Table 14.5-5. In addition Tracie wanted to provide some clarifications surrounding direct ADF&G efforts versus the efforts being undertaken by the rest of the AEA study team. Those changes will be made for the Final Study Plan and the final document will be posted. Tracie noted that Chickaloon has requested that Knik join their subsistence meeting. Dara Glass (CIRI) asked if Knik is aware of that request. Tracie indicated that consultation with Knik has been initiated and they appear to be in agreement with Chickaloon's suggestion.

Dara Glass asked if Montana Creek has been included as was not listed directly on the presentation slide. Tracie responded that the list is based on census-designated areas, and that Montana Creek might be part of a larger grouping of smaller communities. Dara Glass indicated that Montana Creek could be important to capture since many members don't live there, but do use the area for subsistence. Dara also asked about Gold Creek and if that community is covered in the surveys. Tracie noted she would check with ADF&G to determine if Montana Creek and/or Gold Creek are included elsewhere. By the close of the meeting Tracie was able to acknowledge these communities are part of larger groups being surveyed in the area.

Tracie noted that Talkeetna was inadvertently left off of two lists in the slides as presented, and a reference to eight communities should read nine. Kirby Gilbert asked about the FERC clarifications surrounding the nine communities noted in their February 1st study plan determination. Tracie responded that the nine communities formerly referred to as "in-depth" communities are now to be acknowledged as TK data collections, even though the data collection method is different than the other TK data collections.

Tracie Krauthoefer asked if any air quality questions are needed in the traditional knowledge surveys. Maryellen Tuttell (DOWL HKM) and Marci Balge (Newfields) indicated that none will be required.

Recreation, River Flow, and Aesthetics

Kirby Gilbert indicated that many recreational topics were covered during a February 25th intercept survey TWG meeting. Therefore the presentation today was to focus on river flow, but

comments and questions welcome on all facets of recreation and aesthetics. Kirby introduced John Gangemi (ERM), on the phone and who is leading the river recreation studies.

John Gangemi presented recreation and river flow status slides, summarizing the 2012 study results and 2013 study planning efforts. Kirby Gilbert noted that the Project is transitioning to a new river locational system now called Project River Miles, or PRMs, and that future materials should be adjusted to that system instead of the 1980s surveyed River Miles, or RMs as shown on the current slide. Betsy McGregor (AEA) indicated that there is GIS information available for the PRMs, as well as an upcoming technical memo that will tabulate RMs, PRMs, and specific Project site locations. Information on PRMs will be emailed to Tim Kramer (URS) and others. John Gangemi noted that aircraft was inadvertently left off of the presentation slide under Motorized Uses, but was included in the report. The river recreational team will look at interdisciplinary studies as they progress through 2013, iteratively, to determine if the current downstream terminus point for their study (Parks Highway) is appropriate, or if it needs to be moved. The internet survey tool provided in the RSP has been modified slightly for organization and grammar.

Cassie Thomas (NPS) noted that she would like a copy of the revised internet survey. Kirby Gilbert indicated that it will be posted along with other survey instruments on March 7th for a 15-day review period.

Cassie Thomas expressed concerns about the introductory wording on the 2/4 executive interview. Specifically the use of language indicating how much power would be produced by the project, given that environmental requirements that could change power outputs are not yet known. Cassie considers this language to be irrelevant, hypothetical, and potentially influential to the survey taker. This concern was expressed on earlier survey instrument drafts but does not appear to have been incorporated although the recreation surveys had incorporated the suggested change. Becky Long (Coalition for Susitna Dam Alternatives) and Dara Glass (CIRI) agreed with Cassie Thomas' position. Becky Long and Cassie agreed that the introduction could and should include information on the purpose of providing power for the Railbelt, just not how much. Chuck Sensiba (Van Ness Feldman) and Kirby Gilbert indicated that they would review all draft instruments and work to make them consistent. Everyone agreed that it is not the intent of the survey to be directive.

Cassie Thomas asked if there will be winter field work this year. John Gangemi (ERM) indicated that it has not yet been decided. They may do field work during the Oosik Classic. Betsy McGregor reminded everyone that survey pre-testing will occur in Talkeetna during the Oosik Classic.

Cassie Thomas asked about timing of the downstream study terminus decision. John Gangemi (ERM) responded that it would be an iterative process, with a final decision point in the early 2014 timeframe.

General Questions

Jan Konigsberg asked about AEA's protocol for data deliverables, since there have been occurrences of AEA not obtaining all consultant data in the past. Betsy McGregor (AEA) responded that the RSP has provisions for quarterly meetings (like this TWG) to allow stakeholders an opportunity to discuss the data as it is collected, as well as any study plan changes that might be needed during the course of the study. The data will first be formally published in the ISR, per FERC regulations. Study schedules are being tracked quarterly. AEA is obtaining provisional data from consultants on varying schedules (monthly in some cases) depending on the amount of data involved. GIS data is delivered to ADNR. AEA does have all 2012 data now. Fully analyzed and QC'd data will be published in the ISR and delivered to AEA/ADNR.

Harry Williamson (NPS) expressed questions and concerns about the way "user conflict" is being addressed in the draft intercept survey. Donna Logan (McDowell Group) said that Questions 8 and 10 were inserted to try and address the FERC comments, and that all suggestions will be considered. Harry Williamson (NPS) would prefer more direct questions and will draft some comments or potential proposed language.

Cassie Thomas asked when focus group methodology will be discussed. Kirby Gilbert responded that it will be a topic in the next quarterly TWG (tentatively June 10th).

Becky Long (Coalition for Susitna Dam Alternatives) asked what opportunities exist for public comment on the approved RSP. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) indicated that FERC has a dispute process after its study plan determination, but it's not really comment period under the ILP; but that e-Library accepts comments at any time. Also, there will be an opportunity to comment on the survey instruments March 7 to March 22.

Action Items:

- Tracie Krauthoefer (HDR) will check with ADF&G to determine whether Montana Creek and Gold Creek are included in other census-designated areas, such as "Parks Highway Households".
- Betsy McGregor (AEA) will provide PRM information to Tim Kramer (URS) and others.
- AEA will post all survey instruments (intercept survey, mail survey, internet surveys) on March 7th for a 15-day review.
- Harry Williamson (NPS) will work to expedite his "user conflict" comments and suggestions for the intercept survey and AEA will work to incorporate them.
- AEA will review the introductory language on survey instruments for consistency and responsiveness to stakeholder comments regarding the amount of Project power potential.