

Meeting Summary
Susitna-Watana Hydroelectric Project Licensing
Cultural and Subsistence Resources Workgroup Meeting
February 28, 2012
AEA Project Offices, First Floor Conference Room
411 W 4th Avenue, Anchorage, AK

Subject

- ILP Study Request Outlines and Study Plan Development for Cultural Resources.

Attendees:

Organization	Name
AEA	Betsy McGregor
AEA	Bruce Tiedeman
ADF&G	Mark Burch
ADF&G	James Van Lanen
ADHSS-HIA	Sarah Yoder
ADNR	Courtney Smith
ADNR-OHA	Richard VanderHoek
BLM	Elijah Waters
BLM	Dan Sharp
EPA	Jennifer Curtis
FERC	David Turner (by phone)
USFWS	Mike Buntjer
NPS	Cassie Thomas (by phone)
ABMC and AVI	Chuck Akers
Ahtna, Inc.	Gloria Stickwan (by phone)
CardnoENTRIX	Lynn Noel
DOWL HKM	Jessica Christianson
E-Terra	Frank McQueary
E-Terra	Lars Gleitsmann
HDR	Jeff Schively
HDR	Anne Leggett
HDR	Adinda Demske
HDR	Tracie Krauthoefer
MWH	Kirby Gilbert
MWH	Heather Williams
Natural Heritage Institute (NHI) / HRC	Jan Konigsburg
Northern Land Use Research (NLUR)	Pete Bowers
Northern Land Use Research (NLUR)	Richard Stern (by phone)
URS	Paul Dworian
URS	Pat Athey

Organization	Name
Van Ness Feldman	Jonathan Simons (by phone)

Presentations

- Kirby Gilbert (MWH): Overview of project licensing calendar through Draft EIS July 2016 (<http://www.susitna-watanahydro.org/Schedule.html>)
- Kirby Gilbert (MWH): Overview of Study Request Template (http://www.susitna-watanahydro.org/Docs/StudyRequestTemplate_draft_021612.docx)
- Kirby Gilbert (MWH): Review of Table of Preliminary 2013-2014 Formal ILP Studies – Cultural and Subsistence Resources (http://www.susitna-watanahydro.org/Docs/CulturalandSubsistenceResources_02162012.pdf)
- James Van Lanen (ADF&G): Overview of Susitna-Watana Hydroelectric Project: Subsistence Gap Analysis and Scope of Work (meeting handout)

Cultural Resources

1. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Stated that 2012 will likely be focused on setting the stage for data collection and not impact analysis. Need to identify linkages between studies, overlaps with other areas such as recreation and wildlife. Some historic property information exists from the 1980s work, but more is needed, and existing data needs to be put in GIS format.
2. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Stated that defining the Area of Potential Effect (APE) can be a typical challenge point for projects like this. Sometimes we can end up with two APEs, one for direct effects (ground disturbance) and a larger one including a buffer zone for indirect effects. Currently the reservoir area is better defined than the road and transmission corridors due to ongoing facility siting optimization studies. Engineering feature siting optimization would ideally incorporate cultural and resource study input. Avoidance is first desired option for mitigation. Design process needs to be somewhat iterative.
 - a. Richard VanderHoek (ADNR-OHA) – Agreed that defining APE is a challenge, will have to look at all three proposed road and transmission corridors. The indirect APE will become significant later. 10 years of experience on Denali Highway and other projects indicates that foot traffic, OHV traffic will be significant. Need to do an assessment to determine where the attractive hikes, boat destinations, etc. are going to be.
 - b. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Noted the study area is currently @ 2200' corresponding to the 2000' potential maximum pool elevation reservoir. Is that sufficiently large to serve as an APE for the inundation zone.
 - c. Richard VanderHoek (ADNR-OHA) – Probably this is ok for now, but may need a larger APE later.
 - d. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Timing of APE definition is tricky. He believes that Wayne Dyok's (AEA Susitna-Watana Program Manager) goal is to have preferred access & transmission routes selected by end of 2012.

- e. Betsy McGregor (AEA) – There is an ADOT&PF report due out at the end of March 2012 evaluating the three road corridors. This report does not address transmission; that is in a separate report.
- f. David Turner (FERC) – How might SHPO and agencies go about identifying or defining a visual impact area for purposes of establishing an indirect effects APE?
- g. Richard VanderHoek (ADNR-OHA) – Agrees it is difficult to do; but it might be a matter of looking for easy access features (gravel ridges) that intersect proposed access routes that would likely become 4-wheeler trails. There are existing 4-wheeler routes almost to the reservoir.
- h. David Turner (FERC) – Noted we need to define an APE reasonably.
- i. Cassie Thomas (NPS) – During yesterday’s recreation discussion, it was identified that there is a trail map data gap (including foot, 4-wheeler and snowmachine trails). That data gap will likely also need to be filled to help inform the cultural resources indirect effects APE definition.
- j. Betsy McGregor (AEA) – ADF&G harvest location data may help inform as well.
- k. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Indicated the value in adding trail mapping to the 2012 recreation study.
- l. Anne Leggett (HDR) – Aerial imagery may help as well.
- m. Elijah Waters (BLM) – BLM does have some trail inventory data in GIS format, known to be incomplete, but may still be helpful.
- n. Lars Gleitsmann (E-Terra) – Archived satellite imagery also shows trails (summer).
- o. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Would a predictive model be useful in the cultural resources investigations?
- p. Pete Bowers (NLUR) – Predictive modeling extrapolates from known sites to help stratify the survey area in order to focus the field work. Area is too large to do 100% survey so the predictive model could help limit the need to do ground surveys in all locations.
- q. Richard VanderHoek (ADNR-OHA) – Predictive modeling needs to make use of all available data layers (historic sites, caribou, etc).
- r. Pete Bowers (NLUR) – Is there a plan to create/enhance some trails as part of the project?
- s. Betsy McGregor (AEA) – Not yet. This will be determined later in the process (collect data, assess, plan, manage). Will write a recreation management plan later.
- t. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Public access is a contentious issue. Some stakeholders want it, others do not.
- u. Chuck Akers (ABMC and AVI) – Objected to “or” statement on criteria 1.3.6 of Formal Study Plan Template. Thinks it should be an “and” conversation between the scientific community and landowners. Existing trails and proposed features likely cross native lands, and landowners need to be included in all discussions about use of their properties.

- v. Bruce Tiedeman (AEA) – Introduced himself as the native liaison for AEA. Noted that the southern route is predominantly native land. The middle route is mixed native and non-native land. The northern route is mostly state and federal land. It is important to note that native stakeholders are likely to give comment on indirect effects to non-native lands. Important to remember that we do not want to dictate to other landowners what to do with their land.
3. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Stated that Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) were not something researched during the 1980s work. AEA is responsible to advance this work, and would be studying TCPs on APE lands of all ownership categories. Typically this is done by ethnographers.
 - a. Pete Bowers (NLUR) – Might want to consider tying in TCP research with subsistence studies since likely interviewing many of the same people.
 - b. Betsy McGregor (AEA) – TCPs seem to be useful as inputs for predictive modeling.
 - c. Pete Bowers (NLUR) – Yes, but may be a “cart before the horse” situation. Modeling is iterative.
 - d. Tracie Krauthoefer (HDR) – If subsistence studies being done by ADF&G consist of household surveys, there may not be time for interviewers to ask TCP questions. If it is a Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) setting, then would be more appropriate to ask TCP questions.
 - e. Pete Bowers (NLUR) – Agreed that it needs careful thought and planning, would at least be a starting point.
4. Tracie Krauthoefer (HDR) – Experience shows that having a plan in place for dealing with human remains (Unanticipated Discoveries Plan [UDP]) is key.
 - a. Pete Bowers (NLUR) – Agreed that having contacts identified ahead of time for clear and fast communications is critical.
 - b. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – On federal lands, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) comes into consideration. FERC requires that a Historic Properties Management Plan (HPMP) be written for the project, it will be folded into the license application. Also a paleontological screening/study/sensitivity analysis will need to be done, particularly on Federal lands.
 - c. Richard VanderHoek (ADNR-OHA) – They are currently working with John Jangala of BLM and paleontological resources are of interest across all BLM lands in the area.
5. Bruce Tiedeman (AEA) – Will AEA’s proposed fieldwork be accepted by the agencies? Does the group feel some agreement is being reached?
 - a. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Agreement by all stakeholders is what the study plan development and submittal process is intended to achieve. Asked if everyone thinks AEA is on track at this time? Realizes there will be more discussions and deliberations once more specifics are put into Study Plan Request format for April workgroup meetings.
 - b. Richard VanderHoek (ADNR-OHA) – Yes [planning process seems to be on track].

- c. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – AEA has been given permission by FERC to initiate Section 106 consultation and it will be needed not just for FERC but also for Army Corps of Engineers 404 permitting process and any BLM decisions granting use of their lands.
- d. Tracie Krauthoefer (HDR) – Encourages broad thinking with respect to the APE. It is easier to narrow an APE that started too large than to add to one later. Cited an example of another hydro project that is having to widen their corridor.
- e. Pete Bowers (NLUR) – They used a 5 mile boundary around the corridors in their initial search for historic properties during recent gap analysis work. Predictive model will help identify likely areas of interest.
- f. Betsy McGregor (AEA) – Indicated that the alternative corridors have been changed since gap analysis was done and some have been further refined.
- g. Tracie Krauthoefer (HDR) – It would be good to do some survey work soon to help validate the predictive model(s).
- h. Pete Bowers (NLUR) – Maybe start by surveying the approximately 50 identified sites in the reservoir area, and extrapolate from there.
- i. Richard VanderHoek (ADNR-OHA) – When thinking about multi-year collection, want to do soils first year (volcanic for markers, etc). This will give framework for 2nd and 3rd year studies.
- j. Betsy McGregor (AEA) – Intent is for environmental contractors to put studies from outline into FERC Study Plan Request format.
- k. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Goal is to get the updated Study Plan Request outlines posted by March 23, 2012.
- l. Pete Bowers (NLUR) – It could be useful to take a “low-hanging-fruit” approach to 2012 work. Get the non-controversial and unlikely to change work out of the way (i.e. reservoir area).
- m. Betsy McGregor (AEA) – Also preparing an unanticipated discoveries plan would be good to have in place in 2012.
- n. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Corridors as defined in the PAD are the current direct impacts or “default” APE and should be considered so at this time, however these areas would be narrowed down to the proposed ground disturbing areas later, once those areas are known.
- o. Tracie Krauthoefer (HDR) – May need to make sure an Unanticipated Discoveries Plan includes a curation plan as well.

Subsistence Resources

1. James Van Lanen (ADF&G) – Presented scope of work document for ADF&G subsistence work. Indicated that the Principal Investigator (Davin Holen) was unable to be here today due to Board of Fish meeting conflict. Discussed general study objectives, survey sample techniques, community involvement, local hire and training, limitations of 1-yr-data snapshot, harvest mapping process, interview process typically including traditional knowledge interviews (TKI), etc.

- a. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Indicated that ADF&G scope of work document will be folded into the ILP study plans.
- b. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) –Noted that EIS is not expected until 2016, so we may need to include additional communities whose data validity will expire before then.
- c. Betsy McGregor (AEA) – Asked what criteria define a “community” for ADF&G subsistence survey purposes.
- d. James Van Lanen (ADF&G) – Indicated that only census-designated communities are surveyed. There is no population size threshold. Talkeetna is outside the ADF&G subsistence management area, so is not included as a survey community per the ADF&G guidelines.
- e. Lars Gleitsmann (E-Terra) – Why isn’t Lake Louise included?
- f. James Van Lanen (ADF&G) – Lake Louise is likely included with Tolsona, but he would have to check.
- g. Elijah Waters (BLM) – Is the Copper Center survey, the NPS survey that was done recently?
- h. James Van Lanen (ADF&G) – NPS was a partner, but ADF&G did the survey.
- i. (Unknown)– Chase is a trainstop, why is it singled out from all similar small Railbelt communities in that area?
- j. James Van Lanen (ADF&G) – Can’t cover everything. Household lists are generated upon arrival in the community for the surveys; not before arrival. This helps get people that may be missed otherwise. Local researchers add people to the list. Davin Holen (ADF&G) would have more specifics.
- k. Tracie Krauthoefer (HDR) – Working with community liaisons helps get clues for outlying households.
- l. Betsy McGregor (AEA) – The schedule for the surveys takes into account other Projects that may require subsistence surveys in the same community. Interim reports will roll into the ILP study report each fall.
- m. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – This plan covers baseline data collection. Need to also think about the next step and how that might proceed – that is impact analyses based on the data collected.
- n. James Van Lanen (ADF&G) – Impact analysis is not my specialty, but expect that it will be fairly subjective. Method of access questions are asked, and may help get at trail location/use to help inform the impact assessment.
- o. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Public access during construction is an open question. Winter construction could mean that the Denali Highway would be open longer than normal, to the intersection with the project road.
- p. James Van Lanen (ADF&G) – On recent surveys for other projects, ADF&G typically hears that opening up access to the areas is desired.
- q. Sarah Yoder (ADHSS-HIA) – Did hear some “too much access” feedback on recent surveys for other projects.
- r. Chuck Akers (ABMC and AVI) – General population might want more access, but landowners might not agree. CIRI villages have 12b selection lands in the area. Ahtna has land as well, may have traditional use also. Landowners need to be engaged in the discussion.

- s. James Van Lanen (ADF&G) – During Copper Basin study, heard two basic commentaries. Non-natives were complaining about Ahtna restrictions and fees, natives were complaining about not being able to keep trespassers out.
- t. David Turner (FERC) – Those on the phone don't have the handout. Please describe the ADF&G Subsistence Study implementation schedule.
- u. Betsy McGregor (AEA) – First four communities are scheduled for survey January through March 2013, next set January through March 2014. Lots of work leading up to the actual surveys (local hire and training, etc). Timing of surveys is based on seasonality of subsistence lifestyle.
- v. Gloria Stickwan (Ahtna) – Just joined the meeting and heard reference to Copper River study. Please describe.
- w. James Van Lanen (ADF&G) provided overview for Gloria and others.
- x. Tracie Krauthoefer (HDR) – Are there other resources or studies that could be utilized? Concerned that one year of data might not be enough.
- y. James Van Lanen (ADF&G) – Not aware of any other information sources. ADF&G recognizes limitations of 1-yr-data surveys, but that is the standard. Concerns include survey burnout and limited survey resources. They try to get at trends and cycles with historical use mapping that is part of the interview process.
- z. Kirby Gilbert (MWH) – Baseline descriptions of resources should not be static by definition. Baseline resource depictions should discuss trends and cycles to help all understand declining or improving conditions with regard to resource abundance, quality or utilization, etc.
- aa. James Van Lanen (ADF&G) – Cited an example where a hunting moratorium in a particular drainage would have been missed by a 1-yr look. But historical use mapping helped illuminate the longer-term situation. Need to keep 1-yr-data separate from historical data for method clarity.
- bb. Additional schedule questions and clarifications based on handout.
- cc. Betsy McGregor (ADF&G) – Subsistence workgroup will typically be scheduled with social sciences in future. Cultural will usually follow that meeting. Room conflicts necessitated scheduling with terrestrial resources with cultural and subsistence resources this time.

Meeting Summary

1. Attendee introductions, meeting agenda and draft calendar overview by Kirby Gilbert (MWH).
 - a. Last week of March 2012 – scoping meetings throughout the state.
 - b. First week of April 2012 – next set of workgroup meetings.
 - c. April 27, 2012 – important date; agency & licensing participants' comments due on PAD, FERC Scoping Document (issued 2/23/12), and study requests.
 - d. May 2012 – workgroup meetings.
 - e. June 11, 2012 – AEA to submit the formal Proposed Study Plan. Comments due by September 10, 2012.

- f. July 2012 – possible site visit and formal FERC study plan workgroup meetings.
 - g. October 10, 2012 – AEA to file Revised Study Plan with FERC.
 - h. November 30, 2012 – FERC to issue study plan determination.
 - i. September 2015 – submit license application to FERC.
 - j. July 2016 – FERC to release Draft EIS.
2. Overview of the template for formal study requests by Kirby Gilbert (MWH).
 - a. Environmental contractors who will be hired next week will be asked to draft formal study plan requests for each item in the study plan outline (and any other studies identified during the workgroup process or other comment avenues) for project efficiency.
 - b. Stakeholders wishing to make additional study requests must use the study plan template. Goal is to identify study needs as early as possible so that the contractors can draft the requests and minimize need for stakeholders to do so on their own.
3. Cultural Resources discussion led by Kirby Gilbert (MWH)
4. Subsistence Resources overview discussion introduced by Kirby Gilbert (MWH)
 - a. Subsistence presentation by James Van Lanen (ADF&G)

Action Items

1. AEA to post ADF&G's Subsistence Gap Analysis and Scope of Work that was handed out during the meeting.
2. AEA to consider doing some trail mapping in 2012, to inform definition of APE.
3. AEA to investigate what GIS trail inventory data is available from BLM.
4. Workgroup to consider including TCP research with subsistence research, if feasible.
5. Make sure UDP includes a curation plan.
6. Consider adding TKIs to ADF&G subsistence scope, if not already there.