

Meeting Summary
Susitna-Watana Hydroelectric Project Licensing
AEA Project Offices, First Floor Conference Room
411 W 4th Avenue, Anchorage, AK

ILP Formal Study Plan Meeting for Social Sciences
August 8, 2012, 8:30 am – 4:00 pm

Attendees:

Organization	Name
ADF&G	Mark Fink
ADF&G	Davin Holen
ADF&G	Stormy Haught
ADNR-OPMP	Marie Steele
AEA	Bryan Carey
AEA	Wayne Dyok
AEA	Betsy McGregor
AEA	Bruce Tiedeman
AGO	Brian Bjorkquist
AHTNA	Joe Bovee
ANLC – UAF	James Kari
Aquatic Restoration and Research Institute	David May
BLM	John Jangala
Charles M. Mobley & Associates	Chuck Mobley
Chickaloon Village	Lisa Wade
DHSS	Paul Anderson
DOWL HKM	Kristen Hansen
DOWL HKM	Maryellen Tuttle
EPA	Jennifer Curtis
EPA - Intern	Lisa McLaughlin
FERC	David Turner
FERC	Frank Winchell
FERC	Ken Wilcox
FERC	Kim Nguyen
HDR	Tracie Krauthoefer
Long View Associates	Steve Padula
The Louis Berger Group	Lisa McDonald
McDowell Group	Bob Koenitzer
MSB	Fran Seager-Boss
MWH	Sarah Callaway
MWH	Kirby Gilbert
MWH	John Haapala (by Phone)
MWH	Brian Sadden (by phone)

Organization	Name
National Heritage Institute/ HRI	Jan Konigsberg
Northern Economics	Pat Burden
Northern Economics	Don Schoden
NLUR	Peter Bowers
NPS	Cassie Thomas
NPS	Harry Williamson (by phone)
OHA/ SHPO	Shina DuVall
Stephen R. Braund & Associates	Stephen Braund
Stephen R. Braund & Associates	Paul Lawrence
URS	Bill Simeone
URS	Taylor Brelsford
URS	Bridget Easley
USFWS	Jenny Spegon
URS	Amy Rosenthal
URS	Louise Kling
ERM	John Gangemi

Introduction and Meeting Overview – Kirby Gilbert (MWH)

Cassie Thomas (NPS) noted she and Harry Williamson provided some initial comments to AEA yesterday. Cassie asked how AEA will incorporate information from 2012 reconnaissance by October agency comment deadline along with any winter 2012 reconnaissance. For the formal studies Cassie is wondering how to integrate outputs from some studies that are necessary inputs for other studies, within the timeframe of a two-year study window. David Turner (FERC) responded that if needed there are provisions within the ILP process for updates to the approved study plans, “with good cause.” Wayne Dyok (AEA) indicated that AEA will provide a schematic with dates of how the studies interconnect to the group before the October 15 comment deadline.

Action Items

1. Distribute schedule showing interconnections between studies before October 15th comment deadline.

Regional Economics & Socioeconomics – Pat Burden (Northern Economics)

- **Regional Economic Evaluation Study** – power related benefits/effects of the Project, focuses on Railbelt
 - There was a general request to define in the PSP how the “knowledgeable persons” to interview for input into the model will be chosen. Pat noted that the categories of persons and types of interview questions will be added to the study plan.
 - Jan Konigsberg (National Heritage Institute) indicated that the retail rate for power would be important to include in modeling. He also requested if there was going to be comparison on opportunity costs regarding power alternatives, such as

analyzing the costs of other power alternatives that might be foregone by pursuing a large hydropower project. In terms of using surveys to obtain information, Jan agreed it would be good to have any draft survey instrument in the study plan if we know we are going to do interviews.

- **Social Conditions and Public Goods and Services Study** – Includes Project effects on the economies of affected communities, including: Municipality of Anchorage, Fairbanks North Star Borough, Valdez-Cordova Census Area, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Y-K Census Area, Mat-Su Borough, Denali Borough.
 - Lisa McDonald (The Louis Berger Group) indicated that there is new information in the field of sociology to provide guidance to identifying objective questions for surveys and how to extract the information using a survey instrument. She asked what methods would be used to estimate any economic values associated with subsistence and recreation use of the region. Pat Burden (Northern Economics) indicated that existing data will be used to the extent available. Decision to use travel cost versus random utility model will be made soon in terms of trying to put some economic values on these uses.
 - Cassie Thomas (NPS) expressed concerns about whether the recreation study and the socioeconomics study plans are going to sample the “adventure tourist” population of recreationists (in state and out of state tourists), which she speculated may be more significant to this Project area than commercial tourism. Cassie noted that commercial service providers (e.g. Mahay’s, Princess Lodge, etc.), are not really the primary users of the Project area, particularly in the winter. Many people get to the Project area without the use of commercial service providers. She asked how non-consumptive users (someone who is not there to hunt/fish) would be sampled?
 - Bridget Easley (URS) indicated that creating a description of recreational uses of the Project area is not going to be strictly statistical in nature and that many data collection efforts will be made
 - Jenny Spegon (USFWS) expressed concern that local communities will feel left out if not involved in the surveys. The surveys might appear to be to a selective audience, rather than a random audience. They may feel like they are part of the affected group, but were not surveyed for their input, particularly with respect to quality of life issues.
 - Jan Konigsberg (National Heritage Institute) suggested online surveys. The group agreed that online surveys could introduce statistical bias, but could be valuable from a qualitative standpoint or capturing certain types of users.
 - Cassie Thomas (NPS) mentioned that phone surveys could also introduce bias; many residents have only cell phones, and no land lines.
 - Jan Konigsberg (National Heritage Institute) commented on the exclusion of the national valuation component to the study, In his mind, it is a difference of opinion on interpretation of the Federal Power Act. However, he is not opposed to the current studies, but feels that there should be a national component as well. He agreed to disagree on that aspect, but is supportive of moving forward with the existing studies.

Action Items

1. Identify typical survey questions and categories of who will be surveyed. Check recent literature regarding use and methods for improving informal surveys. Participate in follow up meetings on surveys methods and instruments to help ensure quality of life and recreation questions are included in the surveys.

Transportation & Air Quality – Kristen Hansen (DOWL HKM)

- **Transportation Resources Study – Includes** all routes and modes, primarily in the Mat-Su and Denali boroughs, and also port and rail activity. There will not be a specific transportation survey; transportation usage will be gathered from existing information and by inclusion on other resource surveys (i.e. recreation).
 - Cassie Thomas (NPS) indicated that this study highlights the need to include transportation questions on other surveys. Not only on recreation survey, because people use the river for other purposes than just recreation.
 - Jenny Spagon (USFWS) inquired how will people who own land but are only there seasonally be reached to survey. Bridget Easley (URS) indicated that residents are interested in many things besides just recreation (i.e. quality of life, power availability, etc.).

Action Items

1. Consider use of survey questions in other disciplines to help get at understanding of river and overland transportation uses along the River downstream of Watana dam.
- **Air Quality Study – the** goal is to determine potential for violating any air quality regulations, primarily within the Project vicinity (direct/indirect impacts), and also assess Railbelt emissions.
 - Other studies are going to be utilizing results from traffic and air quality studies. So it will be important to front-load 2013 activities to keep those studies moving forward.

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) – Dr. Paul Anderson (DHHS)

- **Not a FERC requirement, but AEA is electing to go complete an HIA for the Project**
 - HIA technical guidance available at: www.epi.alaska.gov
 - Lisa Wade (Chickaloon Village) inquired what type of HIA, comprehensive versus rapid would be used. Dr. Anderson (DHHS) replied Comprehensive.
 - Lisa Wade (Chickaloon Village) indicated that the data on subsistence use, particularly as it pertains to Mat-Su Borough, is lacking, and asked if there will be a way of getting at that information.
 - Tracy Krauthoefer (HDR) indicated that Traditional and local knowledge interviews will be conducted in this area.
 - Lisa Wade (Chickaloon Village) indicated that this is a traditional use area, and suggested speaking with Knik tribe, or Richard Porter, on subsistence issues as well. Chickaloon would appreciate continued involvement. Dr. Anderson indicated that Newfields would be the contractor conducting the HIA.

- Marie Steele (ADNR-OPMP) highlighted the need for close resource coordination, particularly with regard to the critical path schedule since the HIA will utilize results from many resource studies.
- Pat Burden (Northern Economics) indicated there would be some coordination with social conditions study results as well

Project Safety: Probable Maximum Flood & Seismic Studies – Bryan Carey (AEA)

- **Probable Maximum Flood**
 - Marie Steele (ADNR-OPMP) asked if any of the studies will evaluate an unintentional release from the reservoir. Bryan Carey (AEA) responded that an unintentional release from the reservoir would not result in the entire reservoir suddenly emptying. The dam structure would still be in place, and an unintentional release would likely come in the form of a leak or crack in the dam..
- **Site Specific Seismic Hazards Evaluation – Bryan Carey (AEA)**
 - Brian Sadden (MWH) explained that every dam under FERC jurisdiction undergoes periodic dam break modeling. An emergency action plan is developed based on this flood condition/ event, and is activated in tabletop drill scenarios. This will be developed in early design and construction.
 - Kirby Gilbert (MWH) added that there will be temporary emergency action plans for construction activities (for use of cofferdams to reroute flows, etc).
 - Marie Steele (ADNR-OPMP) encouraged a robust community planning aspect for emergency response, as this Project moves forward, using lessons learned from Louisiana and gulf oil spill. David Turner (FERC) indicated that these issues will be addressed in the dam safety plan, rather than during NEPA assessment. Brian Carey (AEA) added that the Board of Consultants will be involved very early in the Project development, which typically occurs much later.
 - Kim Nguyen (FERC) requested that AEA contact Doug Johnson at FERC at Portland Regional Office regarding any further comments to the study plan.

Action Items

1. Contact Doug Johnson at FERC Portland Regional Office to obtain any comments on the study plans.

Recreation, River Flow, and Aesthetic Studies – Bridget Easley (URS)

There will be several different types of surveys and interviews. Much of it will be qualitative, some statistical. More development is needed in these areas. Other than sightseeing along the Parks Highway, recreation is varied and sparse (e.g. hunting) – interception surveys will be difficult. A multi-disciplinary survey may be necessary to avoid reaching out to the same people multiple times.

Harry Williamson (NPS) indicated the importance of seeing a preliminary version of the survey instrument as soon as possible. Bridget Easley (URS) indicated that a survey instrument could be ready to be released by mid-September or so and a review/discussion meeting could be held.

- Recreation Resources Study

- Cassie Thomas (NPS) would like to see a survey instrument that specifically addresses recreation winter use and travel.
- Bob Koenitzer (McDowell) cautioned about survey creep; perhaps it is necessary to send out smaller surveys to targeted groups (snow machiners, etc.).
- Aesthetics Resources Study (includes sound)
 - Jim Kari (ANLC-UAF) mentioned that nomenclature from Alaska Native groups, specifically Ahtna, could be included in naming sites.
 - Bridget Easley (URS) requested to meet with NPS and others on methodology for the sound study. Cassie would like to be consulted on site selection; she is unavailable August 9-27. Mark (ADF&G) would also like to be included. Sound (and visual) sites can be discussed further at a meeting in September.
- Recreational Boating/ River Access Study (likely to be renamed Recreation Flow Study)
 - Ken Wilcox (FERC) inquired how users of the upper reach (from Project area up to the Denali Highway) would be affected once they reach the Project area. John Gangemi (ERM) responded that this is an area that will be targeted; is important for egress from the river as well.
- Harry Williamson (NPS) indicated the need to understand how all the surveys and data gathered from other studies are going to be interrelated. He inquired when/what preliminary information from the 2012 recreation study would be available before the October 15 comment dead line. Betsy McGregor (AEA) indicated that the 2012 recreation data was basic reconnaissance-level information.
- Cassie Thomas (NPS) – We understand that it is preliminary data, and likely will change, but it will at least provide some baseline information.
- Harry Williamson (NPS) would like to see the revised study plans include appendices of the actual survey instruments.
- Ken Wilcox (FERC) indicated that the Revised Study Plan should include a list of potential locations identified for intercept surveys and initial Key Observation Points (KOPs) should be identified in the study plans if possible.

Action Items

1. Hold workshop or meeting to go over survey instrument, survey plan, and initial selection of KOPs.
2. Conduct consultation prior to distribution of the preliminary survey instrument. Include Cassie Thomas (NPS).
3. Set up meeting between URS and NPS regarding sound study methodology and site selection.
4. Include survey instruments as appendices in Revised Study Plans.
5. Add a list of potential locations identified for intercept surveys and initial KOPs.

Cultural & Paleontological Resources Studies – Chuck Mobley (Charles M. Mobley & Associates)

- **Cultural Resource Inventory and Evaluation**
- **Ethnogeographic and Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) Inventory and Evaluation**

- **Paleontological Resource Inventory**
- **2012 Survey Data and Applications**
- Frank Winchell (FERC) indicated that the definition of the Area of Potential Effect (APE) is the primary issue to be resolved. He suggested starting out with APE map that shows area of direct effect, area of indirect effects, land ownership and previously-surveyed areas and distributing it to the cultural resources workgroup for a meeting later in August or so. Shina DuVall (OHA-SHPO) indicated that it is acceptable to refine the APE as the Project components become clearer and unknowns are eliminated.
- Pete Bowers (NLUR) confirmed that transportation and recreation studies will be considered in refinement of the APE, particularly the indirect effects.
- Shina DuVall (OHA-SHPO) indicated that distinguishing between direct/indirect APE is less important to SHPO, but is usually helpful for project planners. APE should include all alternatives, and when they are eliminated, then the APE can be refined.
- Chuck Mobley (Charles M. Mobley & Associates) inquired if the entire list of native entities identified in the PSP should be invited to the APE meeting. Shina DuVall (OHA-SHPO) indicated that it would be better to cast a wider net, and allow the various groups the opportunity to participate. However, just sending a letter and not receiving a response is not necessarily enough; a good faith effort to follow up with groups and give them an opportunity to respond and participate would need to be made.
- Frank Winchell (FERC) suggested consulting with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation concerning the APE discussions.
- Pete Bowers (NLUR) mentioned the need to identify culturally-modified trees, such as intertwined trees or trailmarkers.
- Frank Winchell (FERC) inquired if a tribal representative/monitor would participate during field studies.
- Wayne Dyok (AEA) suggested including the Mat-Su Borough (Fran Seager-Boss) in the discussions.

Action Items

1. Develop a map/maps showing draft direct/indirect APEs and land ownership and provide to workgroup.
2. Set up a workgroup meeting for later in August or September to develop APE rationale and initial APE.

Subsistence Study – Paul Lawrence (Stephen R. Braund & Associates)

- Paul Lawrence (Stephen R. Braund & Associates) confirmed that preliminary information would be available within a relatively quick timeframe for other resources to utilize in their analyses.
- Steve Braund (Stephen R. Braund & Associates) stated that cultural and subsistence studies should be coordinated to identify the “overlap” between the two resources.
- Davin Holen (ADF&G) confirmed that the ADF&G interviews will help to identify the people in the communities that will be good to interview.

- Ken Wilcox (FERC) indicated that it would be nice to have clarification between the users that are living off the grid (a subsistence lifestyle) versus those utilizing areas for recreation.
- David Turner (FERC) inquired how off-the-grid residents would be captured.
- Marie Steele (ADNR-OPMP) inquired if a comprehensive data document of all survey results could be produced after all work is completed.
- Steve Braund (Stephen R. Braund & Associates) suggested that following the recreation survey workshop meeting, a list of desired survey questions be sent to them to determine how they can be accommodated in their survey.
- Kirby Gilbert (MWH) requested the survey instrument be included in the Study Plan..

Action Items

1. Davin Holen (ADF&G) to send Steve Braund (Stephen R. Braund & Associates) a list of communities to be studied.
2. Davin Holen (ADF&G) to provide a copy of the survey instrument, for work that will be conducted in January 2013.
3. Steve Braund (Stephen R. Braund & Associates) to provide survey instrument for the remaining communities.