



SUSITNA-WATANA HYDRO

Meeting Notes Cultural Resources Technical Workgroup Meeting September 11, 2013

LOCATION: AEA Offices – Board Room
813 Northern Lights Blvd
Anchorage, AK

TIME: 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Quarterly Status of 2013 Studies

GoTo MEETING: <https://www4.gotomeeting.com/register/821443215>
1-800-315-6338 Code 3957#

Goal: Brief Licensing Participants on Progress of Cultural and Paleontological Resources Studies

ATTENDEES: Richard VanderHoek ADNR/OHA, Justin Crowther AEA, Julie Anderson AEA, Wayne Dyok AEA, Andrew Fraiser AEA, Betsy McGregor AEA, Charles Mobley Charles M. Mobley & Associates, Dara Glass CIRI, Tracie Krauthoefer HDR, Fran Seager-Boss Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Kirby Gilbert MWH, Heather Williams MWH, Justin Hays NLURA, Taylor Brelsford URS, Bill Simeone URS, Chuck Sensiba Van Ness Feldman

ON PHONE: Heide Lingenfelter Ahtna, Inc., John Jangala BLM, Becky Long Coalition for Susitna Dam Alternatives, Frank Winchell FERC, Phillip Manning KTNA, Paul Roderick self

This was the third 2013 quarterly cultural resources Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting. The quarterly TWG meetings are intended to provide status on study plan progress, communication and discussion regarding any study plan variances that may be required given actual field conditions, and planned next steps.

The agenda, documents, and supporting presentations can be found on the meetings page at <http://www.susitna-watanahydro.org/>. These meeting notes are intended to supply information and significant consultation not included in the provided materials.

Following introductions and a brief overview regarding overall project status, presentations were made on the following studies:

- Archaeological Investigations;
- Ethnogeographic Studies;
- Paleoenvironmental Investigation;
- 2013 Study Facilities Survey; and
- Paleontological Inventory.

Project Status Overview (Kirby Gilbert MWH)

Final study plans for most of the 58 studies are now posted on the documents page at <http://www.susitna-watanahydro.org/> for reference. The final study plans incorporate FERC Study Plan Determinations that modified the Revised Study Plans. Scheduling for the fourth quarterly TWG meetings will be announced soon. The next formal reporting on these social science studies will be February 3, 2014 with submittal of the Initial Study Report (ISR).

Archaeological Investigations (Justin Hays NLURA)

Archeological study team accomplished 2013 pedestrian investigations on permitted lands as planned. Good weather allowed for some additional reconnaissance for future work. Pedestrian surveys utilized transects at 10-meter spacing. Due to a lack of access permits, the 2013 pedestrian surveys did not occur on CIRI lands or lands owned by Cook Inlet Region Village Corporations.

Aerial surveys were also conducted. The remainder of the aerial surveys will be conducted in 2014. Re-inventory of known AHRS sites was highly successful, despite the challenges with existing location data. AHRS database location error at sites increased from about 155m for sites visited in 2012 to about 370m for sites visited in 2013. New site discoveries were primary surface artifacts, including lithic scatters, lanceolate points, microblades, and microblade cores; however this is not necessarily representative of final findings since 2013 field work did not include subsurface investigation. Surface artifacts are not easily datable, but most appeared to be quite weathered and covered with old lichen. The planned 2014 subsurface investigations may yield artifacts that could be radio-carbon dated. Data from other studies will also help determine periods and traditions associated with the surface artifacts. Interpretation of cairns is one example where ethnogeographic information may be helpful. Spike camp information was shared between teams nearly real-time to facilitate logistics and reduction of impact on hunters using the study area. Safety training efforts were highly successful. Unanticipated Discoveries Protocol training was provided to field crews from all resource areas. Training materials were helpful; a training video was developed which is being evaluated for improvement. The Unanticipated Discoveries Plan was correctly implemented; two reports were received from other study teams, including latitude/longitude information that was used to determine that both were known sites. Although no Alaska Natives accompanied the team specifically for a tribal perspective, the team does employ Alaska Natives.

Ethnogeographic Studies (Bill Simeone URS)

The Ahtna ethnogeography investigation is underway, using a shared leadership approach. The Elders Conference and interviews were successful and appreciated. The investigation process is stimulating more questions and involvement in the project, as the Ahtna people become more aware of what it entails. Historical use patterns are being compared with contemporary use patterns. Some observed and reported caribou movements have been useful to help inform the archaeological survey work. Recurring topics appearing in the tape translations include travel, supernatural stories of big fish, and historical information from the late 19th century. Ahtna tribal officials prefer to respect the Cantwell Ahtna band's traditional territory, rather than ANCSA boundaries, in regard to participation in the Project. The Cantwell Ahtna band, including those who no longer live in Cantwell, still use traditional sites, even though some of the place names used to identify them have changed. According to these interviews, Ahtna people appear to have consolidated their hold on the Upper Susitna area by defeating Lower Tanana people by 1865 or so. There was then movement to Valdez Creek upon gold discovery in 1903, followed by movement to Cantwell when the mine closed. Use of collected information is being handled in accordance with national ethics standards for registered archaeologists. The people themselves decide whether or not to provide information, and what is done with the collected information.

A Dena'ina ethnogeography study is planned for 2014, pending arrangements being made by AEA.

There was much discussion on how artifacts and remains found on private lands. AEA confirmed that they will abide by conditions set in any permits issues by particular landowners. The Unanticipated Discoveries Plan may require

changes to accommodate private landowner concerns, perhaps by referencing permit conditions per landowner. There was further discussion that the plans for cultural resources management need to consider not just the unanticipated discovery plan protocols, but how artifacts are curated and handled, and longer term policies and plans for management over the term of a new FERC license. Both Heide from Ahtna and Dara from CIRI stated that protocols for handling any sensitive cultural materials should be worked out with AEA and Alaska Native entities. Dara from CIRI stated that CIRI and the Cook Inlet Region Village Corporations intend to issue a 2014 access permit to AEA no later than January 1, 2014, and requested that the parties work together to develop protocols that would apply to lands owned by CIRI and the Cook Inlet Region Village Corporations. AEA agreed to work together with CIRI and Cook Inlet Region Village Corporations to develop requirements, standards and procedures that, while meeting state legal requirements, would apply to cultural resources when accessing Cook Inlet Region Village Corporation Lands. AEA also expressed a willingness to revisit the Unanticipated Discoveries Plan protocols to see what can be done to provide flexibility for protocols that may differ on private lands versus Federal or State lands, but requested CIRI, Ahtna, and other parties to identify specific issues in the Unanticipated Discoveries Plan protocols that they would like to see changed.

2013 Study Facilities Survey (Charles Mobley Charles M. Mobley & Associates)

Study Facilities Surveys are being conducted on an as-needed basis to satisfy Section 106. There was only one survey conducted in 2013, for the installation of a seismic station on Deadman Mountain. Survey information will be documented in the ISR.

Pertaining to a question about the Seismic station, it was noted that the site-specific hazard study will be discussed at the TWG meeting on September 25th, and included in the ISR.

Paleoenvironmental Investigation (Justin Hays NLURA)

Paleoenvironmental program is being conducted mostly by UAF researchers, in 2014. Only planning activities have occurred in 2013. SHPO has a high level of interest in this study. Coring is expected to take place in April 2014. A lake location has not yet been selected, but will be determined based on ADF&G proxy data rather than bathymetry.

Paleontological Inventory (Justin Hays NLURA)

Paleontological study is planned for 2014. There is some planning for the 2014 work including gathering results from the 2013 soils studies.

General

There was some discussion about the disposition of artifacts that have ended up in UAF archives. Some Project stakeholders may want to consider alternatives that do not require collection of artifacts, such as making notes and repatriation, or replication technologies.

Action Item**Responsibility**

Look into possibility of accompanying archaeological crews on future site work.	Frank Winchell FERC
BLM requests a breakout of federal acres in the report.	Justin Hays NLURA
Provide Dena'ina land use document mentioned in the meeting to Betsy McGregor AEA for distribution to appropriate study lead.	Dara Glass CIRI
Review the Unanticipated Discoveries Plan and identify areas of possible revision for private lands, such as notification, artifact treatment, and confidentiality procedures.	Dara Glass CIRI and Heide Lingenfelter Ahtna
Work with Cook Inlet Region Village Corporations and CIRI to update the Unanticipated Discoveries Plan to reference permit conditions regarding notification, artifact treatment and confidentiality procedures. This will allow individual private landowners to specify protocols according to their specific needs in their individual permits, within the confines of the law.	Wayne Dyok, Julie Anderson and Betsy McGregor , AEA