

Columbia River Policy Advisory Group

Yakima, Washington

October 11, 2006

The following people attended the meeting:

Participants:

Dale Bambrick, National Marine Fisheries Service
Max Benitz, Benton County Commission
Gary Chandler, Association of Washington Business
Kathleen Collins, Water Policy Alliance
Jon Culp, Washington State Conservation Commission
Cindy Custer, Bonneville Power Administration
Dick Erickson, East Columbia Basin Irrigation District
Jim Fredericks, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Michael Garrity, American Rivers
Rick George, Umatilla Tribes
Bill Gray, Bureau of Reclamation
Tony Grover, NW Power Council
Bob Hammond, City of Kennewick
Joe Lukas, Grant County PUD
Gerry O'Keefe, Department of Ecology
Darryll Olsen, Columbia-Snake Rivers Irrigators Association
Merrill Ott, Stevens County Commission
Gary Passmore, Colville Tribes
Lisa Pelly, Washington Rivers Conservancy
Phil Rigdon, Yakama Nation
Derek Sandison, Department of Ecology
Mike Schwisow, Columbia Basin Development League
Teresa Scott, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Rich Stevens, Grant County Commission

Others in attendance:

Stuart Crane, Yakama Nation
Debbie Colbert, Oregon Water Resources Department
Dennis Dorratcague, MWH Americas Inc.
Andrew Grassell, Chelan PUD
Dan Haller, Department of Ecology
Justin Harter, Naches-Selah Irrigation District
Carla Hough, WSU
Steve Hughes, URS Corporation
Ron Hull, Grant Conservation District

Brad Johnson, WRIA #35
Milt Johnston, Washington Department of Natural Resources
Chuck Klarich, Black Rock Project
Paul LaRiviere, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
David McClure, Klickitat County, WRIAs 30 and 31
Elizabeth McManus, facilitator
VJ Meadows, Benton County
Kathy Moses, Colville Tribe
Jim Newell, WSU
Meghan O'Brien, Department of Ecology
Bill Quaempts, Umatilla Tribe
Joye Redfield-Wilder, Department of Ecology
Tom Ring, Yakama Nation
Pat Ryan, Washington Department of Natural Resources
Dan Silver, facilitator
Paul Stoker, Ground Water Management Area
John Strand, WSU Tri-Cities
Mike Taylor, Cascade Economics LLC
Tom Tebb, Department of Ecology
Steve Thurin, HDR

The subcommittee on project selection criteria presented a set of questions and issues that it had developed to guide decisions about which projects to fund. Members of the subcommittee were Tony Grover (chair), Jon Culp, Dan Haller, Lisa Pelly, and Mike Schwisow. The subcommittee proposed that some of the questions could be used for screening, that is, an application could be rejected if it did not pass muster on one of the screening questions, and other questions could be used to balance between projects that meet the initial screening criteria.

The PAG sought to clarify the screening and balancing questions and get a clearer sense of the definitions from the legislation that would affect funding criteria and decisions. The group also discussed the importance of considering the comments received on the discussion of funding in the EIS. The PAG asked the funding subcommittee to redraft the questions based on the discussion and then circulate the questions to the PAG and solicit written comments. The subcommittee will redraft the questions by October 20 and the facilitators will distribute them. Comments will be due on November 20, when the EIS comment period ends. These questions and criteria will then be discussed again at the December 14 meeting.

At the September meeting, the PAG had requested that Ecology develop a timeline on when various programmatic and project actions would be ripe for discussion and be more explicit about when it wanted to get advice and on which activities. In response to this request Derek Sandison (Ecology) handed out a list of programmatic and project activities and a timeline to illustrate when preliminary work was expected to be completed for these activities. Members expressed an interest in dealing with projects as well as policy issues. Various members also emphasized the need and opportunity to

build on relationships among the parties at the table rather than just focusing on Ecology's actions. The sense of the group was that it would be useful to make progress on an incremental basis, while also working to resolve conflicts about the larger set of issues associated with the Columbia River.

The group selected these projects for discussion and review in future months:

January – Kennewick Irrigation District Pump, Exchange/Diversion Point Change

March -- Off-channel Storage

June – Lake Roosevelt Drawdown

Dan Haller (Ecology) then briefed the group on two forthcoming draft reports: The Water Supply Inventory and the Supply and Demand Forecast, reports to the Legislature, both due out in draft on October 16 and in final form on November 15. These reports were developed on a very aggressive schedule since the passage of the Columbia River Bill. The Inventory will provide guidance to Ecology and the region to identify future water supply projects. The Supply and Demand Forecast describe sources of future demand and factors that could potentially change available supplies of water.

The two reports were based on published materials and on informed, unpublished information. The Inventory will include a compilation of potential conservation and storage projects throughout the Basin. The Supply and Demand Forecast will have maps and graphic depictions of water rights and applications one-mile proximate to the Columbia River. In combination, the reports are an effort to establish current baseline conditions and provide a context for identifying demands that will be made on the system, in-stream needs, and potential means of bringing demand and supply into balance.

A panel comprised of Dale Bambrick from National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, Cindy Custer from the Bonneville Power Administration BPA, Bill Gray from the Bureau of Reclamation, and Jim Fredericks from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers briefed the PAG on the nexus between federal actions on the Columbia River and potential state activities under the Columbia River Bill. Each of the panelists described generally how his or her agency is involved with the Columbia River. The panelists expressed their appreciation to be included early in the discussions about potential projects or policies, and they each concluded that there was a significant nexus between federal responsibilities and potential state actions. A number of things being considered by the PAG could trigger the consultation requirements of the Endangered Species Act. The panelists each expressed openness to considering various projects but also noted that the Columbia River is a highly managed river and the system constraints can be difficult to change. Taking flows away from existing needs for hydropower production will affect the system's ability to produce the hydroelectric power upon which

the region depends. Panelists noted the difference between the July-August protection of flows in the Columbia River Bill and the federal BIOP flow targets, which cover other months. They indicated that any proposed project that made it less likely that BIOP target flows would be met in any month would be problematic. Nonetheless, each panelist expressed an interest in developing the groundwork and relationships to lead to successful implementation of projects and policies.

Toward the end of the meeting, the PAG discussed their thoughts about topics for future meetings. A number of members commented on the importance of understanding the different perspectives various members held and of developing and nurturing relationships that would lead to solutions and positive outcomes.

The Executive Committee will meet to determine the agenda for the next meeting or, alternatively, to postpone the next meeting. The next meeting is currently planned to be held in **Hal Holmes Center in Ellensburg on Thursday November 9, beginning at 9:00 a.m.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.