

**Columbia River Treaty 2014-2024 Review
Stakeholder Listening Session
October 13, 2011; 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Boise, ID**

Summary of Dialogue

Attendees:

Sovereign Representatives and Staff

Taylor Aalvick, Cowlitz Indian Tribe
Witt Anderson, USACE
Mark Bagdovitz, US Fish & Wildlife
Christine Golightly, CRITFC
Jim Heffernan, CRITFC
Keith Kutchins, UCUT
DR Michel, UCUT
Molly Moreland, BPA
Rick Pendergrass, BPA
Lori Postlethwait, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Matt Rea, USACE
Rick Rolf, BPA
Nancy Stephan, BPA
John J. Williams, BPA Idaho

Stakeholders

Scott Barillaro, BC Ministry of Energy and Mines
Mark Bransom, CH2M Hill Engineering
Ellen Berggren, US Army Corps of Engineers
Greg Clark, US Geologic Survey
Clay Fitch, Wells Rural Electric
Jim Fodrea, HDR Engineering
Curt Fransen, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Gerry Gregg, US Bureau of Reclamation
Rae Lene Gould, Washington State League of Women Voters
Helen Harrington, Idaho Water Resources
Bob Jenson, Oregon Legislative Assembly
Shirley Lindstrom, NW Power and Conservation Council
Ryan McDaniel, Idaho Department of Water Resources
Mary McGown, Idaho Department of Water Resources
Terry Maret, US Geologic Survey
Tessia Park, Idaho Power
Shawn Parkinson, Idaho Power
Tim Personius, Bureau of Reclamation
Mike Roach, SR RISCH
Kathryn Rodden, National Weather Service

Norm Semanko, Idaho Water Users Association
Tom Stuart, Idaho Rivers United
Glen Traeger, Renewable Resources

Purpose and Overview of the Listening Session

This Listening Session was designed to hear from the region's stakeholders about the alternatives that will be analyzed through the Columbia River Treaty Review process. This was one of three such sessions held throughout the region in September-October 2011.

The meeting began with a presentation from Matt Rea, Treaty Review project manager for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Matt provided background on the Treaty Review process, as well as information about the preliminary alternatives under consideration and the iterative process that will be used to evaluate those alternatives. A copy of Matt's presentation can be found on the Treaty Review website at: www.crt2014-2024review.gov.

After the presentation, attendees divided into small groups to share their questions and comments about the alternatives. Participants divided themselves according to ecosystem interests, power interests, and flood risk management/irrigation interests. At this session a group of people also participated via webinar, and shared their opinions on the alternatives during the discussion period. After about an hour of discussion, all of the attendees reconvened to hear from the group facilitators about the themes and comments received.

The following is a summary of the comments made during the session.

Hydropower Alternatives

- It's important to resolve the issue of called-upon. 600 kcfs is the Canadian view, and 450 kcfs is the U.S. view. How will this discrepancy be resolved?
- It's important to get a handle on the value of the Canadian entitlement. Many of the region's utilities believe it is currently too costly. About a quarter of this total cost is currently being paid by the Mid-Columbia utilities.
- There is a great deal to understand about the Canadian power system. Why would Canada put more power in the market especially given current market conditions? Why would they want to dramatically shift operations? Canada is a winter-peaking system, for domestic supply. How might Canada market power in July & August? What other markets could drive their choices? Is there the possibility that we could lose our August-September flows for fish if Canada operates their system differently? The Province of BC "owns" the Canadian entitlement. They re-market much of that power back to the US, with the proceeds going into the Province's general fund.
- The original Treaty drafters believed that U.S. power generation would increasingly come from thermal resources, and that the entitlement amount/value would decrease over time. That has not been the case.
- It's important that you are clear on how factors such as renewable resources and conservation will be considered in the alternatives. What data will be used regarding load/resource balance and the power markets?

- If we don't have the Treaty, what will happen to the U.S. capacity to meet its energy needs? Are we better or worse off with the Treaty?
- There may be times when our capacity will not meet our needs. How do you mitigate for that risk? Renewable resources are currently not reliable enough to provide the certainty we need to meet current and future demands.
- Our ability to provide energy is a draw to foreign investment for our region. How might that be jeopardized with or without the Treaty?
- Are we doing an adequate job of assessing risks, given how many uncertainties there are? For example, forecasters 60 years ago predicted higher thermals, lower hydro production, but that didn't pan out. How can we learn from the past -- what happens if your forecasts don't come true?
- Another variable to consider is current environmental legislation that could put limits on the use of coal.
- Do you have enough time to adequately complete the analysis?
- How much would the Snake River system and its tributaries have to mitigate for flood control and other needs if the Treaty is terminated? How much input will we have in that? Is the Snake River included in your alternatives?
- How would additional operations; for example, more storage and flow usage, be modeled beyond the currently licensed requirements? Is that included in the modeling?
- What more might we be asked to do? Idaho cares about what happens to its reservoirs – recreation, irrigation, power production impacts. If we're going to be asked to do more/something different than our currently licensed operations, we want input on that. Hydropower costs in Idaho are increasing, our resources are being tapped, and our flexibility is being limited. We are concerned.
- Flow augmentation must be considered carefully and modeled more accurately.
- Are additional storage possibilities in the U.S. or Canada being considered?

Flood Control Alternatives/Irrigation Interests

- What is the scope of the projects that will be potentially impacted by the alternatives? We need to clearly understand those impacts. We also need clarity on the authority of the Corps and Bureau of Reclamation on the Upper Snake River dams.
- The impacts of different operational scenarios on all existing uses – hydropower, flood control, recreation, irrigation, etc. – should be evaluated.
- Would new flood control projects be needed under some alternatives?
- Can flood control/management be shifted from projects to improve the Spring hydrograph?
- How will the models capture the flood risks at the 450 kcfs vs 600 kcfs “called upon” levels? How would you adjust for this in-season?
- What is an “acceptable” level of flood risk? Who makes that decision? How is “risk” captured and distributed?
- Flood risk management should be integrated with ecosystem concerns. We need flexibility in this regard.
- If there were additional costs for some private projects, how would those costs be assessed and distributed? Can you define scenarios in which those projects might be asked to change

operations, and how would that fit with current Federal Energy Regulatory Commission regulations?

Ecosystem-Based Function Alternatives

- It's important to understand how any changes in operations will affect water quality in Idaho: specifically, dissolved oxygen and other gases, contaminants, and sediments.
- Do you have a specific goal in mind for ecosystem function? A target you are trying to achieve?

Webinar Participants

Callers on the webinar represented the Washington State League of Women Voters, HDR Consulting, and a firm with interests in renewable energy resources. The comments included:

- Who pays for infrastructure improvements for flood risk management? If we go to called-upon who pays? Will that come back to local government?
- Irrigation is really important, not just for agricultural interests, but for our region's economy as a whole. How is irrigation being accounted for in Treaty Review? There is currently a study underway in Washington State that is evaluating water supply needs. That study should be incorporated into the Treaty Review process.
- How are you accounting for power costs in Treaty Review? What is the basis for your cost analysis?
- The Columbia River is a rapidly moving target. How can you effectively model the Columbia River system?