

**Columbia River Treaty 2014-2024 Review
Stakeholder Listening Session
June 10, 2011; 9:00-Noon
Spokane, Washington**

Listening Session Summary

Overview

Under the Columbia River Treaty, Canada and the United States (U.S.) jointly manage the Columbia River for power generation and flood control as it flows from British Columbia into the United States. The U.S. Entity, designated to implement the Treaty for the U.S., is comprised of the Administrator of the Bonneville Power Administration as Chairman and the Division Engineer of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Northwestern Division as Member.

The U.S. Entity is currently conducting a review to evaluate the future of the Columbia River Treaty after 2024. The Columbia River Treaty 2014/2024 Review (Treaty Review) establishes a framework for interested parties to collaborate with the U.S. Entity as it studies and evaluates alternatives needed to better understand the implications of post-2024 Treaty scenarios. By late 2013, the U.S. Entity will make a recommendation to the U.S. Department of State on whether it is in the best interest of the U.S. to continue, terminate, or seek to amend the Treaty.

The Treaty Review Sovereign Participation Process establishes a framework for sovereign parties to collaborate and coordinate with the U.S. Entity in the process of conducting technical studies and evaluating alternatives needed to better understand potential Treaty futures. A broader group of regional stakeholders (outside of the sovereigns) will also be invited to regularly participate at key milestones in the study process.

Part of this process includes the formation of a Sovereign Review Team (SRT). The “sovereigns” participating on the team include representatives from the states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana, 15 Northwest Tribes (5 Representatives on the Sovereign Review Team), National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bonneville Power Administration, Bureau of Land Management, Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Geological Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and National Park Service.

The SRT meets monthly to review and discuss policy-related issues. The SRT is ultimately responsible to deliver a recommendation to the U.S. Entity regarding the future of the Treaty. Providing technical, modeling, and analytical support to the SRT is the Sovereign Technical Team (STT). The STT is made up of technical representatives from the same organizations and entities participating on the SRT. It is the responsibility of this team to organize and review the technical studies and data that will inform the SRT.

June 10 Stakeholder Listening Session

On June 10, 2011, the U.S. Entity sponsored a half- day “listening session” to hear from regional stakeholders. At this point in the Treaty Review process, the Sovereign Technical Team and

Sovereign Review Team are beginning to develop the study alternatives. The purpose of the listening session was to hear from stakeholders on the elements, issues, and questions they believe are important to include in these study alternatives.

About 20 people signed in on Friday morning, and another 6 individuals participated via webinar. The June 10 listening session was preceded on Thursday evening by a “Treaty 101” presentation by Matt Rea from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Nancy Stephan, from the Bonneville Power Administration. Approximately 9 people attended this session.

The listening session was presided over, and facilitated by, members of the Sovereign Review Team. The meeting began with a presentation by SRT member Brian Lipscomb, who provided an update on the work completed to date by the SRT. Matt Rea from the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers described the “reference operations” that will serve as a baseline from which to evaluate other alternatives that are developed for modeling and analysis.

After Matt’s presentation, meeting participants engaged in small group discussions, sharing the elements, issues, and questions they hope to see evaluated in the alternatives. After about an hour of discussion, each table facilitator (an SRT member) reported on the results of the discussion. In addition to the oral comments, a number of individuals submitted written comments and questions at the end of the meeting.

The suggestions for study alternatives are summarized according to key themes:

Canadian Entitlement and Canadian Operations

- The Canadian Entitlement needs to be more proportional to flood control and other benefits we get from Canada. For example, the current Treaty doesn’t factor in the accommodations we make for fish. That must be analyzed through the alternatives.
- Another consideration should be Canada’s plans for system improvements, for example the proposed new hydro plant at Peace River.
- The alternatives should take into account the way in which Canada intends to operate in the future; they will be serving their own load and trying to maximize their revenues.
- If we are able to achieve a monetary savings through a renegotiation of the Treaty, how could we better use that money in the U.S. What might we do with that savings?
- Can we develop an alternative where termination occurs and we shift those resources instead to our own power, ecosystem, and water supply needs? Could we invest that money in new infrastructure to meet those needs?
- Let’s have an alternative that assumes there is no Treaty. Then, let’s look at the possibilities of optimizing the U.S. system. If there are additional needs beyond that, we should determine how to fill those gaps.
- How will the payment to Canada change if we move to a called-upon arrangement?
- Take Canadian operations/market into account. How will we use the market price in called-upon?

Hydropower

- It’s important to recognize how much the hydropower system has changed since the Treaty was first negotiated. There have been major changes, such as the development of

renewable resources, for example. Other resources, such as the Centralia Coal Plant, are coming off-line. Changes have taken place in the transmission system, and more such developments are being planned. The Treaty Review needs to acknowledge these changes and ask these questions: What is the current system capable of achieving? And how would a better optimized system fit into a future Treaty discussion?

- One goal should be to reduce the deep drafts of Coulee Dam. Or, if they will continue to occur, the Coulee pumping system should be improved there. This is just one of a number of improvements that could be made at Coulee.
- Is there a minimum flow that's required for power systems and/or should we look at one moving forward?
- Different scenarios for potential load growth should be examined. It's important, for example, to review the Power Council's projections. Understand and look more closely at the uncertainties. Understand the impacts of population growth.
- Future assumptions for power conservation need to be incorporated. For example, could some of the alternatives analyze the impacts of incentivizing smart grid or other conservation-type power arrangements?
- Pricing and point of hydropower delivery – where and how does that fit into the modeling? Shaping of power production needs to be included.
- The additional generation we anticipate beyond 2024 should be included in the alternatives.
- We have to consider an alternative to transmission delivery at Blaine – look at Oliver.
- A transmission change that must be incorporated into the alternatives includes the possibility of moving one of the transmission lines east of the Cascades. This would run from Alberta into the U.S.
- The 2011 White Book should be used and not the 2007 White Book.

Ecosystem -Based Functions

- Ecosystem questions and function need to be fully incorporated into the alternatives.
- Improved management of dissolved gasses at Coulee should be considered.
- BiOp/EIS – does this include non-federal projects? There are also 401 water quality permits. We need to review and incorporate any changes to those permits, etc. as a result of relicensing.
- Clean Water Act considerations must be included in the alternatives. These include temperature 303(d) listings, for example. Other contaminants beyond sediment toxics also need to be considered.
- Take advantage of higher flows to help recharge some of the aquifers, for example in the Umatilla Basin. This would help both irrigation and temperature issues.
- Ensure that if there are additional flood plain purchases that these are accomplished in a way that helps fish habitat as well.
- Ensure that any changes in U.S. reservoir operations are adequate to meet needs beyond power generation. Hungry Horse is one example to look at in this regard.
- Look at the option of keeping the levees vegetated. National Army Corps policies dictate that riparian vegetation should be removed from levees. However this is NOT beneficial for fish habitat and temperature, water quality, sediment run-off. If levees are utilized

to a greater degree, riparian and habitat protection must be incorporated into their design.

- We need a better understanding of the effects of the BiOps; the models should show the impacts on BiOps and any adjustments to them that may be necessary under different Treaty scenarios.
- Include TDG TMDL obligations for structural upgrades at dams; such as RSW implementation to reduce TDG.

Navigation/Irrigation

- Statutes and regulations need to be included in the alternatives – in addition to water quality, the regulations governing navigation, for example.
- How will irrigation, recreation and navigation be prioritized in the alternatives?

Flood Risk Mitigation

- We are using an 80-year water record, but there have been lots of dry years in the past 10 years. We need to incorporate that information. Also, you should consider looking at more refined data that just average annual flows, for example, daily or hourly flows.
- Flood risk management – look at more than 450 cc's at The Dalles.
- Climate change needs to be considered. Look at it in relation to stream flows and temperature – look at any pending legislation in this regard.
- Reservoir drawdowns bring up a host of issues for cultural resources sites. These will be issues now and well into the future. They must be addressed in the alternatives.
- Previous models anticipated that we would continue under the Canadian operation without any alternations to the Treaty. Those models need to be changed and adjusted assuming that those alternations could come into play.

Other Comments and Suggestions

- The Columbia Basin Trust is eager to have input into this process. The Trust understands the need for, and is working toward, communication and collaboration from both sides of the border. It's important to engage in these conversations now before the process gets too formal. The third symposium sponsored by the Trust will be held in Cranebrook in October.
- Some of the utilities are concerned about the lack of hydropower representation on the Sovereign Review Team.
- We recommend that you create a detailed public involvement plan that identifies how citizens and stakeholders will continue to be involved in this process. The League of Women Voters in all four states is happy to assist with this.

Next Steps

This summary of the listening session will be distributed to all of those who attended the meeting, and will be posted on the Treaty website.

The results of this session will be used to inform the work of the Sovereign Review and Technical teams as they develop the alternatives for the modeling. Additional meetings and sessions for stakeholders will be conducted throughout the Treaty Review process.

Meeting Participants

Those stakeholders who signed in at the meeting included:

- Erin Apperson, Puget Sound Energy
- Scott Brattebo, Public Generating Pool
- J.R. Cook, Umatilla Basin Water Commission
- Robert Cromwell, Seattle City Light
- Bonnie Douglas, Idaho League of Women Voters
- Baxter Gillette, Energy FR
- Ian Hunter, Snohomish County PUD
- Scott Hutsell, Lincoln County PUD
- Keith Knitter, Grant County PUD
- Bob Levy, Oregon
- Agnes Lut, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
- Kirk Maag, Stoel Rives, Portland
- Stan Miller
- Patrick Maher, Avista
- Rachael Osborn, Center for Environmental Law and Policy
- Tess Park, Idaho Power Company
- Shaun Parkinson, Idaho Power Company
- Warren Seyler, STOI DNR Coordination
- Sheila Sharp, representing Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers
- John Shurts, Northwest Power Planning Council
- Zabyrn Towner, PNGC Power