

Updated Study Report Meeting Land Use, Aesthetics and Recreation Resources

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Land Use (Slide LI)

Objectives:

- Document existing land uses in the Study Area along with identifying applicable land use and management plans.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of changes to Project facilities and operations related to relicensing with land uses in the Study Area and their consistency with applicable land use and management plans.



Land Use (Slide L2)

Study Area:

- Composed of lands within and adjacent to the proposed FERC Project boundary.
- Existing FERC Project boundary excluded portions of the forebay access road and tailrace channels.
- Proposed FERC Project boundary has changed since the last meeting. Now would include all of the forebay access road, portions of existing tailrace channels not currently in FERC Project boundary, and the proposed tailrace reroute alignment.



Land Use (Slide L3)

Variance to Study Plan:

- No variances from the study plan occurred.

Additional Work Proposed

- No additional studies are proposed
- Results and conclusions are presented in the December 2013, Updated Study Report



Land Use (Slide L4)

Applicable Federal and Local Plans:

- Two entities, the U.S. Forest Service and Wallowa County, manage lands and resources in the Study Area and have developed management plans.
- **Wallowa-Whitman National Forest**
- Lands managed under 1990 Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan).
- The Eagle Cap Wilderness (0.25 mile from Project FERC boundary) is managed under the Forest Plan as well as the Eagle Cap Wilderness Stewardship Plan.



Land Use (Slide L5)

Consistency with Forest Plan:

- The issuance of a special use permit for the Project by the WWNF indicates a history of approval of the Project by the WWNF, subject to conditions in the FERC licenses that have been granted to the Project in the past.



Land Use (Slide L6)

Consistency with Forest Plan (continued)

- PacifiCorp has and will continue to, assist the WWNF in meeting the directive of providing opportunities for dispersed recreation in the WWNF by:
 - Providing recreational access from the Wallowa Lake area through PacifiCorp lands into the WWNF and Eagle Cap Wilderness so that the public can participate in dispersed recreation activities.
 - Working cooperatively with WWNF to manage the Wallowa Lake Trailhead on PacifiCorp land and use by the public of the Project's forebay access road.



Land Use (Slide L7)

Consistency with Forest Plan (continued)

- PacifiCorp will improve the visual setting of the portion of the Project on NFS lands so that the directive of having the landscape remain relatively natural and undeveloped will be more closely realized.
- The proposed measures will reduce the visual presence of Project features to recreationists.
- The proposed measures are described in the Updated Study Report (Final Technical Report) for Aesthetics and Visual Resources.



Land Use (Slide L8)

Wallowa County:

- Project is located within Wallowa County and is under the jurisdiction of the 2003 Wallowa County Comprehensive Plan.
- Power generation and transmission at facilities are permitted as conditional uses in all zones the Project is located in – the Project is consistent with the county comprehensive plan.



Aesthetics and Visual Resources

(Slide A1)

Objectives:

- Document the existing aesthetic and visual character of the assessment area, Project facilities, and operations (noise and flows in bypass reach).
- Evaluate how/if changes to Project facilities and operations related to relicensing would impact aesthetic and visual character.
- Determine if changes to Project facilities and operations related to relicensing would be consistent with applicable land management planning goals for aesthetic and visual resources.
- Identify opportunities for mitigation measures.



Aesthetics and Visual Resources

(Slide A2)

Study Area:

- For visual resources the Study Area extends 0.5 mile from the Project boundary.
- For noise, considered to be an aesthetic resource, the Study Area is an approximate 3-mile radius around the Project powerhouse.

Variance to Study Plan:

- No variances from the study plan occurred although an unplanned noise reading of the powerhouse was conducted in the summer of 2013.



Aesthetics and Visual Resources

(Slide A3)

Potential Additional Work Identified at 2013 Meeting is Identified in the First Bullet Below:

- *“If applicable standards used to gauge the degree to which noise associated with the powerhouse exceeds suggested or required standards are found, powerhouse noise will be examined to determine if the noise meets or exceeds such standards”.*
- Noise readings were taken from 25 locations around the Project Area (see Appendix C handout).
- No standards were identified by PacifiCorp, the WWNF, or OPRD.
- A determination could not be made on whether or not powerhouse noise was excessive.



Aesthetics and Visual Resources

(Slide A4)

Impacts to Aesthetic and Visual Character from Changes to Project Facilities and Operations Associated with Relicensing:

- Due to terrain and heavy vegetation, the visibility of most Project facilities is limited, so changes to them will have localized impacts to aesthetic and visual character.
- All of the portion of the Project in the WWNF is surrounded by areas that were assigned a Visual Quality Objective (VQO) of Retention (which is the second most restrictive VQO) in the Forest Plan.



Aesthetics and Visual Resources

(Slide A5)

Impacts to Aesthetic and Visual Character from Changes to Project Facilities and Operations Associated with Relicensing (continued)

- Although the Project has been permitted as a special use and is therefore consistent with the management intentions of the WWNF, USFS policy requires that attempts to be made to reduce the visual impacts of projects on NFS lands. Mitigation measures were developed to address this concern.

Aesthetics and Visual Resources

(Slide A6)

Potential Mitigation Measures that Were Suggested During 2012-2013 Site Visits with PacifiCorp and WWNF Staff:

- Plant vegetation between the East Fork Trail and the shoreline near the forebay to screen views of the forebay, dam, spillway, catwalk, dam laydown area, and storage area from people using the trail. *(Was found to not be practical) – Replaced with an interpretive sign on west side of forebay w/ information on Project, Eagle Cap Wilderness, trails, etc.*
- Modify the intake structure to make it more attractive and similar in character with storage shed (cabin) in the laydown area. *(Adopted)*
- Treat (stain) the timber support members of the upper trestle that are light in color a darker color so that all support timbers are the same color. *(Adopted)*



Aesthetics and Visual Resources

(Slide A7)

Potential Mitigation Measures to Consider for Project Facilities (continued)

- *Additional measure – paint exposed parts upper penstock a dark color.*
- *Additional measure – improve the appearance of the laydown and storage area on east side of forebay.*
- Powerhouse – partially screen area and make more attractive with landscaping along the portion of area abutting the Joseph-Wallowa Lake Highway turnaround area. *(Adopted)*



Aesthetics and Visual Resources

Additional Work Proposed

- No additional studies are proposed
- Results and conclusions are presented in the December 2013, Updated Study Report

Aesthetics and Visual Resources

(Slide A8)

Potential Mitigation Measures to Consider for Project Facilities (continued)

- Modify or replace chain-link fence on side abutting the Joseph-Wallowa Lake Highway turnaround area with a more attractive fencing material or, at a minimum, black-coated vinyl chain-link fence (if this option is chosen, replace all chain-link fence with black-coated vinyl fencing). *(Adopted)*
- Add interpretive signage near facility that will explain the history and function of the Wallowa Falls Hydroelectric Project, Pacific Park Campground, the local trail system, and other features. *(Adopted)*
- *Additional Measure – recoat powerhouse roof w/ more appropriate color (within 3 years of license) and siding (per maintenance need).*



Recreation (Slide R1)

Objectives:

- Characterize existing recreation opportunities and use levels within the Study Area.
- Identify both existing and future recreation needs related to the Project over the term of the new license.

Methods:

- Recreation Supply Analysis: inventoried recreation facilities and use areas in the Study Area and their condition.
- Recreation Use and Demand Analysis: identified existing recreational demand in the Study Area and estimated future demand and need for various activities of interest needs over the potential term of the new license (30 to 50 years).



Recreation (Slide R2)

Study Area:

- Approximate one mile radius around the FERC Project boundary.

Variance to Study Plan

- No variances from the study plan occurred.

Additional Work Proposed

- No additional studies are proposed
- Results and conclusions are presented in the December 2013, Updated Study Report



Recreation (Slide R3)

Recreation Use and Demand Conclusions:

- Project helps meet demand for types of outdoor activities identified in SCORP that are popular in Wallowa County and likely will continue to be popular in the future.
- During peak recreational use months of July and August, demand for some activities such as camping (particularly at Wallowa Lake State Park) exceeds the supply.



Recreation (Slide R4)

Recreation Use and Demand Conclusions (continued)

- There are opportunities for the Project to more effectively help meet these demands.



Recreation (Slide R5)

Recreation Use and Demand Conclusions (continued)

- Ability of Project to directly help support existing and future recreation needs should focus on types of activities that are supported on PacifiCorp Project lands (or trails passing through them). These include various types of camping as well as popular activities identified in SCORP that occur via trails (e.g., hiking, big game hunting, fishing, nature observation, nature photography).



Recreation (Slide R6)

Recreation Use and Demand Conclusions (continued)

- Developing trails and controlling the creation of user-created trails on PacifiCorp land will be a valuable contribution to the trail system in the Study Area.
- Opportunities are available for Project to help meet needs of other types of popular activities identified in SCORP by upgrading area near powerhouse (make more attractive, add interpretive material, maps and better signage) and potentially teaming with OPRD to upgrade Little Alps Day Use Area (which will support popular and growing activities such as picnicking, relaxing, and back-country use).



Recreation (Slide R7)

Recreation Supply Conclusions – PacifiCorp Lands:

- PacifiCorp Park Campground is popular during July and August, provides a more rustic camping experience than other campgrounds in the Study Area, and helps meet a demand for less developed camping.
- Better site definition of campsites at Pacific Park Campground is warranted as well as providing better ADA accessibility to facilities (particularly at one or both of the vault toilets).



Recreation (Slide R8)

Recreation Supply Conclusions – PacifiCorp Lands (continued)

- Good opportunities to work with OPRD on connecting campground with Little Alps Day Use Area.
- Better communication with OPRD could allow Pacific Park Campground to help meet Study Area camping demands.
- User-created trails west of campground need to be controlled (some eliminated and some hardened) and linked (via signage) to WWNF trails.



Recreation (Slide R9)

Recreation Supply Conclusions – Little Alps Day Use Area and Wallowa State Park Maintenance Facility

- OPRD is concerned about the future of the Little Alps Day Use Area and maintenance facility in the future if PacifiCorp does not renew its lease with OPRD.



Recreation (Slide R10)

Discussion: Proposed Measures

- Review handout and discuss the recreation enhancement measures proposed by PacifiCorp, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.



Next Steps

- Parking lot items from today
- Additional comments or questions on material discussed?
- Identify unresolved issues and path for follow-up
- Adjourn