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BEFORE THE
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

- - - - - X
IN THE MATTER OF : PROJECT NO.
WELLS HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT : 2149
- - - - - X WASHINGTON

Douglas County PUD Auditorium
East Wenatchee, Washington 98802

Wednesday, February 28, 2007

The above-mentioned matter came on for public
scoping meeting, pursuant to notice at 9:00 a.m.

MODERATORS: ROBERT EASTON, FERC
DAVID TURNER, FERC

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1 P R O C E E D I N G

2 MR. EASTON: I guess we'd like to get started
3 here. Good morning. I'd like to welcome you to the
4 public scoping meeting for the Wells Hydroelectric
5 Project. My name is Bob Easton and I'm from the Federal
6 Energy Regulatory Commission. I'm a project coordinator
7 for FERC on this proceeding and I'm also a fisheries
8 biologist and I did not stay at a Holiday Inn Express
9 last night.

10 With me here today also from the commission is
11 David Turner, who is a terrestrial fishery -- or
12 terrestrial biologist, and also Dave's got quite a bit
13 of expertise with the integrated licensing process which
14 is being used for this proceeding, and he'll be able to
15 steer me straight when we get into some discussions on
16 that, on that process.

17 We're going to kind of give you a brief
18 overview here of some of the things we want to cover at
19 the beginning. We'll do like a little informal
20 presentation here at the beginning, give you a little
21 background on the licensing process, discuss the purpose
22 of scoping, Douglas PUD will give a brief overview of
23 the project, and then we're going to pick our way
24 through some of the resource issues that have been
25 identified in the preapplication document and also look
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1 at some of the studies that have been proposed thus far,
2 then we'll cover some of the important dates that are
3 upcoming through this license proceeding and then we'll
4 try and finish with questions and comments.

5 We do want -- like I said, we want to keep
6 this pretty informal, so if somebody has something, a
7 comment or a question, at any point, feel free to
8 interrupt me or anybody else that's up here speaking,
9 and if you have some input when we get into resource
10 discussions, that's what we'd really like to get a lot
11 of, is interactive discussion at that point. So please
12 speak up.

13 We do have sign-in sheets in the back and we'd
14 appreciate it if everybody who is here would sign in.
15 The primary purpose for that is so we have a record of
16 who showed up. But it also is so the court reporter can
17 figure out how to spell your name if and when you speak
18 during the meeting today.

19 I refer to the court reporter. We have the
20 court reporter here taking -- making a transcript of
21 this proceeding. That will go into the commission's
22 record and it will allow us to refer back to what was
23 discussed at this meeting when we get further into our
24 analysis at the commission. It will also be available
25 to you eventually so you can look and see what was said
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1 at the meeting if there are any questions in the future.

2 One thing, did I -- you need to speak clearly
3 and state your name and your affiliation if you do speak
4 during the meeting so that the court reporter can
5 identify your comments with -- or associate your
6 comments with your name in the transcript.

7 If you don't wish to speak today, you can file
8 written comments with the commission. Instructions for
9 that are listed on pages 19 and 20 in the scoping
10 document. Hopefully everybody got a copy of that.
11 There's a few extra copies in the back there if you
12 don't have a copy of the scoping document.

13 FERC will be issuing future documents to the
14 mailing list, but it will be the FERC mailing list only.
15 When we issued the scoping document, we used our
16 official FERC mailing list, but we also sent the scoping
17 document out to the distribution list that was created
18 by Douglas PUD for the preapplication document.

19 We won't be sending out things to the Douglas
20 distribution list in the future. We'll just be sending
21 things to the official FERC mailing list. So if you
22 want to continue to get issuances directly from FERC,
23 mailed out directly, you'll need to get added to the
24 mailing list.

25 The way to determine that is look at pages 24

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1 to 29 of the scoping document. If you don't see your
2 name on there, then you're not on the official FERC
3 mailing list. In order to get added to that list, you
4 need to follow the instructions on page 24 of the
5 scoping document.

6 If I went too fast for anybody, go ahead and
7 ask questions. And I can help you after the meeting too
8 with that. It's not really that complicated, but if you
9 do want to get FERC issuances in the future, you'll need
10 to get added to the mailing list if you're not already
11 on there.

12 As I said before, this proceeding, this
13 process we're using here is the integrated licensing
14 process. It's a fairly new process with FERC. We've
15 got a handful of projects that are using this process,
16 and in order to get you familiar with it, we're going to
17 kind of give you just a brief overview of it. There is
18 a more detailed handout in the back that goes through
19 each individual step of the integrated licensing
20 process. So if you want that information, you can get
21 that from that handout.

22 But basically the main components that we're
23 going to cover here are that back on December 1st
24 Douglas PUD filed their notice of intent to file a
25 license application for the Wells project and they filed

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1 a copy of the preapplication document with FERC. That
2 basically starts the process.

3 Subsequent to that, we move into this scoping
4 process, which is what we're here for -- to do today.
5 And we then move into the development of the study
6 plans. Douglas actually has a good start on that, and
7 if you look in the preapplication document, you'll see
8 there is actually quite a few study plans that they've
9 already put together and have worked out there.
10 Typically in this process a lot of that doesn't happen
11 until later. So they got a leg up on some of that
12 stuff.

13 Once the study plans have been formalized and
14 agreed upon and approved by FERC and Douglas goes off
15 and conducts studies for a period of a couple -- one to
16 two years, so after those studies have been completed,
17 they begin preparation of their license application.
18 The license application is due to be filed by May 31st,
19 2010.

20 After that, the commission begins its review.
21 It's basically ball in our court and we need to review
22 the application to determine if it's accurate. Once
23 we've determined that it meets our regulations in terms
24 of adequacy, we go ahead and issue what we call the REA
25 notice, which means that the application is ready for
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1 environmental analysis. That notice solicits the
2 comments, terms and conditions from the various
3 stakeholders and also it provides an opportunity to
4 intervene in the proceeding.

5 After that, after we receive those terms and
6 conditions and the interventions, we then would move
7 into the preparation of the environmental document. In
8 this case we intend to prepare a draft of the final EA,
9 or environmental assessment.

10 After the final EA is issued, then there would
11 be preparation of an order by the commission which would
12 make a decision on whether to license the project or
13 not.

14 Okay. Scoping. The agency, FERC, is under
15 the Federal Power Act and we have the responsibility to
16 issue licenses for nonfederal hydroelectric projects.
17 That is considered to be a federal action. So under the
18 National Environmental Policy Act we're required to do
19 an environmental analysis of that action before we can
20 proceed with issuing or denying a license.

21 As I said earlier, for this proceeding, we're
22 intending to prepare an environmental assessment rather
23 than an EIS. We issued a scoping document back in
24 January and, as I said, copies are available in the
25 back.

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1 The scoping document includes a brief
2 description of the existing project facilities, a
3 preliminary list of resource issues, describes the
4 studies that were proposed by Douglas PUD in the
5 preapplication document. It also describes the types of
6 information we are seeking through scoping. It includes
7 a process plan, which we -- I should point out we've
8 revised that.

9 Shane pointed out that the process plan we
10 included in the scoping document had some dates that
11 fell on weekends, and in order to hit those dates, you
12 would actually have to file on Friday, but our
13 regulations allow for people to file on the subsequent
14 Monday when dates -- filing requirements fall on
15 weekends.

16 So we've revised the process plan that was in
17 the scoping document and there's obviously a revised
18 process plan on the back table also. And then the other
19 thing we included in the scoping document in addition to
20 the process plan is a proposed outline and time line for
21 the environmental assessment.

22 The main purpose of this meeting is for us to
23 kind of go over the resource issues, go over the study
24 plans and kind of have an interactive discussion about
25 those. We're really here to solicit input from the

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1 stakeholder groups, find out what type of issues we may
2 or may not have identified, if we've included something
3 that wasn't necessary in the scoping document or if
4 there's things we have left out, and also to kind of
5 steer what type of information needs we are going to
6 need in terms of our proceeding and our analysis.

7 I guess at this point I will turn it over to
8 Shane and he will give us a brief overview of the
9 project facilities and project operation.

10 MR. BICKFORD: Thanks, Bob.

11 So my name is Shane Bickford. I'm a
12 supervisor of licensing in Douglas PUD. I'm just going
13 to give you a real quick overview of the project
14 description, talk a little bit about operations and talk
15 a little bit about what Douglas PUD did to prepare for
16 relicensing.

17 So that's a shot of Wells Dam from Douglas
18 County. It's not a shot many people actually see
19 because not many people are on that side of the river.

20 Wells project is located at, river miles,
21 515.6. That's how far it is upstream from the Pacific
22 Ocean. We're the ninth project from the Pacific Ocean
23 on the main-stem Columbia River. We're 30 miles
24 downstream from Chief Joseph Dam and 42 miles upstream
25 from Rocky Reach Dam, about 50 miles north of Wenatchee,
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1 located right here.

2 This is the Wells hydrocombine, which we'll
3 talk about in a couple of minutes. This is basically a
4 high-resolution orthophoto of the Wells project. The
5 water is flowing in this direction downstream. I'm just
6 going to point out a couple of the features.

7 This is what we call a forebay. You'll
8 probably hear some people toss that term around later
9 today.

10 The reservoir is the area of the body of water
11 impounded upstream of the hydrocombine, and it backs up
12 almost to Chief Joseph Dam, about 29 and a half miles,
13 about near the town of Bridgeport.

14 Some of the other kind of unique aspects of
15 the project, we've got this really compact structure
16 called a hydrocombine, which we'll talk a little bit
17 more about in a couple of minutes.

18 There's the east earthen embankment, a west
19 earthen embankment. The total dam is about 4,000 feet.
20 This kind of odd-looking channel here is a spawning
21 channel that's no longer used. It's part of the Wells
22 fish hatchery, which raises steelhead and summer chinook
23 and rainbow trout.

24 This is the tailrace area of the project.
25 It's where water is discharged after it passes through

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1 the facility. Electricity is discharged from the
2 project down to two 230 kV transmission lines. Those
3 transmission lines go up over the Waterville plateau and
4 come down around Rocky Reach Dam where that power is
5 blended into the grid.

6 Most people have seen the dam from the
7 highway, which is over here on the Chelan County side.
8 This is the Douglas County side. Have a little park
9 facility up here called Vista Overlook. There's rest
10 rooms, there's a turbine exhibit up here. Some of the
11 folks that went on the site tour yesterday saw that.

12 There's also fabrication facilities, and in
13 the future there's going to be some backup diesel
14 generators located up there for station service. So
15 it's kind of an overview. And I'm going to dwell down
16 more into this compact structure called the
17 hydrocombine. It's really unique.

18 The futures of the hydrocombine include two
19 fishways. A lot of projects have -- some have three,
20 some have one. Wells has two, one on the east
21 embankment, one on the west embankment, which is nice.
22 Fish are able to travel right up the shoreline and
23 intersect these fish ladders quite readily.

24 We also have a switchyard located on the deck
25 of the dam. Usually that's on one of the shorelines.

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1 So that's another unique feature. It's very compact.

2 Ten Kaplan turbine units with nameplate
3 capacity of 774 megawatts, a maximum capacity of 840.
4 Note that most power plants have a powerhouse over here
5 and a spillway over here. Wells Dam, they're integrated
6 and they're together and on top of one another. So
7 these dark areas are spillways. The red points to the
8 turbine silos.

9 Those are the spillways. They have 11
10 spillways. They have over -- the capacity of the
11 spillways is over a million cfs. The juvenile fish
12 bypass facilities are located in five of the spillways,
13 five of the 11 spillways, and they're very efficient at
14 passing downstream juveniles. They have been tested
15 rigorously and the passage efficiencies are between 92
16 and 96 percent for downstream salmon and steelhead, so
17 the highest efficiency on the river.

18 The nice thing about the bypass system is it's
19 spread evenly across the river. Fish aren't
20 concentrated on one shoreline or the other. Fish are
21 dropped right back into the bulk flow of the turbines,
22 so that helps to really reduce friction.

23 So that's the hydrocombine. It's very
24 compact. Lots of things going on in a very small space.
25 This is a thousand feet of structure.

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1 So that's it for -- there we go. A little bit
2 about operations. The Wells project is a run-of-river
3 project. For those of you that are familiar with Grand
4 Coulee, that's a storage project where you have seasonal
5 drawdowns, up and down.

6 Wells project fluctuates kind of on a daily
7 basis, but the fluctuations are rather small. A very
8 limited storage, only enough water to basically keep
9 things running for a day. Daily flows, daily generation
10 and discharge are largely driven by the dams upstream of
11 us, Chief Joseph Dam and Grand Coulee Dam.

12 Again, no seasonal drawdowns associated with
13 flood control or other operations unless there is a
14 severe flood event and the Corps would request some
15 additional storage.

16 Our reservoir fluctuations usually are in the
17 range of two feet. The project is authorized to go down
18 ten feet. We don't like to go down ten feet because
19 there's nothing left in the gas tank when you go that
20 far. It also significantly reduces the head of the
21 project. So the normal operating range is ten feet.
22 Normally we're in the upper two feet of that, up around
23 781.

24 In preparation for licensing, Douglas PUD
25 really kicked off its licensing effort in 2004, and the

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1 first thing we wanted to do is to make sure we had all
2 the available information, and so what we did is we did
3 a two-prong process for that.

4 We looked internally and searched up all the
5 archived documents we could find in the district, and we
6 came up with over 20,000 documents that had close
7 association with the Wells project and would be useful
8 in our licensing. Those documents have been placed on
9 our licensing library and are publicly accessible.

10 And we also contacted 350 outside entities,
11 organizations to identify information the district may
12 not have that we would need to know about for licensing
13 and we got about 35 documents that were reflected in
14 that effort.

15 Starting in 2005, after we collected all this
16 literature, we really wanted to -- we wanted to look at
17 some of the data gaps that we might have in existing
18 information. So our plan was to fill as many of those
19 data gaps as possible by conducting baseline studies.
20 We conducted 50 baseline studies between 2005 and 2006.
21 The studies were focused on water quality, recreation,
22 resident fish passage studies, as well as wildlife and
23 technical resource studies.

24 That information is all contained within the
25 preapplication document. It's on our licensing website.

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1 We have little video clips of some of the field
2 exercises and activities associated with those studies
3 on the website for those that are interested. The other
4 reason why we wanted to do those studies that would help
5 us identify -- a lot of times when you do a study, it
6 leads to other questions, and so that's what we're here
7 for today.

8 We also -- another thing that we started in
9 2005 was stakeholder outreach. We wanted to get ahold
10 of the public and really engage stakeholders to have
11 them help us identify what the issues are that they have
12 with the project and how it operates.

13 And so basically in 2005, 2006 we had 28
14 resource work group meetings. These are technical
15 meetings with biologists, folks from the cities, the
16 counties, tribes, state government, federal government,
17 trying to understand what their issues and concerns are
18 with the Wells project.

19 We also had 33 policy outreach meetings. We'd
20 go and meet with state directors of agencies and tribal
21 councils and talk to them to understand what their
22 issues are with the operations of the Wells project, the
23 idea being let's identify issues, let's see how many of
24 those issues really have a relationship to the Wells
25 project, try and match those up with FERC's IOP criteria
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1 for studies, which are seven criteria, and then of the
2 issues that match up with FERC's criteria, let's develop
3 study plans, get those in a preapplication document so
4 that, as Bob indicated, we can be a leg up on the
5 process and be ready to implement those studies as
6 quickly as possible.

7 So the resource work groups successfully
8 identified a lot of issues. A lot of those issues
9 didn't meet the seven criteria, and of those issues that
10 met the criteria, we basically patched those up into 12
11 study plans that we put in the preapplication document,
12 which there's copies in the back. There's also CEs in
13 the back. You can get it on FERC's website. You can
14 also get it on Douglas PUD's website.

15 Those issues, those 12 issues, cross a pretty
16 broad spectrum. There are some recreation studies,
17 there are some wildlife and technical resource studies,
18 there are some water quality studies and there are some
19 fish studies.

20 So with that, I'll hand it back to Bob, who is
21 going to walk you through some of the issues in some of
22 the studies.

23 MR. EASTON: Shane, did you provide the work
24 group with sign-in sheets for people that want to join
25 the work groups? Is that the point of that?

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1 MR. BICKFORD: We do. Yes. Thank you.

2 MR. EASTON: So there are some -- there are
3 sign-in sheets for the meeting, but there are also some
4 separate sign-in sheets back there that -- for
5 Douglas -- if you've signed those, you're basically
6 saying you want to participate in the work groups, the
7 different resource work groups. So you may want to take
8 a look at those.

9 Okay. This is sort of the part of the meeting
10 we want to get a little bit more interactive with you,
11 trying to initiate some discussion here about some of
12 these resource issues and some of these study plans that
13 we put forward and the resource and information needs.
14 So feel free to speak up as we go through some of these
15 next few slides here.

16 Basically we're going to just cover some of
17 the resource areas, work our way from aquatics and --
18 through aquatic resources and then terrestrial,
19 threatened and endangered species, recreation, land use,
20 and aesthetics, archaeological and historic resources
21 and then developmental resources. Those are all
22 resource areas that we identified as having issues in
23 the scoping document.

24 And if you refer to page 13 and 14 of the
25 scoping document, you'll see the resource issues related

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1 to aquatics that we have identified. And the first one
2 that comes up is effects of the project on the input,
3 movement, accumulation, and retention of toxins,
4 primarily DDT and PCBs, originating in the Okanogan
5 River and the potential indirect effects of these toxins
6 on aquatic organisms and humans.

7 In association with that resource issue,
8 Douglas identified a study need and put together a study
9 plan to sample sediments and fish tissues in the lower
10 Okanogan River for DDT and PCBs.

11 Anybody have any comments or anything to add
12 to those -- either that resource issue and how we
13 characterized it or the -- does anybody have any input
14 or anything they want to discuss in relation to the
15 study itself?

16 (No response.)

17 I do -- I actually have something I'd like to
18 say about it. In looking at the study itself, one thing
19 I notice is that the issue is identified as having sort
20 of an interest in following what the input, the
21 movement, accumulation and retention of these toxins is,
22 but when you look at the study itself, it really doesn't
23 get at any of those.

24 And I'm not saying the study should be
25 modified to get at those, but I'm wondering if we should

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1 maybe recharacterize that issue. We basically just took
2 the leap of what was in the PAD and put it into our
3 scoping document.

4 It seems like what -- when I reviewed the
5 study itself, it looked like what you're really
6 concerned about, the stakeholder groups or whoever
7 brought this up were concerned about, is the effects of
8 project-related recreation and fishing on human exposure
9 to DDT and PCBs in the lower Okanogan River.

10 So it's not necessarily how the project is
11 affecting what's going on with the DDTs, but actually
12 it's sort of the recreation and fishing that's
13 associated with the project and the potential for human
14 exposure.

15 Anybody familiar with that issue that maybe
16 can speak up and give me an idea if that's -- if we're
17 tinkering with something we shouldn't if I change that,
18 the way that issue is characterized?

19 MS. IRLE: Well, I think there were some
20 discussions that continued after the middle of the PAD
21 and I think we're still looking at the best ways of
22 characterizing most of those.

23 MR. EASTON: In terms of the study or the
24 actual resource issue?

25 MR. BICKFORD: For the court reporter,
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1 remember to include your name and affiliation.

2 MS. IRLE: Yes. My name is Pat Irle. I work
3 for the Washington State Department of Ecology.

4 And I believe we're still looking at trying to
5 determine what appropriate -- what information we have
6 and so what kind of scope of the study should be.

7 MR. LE: Bao Le, Douglas PUD.

8 I think, just following up on Pat's comment,
9 the initial issue centered more around kind of sediment
10 dynamics. That's why I think the initial issue was
11 crafted towards more of the accumulation and retention.

12 However, as we started to discuss the issue
13 and tried to uncover the information that was available
14 through existing information studies, TMDL work that
15 ecology had done, we hadn't quite come to an agreement
16 on what the potential project effect was and how that
17 potential issue had met the seven criteria.

18 But the one thing that we did agree on was
19 that there was a human health concern and that was
20 something the Douglas PUD could address, and that's how
21 we evolved to the study that we've developed. So there
22 is kind of a disconnect there in terms of --

23 MR. EASTON: Which --

24 MR. LE: I think your point of
25 recharacterizing it might be a --

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1 MR. EASTON: Recharacterizing the issue as is
2 described in the scoping document? I mean, that was one
3 thing as I dug through the study plan, it seemed -- it
4 definitely seemed like it wasn't really getting at the
5 sediment stuff as much as you're just going out to
6 determine what's there and is this a human health risk,
7 basically. That seemed to be what I was getting from
8 it.

9 MR. BICKFORD: Just to follow up with what
10 both Bao and Pat said, what we did in our resource work
11 groups is we basically did a mini scoping. So we had
12 stakeholders identify all the issues associated with the
13 project. The issue that was identified is not
14 necessarily what the study ends up being.

15 And so the study title that was filed in the
16 PAD is "Assessment of DDT and PCB in fish tissue and
17 sediment in the lower Okanogan." That came out of an
18 issue related to accumulation, input, outflow of toxins
19 in the Okanogan. So it was kind of the umbrella issue.

20 What we did is we dwelled down on what we
21 thought we could actually measure and what the group
22 could agree on how to tie with the seven criteria, not
23 that the group -- you know, there are members in the
24 group that might think that there is a broader range of
25 issues that need to be addressed, but those are the
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1 issues that we were able to agree on for that particular
2 study plan. So that's why the study plan is written as
3 it is, DDT and PCBs, sampling fish tissue and sediment.

4 MR. EASTON: So the original issue still sort
5 of lingers, then, is what you're saying. And so if
6 anything --

7 MR. BICKFORD: It sounds like it, yeah.

8 MR. EASTON: So maybe one way to approach this
9 for trying -- I'm thinking ahead in terms of how we
10 might revise the scoping document and try and get to
11 like a final scoping document and identifying issues for
12 the environmental analysis and wondering if maybe we
13 retain the existing issue and then add another issue
14 that brings in the human health effects aspect of it,
15 because it doesn't -- I guess it does mention humans in
16 that original issue.

17 So I guess we can leave it the way it is.
18 There's really no need to add another issue. I was
19 actually, I guess, thinking I could pare it down, shrink
20 it to a more concise issue. What you're suggesting is
21 maybe just leave it the way it is since it sort of
22 covers the full scope of what people are concerned with?

23 MR. BICKFORD: Right. I think the scoping
24 document accurately described the overarching issue
25 which is toxins in the Okanogan basin. The study plan

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1 actually walks the reader through the steps. It has
2 the -- the original issue and then what the group agreed
3 upon that was for study and then goes into the details
4 for the specific study. So --

5 MR. EASTON: And I guess the only other thing
6 I would add in terms of the -- in regard to the study,
7 and this occurs with several of them, is you may - you
8 do have language in the study that says, you know, it
9 will help to -- "the information gathered from this
10 study will help to shape license requirements."

11 From our standpoint it might be helpful if you
12 expanded that to Douglas working with the work groups,
13 kind of try and identify what requirements we might be
14 thinking of in terms of -- I don't think you have to get
15 super specific on that, but it would be helpful to give
16 us an idea of what direction you might be considering as
17 a possibility of where you might end up.

18 Obviously, you can't commit to that at this
19 point. It's pretty early, but -- and just in order for
20 us to get an idea what value this study may have to us.
21 That's what we're looking at, from that angle.

22 I guess we can move to the next issue, which
23 is effects of the project on total dissolved gas levels
24 in the Wells tailrace and the Rocky Reach forebay.
25 Again, in association with this resource -- this issue

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1 is, obviously, typical of all the projects or a common
2 issue of all the projects in the mid-Columbia
3 participating in the relicensing of the Priest project
4 and the Rocky Reach project -- they haven't been
5 relicensed yet, but the proceedings, and that was an
6 issue that -- the dissolved-gas issue came up in both of
7 those projects and has been an issue in the mid-Columbia
8 for many years.

9 In association with that issue, Douglas
10 identified that they would put together a study plan to
11 continue to study the total dissolved gas production and
12 dynamics in association with operations of the project.

13 Does anybody -- I mean, this really is pretty
14 straightforward stuff. You've seen this elsewhere. The
15 only thing I thought I saw on the study plan that I --
16 getting back to the requirements aspect, is instead of
17 just saying "requirements," saying you might be
18 considering changes in operational protocols or
19 something like that. That's the kind of specifics I was
20 getting at with the previous comment about adding to the
21 study plan to try and give us an idea where things might
22 end up ultimately.

23 But does anybody have any comments about total
24 dissolved gas related to the Wells project?

25 (No response.)

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1 The next issue that was identified in the
2 scoping document was the effects of the project on water
3 temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH and turbidity. And in
4 association with that there were two studies that were
5 identified in PAD. There was a development of a model
6 to assess the project effects on water temperature and
7 then additional monitoring of DO, or dissolved oxygen,
8 pH and turbidity.

9 Does anybody have any comments regarding those
10 water-quality parameters, temperature, DO, pH,
11 turbidity? Everybody is happy with where that stands?

12 (No response.)

13 I know one thing that stood out reviewing the
14 study plans, the temperature modeling study plan looked
15 fine, except the only question I had was it wasn't clear
16 to me that -- I know we have water --
17 water-temperature-impaired section of the river here and
18 we don't have an idea of the precise effect of the
19 project and I guess that's what the modeling exercise is
20 to get at.

21 Pat, you may be able to address this better.
22 Was a similar type of study conducted for Rocky Reach
23 and also for Priest?

24 MS. IRLE: Yes.

25 MR. EASTON: So this basically has been done

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1 already at the other two projects, so it's just kind of
2 following in the same footsteps, being consistent in
3 that regard?

4 MS. IRLE: Yes.

5 MR. EASTON: Okay. Then the other -- on the
6 other side, the monitoring of the pH and turbidity and
7 dissolved oxygen, I guess there's always the mentality
8 that additional information is always good and we can
9 always collect more, but I was wondering, is there
10 really a strong need here, an indication that there's a
11 need for additional monitoring?

12 It seemed like there was -- the study plan
13 that was in the PAD kind of inferred that there's a
14 substantial amount of information that's already been
15 collected with regard to these parameters and that they
16 pretty much indicate there's no exceedance of the state
17 criteria.

18 So what exactly is the intent of additional
19 monitoring at this point? I mean, do we -- why is that
20 information needed? Is there something inadequate about
21 the existing information or questions about it or --

22 MS. IRLE: I'm trying to remember where -- I'm
23 sorry. I -- I'm sorry. I wasn't prepared for a
24 discussion. I thought this was going to be an
25 opportunity for formal comment and I wasn't prepared to

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1 provide comments for formal record.

2 MR. EASTON: We were going to -- yeah, we'll
3 get to that too.

4 MS. IRLE: This is just discussion?

5 MR. EASTON: We're just working our way
6 through the resource issues and the study plan, kind of
7 giving you our feedback and trying to sort of stimulate
8 just an informal discussion about the --

9 MS. IRLE: Okay.

10 MR. EASTON: This is not -- nobody is on trial
11 here. I mean, this is --

12 MS. IRLE: Well, it is going to go into a
13 formal record.

14 MR. EASTON: Well, that's true, but if you
15 don't desire to respond, that's fine too. I'm not
16 trying to put you on the spot.

17 All I'm asking is when I looked at the
18 information that's described in the PAD, to me, the
19 first thing that stood out was there's no indication
20 that there's been any exceedances of the state criteria
21 for these three parameters and there appears to be a
22 pretty substantial amount of information that's already
23 been collected in regards to these parameters.

24 We have our seven criteria, but I got to go
25 through in order to make a decision whether FERC thinks

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1 this plan is needed or not. So I'm trying to see if
2 there's additional information that's not described in
3 the PAD that would lead me to decide that this
4 monitoring is actually needed.

5 MS. IRLE: Okay.

6 MR. EASTON: So that's all I'm looking for.

7 MS. IRLE: Yeah.

8 MR. EASTON: I'm not trying to put you on the
9 spot.

10 MR. TURNER: Let me -- David Turner.

11 Let me just explain one thing. What we're
12 trying to do, this is where IOPU, it kind of departs
13 from your traditional approach when we do scoping, when
14 the application has already been done and filed and
15 additional information has already been laid out.

16 But within the next 60 -- no, actually 30 days
17 from now, we all have to file our study requests and
18 they commission these to make sure we know what the
19 issues are and our understanding of what those issues
20 are too so we can put forth a logical description of a
21 study. And, as Bob said, ultimately we have to make
22 some recommendations to our director as to whether a
23 study is needed or not.

24 And it's good that you guys have worked
25 through a lot of these studies, but it also brings more

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1 to us, to the scoping to ask questions to make sure that
2 we're on the same page as you guys, which we have been
3 working so hard over the last -- for the last several
4 months anyway to try to define the issues.

5 So that's why we're also talking about the
6 studies and what's been laid out.

7 MS. IRLE: Yeah. No. I'm fine with that.
8 I've just never been at a meeting in the course of the
9 last eight years where my comments got specifically
10 incorporated into a written record and it's a little
11 unnerving.

12 MR. TURNER: This is David Turner again.

13 That's true, and I know that some parties feel
14 a little more reluctant to do that. I would hope that
15 people will be free here. We're not going to pin you
16 down to that. We're trying basically to get a good
17 understanding. You have an opportunity to file written
18 comments if you want to supplement what you say here or
19 clarify it.

20 But we really want this to be interactive to
21 understand what you guys have been working through over
22 the last few months, give you our perspective as to what
23 we understood by reading the PAD and what's in the
24 record so far, so --

25 MR. EASTON: I mean, from our standpoint, it's

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1 important to realize that we're in Washington, D.C.,
2 we're back hiding across on the other side of the
3 country, and we get all the paper, hard-copy stuff of
4 what's going on out here and we would look at it, but we
5 really don't have a feel for all the details of the
6 decisions that are being made, and we're trying to come
7 out here as a part of this meeting for us, and the big
8 benefit is to figure out what are the steps and the
9 logic that you went through in developing the issues and
10 the study plans and how did you get to this point and
11 what can you tell us to help us to figure out how you
12 got here.

13 And all I'm trying to do is highlight the
14 things that I saw when I went through the information
15 that was in hard copy in front of me that brought up
16 questions. And so -- and if you don't -- don't feel
17 forced into a corner to have to even respond. If you
18 just don't have to -- want to just say, "That's where we
19 ended up," that's fine too. So I'm not trying to make
20 you feel uncomfortable.

21 MS. IRLE: Yeah. I haven't looked at the
22 documents for a while to review where we came from, so I
23 wasn't prepared to comment additionally.

24 MR. EASTON: Well, we can move forward from
25 this particular issue. We've beat this dead horse

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1 already pretty good.

2 Okay. There are several other issues here in
3 the scoping document that really don't have any studies
4 associated with them, but we did identify them as
5 resource issues that we need to address in the
6 environmental document. These issues include effects of
7 the project on aquatic and wetland plant communities,
8 the effects of the project on the spread of aquatic
9 invasive species, then we also have the effects of the
10 project and ongoing actions, including the Habitat
11 Conservation Plan, on salmon and steelhead.

12 Actually, the first two there, aquatic and
13 wetland plant communities and aquatic invasive species,
14 those are issues that showed up in some of the other
15 projects and they were included in the PAD.

16 Now, the salmon and steelhead issue wasn't
17 really in the PAD, but it's obvious that the Habitat
18 Conservation Plan is a big issue in the operation of the
19 project and we see why this is a big issue.

20 We included that because we figured there was
21 no way we were going to proceed through an environmental
22 document and not address it in any way, shape or form or
23 at least pay some lip service to it.

24 Yes.

25 MR. LACY: I'm Steve Lacy, the mayor here in
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1 East Wenatchee, for the record.

2 I came here today with really one goal in mind
3 and that was to express the concern, which I think is on
4 the part of the constituents in the city primarily,
5 about how this plan gets developed as a function of cost
6 to the Douglas County PUD, and by that I mean that we
7 certainly believe as a city that it's important to do
8 and go through and identify every important assessment
9 criteria that needs to be done in order to protect the
10 habitat, for example, but the concern, I believe, mostly
11 of my constituents would be that we don't add to the
12 process, the relicensing process, requirements that cost
13 the taxpayers money through the PUD having to expend
14 funds that would up -- necessarily or potentially up
15 rates when they are not necessary.

16 In other words, I think what you've been
17 talking about here is can we identify those areas where
18 studies have been done and there's absolutely no need to
19 go and require spending more money to inquire further,
20 and I appreciate your saying that because that's
21 consistent with the position I think the city would take
22 and that is that the PUD not be saddled with areas of
23 study or additional work when you can identify that
24 there's no real issue to be addressed.

25 And I have -- when I look at this long list of
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1 things, of potential things, that could be subject to a
2 study and subject of concern that might simply end up in
3 a lot of wheel spinning to ultimately conclude that
4 there never was an issue, then it concerns me as a
5 public official as to whether or not the PUD might be
6 incurring a lot of costs in the process that will
7 ultimately end up in the mailbox of the taxpayer.

8 MR. EASTON: Right, right.

9 MR. LACY: And so that's my concern. That's
10 the one thing I think I wanted to express on behalf of
11 the people of the area that I help lead. Okay?

12 MR. EASTON: Yeah. I appreciate your
13 comments. I know that may not be clear to everyone, but
14 that is sort of one of FERC's responsibilities, is to --
15 we're not just looking at these study plans to determine
16 if they will be -- provide just straightforward
17 beneficial information to us, but they are sort of a
18 cost aspect to the decision, and then as we move through
19 the entire process, any measures that would be
20 considered for inclusion in the license, we would
21 balance that against the cost of those measures, and
22 that's our obligation under the Federal Power Act, is to
23 look at that and balance costs against the benefits for
24 any sort of measure or study that comes up.

25 So, yeah. And that's a big part of what we're
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1 trying to do here today, is get as much information as
2 we can so we can make that type of decision. So I
3 appreciate your comment.

4 Does anybody have any comments about the three
5 issues, the aquatic and wetland plant communities,
6 anything in regard to aquatic nuisance species or
7 invasive -- aquatic invasive species or is there
8 anything to add to the issue to be identified in regard
9 to the salmon and steelhead?

10 MR. LE: Bao Le, Douglas PUD, again.

11 As you had mentioned, Bob, that in the PAD we
12 included some of the information reflected in our
13 baseline studies that were conducted in 2005. We did an
14 aquatic macrophyte mapping survey and examined -- one of
15 the objectives of that survey was to examine the amount
16 of invasive aquatic plants that were in the reservoir,
17 and in the PAD we had noted that it was quite low
18 relative to some of the other downstream mid-C
19 reservoirs. So I think that was one of the ways we
20 addressed it with just implementing a study and
21 providing some initial information from our assessment.

22 And we also conducted an aquatic
23 macro-invertebrates survey and examined kind of the
24 species composition that was available in the Wells
25 project. At the time there were several species that

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1 were non-native. Although, they haven't been
2 categorized by the state as invasive species.

3 We are currently working with the Washington
4 Department of Fish and Wildlife to do zebra mussel
5 surveys at certain times of the year. So we're
6 continuing to collaborate with invasive species programs
7 through the state to make sure that we're monitoring
8 appropriately invasive species. There is some existing
9 information and we included that in the PAD.

10 MR. EASTON: Yeah. And I saw that, and that
11 will all be helpful in evaluating these particular
12 resource issues that we've identified.

13 And I guess I should note that there were no
14 additional studies that were identified with any of
15 those particular issues, the aquatic and wetland plants,
16 invasive species or the salmon and steelhead.

17 Of course, the salmon and steelhead, we're
18 doing an ongoing study as part of the HCP, so tons of
19 additional information is continuing to come in there,
20 so -- and we expect that we'll see that through either
21 the license application directly or other filings that
22 come in through FERC as part of the existing license.

23 Okay. Now we get to what we found to be
24 somewhat of a tricky issue for us. We weren't really
25 sure where to even put it in terms of resource areas.

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1 We put it here under aquatics. It's the -- the issue as
2 described in the scoping document was "Effectiveness of
3 the nuisance wildlife control program on controlling
4 predation of listed salmon and steelhead juveniles and
5 identification and evaluation of the cost and benefits
6 of potential alternatives to the existing program," and
7 then there is a study associated with that, which is to
8 evaluate the effectiveness of the predator control
9 program.

10 We really weren't sure where you're going with
11 this one, and that's not to say -- it's just really a
12 clarity issue, I think, on our part trying to figure out
13 how -- there's stuff in the study plan that sort of
14 implies that -- I think there was a statement in the
15 study plan about making the control programs more
16 effective. That implied to me it was a fish issue, you
17 were trying to make the control program more effective
18 in terms of protecting the fish.

19 But then there's a discussion of alternatives
20 in terms of the wildlife, and it sounded almost to some
21 extent like you're trying to find ways to not impact the
22 wildlife as much but still receive the same benefit from
23 the predator control program.

24 So -- and then -- and I guess that's why
25 you're talking about looking at alternatives. So from

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1 our standpoint, there might be some ways you can tweak
2 the study plan a little bit to try and make it clearer
3 to us in terms of what the goal is with the -- and maybe
4 it covers both. Maybe it's really both for aquatics and
5 wildlife and we need to find a way to deal with that on
6 our end in terms of -- you know, we want to be able to
7 pigeonhole it and nail it right into one spot.

8 Maybe we need to be more flexible in how we
9 deal with it and where we put it, but I think there
10 needs to be some discussion on that or whatever. I
11 don't know. Can you provide --

12 MR. BICKFORD: Yeah. The -- Shane Bickford,
13 Douglas PUD.

14 This particular issue was crafted in the
15 terrestrial work group and it was an issue that both
16 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Washington Department
17 of Fish and Wildlife raised that there may be impacts
18 from our predator control program on mammals and avian
19 predators as they are either hazed or lethally taken at
20 the hatchery facilities or in the tailrace of the
21 project, trying to protect salmon under the HCP.

22 And so the intent of the study is really to
23 focus on what are the problem species so that we're not
24 taking the wrong ones, and then are there alternatives
25 to taking them that could work equally well, like

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1 fencing or, you know, propane cannons, water guns,
2 strobe lights, those types of things.

3 So it's kind of a two-prong study. The first
4 part is what species are the problem so that we are not
5 taking species that really aren't a problem, they're
6 just hanging around hatcheries.

7 MR. EASTON: I got you.

8 MR. BICKFORD: And then the second half is are
9 there alternatives to the program we're implementing.

10 MR. EASTON: So it really is predominantly a
11 terrestrial issue?

12 MR. BICKFORD: Yes.

13 MR. EASTON: Told you, David.

14 (Laughter.)

15 MR. TURNER: Well, as Bob said, I just found a
16 disconnect between the way the objectives were laid out
17 in the study plan and the study title and it really
18 wasn't clear that you were looking at -- I mean, I kind
19 of guessed that you were looking at ways to figure out
20 who was the real problem, but it says wildlife in a very
21 broad term, which can mean the indirect effects of
22 hazing on songbirds. Are we flushing those?

23 And when I looked at your methods in terms of
24 looking at gut contents and some of the other things of
25 other predators, you're not really looking at those
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1 other indirect wildlife species that may be affected by
2 the hazing. You're actually looking at the predators
3 that you want to control.

4 So it was really more of a -- I wasn't real
5 sure of where you were going. The ultimate objective,
6 like I figured, was basically what you said, which
7 species should be targeted, but the overall goal was not
8 necessarily -- I didn't pick up on the second part of
9 it, that making sure we target the right ones so we
10 don't hit the -- have an adverse effect on other
11 wildlife species.

12 So we can certainly put it back in there, but
13 we may need to tweak how we've characterized that issue,
14 then. Because I figured it would be more towards the
15 goal of making sure you were effective in terms of
16 controlling numbers of losses of salmon and steelhead
17 smolts, because that was one of the aspects in that
18 study plan, is figuring out what -- how much of those
19 were being taken, by who. So there is an overlap. I
20 wasn't real sure what --

21 MR. EASTON: I think the term "effective" is
22 what -- I understand now what you mean by it, but it got
23 us -- we got sidetracked on it because we're thinking
24 the program is targeting salmon and steelhead
25 protection, so if you make the program more effective,

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1 it's more effective in terms of protecting salmon and
2 steelhead. What you really mean is making it more
3 effective at eliminating -- well, targeting the right
4 wildlife species.

5 So I -- it's almost like a semantics issue.
6 We just need -- once we understand it, we know where to
7 pigeonhole it. The good part is it's not in my resource
8 area anymore. It's in Dave's.

9 (Laughter.)

10 Does anybody have anything else they'd like to
11 add on that particular issue or the predator control
12 program?

13 (No response.)

14 The next issues are related to lamprey, which
15 has become a big issue here throughout the Columbia
16 River system.

17 MR. LACY: What's a lamprey?

18 MR. EASTON: A lamprey?

19 MR. LACY: Yeah.

20 MR. EASTON: It's a jawless fish.

21 MR. LACY: Okay. I didn't know what lamprey
22 are, but now I do.

23 MR. EASTON: They do migrate up the river from
24 the ocean, and their -- the numbers have declined, you
25 know, over the last 30 years or so and they do have a
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1 pretty significant cultural significance to the tribes,
2 and they've also become sort of a species of interest to
3 the fish and wildlife agencies.

4 So they definitely are a common issue not just
5 in the Columbia, but really through the entire Northwest
6 now. We're seeing them -- at all the FERC projects they
7 have become a species of interest and we have been
8 addressing them in all the places where they come up,
9 essentially.

10 Lamprey was an issue at Rocky Reach and it was
11 also an issue again at Priest Rapids, so -- and there's
12 analyses in both of those environmental impact
13 statements that you can see that discusses and addresses
14 lamprey and lamprey effects related to the hydropower
15 projects.

16 For this -- in this scoping document we
17 identified a couple of resource issues related to
18 lamprey. One was the effects of the project on lam- --
19 juvenile lamprey dam passage and reservoir survival.

20 There is a -- there's really not a lot of
21 information out there on juvenile lamprey dam passage
22 and reservoir survival. There's some literature, but
23 we've got -- not a lot of specific studies that have
24 been conducted, at least successfully. And there aren't
25 a lot of lamprey to play with either. So that's my
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1 other problem, collecting juvenile lamprey is difficult.

2 So as a result, we end up with a study plan
3 that primarily focusses on kind of gathering literature
4 and trying to figure out what information has been
5 collected elsewhere.

6 So Douglas has proposed in the study plan --
7 or in the PAD a study that would review lamprey survival
8 and predation rates from literature, but they also did
9 conclude a field study portion that would look at
10 predatory fish and bird dives to try and see who -- as
11 the lamprey migrate, the juvenile lamprey migrate
12 through the project area, they're trying to see what
13 species are actually consuming the juvenile lamprey and
14 having an effect on their survival as they move through
15 the project area.

16 The literature part, Dave and I went round and
17 round and I kept asking him, "Dave, does FERC approve a
18 study that is really just a literature review?"
19 Because, you know, our license applications have always
20 had a big compilation of existing literature, "So is
21 that really a study or not?"

22 I think where we stand right now, it looks
23 like FERC is saying, "Okay. In this case it works into
24 the study." And, obviously, the field study component
25 is truly the study. So I don't think it's going to run

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1 into any problems there in terms of approvals or
2 anything.

3 Does anybody have anything to add in regard to
4 juvenile lamprey or any comments or thoughts about
5 juvenile lamprey?

6 (No response.)

7 Come on, this is supposed to be interactive.
8 You know, give me something.

9 The next issue is the effect of the project on
10 adult lamprey habitat use and upstream passage. And
11 Douglas proposed two studies related to adult lamprey.
12 One was a survey of reservoir -- adult lamprey spawning
13 habitat in a reservoir, and then the other is a
14 telemetry study of adult lamprey passage.

15 I've got to admit that the habitat study
16 stands out as making me kind of squirm a little bit
17 because I'm looking at it and I'm looking at last year's
18 lamprey numbers and it's like 40 fish passed the dam,
19 and I'm wondering why you need to worry about habitat
20 when it's obviously not limiting at this point. If
21 there's 40 fish passing, I can't imagine they're habitat
22 limited right now.

23 So, I mean, just as a -- usually habitat
24 surveys are done and habitat analysis is done typically
25 when you're pretty positive that there's so many fish
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1 moving into an area, that there is more fish than there
2 are at this habitat.

3 In this particular case, I don't know, is
4 there anybody that wants to speak to that, to the need
5 of doing actually a survey of adult habitat within the
6 reservoir?

7 MR. LACY: Well, this is Mr. Lacy again. This
8 is exactly my issue. I mean, I say, no, don't do that
9 study because there's no -- obviously no need to do it
10 and it's just going to cost a lot of money.

11 I've lived here in this community for 29 years
12 and I've never even heard the word "lamprey" used until
13 today, and I'm sure it's been all over the PUD, but
14 outside the PUD nobody is concerned about lamprey in the
15 Columbia River, and particularly if you've got a study
16 that says 40 of them, which I assume is a fine number,
17 are passing --

18 MR. EASTON: Well, in all fairness, that
19 number is from one year, and there were --

20 MR. LACY: Right.

21 MR. EASTON: Several years ago there were 1400
22 that went over the dam. So, I mean, that's just -- but
23 it does stand out to be somewhat odd to be studying
24 reservoir habitat especially when you read the actual
25 study plan, there's quite a bit of information in there
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1 that says it's likely that there's very little in the
2 reservoir. It's likely what's there -- that what might
3 actually be there is marginal. So it's kind of -- and
4 it's not clear that there's going to be any project
5 effects on it if there is any there.

6 So from our standpoint, we'd like to know why
7 this is sort of a critical issue that's worthy of
8 spending, I think, \$120,000, or whatever it was, on in
9 terms of doing a study.

10 MR. LACY: I love to hear you say that.

11 MR. EASTON: Okay. Dennis.

12 MR. BEICH: Dennis Beich, Washington State
13 Department of Fish and Wildlife.

14 And I don't like to hear him say that. So I
15 notice that the tribes aren't here and this is of
16 particular importance to the tribes. But even beyond
17 the tribes, we are seeing a -- what appears to be a
18 decline in lamprey populations.

19 What we are trying to avoid is a listing of
20 lamprey and then we have to deal with the Endangered
21 Species Act once they become listed, and we know what
22 that's like in dealing with both steelhead and the
23 chinook populations up here.

24 I'm not a biologist, but I will give my
25 30,000-foot explanation here. Because we do have low

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1 numbers of lamprey and it looks like they are -- have
2 been declining, we're just now getting -- trying to get
3 information on them, if we do have habitat within a
4 reservoir that those lamprey are using and there's a
5 small number of lamprey, we're not sure how many there
6 used to be or how many there potentially could be, but
7 it's important to identify the type of habitat they use
8 so we don't do something to destroy that habitat and
9 further cause a decline of the population.

10 MR. EASTON: Okay.

11 MR. BICKFORD: Jim Bickford, Douglas PUD.

12 Basically the goal of the study is to identify
13 spawning as opposed to overwintering or early stage
14 spawning habitat. The project effect that was
15 hypothesized by the aquatic work group is a reservoir
16 fluctuation and dewatering in the lamprey --

17 MR. EASTON: So primarily up in the Methow and
18 Okanogan?

19 MR. BICKFORD: Primarily it's in the interface
20 between Methow and the project reservoir, and some of
21 the background that you obviously read in there that
22 indicated that the -- you know, the vast majority of the
23 reservoir does not contain habitat that's adequate for
24 lamprey spawning is true. But we want to go out and
25 make sure that that's true. If it's not true and we
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1 find lamprey in there, we want to be able to take the
2 second approach, which is the second objective of the
3 study, to determine whether the reservoir fluctuations
4 actually affect.

5 So first it's an identification of whether
6 they're even spawning in the reservoir. If they're not,
7 you're done. If they are, does the project's operations
8 affect their incubation. So that was the nexus that we
9 were striving to get in that particular study plan.

10 MR. EASTON: Okay. We'll take another look at
11 it.

12 MR. LACY: This is Mr. Lacy again.

13 I'm getting educated here and I appreciate the
14 comments about what the numbers mean, particularly or
15 potentially mean. But -- and I don't want to divert
16 just to get educated, but what are lamprey used for? Is
17 there any reason to be that concerned about whether or
18 not we have 1200 lamprey or 40 passing through our dam?

19 MR. EASTON: Anybody?

20 MR. LE: Bao Le, Douglas PUD.

21 Well, as Bob had mentioned, they are a
22 culturally significant species to the tribes, the
23 lower-river tribes. They used to harvest them.

24 MR. LACY: Do they now?

25 MR. LE: Yes, they continue to harvest them in
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1 the lower river.

2 MR. LACY: Okay.

3 MR. LE: An ecological significance, probably
4 likely when lamprey return to the Columbia --

5 THE REPORTER: I can't hear you that well over
6 here.

7 MR. LE: I'm sorry.

8 When lamprey were returning to the lower
9 river, the main-stem Columbia River, in large numbers,
10 they likely provided an ecological buffer, predatory
11 buffer for some on it. They are a nutrient source.
12 Like salmon, they come back to the rivers, they spawn
13 and they die.

14 So there are ecological benefits to having
15 that, but they're a native species, they've been in the
16 main stem longer than any of us have been here, and
17 they're -- like Bob had said, there's a lot of momentum
18 behind them right now. Fish and Wildlife Service, at
19 one time they tried to list lamprey species.

20 So for us, I think, at Douglas it was -- we
21 had identified that they are in the mid-C. There's a
22 lot of momentum towards learning more about lamprey.
23 There's a potential listing. I suspect that in the
24 future there will be some organizations that will try to
25 push for a listing again as more information becomes
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1 available.

2 And for us it was really an information -- we
3 didn't have any information to address whether they do
4 exist or not. We couldn't with any confidence say, "No,
5 they aren't spawning in our project area."

6 So we -- for us, it seemed like the
7 appropriate thing to do was to do an assessment. Even
8 though my professional opinion is there probably isn't
9 very much, if any, suitable habitat given that lamprey
10 are an upper, small tributary spawning species, we don't
11 find them in the main stem, and our tributary habitat
12 within the project boundary is limited, but it was
13 something we felt we should collect because we don't
14 have any information to address the issue as it was
15 posed by stakeholders.

16 MR. EASTON: Would the study be reservoirwide
17 or are you pretty much just going to focus in on areas
18 you pick up from GIS or whatever that's being --

19 MR. LE: The initial assessment would be a
20 desktop exercise given, you know, looking at the
21 appropriate parameters that will be suitable. It will
22 be reservoirwide, and then from there we would identify
23 areas that would need actual field surveys.

24 So if I had to hazard a guess, I would say
25 that we're probably going to find ourselves in the

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1 tributaries -- the project area portions of the
2 tributaries to do any sort of surveying.

3 MR. EASTON: Okay. To add to what you were
4 talking about in terms of the interest in the lamprey,
5 one theory I heard that was actually pretty interesting
6 is, you know, they have all these problems with the sea
7 lions eating the salmon as they're entering the river
8 mouth, and there is a theory out there that the sea
9 lions actually prefer lamprey, and if lamprey were
10 abundant, they'd be picking them off instead of picking
11 off the salmon.

12 Of course, it's kind of -- it's like a con- --
13 it's a nice theory, but it's going to take a lot before
14 we get to a point where that theory can be tested
15 because we have to bring lamprey all the way back --

16 MR. LE: Yeah. From a caloric standpoint,
17 they're much higher in caloric value and nutrition than
18 salmon are.

19 MR. EASTON: I've never had one, but I heard
20 lamprey sandwiches are really good.

21 (Laughter.)

22 MR. EASTON: Seriously.

23 MR. LACY: A little difficult to find. I've
24 never seen them on a menu.

25 MR. HALEY: Pat Haley, Port of Douglas County.

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1 The history of the lamprey, and I don't mean
2 to belabor this point because I know that there's some
3 experts in this, but I used to work at Chelan PUD where
4 they have cameras that monitor fish as it passes through
5 the fish ladders and they've been doing that for 20-plus
6 years, and I don't ever recall a lamprey ever being
7 shown up on a poster that they would have in their
8 viewing center of all of the fish that would go by and
9 it just couldn't get by that camera without it being
10 identified.

11 So I'm wondering where the history of this
12 fish has come up. You know, those dams have been there
13 for so long and there have been extensive monitoring
14 principles being applied to knowing what's going up and
15 then all of a sudden now this is new fish species
16 that's --

17 MR. EASTON: Well, they have been here the
18 whole time, obviously, and they actually -- at all the
19 dams where the counts have been going on, the focus has
20 been over the years to just count the salmon and
21 steelhead primarily and the other species that were
22 coming in weren't really getting addressed.

23 So things like bull trout, which are now
24 getting accounted for in some of these fishways, you
25 know, they were more of an impact ten, 15, 20 years ago
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1 also. So they're really -- historic data for lamprey
2 passage and bull trout passage and sturgeon and other
3 species that are all of interest now, we don't have
4 ladder counts for them.

5 In terms of -- I mean, it's really not my job
6 to give you the background on why lamprey is now an
7 issue. I can only tell you from the other side, which
8 is that as a regulatory -- representative of a
9 regulatory agency, it's clearly become an issue at all
10 of our projects, and as I said before, it's really not
11 just Columbia River projects. We're seeing it on
12 projects along the coast, down as far south as into like
13 southern Oregon area. I'm not sure about California
14 because I haven't done any projects in California and I
15 don't even know if they're down there.

16 MR. LE: The northern --

17 MR. EASTON: Are they --

18 MR. LE: North of the Bay area, yeah.

19 MR. EASTON: So they do occur. So anywhere
20 throughout the historic range where there's a FERC hydro
21 project, they pretty much have been brought to us as an
22 issue and we've been addressing it. And there have been
23 a lot of study requests and a lot of those studies
24 haven't been done because we can't find a way to do all
25 of them because they, one, require fish. You have to be

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1 able to get your hands on these fish in the case of
2 juvenile studies, and there's really no efficient way of
3 getting a large number of juveniles.

4 The adult passage studies such as the
5 telemetry study here, that has been done elsewhere. At
6 Priest Rapids they did some adult telemetry studies, and
7 at Rocky Reach, they also did a telemetry study there.
8 And then, of course, the Corps has done some of these.
9 And then you go down into the Willamette drainage and
10 it's an issue there and there's been a passage study
11 down there for adults also.

12 So when issues come to FERC, we really have --
13 we can't ignore them. It's not our job to just say,
14 "Well, you know, it hasn't been an issue in the past, so
15 therefore we can ignore it."

16 So what we usually do is we try and figure out
17 what we can do to address it, what information is
18 available, what studies can be done or should be done,
19 balance that against costs, and then in terms of
20 protection measures that ultimately might end up in a
21 license, that all gets thought through in terms of
22 reasonableness, basically.

23 The public interest and, you know, benefits
24 are weighed against costs and ultimately there's a
25 thumbs-up or thumbs-down call that's made at the agency

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1 by the people that are really empowered there, which is
2 not me. I'm just a fish guy. So I'll make a
3 recommendation and they either go with it or they don't.

4 So that's all -- that's really -- I mean, in
5 terms of lamprey, where that issue comes from, my
6 understanding is really a lot of it's driven by the
7 tribes and their cultural resource interest in it and
8 then also the fish and wildlife agencies that see it
9 and, you know, they're concerned because they've been
10 looking at declining numbers. The numbers they do have
11 suggest there's a lot less lamprey than there were back
12 in the '60s.

13 MR. LACY: One more question and then I think
14 I'll be satisfied on this issue. You may not be able to
15 answer this. This is Mr. Lacy again. I'm sorry.

16 You may not be able to answer this because you
17 said you're a fish guy, but what does one of these
18 studies that we have just been talking about cost? Do
19 you have any idea?

20 MR. EASTON: I believe that -- the ones that
21 are included in the PAD?

22 MR. LACY: Yeah, these that are being
23 suggested.

24 MR. EASTON: They actually have -- all -- each
25 one of them has a cost associated with it. I don't have

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1 the exact cost on the top of my head.

2 MR. LACY: They're in the big PAD document?

3 MR. EASTON: Yeah. There's a cost estimate
4 for each one of them. I think the two-step -- one of
5 them was a two-step -- the habitat study is a two-step
6 study. So there's going to be an initial cost to do the
7 base, you know, indicator of whether there is any
8 habitat.

9 If you don't find habitat, then you don't go
10 to the second step of actually looking for spawning. So
11 that would -- you would actually have a lower cost than
12 the total. I don't know what the breakdown is on that.
13 Maybe Bao can give you that information.

14 MR. LE: Yeah. I can tell you if I find it
15 here.

16 MR. EASTON: I believe the cost is roughly a
17 hundred thousand, a hundred --

18 MR. BICKFORD: Yeah, it's a little over a
19 hundred thousand.

20 MR. EASTON: A hundred to \$120,000, in that
21 range, the total cost of this habitat study. The
22 telemetry study I think was roughly a hundred thousand,
23 somewhere in that ballpark. Juvenile study, I don't
24 remember. I can't remember what the cost was on that.

25 MR. BICKFORD: That was less than 50 because
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1 it's --

2 MR. EASTON: 46,000, maybe something like
3 that?

4 MR. BICKFORD: Yeah, something like that. I
5 don't have the number in front of me.

6 MR. LACY: We're talking about some real
7 money.

8 MR. EASTON: It's all real. I mean, we take
9 it very seriously no matter what the cost is. It's --
10 we were going to get into it a little bit later in this
11 presentation. Actually, Dave will probably cover it.
12 We've got study criteria. It's basically like a
13 decision matrix that FERC uses in order to determine
14 whether we think a study should be done or not.

15 MR. LACY: That's helpful. Thank you.

16 MR. EASTON: And when we get to that, you'll
17 see that one of the things we think about is -- I mean,
18 cost is factored in as a consideration.

19 MS. HOWE: I'm Gail Howe, mayor of the City of
20 Pateros, and I just wanted to bring home a little bit
21 about lamprey.

22 I live on the mouth of the Methow River and
23 one day my daughter came up from the beach and said,
24 "Mommy, what's all of the little baby snakes doing? I
25 don't want to go in the water." And that just is an
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1 explanation that there had been a lot of fluctuation in
2 the reservoir and there was handfuls and gobs of these
3 things floating on the shore.

4 So that was my introduction to what lampreys
5 were, because I'm not a fish person and I'm not a
6 biologist, I'm more of an economist, and I could care
7 less otherwise about the lamprey.

8 MR. LACY: It sounds like a habitat to me if
9 they're growing there.

10 MR. EASTON: Yeah. It's possible that they --
11 well, total speculation here, obviously. It's possible
12 they were spawning right in that area. It's also
13 possible that those were a migratory form of the
14 juvenile that were coming from some point upstream and
15 then happened to be moving through that area at the
16 time. You know, that's just pure speculation. No real
17 way to know based on -- I mean --

18 MR. LACY: Yeah.

19 MR. EASTON: -- we'd have to do a study. So
20 you probably don't want to know that bad.

21 MR. LACY: Don't get me wrong. Again, I'm --
22 I believe that we should be concerned about the
23 environment, about these species, and if it's necessary
24 to do that study, even if it's three or \$400,000 -- I
25 mean, I'm not taking the position that we should just
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1 simply not do what's necessary and keep the bill down in
2 the box. I'm more concerned about making sure that
3 those criteria that FERC is using to determine that
4 studies are actually necessary are actually met.

5 MR. EASTON: Yeah. I appreciate that. I know
6 what you're saying.

7 MR. LACY: Right.

8 MR. EASTON: Does anybody have anything else
9 they'd like to address in terms of lamprey, or thoughts,
10 questions?

11 MR. ELDRED: Tony Eldred, State Fishing and
12 Wildlife Department.

13 For many years I was just -- I was only a
14 fisheries bio just for the Department of Game, the
15 Department of Wildlife, predecessors of the Fish and
16 Wildlife Department.

17 And madam Mayor, her question -- or her
18 comment there, lamprey, these specific lamprey come up
19 and spawn in tributary streams and they spend -- as
20 David knows, they -- no, it's -- as Bob knows, they
21 spend the first couple of years of their life typically
22 in banks and mud upstreams. They grow, develop and then
23 they emerge from their mud and they travel downstream.
24 It's so-called downstream migrants, and yet they really
25 put on the growth in the ocean.

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1 But the point that I'm making is even though,
2 understandably, this group may be comprised of European
3 settlers, this country, the Yakima tribe will be very
4 interested in this subject of the lamprey and that they
5 get appropriate attention, and I'll get to where I'm
6 going, that if you get -- well, I think it's very
7 practical to proceed with this study now that -- and it
8 behooves all of this group I think to support the study.

9 If it were to get short shrift as being
10 studied, reviewed or commented upon in the draft EIS and
11 the final EIS and then ultimate license orders, it --
12 looked at very critically by the Yakima tribe and their
13 very learned attorney, and there's certainly a
14 possibility that if you have to come in and do an
15 extensive study late in this licensing procedure, it
16 could really cobble things up at the end.

17 So in a practical sense, by doing this, the
18 district staff learns a good deal, fishery science
19 learns a good deal about restoration of lamprey, one of
20 these offbeat species, so to speak, and then you avoid a
21 bump in the road toward getting the new license for the
22 project.

23 MR. EASTON: Okay. Thank you.

24 Are we done with the lamprey?

25 (No response.)

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1 I guess -- I think we can move on. We've got
2 a really -- there's really three other issues we
3 identified in the scoping document related to fish.
4 There were no studies associated with these because I
5 guess existing information seemed adequate to address
6 these issues. The other three issues were the effects
7 of the project on white sturgeon spawning, rearing,
8 recruitment, movements and abundance.

9 White sturgeon is another one of these species
10 that really hasn't been focused on for -- in the past
11 historically and it's recently become a pretty serious
12 species of interest at all of the mid-Columbia projects
13 and is addressed at Rocky Reach and at Priest Rapids and
14 is now an issue here at this project.

15 Another issue is the effects of the project on
16 bull trout survival and habitat. Again, another issue
17 that's consistent with what we saw at Rocky Reach and
18 Priest Rapid. And I only refer to those two projects
19 because, I mean, they really are -- you know, in
20 terms -- from FERC's standpoint, we processed those
21 applications recently, so we're looking at it trying to
22 say, "Okay. Have we been consistent in terms of how
23 we've addressed issues and identified issues?"

24 And basically all I'm telling you is that
25 things that came up at Rocky Reach and Priest and how we
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1 handled them, we for the most part are seeing the same
2 issues here and we intend to proceed the same way in
3 terms of how we address them and information we look for
4 and along those lines.

5 And then the last issue is effects of the
6 project on resident fish, which, again, is another issue
7 that was in the earlier two projects.

8 Does anybody have comments about sturgeon or
9 bull trout or resident fish?

10 MR. ELDRED: Well, Bob, I would just say that
11 the previous discussion about how far do we go with this
12 study on the lower Okanogan, the contaminants, recently
13 a study was released, a state study, regarding the park
14 quality of Lake Chelan, and it turns out that in --
15 there are two basins in Lake Chelan, for those of you
16 who might not be acquainted. The northerly basin
17 occupies about, oh, some 30 or so miles of the length of
18 the lake and it's very deep, about 1500 feet its deepest
19 point. The southerly basin is ten to 15 miles long and
20 it's much shallower, only a maximum of about 400 feet.

21 And it was recently found that there are very
22 significant levels of DDT -- residual DDT in some of the
23 sediments but also in those so-called bottom dwellers,
24 benth organisms and bottom-feeding fish, and also in
25 fish which prey on organisms, little creepy-crawly
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1 creatures that the fish eat on, they had high levels.

2 So it -- conceivably you could wind up with an
3 interest, an urging of doing a similar study as was done
4 at Lake Chelan, and by doing this you're going to get, I
5 think, a step ahead by this information. What's coming
6 out of the Okanogan?

7 The Wells Reservoir is the first settling
8 basin, so to speak. It flows into the Okanogan. And I
9 presume that there has been significant sediment deposit
10 in Wells Reservoir by now, after 40 years. And it will
11 give some idea of what transfer there potentially could
12 be for these carcinogens and other toxicants that would
13 be coming down the Okanogan, be depositing for some time
14 in Wells Reservoir and potentially transferring through
15 the food chain.

16 MR. TURNER: Just one point, Tony. The thing
17 about that is the people need -- and I'm not downplaying
18 the importance of knowing that, but me as a regulator
19 have to try to figure out, well, how is the project
20 influencing that other than its sediment deposition.
21 But the next step, what would you expect the project to
22 do about it, and that's where we need to take the next
23 step and understand where that -- how that information
24 is useful.

25 MR. ELDRED: That's a good \$64 question.

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1 MR. TURNER: So that's kind of where we're
2 going. It's a two-part question. The proximate effect
3 is what would you expect the commission to require the
4 project to do to address it. And if there's no
5 connection there, then it may not be the responsibility
6 of the licensee to undertake that kind of study. I'm
7 not downplaying the importance, but is it really the
8 responsibility of the project? So that's kind of the
9 question.

10 The way it was phrased here is from a
11 recreational point of view, we may want to provide some
12 kind of information base or have the applicant do
13 something that alerts people to those kinds of problems
14 if there is a problem.

15 MR. ELDRED: Well, potentially --

16 THE REPORTER: I can't hear you. I'm sorry.

17 MR. ELDRED: Oh. Tony Eldred, State Fish and
18 Wildlife.

19 The state having this information, the State
20 Department of Health, frequently -- well, as need
21 arises, they put out these -- issue these notices
22 informing people of potential deleterious or harmful
23 toxicants in tissues of fish that are -- a lot of people
24 might eat.

25 Well, Douglas PUD might have the same gorilla
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1 on their back potentially down the road. What can they
2 do? They can possibly have the local health department
3 be notified of this information possibly to put out a
4 health warning. That's about as far as you can go
5 because you have a reservoir there which seems to me to
6 physically defy a solution.

7 MR. LE: Bao Le, Douglas PUD.

8 And just following up on Tony's comments, I
9 think that's the intent of the study that's proposed to
10 examine fish in recreation areas, the DDTs and PCBs in
11 fish in recreation areas in the Okanogan. The intention
12 is to inform public health issues and either work with
13 the Department of Health, signage, things like that.

14 So the idea is to follow-up on some of the
15 work that ecology has done through their technical
16 assessments and their tmpl development to try to inform
17 the users of the project areas.

18 MS. IRLE: Pat Irle with the Department of
19 Ecology.

20 And I think this is the last remaining issue
21 in discussions between Grant PUD and ecology, and I
22 don't think there's been a final decision made, but it
23 was trying to identify whether or not Grant PUD
24 actually -- the project actually was affecting movement
25 of the sediment, and they presented us with some
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1 information that looks like it will be useful in
2 addressing that.

3 MR. EASTON: Okay.

4 MR. TURNER: Did you mean to say Douglas PUD
5 instead of Grant?

6 MS. IRLE: Yes. Sorry. Guess what I've been
7 doing lately?

8 MR. EASTON: Actually, I was saying earlier to
9 Scott and Bao when I was talking to them before the
10 meeting, I said, "I'm positive I'm going to say Chelan
11 or Grant when I mean Douglas at some point during this
12 meeting because I've spent so much time on these two
13 proceedings already." I don't even know if I've done it
14 or not, so -- but Dave will be sure and point it out,
15 I'm sure.

16 I think if we're done with aquatics -- does
17 anybody have any other issues that they'd like to
18 discuss, information needs that they would like to talk
19 about in regard to aquatic resources?

20 (No response.)

21 If not, I'm going to -- what's that?

22 MR. TURNER: You guys want to take a break?

23 MR. EASTON: Do you want to take a break?

24 MR. TURNER: Take a ten-minute break or a
25 five-minute break? Let's take a ten-minute break. It

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1 will be a quarter of.

2 (Recess taken from 10:36 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.)

3 MR. EASTON: I guess we don't really recognize
4 many of you. Some of you we have seen before. But we
5 did get a request -- I guess, I figured everybody knew
6 everybody. But we got a request to do introductions.
7 So we're just going to basically go around the room,
8 everybody just say your name. If you're affiliated with
9 something, agency or stakeholders group or whatever, go
10 ahead and give your affiliation. If not, just give your
11 name.

12 I'll start off. My name is Bob Easton. I'm
13 with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and I'm a
14 fish biologist.

15 MR. TURNER: David Turner. I'm a wildlife
16 biologist and part of the team of FERC.

17 MR. BLANCHARD: I'm Jim Blanchard with the
18 Bureau of Reclamation.

19 MR. HEMINGER: I'm Lynn Heminger, a
20 commissioner at Douglas PUD.

21 MR. DEVINE: I'm John Devine with Devine
22 Tarbell & Associates, consultant for the Douglas PUD.

23 MR. CLUBB: I'm Bob Clubb with Douglas PUD.

24 MR. BICKFORD: Shane Bickford, Douglas PUD.

25 MS. HOWE: Gail Howe, mayor, City of Pateros.

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1 MR. JENKINS: Steve Jenkins, mayor, City of
2 Bridgeport.

3 MR. BEICH: Dennis Beich, Washington State
4 Department of Fish and Wildlife.

5 MS. IRLE: Pat Irle, Washington State
6 Department of Ecology.

7 MR. SODERSTROM: Keith Soderstrom, Bainbridge
8 Manufacturing, Waterville.

9 MR. LACY: Steve Lacy, East Wenatchee.

10 MR. BRIZENDINE: Greg Brizendine, manager,
11 East Wenatchee Water District.

12 MR. HALEY: Scott Haley, director for the Port
13 of Douglas County.

14 MR. SKAGEN: Ron Skagen, commissioner of
15 Douglas County PUD.

16 MR. HUNTER: Kem Hunter, town of Waterville.
17 That's K-e-m as in Mary.

18 MR. BERNHEISEL: Lee Bernheisel, Okanogan
19 Wilderness League, OWL.

20 MR. KREITER: Scott Kreiter, Douglas PUD.

21 MR. LE: Bao Le, Douglas PUD.

22 MS. MILLS: Denise Mills, Washington
23 Department of Ecology, Regional Water Quality section
24 manager.

25 MR. MCGEE: Jim McGee, Douglas PUD.

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1 MR. ELDRED: Tony Eldred, State Fish and
2 Wildlife Department.

3 MR. JEFFERS: Gar Jeffers, attorney for
4 Douglas PUD, and I too have never seen a lamprey.

5 MS. VIBBERT: Meaghan Vibbert, Douglas PUD.

6 MR. DOBBINS: Bill Dobbins, manager, Douglas
7 PUD.

8 MR. DAVIS: Jim Davis, commissioner, Douglas
9 PUD.

10 MS. MAYO: Mary Mayo, Douglas PUD.

11 MR. HAWKINS: Brad Hawkins, Douglas PUD.

12 MR. EASTON: Okay. I'm turning it over to
13 Dave and he's going to walk through some of the other
14 resource issues.

15 MR. TURNER: Unfortunately, I think you're
16 going to be stuck with me for the rest of the meeting
17 here, so let me know -- I'm kind of a low speaker, so if
18 you need me to talk up, let me know.

19 There are a number of issues that were
20 identified in association with terrestrial resources.
21 Obviously, one earlier that we talked about that was in
22 there that we have recharacterized, and we'll move back
23 into terrestrial, and that's the -- regarding the loss
24 of the salmon and steelhead and even lamprey.

25 There was one issue -- actually two. The
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1 first two are on the bullet on page 14, whether the
2 project transmission line represents avian electrocution
3 or collision hazards and then also whether the -- and
4 this was my take on what you guys were trying to
5 accomplish with the information that's to be gathered in
6 your proposed study, and that -- the second issue is
7 whether -- the transmission line right-of-way management
8 practices on wildlife and botanical resources. There
9 was one study proposed in there that is basically a
10 wildlife survey and habitat exercise.

11 I guess I have a couple of questions, but did
12 anybody have any problems over the way I characterized
13 the issue to begin with? I tried to focus the issue
14 regarding these resources to look more at the effects of
15 the project and maybe what the PUD is actually doing on
16 the ground that may have an influence as opposed to some
17 of the concerns that seem to be raised in the issue
18 description. Any comments? Questions?

19 (No response.)

20 As I said, I do have one quick -- or a couple
21 of quick questions in that one of the things it seemed
22 to be focussing on with regards to the transmission
23 lines is that you were looking at transmission line
24 collision and electrocution hazards, but the description
25 of the efforts in their literature survey, it's very
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1 unclear as to where that information is going.

2 There are a number of guidelines out there,
3 the area protection guidelines that are put out by the
4 Fish and Wildlife Service and -- I think it's EEI. I'm
5 wondering, was that effort intended to be part of that
6 analysis when you said you were going to look at the
7 literature surveyed to figure out what's going on out
8 there?

9 MR. MCGEE: Jim McGee, Douglas PUD.

10 This study was identified by the terrestrial
11 work group, basically Fish and Wildlife Service and
12 Washington Fish and Wildlife.

13 We started out discussing collisions and
14 potential electrocution problems on the transmission
15 lines, and within the group we really couldn't get to a
16 place where -- we couldn't come up with a methodology
17 that would allow us to really identify either of those
18 problems.

19 Electrocution is probably not a problem on the
20 transmission line just because of its basic
21 construction. But the problem with trying to identify
22 collisions on the line is that predatory species out
23 there, if there is a problem, are going to feed on the
24 birds that end up on the ground, and going out and
25 surveying to see if we have dead birds under the lines,

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1 not finding dead birds doesn't mean we don't have a
2 problem.

3 So we ended up looking more at collecting
4 baseline information and trying to see if we have
5 problems with species like sage grouse, some of the
6 terrestrial species in Washington State, like badgers
7 and those species that may be affected by our
8 right-of-way management or work on the lines and to
9 collect information, if it's out there, that would lead
10 us to believe that we might have some collision
11 problems. It's a really difficult study to try and get
12 to collision and electrocution problems.

13 MR. TURNER: Just a couple of points, then.
14 And we can talk about this later in terms of the process
15 and the study means. There are, as I pointed out, some
16 guidelines. You can do some very general stuff by
17 looking at topography and habitat and characterizing
18 that, trying to figure out where there might be a
19 potential problem.

20 I just ask one general question. Is there
21 information to suggest that there is a problem?

22 MR. MCGEE: That's the problem, there is no
23 information to suggest there is or there isn't.

24 MR. TURNER: It is well known that
25 transmission lines can pose collision hazards, and I

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1 would be very surprised, given the sites that we saw
2 yesterday, that the transmission line itself, given the
3 size and the spacing between the conductors, that they
4 do pose electrocution hazards.

5 But nonetheless, since there was a study
6 proposed, I wanted to kind of figure out where you were
7 going --

8 MR. MCGEE: Yeah.

9 MR. TURNER: -- and make sure that I
10 understood what the objectives of those studies were.

11 Did you have something, Shane?

12 MR. BICKFORD: Yeah. Shane Bickford, Douglas
13 PUD.

14 To me the objective of the study, not being a
15 wildlife biologist, was to go out and understand if our
16 right-of-way activities, specifically roads to access
17 towers we control underneath the tower structures, is
18 affecting RTE plants or RTE animals, and to me that was
19 really the focus. The group was also interested to know
20 if collision was taking place and if raptors and corvids
21 were also using the structures to prey on other species.

22 And so basically the study is focused around
23 doing cover type for habitat, trying to understand if
24 RT&Es are affected by our maintenance activities, and
25 then in addition to those surveys, if observations are

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1 made of dead birds underneath transmission lines, that
2 would then be followed up with further assessment.

3 There is also a literature-review component
4 that would look at the EEI information to see if there's
5 topography or if there's wetlands that are being crossed
6 where you see migratory waterfowl or near tropicals that
7 would come in contact with them.

8 MR. TURNER: It poses a greater risk hazard
9 because of those --

10 MR. BICKFORD: Right.

11 MR. TURNER: That's where I was going with
12 that information. If that is the intent, I'm
13 comfortable with it. But from what was in there, some
14 of the detail that was missing, I really wanted to make
15 sure I understood what the issue was and what was
16 driving this.

17 MR. DAVIS: Jim Davis, Douglas PUD.

18 With regard to dead birds under transmission
19 lines, in the rural areas in north Douglas County, there
20 may or may not be some there. I understand that. But
21 it's problematic. You better be there before the coyote
22 gets there or you'll never find the carcass.

23 MR. TURNER: Well, that's very well understood
24 and that's a problem with a lot of the studies that are
25 going on. And, again, it really is one. I guess I have

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1 never seen an issue with sharp-tailed grouse in
2 transmission lines that are that high.

3 So when you talk about any collisions, you're
4 actually talking about raptors and waterfowl and that
5 kind of stuff, so you can start looking in those areas
6 and just kind of making a general assessment.

7 But, as I pointed out earlier, with that
8 information, where does it lead you with regards to
9 collisions? Are we talking about marking the lines
10 potentially? It's -- those are the kinds of measures
11 that may ultimately be discussed, but you need a basis
12 to make that recommendation.

13 So I can see the value of doing that kind of
14 information gathering, but it wasn't really clear in
15 there where you were really taking that information.

16 Anything else in the transmission lines?

17 (No response.)

18 The third bullet is -- and that was the only
19 issue that seemed to have need for recreation -- or need
20 for additional information, but I got some other
21 questions as we go along that may pose some different
22 ideas.

23 But effects of the project-related recreation
24 on wildlife habitats and disturbance to wildlife and the
25 alteration and modification of habitat. The recreation
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1 issue, as I understood it, really wasn't necessarily
2 focussing on associated disturbances of recreation. It
3 seemed to be more focused on, I guess, the indirect
4 effects of adjoining land-use requirements or demands
5 from -- of development and the like.

6 I, again, tried to focus this one back onto
7 some things that are normally associated with a project
8 and its operations. I mean, we do require applicants to
9 provide for recreation and we do -- because of -- this
10 is one of the multiple purposes of this project and it
11 has been talked about in terms of -- in many of our
12 mid-Columbia projects as an effect on wildlife.

13 But I'm wondering if I have overstepped what
14 the concerns were or the concern was as developed by the
15 resource work group meetings, or is this a legitimate
16 issue that I have characterized for those who attended?
17 Any comments?

18 MR. ELDRED: David, are you still -- I
19 couldn't get everything you were saying. Are you still
20 focussing -- is the subject is there an effect of the
21 transmission line?

22 MR. TURNER: No. I moved onto another issue,
23 Tony.

24 MR. ELDRED: You moved onto recreation?

25 MR. TURNER: Right. The third issue at the
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1 bottom of page 14 that carries over to 15,
2 project-related rec- -- project-related recreations and
3 the effects on wildlife. Is skiing, waterfowl and those
4 issues a concern to the resource work groups?

5 MR. ELDRED: Tony Eldred, Department of Fish
6 and Wildlife.

7 We are looking at our -- potentially to see if
8 the glass is half empty. Our experience with previous
9 projects, that we find that there can be very
10 substantial indirect adverse impacts from recreation,
11 from recreators loving the great outdoors to death, so
12 to speak.

13 This -- it would seem -- looking at Wells
14 Reservoir now in the recreation season, the summer
15 recreation season, it would seem not, but, for instance,
16 with Grant PUD on one of them, in the 1960s who would
17 have foreseen what would be occurring there in 2000, and
18 it -- it presents an extreme challenge for the
19 Department of Fish and Wildlife and the utility to
20 protect the native shorelands and the wildlife habitat
21 with these recreators recreating, when they do their
22 thing.

23 So we're looking at the future. We didn't
24 tell the relicensing staff where our experience has
25 been, what we've experienced elsewhere and saying what

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1 is the potential for something similar happening at
2 Wells. We don't know. We can't protect -- we can't
3 project or prophesize.

4 But it would seem perhaps the greatest
5 impediment of a replaying of what has happened elsewhere
6 would seem to be that at Wells the -- downriver, on
7 Wanapum, in a recent recreation survey Grant PUD found
8 that 73 percent of the recreators surveyed originated --
9 they live in the Puget Sound area, in the megalopolis
10 over there, and the local recreators are few in number.

11 So it would not seem a great likelihood that
12 because of more difficult travel obstacles, instead of
13 four-lane, six-lane highways between Puget Sound and the
14 Columbia River at Wanapum, that's both a blessing and a
15 handicap for people who are interested in Wells. It's a
16 somewhat longer distance. The highways can't convey the
17 high-speed traffic, recreation traffic, that we --
18 that's experienced at Wanapum, but we're trying to peer
19 into a very foggy crystal ball. We just brought this
20 up. We didn't predict. We just said, "What are we
21 going to do about what might happen?"

22 In some ways it would be a blessing for the --
23 economically, but for other aspects, project concerns,
24 fish and wildlife and outdoor-related recreation, it
25 could have very much what we've experienced elsewhere.

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1 It could have a very adverse recreation. So we're
2 trying look at both sides.

3 MR. TURNER: And there's nothing, existing
4 information to allow you to provide that sort of
5 analysis on hand, basically? Because there's no studies
6 proposed.

7 MR. ELDRED: We can tell you with certain
8 amenities like highways that can handle a lot of
9 high-speed traffic and adequate number of boat launches
10 and very -- lots of parks around the reservoir that
11 accommodate big crowds, yes, yeah, it's -- every time
12 you add something more that's going to benefit
13 recreators along or on the reservoir, it's going to
14 increase the likelihood, probability of adverse impacts
15 to natural -- other natural resources.

16 But as it stands right now, in my view, the
17 greatest impediment to we experiencing what happened --
18 is happening at Wanapum is the moving from -- traveling
19 from Puget Sound over here. You can't hardly get here
20 towing a 20-foot boat and your -- all your equipment
21 that you bring for -- including the kitchen sink, it's
22 much harder to do that.

23 MR. TURNER: Thank you, Tony.

24 Is there any other comments on that?

25 (No response.)

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1 I skipped a bullet, actually. The one
2 preceding that is the effects of Douglas's land
3 management practices, which include weed control, soil
4 erosion control, and other permitting policies, such as
5 installation of docks and water systems, fences,
6 landscaping and agricultural uses, on wildlife and
7 wildlife habitats.

8 Again, this is one that I have
9 recharacterized, maybe inadvertently, from the
10 intentions of the resource work group, but I did so
11 because I wanted to focus more on what the project's
12 influence is on these kind of actions and maybe what the
13 resource work groups would be worried about, and I think
14 it's going to tier off some of the things that Tony was
15 talking about and that's the indirect effects of
16 recreation and development along the project shorelines.

17 I just kind of wanted to throw it out there
18 that there seems to be a concern associated with the
19 disposition of certain project lands. It's unclear as
20 to what project lands you might be talking about and
21 what those effects might be on wildlife and wildlife
22 resources.

23 That is a difficult issue to grapple with in
24 an environmental analysis without knowing the specifics,
25 and I would hope that there might be some further
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1 discussions if that is truly an issue as to what the
2 concern might be. If it is, I would propose that we
3 kind of limit it to the things that the PUD does do and
4 that's the -- again, the specifics of their land
5 management practices.

6 Does anybody have any comments, concerns or
7 questions about what -- the way I've characterized the
8 issue?

9 (No response.)

10 Flipping to page 15, we picked up with one
11 that is very common with a number of projects and that's
12 the effects of the frequency, timing, and amplitude of
13 reservoir fluctuations on waterfowl and riparian
14 habitats.

15 There seems to be enough information to deal
16 with this issue based on the baseline information that
17 the PUD gathered in characterizing it, but it also seems
18 to be that those conclusions were that there is no
19 adverse effects on wildlife and on riparian and wetland
20 habitats.

21 So I'm wondering if it's much of an issue to
22 even carry forward into the analysis, but we can
23 certainly deal with what we have if it's a big concern
24 for most folks.

25 Comments, questions?

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1 MR. BEICH: Dennis Beich, Department of Fish
2 and Wildlife.

3 I want to step back, and I apologize for
4 having to step back.

5 MR. TURNER: That's fine.

6 MR. BEICH: Is this list what FERC is putting
7 forward as those areas that will be studied or is what
8 you're asking is there really a need for these studies?

9 MR. TURNER: Well, actually, there is those
10 studies proposed for those issues, but these are the
11 issues that are going to need to be examined in the EA
12 that we ultimately look at.

13 In other words, when we do an environmental
14 assessment, we are often looking at specific
15 recommendations down the line as to whether or not -- or
16 an issue or a potential project effect to define whether
17 there should be some kind of measure put in place.

18 Maybe there's enough information to dismiss
19 the issue and we don't need to do anything, but if there
20 is not enough information to do that analysis based on
21 some future recommendation, we want to talk about
22 whether or not we have that information base or not to
23 make that analysis.

24 So these are the issues that have been
25 defined. The second question is do you have enough
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1 information to analyze those issues, and if so,
2 ultimately do you have enough information to make a
3 recommendation.

4 And my take on what's been put together in the
5 preapplication document suggest that these issues have
6 been floated, there is not really a defined problem, you
7 may not need to do anything in the future. So is it an
8 issue that really requires much of an analysis or should
9 it even be carried forward as an issue for the future?

10 If everybody is dead set on having it analyzed
11 and looked at and it is a typical issue to be faced with
12 in the mid-Columbia and we see projects have
13 fluctuations, that's not a problem, we can certainly do
14 it, and we have enough information, in my view, right
15 now to probably do that analysis, but the overall
16 question is, is it even worth addressing at this point.
17 I mean, do we see us doing anything in the future to
18 deal with it?

19 MR. BEICH: And, again, I apologize because
20 I -- although I've had staff participating in the
21 various work groups that Douglas PUD has put together to
22 begin this process, I have not been directly involved,
23 so I don't want to, you know, impose myself on a process
24 that's already been ongoing. But, also, we don't have
25 really here the appropriate staff to address some of

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1 these specific questions.

2 And so I guess I'll talk with Douglas PUD at
3 some break to see if we do have some issues regarding
4 these particular items, whether the -- whether we would
5 be submitting that or how, if they've been discussed in
6 work groups or not thoroughly. So I'm just throwing
7 that out.

8 MR. EASTON: You do have the opportunity to
9 file the written comments --

10 MR. TURNER: Right.

11 MR. EASTON: -- by the end of the scoping
12 period, and so this isn't the entire scoping process.
13 This is the meeting where we have the interactive part
14 and then there's a written part.

15 So if your staff looks at the scoping
16 documents, identifies a bunch of issues that they think
17 need to be retained and they're important issues to your
18 staff, you should highlight that into written comments
19 and file that with the commission.

20 MR. TURNER: And, again, in terms of the study
21 groups, we're really in the beginning of that process.
22 We've even kind of talked through this and we have
23 adequate information and what I see before me suggests
24 that it is. There's probably no need to continue to
25 worry about it. It's just that it seems like some of
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1 the baseline information suggests that these issues
2 could go away, and if that's the case, then we don't
3 need to carry it forward. But I just want to make sure
4 that there is something there.

5 Again, the study plan process, which I'll talk
6 about a little later on, we can even begin to flush out
7 if there's something else missing, but I'm not
8 suggesting that there is at this point, so --

9 MR. BEICH: Thank you, Dave.

10 MR. MCGEE: Jim McGee, Douglas PUD.

11 We've had about seven issues in the
12 terrestrial work group, including a couple you've just
13 discussed, where the group hashed out whether or not we
14 felt that it was a problem, and the only ones that came
15 to the surface that we really felt we needed to move
16 forward with were the predator study for the hatcheries
17 and we collected the baseline information and the RTE
18 information for the transmission lines.

19 We felt that though they had brought up these
20 initial -- these questions initially, that there was
21 enough information to say that they didn't feel that
22 there was even a need for a study or necessarily a need
23 for additional evaluation of those questions.

24 There's also a question about mule deer
25 swimming across the river, and we have no evidence that
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1 there was ever a migratory herd that swam across the
2 river. The state shoots lots of mule deer during their
3 season, so the odds of having an impact on those species
4 is pretty slim.

5 The same thing, there's no evidence right now
6 that recreation is having a serious impact on wildlife
7 on the reservoir other than the white pelicans moving
8 from our reservoir to another reservoir.

9 So the committee felt that, you know, though
10 they brought these issues up, we discussed them, that we
11 didn't have any intention of moving forward on any of
12 those.

13 MR. TURNER: Well, it's a two-prong question,
14 and I'm glad you brought up the migratory -- the mule
15 deer stuff because that was my next bullet.

16 Again, I was wondering, is there information
17 to suggest that there is a problem, and, two, if there
18 isn't a problem, why is it an issue? And if it's not an
19 issue that we need to be worried about, then I would
20 suggest we leave that out. We don't need to focus that
21 effort.

22 You've walked through the scoping process and
23 talked about it and raised that issue and said, "We have
24 enough information to address it, but we also don't have
25 a problem and foresee a problem. We don't need to move
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1 forward with an issue in the project analysis."

2 And that's where maybe you guys are not
3 getting a good picture, but we kind of have to be
4 thinking about the end product, and that's the future
5 license for this thing and where the recommendations
6 might go, and our environmental analysis will need to
7 look at the evidence that's put forward to make that
8 recommendation.

9 If there's not an issue, we don't want to
10 spend the time and the ink on it to deal with those
11 issues if they are not an issue. So that's kind of what
12 I'm trying to address here.

13 MR. BLANCHARD: Jim Blanchard, Bureau of
14 Reclamation.

15 A couple of the terms that you're using
16 possibly cause me a bit of heartache. I think there's
17 an awful lot of data on how the reservoir is operated
18 and how the river is operated, but to say that there
19 isn't an issue that needs to be addressed in an EA I
20 don't think is a fair characterization.

21 I think you do need to talk about reservoir
22 operations and look at the other two processes that have
23 gone on in the river and it's certainly been one of
24 them.

25 There are coordination agreements between all
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1 of the groups that operate dams on the upper Columbia
2 that are not going to be a part of this license as a --
3 as something open for major discussion. I don't
4 think -- you cannot take Wells out of the -- out of the
5 power coordination agreement.

6 MR. TURNER: Oh, I don't think there's any
7 intention to do so.

8 MR. BLANCHARD: No, no. And that's what I'm
9 saying, that you do -- that that needs to be addressed
10 within the EA. And then there are other things that --
11 you know, all the way down to the bar agreement and the
12 way Wells operates within that so that the way they
13 operate their reservoir is integral to the way that the
14 river is operated.

15 MR. TURNER: For sure, and we intend to look
16 at that. But those operations have certain
17 ramifications. The more -- those ramifications are
18 generally in the aquatics issues more than it is in the
19 terrestrial side of things, and that's what I'm
20 suggesting. And, obviously, we will look at those
21 effects.

22 But if there's something associated with mule
23 deer migration barriers, does the reservoir create a
24 migration barrier, if the information suggests that
25 that's not -- there is no effect, there's no problem,
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1 then we don't want to spend a lot of effort -- even if
2 it's -- even if it means we don't need any additional
3 information to dismiss it, we probably don't even need
4 to spend time on the environmental analysis to talk
5 about it if it's not an issue. So that's kind of where
6 I'm coming from.

7 Back there.

8 MR. DAVIS: Jim Davis, Douglas PUD.

9 I'd like to pick up on Mr. McGee's comments
10 about the mule deer migration and also suggest to
11 Mr. Beich that it would really be helpful if the state
12 could weigh in and describe the positive effects of the
13 Conservation Reserve Program enrollment at Douglas
14 County. That's what's really driving the exploding
15 numbers of mule deer. We're not talking about a
16 decrease.

17 I'm fourth generation. I live up there. And
18 mule deer, they are so plentiful, they're pests, and
19 that didn't happen until the Conservation Reserve
20 Program came along, and 33 percent of upper Douglas
21 County is involved in that program, and I would suggest
22 that in Mr. Beich and the state's comments that they
23 articulate that, because I think if he talked to his
24 biologists, they would substantiate that.

25 MR. BEICH: Well, feeling a need to respond,
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1 Dennis Beich.

2 Actually, the Department of Fish and Wildlife
3 is on record of supporting the Conservation Reserve
4 Program and we've been working with Douglas County
5 PUD -- or Douglas County commissioners as well as the
6 Farm Bureau and Cow Association to work with our federal
7 delegation to keep that program intact. We think it's a
8 valuable program, not just for the wildlife, but for the
9 economy of Douglas County.

10 And have we moved on to the mule deer bullet?

11 MR. TURNER: I think we did indirectly.

12 MR. BEICH: And then I have just first a
13 couple of general comments I'd like to get out. I'm not
14 sure when the appropriate time would be to do that.

15 MR. TURNER: Go for it.

16 MR. BEICH: David, I want to just thank you
17 and the other FERC staff that take the time to come out
18 here and have these meetings and talk to the public and
19 actually see the project itself. I think that's very
20 beneficial and it's greatly appreciated.

21 I'd also like to say that Douglas PUD has at
22 least so far been a pleasure to work with, and actually
23 that was meant as a joke.

24 (Laughter.)

25 MR. HEMINGER: You have to tell us when to
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1 laugh.

2 (Laughter.)

3 MR. BEICH: We worked with Douglas PUD
4 throughout the last -- we've had a very good
5 relationship with them and I assume that's going to
6 continue. They're a pleasure to work with and they look
7 at -- they look for constructive solutions to
8 contentious issues, they hold open public meetings and
9 the transparent process is appreciated.

10 And Mayor Lacy just left, but I think they're
11 very sensitive to -- well, they hold to their power
12 production mission and respect the ratepayers and try to
13 hold those costs down but still remain sensitive to
14 resource issues, and that's appreciated.

15 With that, the -- on this -- the effects of
16 the project reservoir as a migration and movement
17 barrier to mule deer, I'm hoping we just don't -- well,
18 let me phrase this different.

19 I've expressed both in the Grant PUD forms as
20 well as the Chelan PUD forms that I feel that -- the
21 agency feels there's a need for taking a look at the
22 existing pools and the migration impediment that they
23 may be causing to indigenous species. The -- and it's
24 just not mule deer. It's a range of species, including
25 pigmy rabbits, jack rabbits, Columbia-basin ground
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1 squirrel perhaps and badgers. It's -- it would be a
2 list of species, not just mule deer.

3 We have a number of pools up and down the
4 Columbia River, and those pools just taken by themselves
5 may not be the straw that breaks the camel's back, but
6 we have a number of projects, whether development
7 projects or the Columbia-basin irrigation project, we
8 have a Columbia River initiative ongoing, there's a
9 number of things that cumulatively have an impact on
10 these short-step species, and we're starting to see a
11 decline in those short-step species, and it would be
12 helpful to have information to see what the impacts of
13 the pools have during normal operation of the project on
14 migration of the species, and if there is indeed an
15 impact, then, of course, we can look at that and add it
16 to the rest of the things going on within the area to
17 try to address the decline of those species. Again, it
18 would be looking to prevent listings of those species.

19 So I would just as soon we didn't focus just
20 on mule deer, but looked at a list of potential species
21 that could be -- probably are impacted.

22 So the Department of Fish and Wildlife does
23 have a concern about the pools presenting a migration
24 barrier and would like to see some additional
25 information obtained as to the extent of that.

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1 MR. TURNER: That raises two questions in my
2 view. As I understood, the resource work groups felt
3 there was enough existing information --

4 MR. BEICH: That's fine.

5 MR. TURNER: -- to deal with that, and I read
6 the PAD and I found nothing to suggest that there was
7 any -- other than profession opinion, which has a great
8 value, I couldn't decipher what the logic was to make
9 that decision, there was enough information to address
10 it.

11 If it is in fact an issue and we can carry
12 that forward in the analysis, then that's fine. We will
13 include it. We may even expand the issue when we look
14 at that.

15 The second part of that question, though,
16 would be what information would you be gathering and how
17 would you be gathering it. You need to be thinking
18 about that because you need to put forth those study
19 requests in the next month.

20 And where are you going to take it? And where
21 do you -- what existing information do you have?
22 Where's the problem? Why is this an issue? And what do
23 you see doing with that information that you gathered in
24 regard to that, how the reservoir is going to affect the
25 migration?

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1 MR. JENKINS: Before we leave the deer
2 issue --

3 THE REPORTER: What's your name?

4 MR. JENKINS: Steve Jenkins, City of
5 Bridgeport.

6 You know, Douglas County is doing a great job
7 on the FERC process. I like the way it's going and the
8 information it's sharing and the professionals are
9 attending the meetings and whatnot.

10 But our community, we have -- recreation is
11 important to our community. It's tourist dollars. So
12 the fish, the deer, the wildlife, everything is
13 important and protection is important, but we have a
14 fear that it's going to be like Chief Joseph Dam when
15 they did their mitigation and their studies up there,
16 when you turn around and spend money to put seven wells
17 in the river to pump water up onto the shore for
18 mitigation, you know, it -- those types of costs put a
19 concern on the community. At what cost is this going to
20 be and is it realistic and is it going to affect the
21 economic driver of the county, in other words,
22 inexpensive power? That's what draws private industry
23 and tax base and that's very important to us also.

24 Our community doesn't want to see the low base
25 rate go on studies or mitigations that really aren't
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1 essential, and that's just an example of one of them.
2 To us and to the general public, those mitigation sites
3 were tremendous dollars and of no value.

4 We don't have a problem with mitigating
5 wildlife or anything else. It's very important to us.
6 But those types of costs are extreme and I think it puts
7 us at risk, Douglas County, of losing our fair and our
8 reasonable rates.

9 MR. TURNER: Well, as Bob mentioned earlier,
10 those are all factors that we will need to balance in
11 our considerations when we make the ultimate
12 recommendation to the commission of whether to relicense
13 and under what conditions. It's -- without specifics,
14 it's hard to respond to your concern, but we will
15 definitely be considering those measures.

16 Shane, did you have something? You were just
17 standing up?

18 MR. BICKFORD: I just wanted to note a
19 general-process statement. I know a lot of the things
20 that were bulleted in the scoping document under
21 terrestrial were -- as Jim indicated, seven of those
22 were things that the regional local biologists and
23 tribes, you know, we sat down and hashed through the
24 existing literature.

25 Mule deer is one of them in particular that we
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1 looked at, sharp-tail, sage grouse, and a lot of the
2 other short-step species, and we sat down and scoped all
3 these issues in the terrestrial resource work group.
4 You'll see a full listing of all the issues that were
5 scoped in the PAD, and in a lot of cases it was
6 professional knowledge, but in the case of mule deer and
7 sharp-tail it was professional knowledge based upon
8 information that is readily available.

9 And so if that information was not in the
10 preapplication document, we will be adding that to the
11 record, and we've got some migratory mule deer studies
12 that we'd like to add to the record and we have some
13 sharp-tail information that we'll be adding as well just
14 to beef up, basically, the same thing that the resource
15 work group, the conclusions that they came to as filed
16 in the PAD.

17 MR. TURNER: That's perfect.

18 MR. BICKFORD: So that will help your guys'
19 EA.

20 MR. TURNER: Well, exactly. And if there is
21 existing information -- that was what the intent of the
22 preapplication document was. When an applicant starts
23 this, it's supposed to gather what they can in terms of
24 relevant and reasonably available information, pull it
25 together so that these kinds of questions that don't pop
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1 up in scoping -- or at least we can ask them in a
2 logical manner, and it doesn't mean that it is the
3 end-all, the be-all. The PAD is the beginning -- it's
4 just the beginning of the process. It's not the end.

5 So if you've got additional information to
6 address our concerns and can put it in the record, then
7 it kind of helps to define whether or not we need
8 additional information. So if you could do that sooner
9 rather than later, it would definitely help me out.

10 MR. HUNTER: Yes. Kem Hunter, Waterville
11 Chamber of Commerce, president. Also here on behalf of
12 Mayor DeVaney, Waterville mayor.

13 I'd like to make some general comments for the
14 record about the scoping process. Probably reiterating
15 what some of the other folks have said. We have a
16 concern about the cumulative expense of studies if they
17 are not really necessary to the end goal, which is the
18 relicensing.

19 Obviously, there's a lot of things that have
20 to be closely looked at but they are mandated by state
21 and federal environmental law, the Endangered Species
22 Acts and a number of other laws, so -- and that should
23 be the focus.

24 When you get to the point of, "Well, while
25 we're doing these studies anyway, there are some other
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1 things we might like to look at that are nice to look
2 at," then I question at some point whether those kinds
3 of inquiries are appropriate in this particular forum
4 because ultimately they'll be paid for by taxpayer and
5 ratepayer dollars.

6 So I just want to keep in mind what the goal
7 here is and focus on what is required under state and
8 federal environmental law during the environmental
9 assessment process.

10 The other comment is when it comes to actually
11 doing the studies, my understanding of the
12 environmental -- of the procedure is that best available
13 science has to be -- has to be incorporated into the
14 study and the findings.

15 I emphasize the word "available" here. If a
16 study -- there's a huge amount of research that's been
17 done on a lot of -- in a whole host of areas. If the
18 science is available out there that can -- that is
19 reliable and is relevant to the inquiry, the necessary
20 inquiry, and if it can be extrapolated so that adequate
21 findings can -- and conclusions can be made, then that
22 should be enough. It doesn't necessarily trigger the
23 requirement of a new field study which would be very
24 time consuming and much more expensive.

25 Also, as I've heard testimony to the effect
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1 that in this limited area of inquiry, the sampling --
2 the size of the sampling may be so small that the
3 results may not be reliable, so that would be all the
4 more reason to rely on best available science that's out
5 there and apply it to our particular questions in this
6 case rather than to do a new and expensive field study.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. TURNER: Maybe we should -- I have a slide
9 toward the end of the presentation that will probably
10 address some of your concerns, but -- so I'd like to
11 hold off on that, and if there's more questions about
12 that, it will come up.

13 I'd like to stick from here on out on the
14 issues at hand. But I think I have some things that
15 maybe in hindsight it would have been better to talk
16 about in the beginning, but it will maybe help tie
17 things up here and relieve some of your concerns.

18 Anything else on the issues of migration and
19 reservoir fluctuations?

20 (No response.)

21 I have added -- the last bullet there is the
22 adequacy of the wildlife management program in reducing
23 the project effects on wildlife. This was an attempt to
24 recharacterize some concerns of one of the issues that
25 was raised in the PAD and that was the effects of -- or
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1 discontinuing the support for the Wells wildlife
2 convention area.

3 I had had a concern that we might be going
4 down a path that is difficult to analyze and the
5 recommendations that might be difficult to support from
6 the commission's point of view.

7 One of the -- we issued a policy statement on
8 settlement agreements back in September of 2006,
9 September 21. A couple of those points are salient
10 whether we get into settlement discussions or not and
11 those are that we really need to make sure there's a
12 clearly defined relationship between any ultimately
13 recommended measure and the project effects and purposes
14 related to those resources that are being affected and
15 that information needs to be based on substantial
16 evidence in the record. That's easier to do when we're
17 looking at specific measures as opposed to funding
18 levels.

19 And I just want people to keep in mind when
20 they raise those concerns -- and I completely understand
21 where those concerns were coming from, but I've seen a
22 number of similar issues raised in the Grant proceedings
23 and the Chelan proceedings and just kind of want to
24 alert folks that we may -- as we go down this licensing
25 path, we need to be concerned with what we've done in
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1 the past, and I think if you look at those proceedings,
2 you're going to see similar kinds of analyses and
3 conclusions drawn when we look at those measures.

4 Any questions, comments, concerns?

5 MR. BERNHEISEL: Lee Bernheisel.

6 I just -- I came in late and I apologize for
7 that, but I have some specific comments on protocols on
8 certain things and I was just wondering if you could
9 explain when we do have a chance to comment upon those
10 today.

11 MR. TURNER: Well, I have to ask the question,
12 to comment on -- you have an opportunity to comment on
13 the issues now. We have a comment period that closes --
14 what? --

15 MR. EASTON: April 2nd.

16 MR. TURNER: -- April 2nd on the issues. At
17 that date you also need to be putting forth any
18 information requests that you have that you feel is
19 necessary for the commission to have an adequate
20 information base to make its decisions on.

21 There's another -- there's other points in the
22 process where we'll also talk about in -- towards the
23 end of this discussion or in the end of the issue
24 discussions where there are other points you need to
25 talk about, the commission's environmental analysis,
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1 what you recommend in terms of what the license might
2 need to include and those types of things. So if you
3 can hold that and if I don't get to it, we can raise it
4 again.

5 MR. BERNHEISEL: Yeah. My issues are based on
6 the scoping itself and there are certain issues -- or a
7 certain issue that I want to discuss that should be
8 scoped and I feel it's not being properly scoped at this
9 point.

10 MR. TURNER: Now is the time to raise it.

11 MR. EASTON: An issue related to a resource or
12 resources?

13 MR. BERNHEISEL: Yes, a resource.

14 MR. EASTON: Yeah, you can --

15 MR. BERNHEISEL: But, no, I don't want to
16 interrupt, you know, the flow of what your schedule is,
17 so I've been kind of waiting to discuss this issue.

18 MR. EASTON: What issue?

19 MR. BERNHEISEL: Spring chinook.

20 MR. EASTON: Well, we covered fish, but you
21 can -- that's fine. You can talk about it right now.

22 MR. BERNHEISEL: Okay. Well, maybe I'll back
23 up and go into the fisheries resource on spring chinook.

24 My name again is Lee Bernheisel. I live in
25 the Methow Valley and I represent the Okanogan

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1 Wilderness League.

2 My involvement has been fairly extensive with
3 Douglas County PUD on fish issues and I have been
4 involved since the early '90s and that was after the
5 last license was basically signed for operation of
6 Wells.

7 I'll start with saying that I feel that there
8 needs to be an environmental impact statement done on
9 the protocols for spring chinook in the Methow basin,
10 and I'm going to go into some issues that I want to
11 discuss that -- the reason why I think an EIS and a
12 range of alternatives needs to be done on this specific
13 resource.

14 My original involvement was reading the
15 protocols for spring chinook after the license was
16 signed off on in the early '90s. In that particular
17 agreement it was agreed by all parties that signed off,
18 including Federal -- FERC, that the spring chinook
19 should be treated very, very specifically for the
20 viability of the wild chinook, wild spring chinook.

21 Part of this program was to do an enhancement
22 program in the Methow Valley and the Methow basin and
23 there were specifics related to those protocols, the
24 number of fish that could be gathered for the hatcheries
25 and other specific reasons and they were always in favor
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1 of having the run for the spring chinook on the wild run
2 maintained and the maintenance of the spring chinook was
3 important that we leave more spring chinook in the river
4 than take out for the three subspecies of spring chinook
5 in the basin.

6 That being said, this protocol has changed
7 many, many times. The process involved in changing the
8 protocols for spring chinook was a closed process. It
9 was something that I was involved in, but I basically
10 had to break the door down to get into the involvement
11 process with Douglas County PUD and the other licensees,
12 Grant County and Chelan County.

13 As I said, the protocols would change because
14 the people involved, which was the fisheries agencies,
15 had ultimate authority to be able to change this without
16 much discussion. The public wasn't involved, as I said,
17 and these were changed yearly. We got further and
18 further away from the protection of the spring chinook.
19 We started collecting more than we had that escaped into
20 the spawning grounds.

21 The adaptive management in this process I do
22 not feel worked and part of it was because it changed,
23 changed dramatically, and it was based on production
24 goals rather than return of the spring chinook, and it
25 still is. And production has to do specifically with
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1 how much pounds of spring chinook are produced each year
2 and released into these three different sub basins of
3 the Methow.

4 The protocols actually flip-flopped in the
5 mid-'90s, which I commented on, and it was done in a
6 very closed process again, but it was done by one
7 portion of the fisheries agencies, their biologists,
8 saying that to save the species, we had to collect more
9 fish rather than less. It never went back to the
10 original licenses, never went back. So we've had this
11 flip-flop in the protocols from the original licensee,
12 which doesn't give me a lot of comfort in the new
13 process.

14 And so I feel that it's appropriate to go look
15 at the spring chinook protocols again and have a range
16 of alternatives on that specific species to see which
17 would be best for the spring chinook.

18 We have also had fish kills that I'm aware of
19 at least three times on both releases and disease within
20 these enhancement fisheries. We've had predation
21 problems with hav- -- introducing coho into the system,
22 which are larger fish and may eat the spring chinook
23 because they're smaller.

24 We've had lots of different things happen in
25 the Methow and it really has not been looked at to this
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1 point, and I'm hoping that this might be another
2 opportunity to look to see what's best for the spring
3 chinook within the Methow basin.

4 My analysis, which I was the only one
5 collecting data for a number of years, on returning wild
6 spring chinook showed that it was pretty much a wash on
7 whether or not the return of the hatchery fish, the
8 enhanced fish or the beta fish was outproducing the
9 other.

10 So we spent a lot of money on enhancements and
11 a lot of money on production and I realize there's some
12 legal issues involved in this and that the courts have
13 mandated certain things to look at these production
14 goals, but I think the fish themselves need to be taken
15 care of and I think they need a second look.

16 And that's pretty much all I really wanted to
17 say on this. But, you know, I would like to see an EIS
18 down for the protocols on spring chinook in the Methow
19 basin and that's just an isolated part of the EA that I
20 would like to see drawn out of it.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. EASTON: Can I just ask a couple of
23 questions and try to clarify a few things?

24 MR. BERNHEISEL: Sure.

25 MR. EASTON: When you say "protocols," are you
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1 referring to the hatchery protocols?

2 MR. BERNHEISEL: Well, it's more than the
3 hatchery protocols. It's protocols for both escapement
4 and hatchery.

5 MR. EASTON: And these are the management
6 goals that are implemented through --

7 MR. BERNHEISEL: Yearly, every spring, to my
8 knowledge, the fisheries agents that I've been --

9 MR. EASTON: This isn't part of the -- is this
10 part of your HCP that --

11 MR. CLUBB: Bob Clubb, Douglas PUD.

12 We went through a long process with the
13 Habitat Conservation Plan which addresses the spring
14 chinook, summer/fall chinook, coho, steelhead and
15 sockeye and there was an EIS produced before and a
16 biological opinion by National Marine Fisheries Service
17 before it went before the commission and adopted as part
18 of our license.

19 So there is a process that goes on. I know
20 Lee doesn't feel like it is as open as it should be, but
21 it goes through a coordinating committee that has
22 representatives of the resource agencies, tribes to make
23 these decisions on an adaptive management basis with
24 overall goals of meeting the "no net impact" standard by
25 maintaining naturally spawning populations.

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1 And so I think we've tried to address Lee's
2 concerns in that process and that has been formally
3 documented in an EIS that was generated by National
4 Marine Fisheries Service.

5 MR. BICKFORD: That was in 2002.

6 MR. EASTON: Right. And that's -- we were
7 actually a cooperating agency on that.

8 MR. BICKFORD: Yes.

9 MR. BERNHEISEL: Just as a point of the
10 process itself, the HCP process kind of changed the
11 cooperative base of how the PUDs were operating in their
12 meetings and I asked to be able to come to the HCP
13 meetings just so I could continue to get information on
14 what the protocols and things were, and I was denied
15 access to those meetings at the HCP level.

16 And so, you know, again, you know, I'm -- it's
17 something that's very difficult for the public to get an
18 oar into this process at this point, and I'm not
19 criticizing, but this gives me another opportunity with
20 opening up the license for 40 years to be able to get
21 more public involvement through an EIS process on these
22 protocols and that's why I'm asking.

23 MR. EASTON: The point of this meeting is for
24 us to get an idea of what the resource issues are and
25 the information needs are, and if there's issues that we

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1 did not identify in this scoping document that you think
2 need to be addressed in the environmental analysis, then
3 you should put those forth.

4 It sounds like you have concerns specifically
5 with spring chinook and how they're handled and
6 addressed managementwise in the Methow basin.

7 MR. BERNHEISEL: That's correct.

8 MR. EASTON: So that's the kind of issue I can
9 take back and try and do a job that could -- you know,
10 spend some time on it, looking at it and trying to
11 figure out how I can characterize it in a way that fits
12 into our scoping document.

13 MR. BERNHEISEL: I would be happy to find time
14 to supply you with the documents I've supplied in the
15 past on the protocols that have -- on what is felt is
16 needed for the spring chinook if that would be of some
17 help. It wasn't any help in the earlier process, but --

18 MR. EASTON: Keeping in mind that one of the
19 things we will be focussing on primarily -- I'm just --
20 I'm wondering if we're having sort of a disconnect here
21 in that what we're looking at is the project and how the
22 project is operated. The management of the species or
23 the fisheries agencies are beyond FERC's authority. We
24 can't really tell NMFS how to manage the salmon and
25 steelhead.

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1 If NMFS decides to tell us to put certain
2 things into their license, they have some mandatory
3 condition authorities where they can basically give
4 things to FERC and say, "Put this in the license."

5 MR. BERNHEISEL: And that's what happened --

6 MR. EASTON: FERC doesn't have any authority
7 to say no to some of those things. And if so, we don't
8 issue a license or we issue a license and things go in.

9 So there is some difficulty of getting at some
10 of the like management goals of the agencies through the
11 FERC process. We can't really -- we don't generally
12 expand our scope wide enough to go out and reevaluate
13 their management approach. What we really hope to look
14 at is the scope of the project in terms of the project's
15 impacts on the species.

16 Now, for spring chinook, this project is
17 pretty good overall in terms of passage survival and
18 things along those lines.

19 Now, the hatchery program, if that's what
20 you're getting at in terms of how they manage the
21 hatchery program, they don't set statement goals. Those
22 goals are going to be set primarily by the agencies.

23 MR. BERNHEISEL: Actually, it was part of the
24 license. That's where this originally came from. The
25 license in 19- -- in early '90s when they went through
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1 their last relicensing --

2 MR. EASTON: Is this project construction?

3 MR. BICKFORD: No. That was not a
4 relicensing. That was just an approval of the
5 settlement agreement on fisheries issues.

6 MR. BERNHEISEL: Okay. It was a settlement
7 agreement that was a part of the FERC process. It was
8 part -- FERC was involved, NMFS was involved, and they
9 came up with a set of protocols. Those protocols are
10 the ones that I'm talking about and those were agreed to
11 by all parties, including NMFS, Douglas County PUD,
12 FERC. All those parties agreed to it.

13 That changed. That has changed dramatically
14 in the last ten years. And it never has gone through
15 the process again. And it may not have been
16 relicensing, but it was certainly a proposal between
17 Douglas County PUD, FERC, NMFS and the tribes, I
18 believe.

19 MR. EASTON: I think maybe the best -- I mean,
20 you've provided us with your oral testimony, so I think
21 we have a picture of what your concerns are, and if you
22 have any intent of filing any written materials, we have
23 a written --

24 MR. BERNHEISEL: Again, I could certainly
25 refile what I've already filed in the past.

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1 MR. EASTON: Well, that would be fine.

2 MR. BERNHEISEL: And so it goes to a different
3 agency. But I did write a letter back in the mid-'90s
4 on what other people thought the protocol should be and
5 these things were changing.

6 MR. EASTON: Well, I think that that may be
7 something that would be worthwhile as taking that and
8 sending it into the commission and giving us a chance to
9 look at it. I think --

10 MR. BERNHEISEL: I will resubmit it.

11 MR. EASTON: We're going to need -- from our
12 standpoint, we're going to need to sit back and look at
13 this and figure out how it exists into the existing
14 licensing process.

15 MR. BERNHEISEL: HCP?

16 MR. EASTON: Well, the HCP, they haven't
17 gotten to a point yet where that -- they have formally
18 proposed that the HCP will be part of their relicensing
19 application because we don't have a relicense
20 application at this point.

21 So we don't know -- I think there's an
22 implication that they're going to carry forward with the
23 HCP and that's part of the commitment to the HCP.

24 From FERC's standpoint, until you put it in
25 the license application and put it before FERC, you

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1 don't have a proposal. So we don't know what your
2 proposal is until you formalize it, and we're years away
3 from that.

4 So there's two and a half years of
5 negotiations here for you to work with them on what you
6 think they need to propose.

7 MR. BICKFORD: The only proposal that we've
8 put in so far is a placeholder that states, in our
9 notice of intent to relicense, is a statement that we
10 plan on not changing operations in the project.

11 MR. EASTON: Right.

12 MR. BICKFORD: So the presumption of the HCP
13 would be included as part of that package because it's
14 part of the existing license.

15 MR. EASTON: We're really early in the
16 process. We're trying to identify the issues. If
17 you've got an issue, I think you should file some
18 written comments to indicate what your issue is and how
19 you think we should handle it and address it.

20 And then to the extent it fits within the
21 scope of what FERC does in terms of relicensing, we can
22 address that issue in the environmental document and
23 then try and address it through measures in the license
24 if it's appropriate.

25 MR. BERNHEISEL: A question for FERC. Is FERC
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1 going to be responsible for doing -- they're responsible
2 for doing the EA, and if they chose to go in deeper into
3 the process, would you be responsible for doing the EIS
4 or would that be Douglas County PUD that would be doing
5 the EIS?

6 MR. EASTON: We'll prepare both documents.

7 MR. BERNHEISEL: FERC will?

8 MR. EASTON: Me, FERC, will. I'm from FERC.

9 MR. BERNHEISEL: Oh, okay.

10 MR. EASTON: I'm sorry. I guess I should have
11 made that clear.

12 MR. TURNER: And right now it's going to be an
13 environmental assessment on the license and what aspects
14 are incorporated in the --

15 THE REPORTER: I can't hear you.

16 MR. TURNER: I'm sorry.

17 We were proposing to do an environmental
18 assessment and what measures will be attached to that
19 new license. We're not proposing to do an EIS at this
20 time because we don't see the level of controversy that
21 would probably drive us to that, but we may ultimately
22 change our mind and this scoping is part of that effort.

23 MR. BERNHEISEL: That's why I came today, just
24 because you have to get your oar in at the start of the
25 process or else you might as well not be here. Thank

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1 you.

2 MR. EASTON: Yeah. Thank you.

3 MR. TURNER: You got the discussion on your
4 point.

5 Getting back to terrestrial resources. Any
6 other comments or questions on terrestrial resources?

7 (No response.)

8 With that, we're getting closer to lunch, I
9 think we can probably wrap this up in the next 30
10 minutes or so if people want to continue and we can
11 gauge it as we get into discussions on the land use and
12 recreation. But I recommend we continue to move forward
13 and see where we are.

14 Our recreation, land use person, due to budget
15 constraints, couldn't be here today, so I'm standing in
16 her stead. I will try to do my best to answer any
17 questions you may have in that regard.

18 After reviewing PAD, we basically came up with
19 three issues: Effects of the project operations on
20 access to and use of public boat launches and docks. In
21 that same vein, it's the effects of the aquatic
22 vegetation and sediment conditions on public access to
23 and use of project waters.

24 And then the last bullet is the adequacy of
25 the existing recreation facilities and public access
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1 within the project boundary to meet current and future
2 demands, including a barrier-free access for folks with
3 disabilities.

4 Did we adequately capture the issues? There's
5 a couple of studies being proposed and basically those
6 are, again, looking at the aquatic vegetation and
7 sediment issues and how it influences access and taking
8 the baseline studies that have been gathered to project
9 what future demands might be and whether those
10 facilities are adequately meeting that demand.

11 Is there any other questions or comments,
12 resource concerns?

13 (No response.)

14 Okay. Take that as a no.

15 We do have certain responsibilities under
16 Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to
17 consider the project's effects of operations on cultural
18 resources of significance, historic, archaeological and
19 traditional resources. And with that, we are -- or
20 Chelan is proposing -- or -- I'm sorry. I knew I would
21 do that. Douglas is --

22 MR. BICKFORD: That's okay. Chelan can
23 propose it.

24 MR. TURNER: -- proposing to look at and do
25 some cultural resource surveys, basically looking at

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1 existing information, going back out and, as I
2 understand it, kind of making sure everything is still
3 status quo. There is already a lot of existing
4 information on cultural resource sites, but we're just
5 kind of reevaluating those sites.

6 Is there any issues on cultural resources,
7 comments or concerns?

8 (No response.)

9 Again, I'll take that as a no.

10 There was one other issue here that apparently
11 we didn't create a slide for and that was developmental
12 resources, and as our standard -- primarily because
13 there's no study prepared, so as part of our standard
14 process we will look at environmental measures to figure
15 out and weigh those against the project -- against their
16 costs and make a decision as to whether or not on
17 balance those measures should be made part of the
18 license.

19 As Bob talked about earlier, there are certain
20 conditions that do get placed on a license that we don't
21 have a choice on, such as the section of water quality
22 certification conditions or Fish and Wildlife Services,
23 Section 18. Those will be analyzed, the cost to the
24 project in terms of what they would be in terms of
25 alternative sources of power will also be looked at in
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1 our environmental assessment and those decisions will be
2 weighed by the commission in making a recommendation for
3 inclusion about whether to issue the license and what
4 conditions are to be placed on that license.

5 The last line, and this is the one that I
6 intended -- it probably should have been in the
7 beginning and it would have put forth a lot of
8 discussion and maybe even resolved a lot of discussion
9 we had about what we need to do in terms of studies, but
10 there are seven study criteria that the commission came
11 up with in collaboration with industry, agencies, NGOs
12 and the like. We have developed and approved the
13 integrated licensing process.

14 The intent here is to get people to focus on
15 information that's needed to make a decision to address
16 the issues that have been raised in a particular
17 proceeding. The tool here is to look at the criteria,
18 and the reason this study -- this slide is up here is to
19 remind folks that in the next 30 days if you need to
20 provide any kind of request for additional information,
21 you need to address these criteria, and the commission
22 is going to consider the information put forward here in
23 making that decision as to whether we want to -- whether
24 we're going to require Douglas to do a particular study
25 or not.

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1 And basically, in a nutshell, and I don't want
2 to belabor this because I know you guys have been at --
3 the resource work groups have been discussing the
4 criteria, the plans that are there and lay it out and
5 talk about the study criteria, and that is a credit to
6 your efforts here in this proceeding.

7 But just for the uninitiated, I'm going to run
8 real quickly through them, and that is to -- the study
9 request needs to identify the study goals and the
10 objectives: What do you intend to accomplish and how do
11 you intend to accomplish it?

12 It needs to inform or consider resource
13 management goals. This criteria is really directed more
14 towards an agency than it is, say, a nongovernmental
15 organization or somebody that doesn't have directed
16 mandates, but, in other words, how does that information
17 you're going to gather inform or apply to your resource
18 management goals?

19 Consider the public interest requirements.
20 This one, again, is more focussed towards
21 nongovernmental organizations who don't have particular
22 mandates. In other words, if you -- let's take a white
23 water interest. If you're -- if the project may have an
24 effect on white water recreation and you want more white
25 water recreation, you think there's a study needed for
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1 white water recreation, you would put forward and say
2 this -- why this is a particular -- in the public's
3 interest to require this kind of a measure and we need
4 this information to make that decision. You need to
5 consider what existing information is there, and this
6 goes to your point earlier.

7 If there's a lot of information known about a
8 particular issue, then we need to weigh what that
9 information is and where -- where the information gap is
10 that needs to be filled. If there's enough there to
11 address the issue, it may not be worth doing a study
12 just getting to that recommendation.

13 And the fourth bullet -- or the fifth bullet
14 here is really the one that is key and that's the nexus
15 to the project operations and effects, and the second
16 part of it, as many people keep -- forget, and that's
17 how are you going to use that information to make a
18 recommendation for the license. There needs to be a tie
19 to -- between the information that's gathered and the
20 project and it needs to inform a license decision. It
21 can't just be information for information sake.

22 The methodology needs to be consistent with
23 accepted practices, and that kind of goes to another
24 concern that you raised earlier. That doesn't
25 necessarily mean you can't invent new policies if

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1 there's not -- or new studies out there that -- there's
2 an issue raised but you need to be creative about
3 finding a solution.

4 If there is no signs of accepted methods but
5 you're able to come up with something you think will
6 work, that can be put forward. But generally it should
7 be consistent with scientifically accepted practices and
8 it needs to consider the level of effort and cost
9 associated with that.

10 We're not talking about here you need to --
11 the more detail on that effort and cost is important,
12 but what we're trying to do is weigh whether or not the
13 proposed study that's going to cost \$200,000 is going to
14 give us a certain amount of information but a proposed
15 study that would maybe need \$25,000 is going to have
16 just about the same quality of information and the
17 incremental gain is not that much.

18 The commission is going to consider all these
19 factors when the study is put forward, and if there's
20 any debate among whether or not that study is going to
21 be needed or not, these are the factors we are going to
22 weigh in making that decision.

23 Any questions? Did I get to the comments that
24 folks had raised earlier?

25 (No response.)

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1 I just want to hit a couple of important dates
2 that are coming up. Again, it's spelled out in detail
3 in the process plan in the back. Your study requests
4 and your comments on the issues are all due by
5 April 2nd.

6 The PUD will take that information and put
7 together a proposed study plan. This must be filed with
8 the commission by May 17th. Again, there is already
9 good effort put forward in that effort -- put forward in
10 developing this proposed study plan that most folks were
11 in agreement with. So you're well ahead of where the
12 process needs to be, but we'll still have to have a
13 proposed study filed by May 17th.

14 Then the PUD will have to hold at least one
15 meeting. The commission will attend that meeting for
16 sure by June 8 -- yeah, June 18th, 2007. That kind of
17 begins the informal process of trying to resolve any
18 disputes among parties about what kind of studies.

19 The commission will sit down, work with
20 everybody. The PUD needs to sit down and work with
21 everybody to kind of craft any additional support for a
22 study or try to resolve any differences in what needs to
23 be done for that particular study that may not be agreed
24 to by all the parties.

25 At the end of that 90-day period, which begins
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1 from the filing of the proposed study plan, the PUD must
2 file a revised study plan that makes -- that considers
3 all the comments and efforts that went through to try to
4 resolve those disputes by September 14th, 2007.

5 Then the commission within 30 days will issue
6 its study plan determination, which will resolve those
7 disputes by basically saying PUD has to use these
8 studies as outlined in the revised study plan with any
9 certain modifications, if we've been convinced by other
10 parties that those modifications need to be made to the
11 study plan.

12 Any questions?

13 MR. ELDRED: That last one, David,
14 "Determination," that means you're at the revised study
15 plan, that's it?

16 MR. TURNER: That's the revised study plan --

17 MR. ELDRED: Yeah.

18 MR. TURNER: -- and that's the one the
19 commission has approved.

20 MR. ELDRED: Yeah.

21 MR. TURNER: They'll go forward and implement
22 those studies. Now, there is another step about a year
23 out when we'll have an initial study report coming in.
24 We'll revisit those studies to make sure that they were
25 conducted as proposed and the information that was
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1 gathered is meeting the needs of the goals and
2 objectives that were laid out in that study.

3 MR. ELDRED: So by "Determination," it means
4 the commission has approved the final study plan and you
5 got a green light, go for it?

6 MR. TURNER: Right.

7 MR. ELDRED: Okay.

8 MR. TURNER: Well, that one, if there's not
9 any other questions -- is there anybody else that has
10 any other issues that we didn't cover here today?
11 Anything else that we want to consider?

12 MS. HOWE: Is this the last opportunity today
13 for any comments?

14 MR. TURNER: No. You have, again, by
15 April 2nd to file written comments.

16 MS. HOWE: I know. Today, I said.

17 MR. EASTON: If you want to speak something
18 that -- read something into the record or --

19 MS. HOWE: Yes, I do.

20 MR. EASTON: -- provide some comments, you
21 need to do that now.

22 MS. HOWE: Well, I have a better comfort zone
23 of reading something than speaking off of the top of my
24 head, so --

25 MR. EASTON: That's fine.

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1 MS. HOWE: Thank you. So I did prepare
2 something for that reason.

3 I'm Gail Howe, City of Pateros, and Pateros
4 has been affected a great deal from Wells Dam reservoir,
5 depending on whether we exist or we didn't exist, so I'd
6 like to read my statement right now. Thank you.

7 Thank you for the opportunity to comment on
8 Wells Hydroelectric Project, Number 2149, Preliminary
9 Application Document and Scoping Document 1 for
10 relicensing. The City of Pateros appreciates the
11 efforts of Douglas PUD and FERC in keeping stakeholders
12 informed.

13 A number of recent actions have resulted in
14 opportunities related to the City of Pateros and Douglas
15 County PUD's relicensing of the Wells project. In 2005
16 the State of Washington developed the Okanogan Trails
17 Corridor Management Plan for a portion of US 97, the
18 state designated scenic and recreational byway that
19 extends from Pateros to the border between the United
20 States and Canada. The name "Okanogan Trails" was
21 selected because of a number of historic trails within
22 and leading to the byway, including the rivers as "water
23 trails."

24 The management plan presents recommendations
25 and strategies for enhancing visitors' experiences and
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1 tourism opportunities while preserving unique resources
2 contributing to the quality of life in the region. The
3 City of Pateros, which is located at the confluence of
4 the Columbia and Methow Rivers, is the southern gateway
5 to the Okanogan trails scenic byway.

6 A regional visitor information center to be
7 located in Pateros is in the planning stages. Pateros
8 is the closest community to Wells Dam, located
9 approximately eight miles downstream from the city.
10 With limited access and operation of the visitor
11 information center in Wells Dam powerhouse due to
12 security concerns, an opportunity exists for a
13 partnership between Pateros and Douglas PUD to share in
14 providing public information on Wells Dam and the
15 reservoir at the new visitor information center in
16 Pateros.

17 This urban setting of the visitor information
18 center in the city of Pateros would be consistent with
19 the district's commitment to natural resource
20 conservation. It is proposed that an investigation into
21 this opportunity be addressed in the relicensing
22 process.

23 In December 2005 the Pateros city council
24 accepted a downtown business plan addressing the
25 interaction between the city's commercial business
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1 district, Memorial Park and the river. A key element of
2 the plan is a public pier, plaza, and
3 historic/interpretive features in the park associated
4 with Ives' Landing, honoring the original
5 founder/namesake of the community.

6 The riverfront area throughout Memorial Park
7 is rip-rapped providing limited interaction and
8 accessibility to the water. The pier would provide a
9 safe, publicly accessible means of connecting people
10 with the dynamic river throughout the year.

11 Secondly, the plan calls for a covered
12 pavilion or similar structure to serve as a focal point
13 of the events in the park. This would provide for
14 interpretive and historic presentations in the
15 riverfront setting, including the significant impact of
16 hydropower, cultural impacts over time associated with
17 changes in the Columbia River, and other subjects of
18 interest to the community and visitors alike.

19 The 1982 Public Use Plan emphasized that the
20 facilities that are available largely control what
21 people are able to do, and if the facilities do not
22 exist, then people are not participating in those
23 activities. It is requested that the recreation needs
24 studies include public use facilities that provide
25 greater accessibility and use, river-based cultural and
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1 historical themes, and informational opportunities.

2 As part of the 1987 Recreational Action Plan
3 for development of Memorial and Peninsula Parks, Pateros
4 agreed to provide maintenance and operation of these
5 facilities, which it has done. Park operation costs
6 have risen, while city population and city resources
7 have diminished in a relative sense over the years.

8 While the city has not tracked specific costs,
9 it would like to work with the Douglas PUD to come up
10 with an assessment of future maintenance and operation
11 costs over the next relicensing period. Development of
12 a maintenance management plan for the parks is one way
13 to assess the overall operational impacts and identify
14 opportunities for the city and Douglas PUD to work
15 cooperatively over the next license term. The City of
16 Pateros requests that maintenance and operation needs
17 for Memorial and Peninsula Parks, tennis courts and boat
18 launches be studied and costs assessed. This includes
19 water and wastewater use and utility impacts.

20 New development is already occurring and will
21 continue to increase in our area. One of the
22 recreational demands often heard by city staff is the
23 need for boat storage. Much of the boating demand is by
24 visitors from the Puget Sound area across the Cascade
25 Mountains, 150 to 200 miles away. The ability to store
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1 boats in Pateros in or out of the water would be of
2 significant benefit to boat owners and the environment.
3 It is asked that Douglas PUD study the need for and
4 benefits of boat storage.

5 The City of Pateros has numerous concerned
6 local citizens and businesses affected as a result of
7 granted permits for use of Wells Reservoir area. All of
8 the City of Pateros riverfront property borders Douglas
9 PUD reservoir land. It is asked that Douglas PUD study
10 the direct, indirect and/or cumulative impact of the
11 Wells Dam project on local communities.

12 Douglas PUD recently secured an interest in
13 the Cascade-Columbia River Railroad right-of-way between
14 Wells Dam and the City of Brewster. The railroad
15 right-of-way generally follows the Columbia River, but
16 as it crosses the Methow River, it swings inland and
17 passes through the City of Pateros' commercial business
18 district.

19 Should the railroad abandon its interest, the
20 City of Pateros will be greatly impacted by whatever
21 actions Douglas PUD takes on the property. The city
22 proposes that Douglas PUD include alternatives for use
23 of this riverfront property including recreational
24 trails and sidewalk linkages between the urban parks.

25 The City of Pateros will work with Douglas PUD
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1 on the details of the requested studies. We are pleased
2 with the opportunity to present these issues and
3 concerns directly to FERC staff and will provide further
4 detail in written comments prior to April 2nd, 2007.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. TURNER: Thank you.

7 Anything else?

8 (No response.)

9 I just want to remind folks again, if you want
10 to be on the official FERC mailing list, follow the
11 instructions in the scoping document.

12 Transcripts of this meeting will be available
13 on FERC's own records information system, our eLibrary
14 system, no sooner than about ten days from now. You can
15 access the eLibrary system at FERC.gov. Transcripts can
16 also be purchased for 25 cents a page from our ace
17 reporter here if you want it sooner. I'd recommend you
18 consider waiting, but it's up to you.

19 Anything else? If not, I thank you all for
20 your participation and involvement and appreciate your
21 input. I enjoyed the meeting.

22 (End of proceeding at 12:26 p.m.)

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