

Sweetheart Lake Hydroelectric Project

2013 Wildlife Studies Work Group Meeting Summary and Minutes

Friday, May 31, 2013 8:30 AM

Members Attending, Agency

Dianne Rodman, FERC
Dennis Chester, USFS
Ryan Scott, ADFG
Shawn Johnson, ADFG
Stephanie Sell, ADFG
Richard Enriquez, USFWS
John Matkowski, FERC
Cathy Needham, Kai Environmental

Members invited but not attending:

Barb Adams, USFS
Susan Walker, NMFS
Neil Barton, ADFG
Sadie Wright, NMFS
Barb Stanley, USFS

Meeting Objectives and Agenda Items:

1. Update, review and input on Wildlife Review document
2. Follow up on JHI ADFG agreement
3. Sweetheart Lake install of game cameras and snares

The following are the minutes from the May 31, 2013 meeting.

Juneau Hydropower

Wildlife Working Group Meeting

May 31, 2013 at 8:30 a.m.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Dianne Rodman.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Hi, Dianne. Duff here.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Ah, good.

Mr. John Matkowski: Hi, Dianne. It's John.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Okay, good.

Ms. Stephanie Sell: Good morning. It's Stephanie Sell and Shawn Johnson from Fish and Game.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Okay.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Hi, Stephanie and Shawn.

Ms. Stephanie Sell: Ryan's going to be calling in from home, so he should be here shortly.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Good morning.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Good morning. Is that you, Cathy?

Ms. Cathy Needham: It is.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Hi. I think we're waiting for Dennis. I don't think Sue and Sadie are going to call in, they--and Richard Enriquez. They did not give me a confirmation.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

Mr. Dennis Chester: Dennis.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Hey, good morning, Dennis.

Mr. Dennis Chester: Good morning.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Well, let me just go through the roll call, or let's--and I think we can move forward. I think we have everybody. Oh, well, we're waiting for Ryan to call in.

Ms. Stephanie Sell: Yeah, he's going to call in.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Yeah, that's right. We'll wait a minute here for Ryan.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Sorry if you're getting weird noises. I'm moving my phone.

Mr. Ryan Scott: Good morning, everybody. It's Ryan from Juneau.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Okay.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Hey, good morning, Ryan.

Well, I think we got everybody that's confirmed that they're going to dial on, so let me just go through. We have Ryan, Stephanie, and Shawn from Fish and Game. We have John, Dianne from FERC. We have Dennis from US Forest Service. We have Cathy from Kai. And you have myself, Duff. Is there anybody else that I left off on the line?

Well, it sounds like everybody, so from there let's--we can move forward with the meeting. The first thing on the agenda was just an update and a review and input on the wildlife review document. I know that Cathy has received comments from Dennis and Sadie and has

diligently been working on integrating those. A couple questions have come up.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Yeah.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: And so, Cathy, maybe if it's all right with you, if I could turn this over to you, you can kind of just discuss where the status is and where we're going forward on that.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay. So, I think last week we sent out a draft of where the document was at that point in time. We took the original wildlife analysis and Dennis's comments, and we ended up doing a little bit of rearranging of the document, and then just different--putting things in different, more appropriate sections and according to the Forest Service guidelines.

And then, we also removed the potential mitigation measures. That's in a separate document. We didn't just delete them. But, since we don't have--since those probably will be developed into a 4E document later, they were taken out of the wildlife analysis since we're going to be looking at analyzing the impacts of mitigation until whatever mitigation measures have been decided upon. So, those are no longer there.

And now, from that stage, we started going through some of the comments that Sadie had provided. There were some anecdotal things that she was able to track down in her comments back to us that we didn't include in the original wildlife analysis. This included some--T&E's considerations, some anecdotal observations of herring

potentially growing in Gilbert Bay and information on sea lion haul out on Mist Island in Port Snettisham, which was a lot closer than we had in terms of looking at documented information.

So--and we haven't actually--we've started to put that information in there, but we haven't gotten all of the background information on those two things. So, we haven't been able to do much in the way of looking at effects.

We've contacted Laurie [sp] over at Fish and Game. I can't remember Laurie's last name off the top of my head right now. But, she's going to be giving us more information of what Fish and Game has on the potential sea lion haul out. And then, we contacted Dave Harris [sp] regarding the herring stuff. And he already actually did provide the information that he had on file about the potential herring spawn.

So, now it's just a matter of taking that document and going through and doing a little bit more of a thorough detailed effects analysis for what we have in there. There are just additional considerations that we need to make. And I think a lot of that was highlighted in Dennis's comments that are still on the sidebar of the analysis document.

So, that's sort of where we've come with the document, where it's at now, and where we intend to go. And then, there are some larger questions that we need to propose back to the group to make some

decisions on how to best finalize this with where we're at. And Duff, you want me to go through those questions?

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Sure.

I just want to--I heard another ring. Did someone else join us?

Mr. Richard Enriquez: Yeah, this is Richard Enriquez, Fish and Wildlife Service here in Juneau.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Oh, hey, good morning, Richard.

Mr. Richard Enriquez: Good morning.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Hey, Richard, appreciate you dialing in.

Just so you know, we have Shawn, Stephanie, and Ryan Scott with Fish and Game. We have John Matkowski and Dianne Rodman with FERC. We have Dennis Chester with the Forest Service and myself and Cathy on the line.

Mr. Richard Enriquez: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Okay. Go ahead, Cathy.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay. So, one of the first things we wanted to talk--I wanted to talk a little bit more about just to clear up, we've been receiving additional wildlife survey type observations for 2013 from some of the various work that's been happening this spring out there. Some of it includes--you know, includes when contractors fly out, there is always observations for looking for goats. And so,

they've been writing up field reports and stuff, and we've been keeping it in a separate file for 2013.

And I just want to make sure that we're all clear and understand that this wildlife analysis right now really only includes wildlife survey information from the 2012 season and make sure that we're still going that route, mainly because I'm concerned that every time we get a new field report, you know, that are coming in every day or every other day in 2013, it's just having to go back through and trying to figure out how to integrate that information in.

I'm not saying that the information isn't important. I just am not sure--I mean, this is going to be a living document that changes every day if we include everything within the 2013 season. So, I just want to confirm with everybody that we all understand that the information that we're doing the analysis on was from the data that was in the report that got submitted to FERC back in October, which is the wildlife study.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: On that note, Cathy, on page 19, you have a typo that says that a humpback whale was observed on July 3rd, 2013. Whoops.

Ms. Cathy Needham: So--okay, that's--I did--you know, I went back and looked at the whale stuff in detail, and I found a little bit different information than what we put in the survey, because I thought it was just individuals. But, when I looked at the data,

there was more than one. And so, I--it should say 2012, so I'll fix that.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Yeah.

Mr. Ryan Scott: So, Cathy, when will--that new data, the 2013 data, when and how will that be inserted into the document train for the project?

Ms. Cathy Needham: That's an excellent question. I guess that's kind of why I wanted to have a discussion about this. Like, right now I've just been taking those field reports and that information and putting it in a file in and of itself. And, you know, again, I'm not saying that it's not important information or that it doesn't apply.

It's just how do we go about--you know, we could be editing this analysis all season, you know, all through the summer as new information is coming in. And I'm not sure how best to handle it. I don't know what the standard procedure for that type of thing would be. So, maybe Dianne could give us a little bit of thought on that aspect, or--.

Mr. Ryan Scott: --Sure. Yeah, I would think, you know, FERC might have a system in place or, you know, have seen that done in the past.

At a minimum, I think you would want to prepare a seasonal document, you know, at the end of the field season, summarize all the data for various species and surveys and things like that and, you

know, have something that--instead of just raw datasheets laying around, you'll have something that's a synopsis.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Right, like a supplemental or something, a supplemental of the study report.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Yeah.

Mr. Ryan Scott: Yeah.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: That would work pretty well, because if Duff does indeed file in July, then that information would hopefully come in in the fall so things would not be very far advanced. And that--you know, we wouldn't necessarily have--well, we wouldn't have any agency comments on them, which we would normally like. But, at least the information would be there on the record and everyone could work with it.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: And I could also commit to--as we receive these raw data reports, not the synopsis, you know, if agents--I don't want to fire up someone's inbox. But, I'm more than happy to, you know, periodically send these out as we accumulate them too.

We do have some game cameras out there already at the--Gilbert Bay and we are going to soon be putting them up at the lake. Now, those won't be checked weekly. But, as we download those, you know, we'll also be doing a--you know, a--it won't be an observation report, but it'll be an encapsulation of what was put on there and--or what we

captured on the game cameras as well as any good photos of any shots that we accumulate.

So, it's up to the group of how they would like me to handle that as we periodically do that through the season. I can give, you know, updates or, if some people prefer, just more of a end of year. I'm flexible.

Mr. Shawn Johnson: Yeah, I think if--you know, if you find something really interesting, you know, you find a dozen goats up there, then, you know, that kind of stuff I like to hear about as soon as possible.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Okay.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: I think in my case--John, what's your feeling on this? I kind of think that we shouldn't see anything until the synopsis comes in. I'd kind of prefer not seeing it if it's not publicly available.

Mr. John Matkowski: Yeah. I mean, I think it would be good if it was, you know, more complete when we see it. I don't see any reason why we would have to see like anything that's coming up, unless like--unless it's something major, you know, something that's going to be a game changer or something. But, I'm fine with that.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Yeah. This is just--you know, this is just FERC being picky about, you know, how we handle things. The other agencies can make whatever agreement with you they want.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Sure, and that's why I'm asking. I don't want to fire off and--you know, we already have--we all have work to do and things to do, and I don't want to inundate people with unnecessary information. But, you know, Shawn and Ryan, if there's something that comes up, you know, I can always pick up the phone and say, "Hey, I'm going to send you a report," or "This is what we saw out there."

And, you know, if there's--let's say we do find a herd of goat, you know, next to the lake or something, I'm sure you'd want to know and I'm willing to share it, you know, as soon as we find--hopefully we don't. But, you know, it'll be what is.

Mr. Ryan Scott: Yeah, I--this is Ryan. And I think an end of year synopsis would be fine for Stephanie and I. And certainly if, like you said, something off the wall or, you know, significant comes up, let us know. But, otherwise, we'll be looking for it at the end of the season.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Okay.

Dennis and Richard, does that sound okay to you, or do you-- what's your input?

Mr. Richard Enriquez: This is Richard. Yeah, I'm fine with that. But, if something--like was said before, if it's something that would be pertinent, especially to most agencies, you know, then definitely it'd be nice. But, we certainly don't want to have more,

you know, piecemeal documents or just information. You know, I'd rather--I'm okay with it having come in the synopsis.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Okay. Thank you, Richard.

And Dennis, your thoughts?

Mr. Dennis Chester: Well, yeah, I think a synopsis is fine from my standpoint.

I guess what I'm struggling a little bit about--with is most of the data collection is--I guess, in my mind, the purpose of it is for this document. Once this document is done, I'm not sure what we're collecting the data for, not that I have a problem with collecting it. I mean, if that's what you guys want to do, that's up to you.

But, this document is going to be pretty much done, but when you--when the--when you finish the NEPA [sp] for your application. So, I'm not sure how that information is going to be used. I guess it's just supplemental. I don't know that we'll--you know, if we find anything that's going to change the analysis, then I guess we could go back and revise the analysis. I'm not sure what headaches that would cause as far as the whole process.

But, I guess, like I said, I'm just--I'm fine with what you're suggesting. I'm just not sure how it's really fitting in the process.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Well, Dennis, we can use late information if it arrives, you know, this fall easily enough in our NEPA analysis as long as it's been filed. It may not be as nicely digested as the

other information, but we would have no problem incorporating it even if it was in two separate documents.

Mr. Dennis Chester: Okay. That sounds good to me.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: I mean, I don't know about your agency's needs. That's kind of a black box to me.

Mr. Dennis Chester: Well, you know, our process is to try and use the same NEPA. So, sometimes if we have something, you know, new and I guess critical, to use some unofficial terminology, then, yeah, we would have to go back and revisit NEPA.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Yeah. Well, I think we would--well, I mean, it would still come in in time for us to do our NEPA analysis. We would incorporate it. Like if we got a year of no goats, yeah, that's information. Or, if we got the 17 goats traipsing down the slope towards the lake, that would also be information we'd use.

And we'd just kind of say, "Oh, well," to the conclusions in the wildlife report. Obviously they were preliminary. Didn't mean to be, but they were.

Mr. Dennis Chester: Right. So, sounds like a plan.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. John Matkowski: So, I mean, I guess the main thing is that the studies are being done, the appropriate studies are being done and we're getting the information as everyone else has requested. So, regardless if they're continuing studies after they submit their

application, that could be just like any general observation that someone had whether they were doing studies or not, and that's still important information.

I guess I'm just riding on what Dianne was saying. So, when everyone--.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: --Just as long as they don't hold up the process. That's the one thing that worries me. But, if you're--if Cathy can get us a synopsis report shortly after the field season closes, I'll be happy.

Ms. Cathy Needham: So, what are we considering field season then? Because these are not studies that we're involved in. These are just observations that are--at this point, they're observations that are coming to me as sort of a clearinghouse. And then, of course Duff is doing the game camera work. So, I mean, I'd be happy to synthesize that information so that could be integrated into a report too.

But, my field season for different types of projects that we do are different timeframes. And so, I'm just curious as to what you would consider end of season for this particular thing since we're not doing a formal study this season.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Well, I can interject in here just a little bit. We have an aquatics plan that's still being field season allocated. And once we're done with that, we will probably be done with the study season. And they're under the--you know, the aquatics

contractor's under the gun to try to get these things done as quick as possible.

So, you know, we're looking at July, maybe August as the timeframe. And, you know, we won't be just going up to the lake to go up to the lake. It'll be for some reasons, and that's the only reason that we will be at the lake. There may be, and it's not--there may be some engineering or evaluation at Gilbert Bay, and there will also be some aquatics at Gilbert Bay. But, again, the timeframe will be July, no later than August.

Ms. Cathy Needham: So, it is fair to say that we would have a supplemental report by September 15th?

Ms. Dianne Rodman: That sounds great to me.

Ms. Cathy Needham: That just includes the additional observations and synthesized information that comes from the game camera, that type of stuff, because, again, it's not necessarily in a study plan. It just happens to be information that we're getting as your other components are being worked on this summer.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Yeah, it would be--I think the data that you would be receiving is the Field Reports, the kind of same format that we've been using, as well as perhaps a similar document with pictures with capture of the game cameras or any hare snares.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay. I mean, it could be earlier than the 15th. But, if you end up extending, like, your aquatics stuff in to August, I'd like to make sure we have enough wiggle room or

something. But, I think a supplemental could be done by September 15th. I'm just trying to be clear on deadlines so I know when things are being expected.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Well, I think September 15th's a good thing. But, if we're done August 5th, I mean, you can look at your schedule and say, "Hey, Duff, I've looked this over. I can get this done in 10 days," or whatever.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Certainly, yeah.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: It's a quick synthesis. And at this point, we don't know what all we're going to have. It may be easy. It may be a little harder, depending on what we get.

But, we can--if we go--if everyone's good with the September 15th no later than, and then we can make--maybe make it earlier. Obviously, if there's a game changer or there is some--you know, we find a Loch Ness monster in the lake or something, we'll let everyone know earlier. Otherwise, we'll just proceed.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay, great.

So, the next subject--are we ready to move on to the next subject? Sounds like it.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Go for it.

Ms. Cathy Needham: I want to have a discussion more just--it would be great if Sadie could have been on the teleconference. But, I

wanted to have a little bit more of a discussion about the comments that the National Marine Fisheries Service provided back.

In going through Sadie's comments, there is a lot of proposed action details that she wants integrated into the analysis for threatened and endangered species and marine mammals, a lot of things that--like a lot of details that really have not been decided yet, especially with respect to construction of the project.

And Dennis and I have talked a little bit about this and the format that we're using, because remember we're--this wildlife analysis is based on a Forest Service process for guidance. And essentially, that becomes a biological assessment, biological evaluation for the threatened and endangered species, because Forest Service is required to meet the outside law for T&E. And so, that is where you see in the document the--why you see the threatened and endangered species in that portion of the document.

But, the issue that we're running into is, you know, we'd like to try to get this wildlife analysis document finalized for the licensed portion of the project, but we don't have a formal BA/BE [sp]. And at this point, in juncture with the June 1st, there would be a lot--it looks like there's a lot of work to be done in order to address National Marine Fisheries Service BA/BE sort of criteria.

And so, I'm looking--I'd like to have a discussion about whether or not we should the BA/BE, the details of that a separate analysis document or if we actually have to go through the process of trying to

nail down all these details in order to do the analysis on threatened and endangered species so that it would be in the wildlife analysis. So, that's kind of a process that--I don't quite understand where we need to be by the time Juneau Hydropower goes to license with respect to T&E.

And so, I'd like--the question I'm asking is, at the level of the wildlife analysis document, what we have. What do we need to do to complete it when we're talking about humpback whales, Steller sea lions, and Pacific herring?

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Dennis?

Mr. Dennis Chester: Well, yeah. The Pacific herring is a candidate right now, so it's not really in the T&E realm.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Well, and I don't want to necessarily enter it too much, but it sounds like NMFS is going to want an analysis on herring. And I understand that's probably not needed within your document, but they are going to want to include it in--just based on the comments that we've got--received from them, they're going to want an analysis done for herring, that potentially they're in the bay.

Mr. Dennis Chester: And it won't be part of a BA. It may be part of an EFH analysis.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

Mr. Dennis Chester: I don't know if--I'm not familiar with the EFH process. But, there may be some EFH issues with herring.

Ms. Cathy Needham: So, can we kick that over to the aquatics people then?

Mr. Dennis Chester: Well, yeah. EFH is not included in your document at all. So--.

Ms. Cathy Needham: --I know--.

Mr. Dennis Chester: --That's a separate--or that's a consultation process as well.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

Mr. Dennis Chester: And yeah, I am assuming it's being done by the fish folks or the hydro folks. But, yeah, candidates are not included in a biological assessment. We include them in our biological evaluations as--for sort of sensitive species. But, that will not necessarily go to NMFS for consultation.

The direction I'm getting right now from the Forest is that basically the format that you're following is a format we use for kind of the whole gamut of wildlife resources analysis in a project. But, as far as consultation with NMFS and potentially Fish and Wildlife Service, the T&E species are what we would consult with, or get a letter of concurrence with or whatever we need. And so, that's the T&E species.

And the direction I'm getting from the Forest right now is that we would actually create a biological assessment document from the bigger document that you have. That would--is what we would send to

NMFS. In this case, I think what would--the way it's written right now or the effects you've--conclusions you've come to, it would be a letter of concurrence that we would ask for.

But, be that as it may, we would separate out the T&E species. And it's specific to the action that would be taken in the decision document, so whatever NEPA decision is made. So, if we're going to go with the proposed action, just as an example, we would make a BA that's specific to the--to that action, which should be, if we have--for example, a lot of our analyses have multiple alternatives. NMFS and the Fish and Wildlife Service are not really interested in all of our alternatives.

The Forest Service analyses them so that our decision maker understands the differences, difference effects that those alternatives may have on those species so he can make his--or she can make their decisions. But, NMFS and the Fish and Wildlife Service are not interested in all of those alternatives. They just want to know what our decision is and what effects our decision will have. So, that's kind of the reason for a separate document is for the different agency needs.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Dennis?

Mr. Dennis Chester: Yes.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: I have a quick question. I had thought that my agency was going to do the consultation. Is the Forest Service also looking at doing a duplicate consultation?

Mr. Dennis Chester: Well, that's--I know that's what Sadie says, and I guess that's fine with me. So, if you guys want to use your process and it's different, then that's fine.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Okay.

Mr. Dennis Chester: Because I think--yeah, as far as the NERC--yeah, the NERC--the FERC license, you are the lead agency is my understanding.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Yeah.

Mr. Dennis Chester: So--and I've kind of been advising Cathy on how we would do it. But, if you folks want to do the lead, then that's fine with me.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Okay. Well--.

Mr. Dennis Chester: --I'm not 100--that's fine with me personally.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Yeah.

Mr. Dennis Chester: It seems reasonable. I'm afraid my forest biologist may have a little bit different idea based on some comments he's made. So, I'll have to check with him--.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: --Hmm. Okay--.

Mr. Dennis Chester: --What his thoughts are on that.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Sure.

And, you know, for the record, there's nothing that you've said about ESA consultation that I'd disagree with. Everything is exactly, you know, me too.

Mr. Dennis Chester: Okay.

So, anyway, that--Cathy, I don't know if that totally answered your question. I guess I'll kind of stop there for a minute to let everybody get their feet and see if there are questions, or if I need to clarify further.

Ms. Cathy Needham: So, in terms of the wildlife analysis document, then, if FERC and--because they're the lead agency and will take over the key consultation process, what does that mean for the document that we are trying to finish now? Does that--do we just refer to a biological assessment that's going to be written at not this time, or do we still have to do a certain level of--I mean, do we still have to have a determination written into this document?

Mr. Dennis Chester: Basically we'd complete this document and the BA would be taken out of it, because everything that's in the BA should basically be in this document that you're working on. It'd just be an excerpt to cut out a bunch of information that NMFS has no interest in.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

And then, Dianne, who--what's the appropriate entity to develop the BA? It's out of our hands at this point then.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Yeah. The--we--.

Ms. Cathy Needham: --Or, we do--then a BA is written on the side by FERC?

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Right. I don't know--it's a little too far ahead for me to know how we're going to do it. Sometimes we just do a threatened and endangered species section of the EA on steroids, and we send a letter requesting consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service and say that our analysis is on pages 235 to 270 of the EA. Or, there are some instances in which either we choose or the service, whichever one, specifically requests a separate document.

But, in either case, it is we're the agency making the decision and it is our responsibility to do the consultation. However, if the applicant provides us with a nice complete BA and we can accept every one of their conclusions, then, you know, that's great. It saves me work.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

And so, the way I am understanding it then, the section within the wildlife analysis that covers threatened and endangered species, we still need to integrate a certain level of detail into it. And how does that relate back to NMFS's comments? Like, how much--NMFS has provided information into this process, and they're asking for a lot of specifics that we just don't know at this time, so it's difficult to make a full analysis.

And most specifically, I'm thinking about construction based activities, looking at whether--like how do we--are we expected, at this level, to be able to answer NMFS's comments in the letter that they've provided in order for this document to be completed and signed off on by everybody?

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Well, as a practical matter, I'll tell you that if you're trying to consult with an agency and you do not have the information they think you need, it will waste everybody's time if you don't give it to them the first time.

That being said, if they are asking for something that's very difficult, shading into impossible, to provide, like exactly how you are going to construct or what kind of equipment you're going to use, you may be able to use an approach like "Generally this is what we're going to do." And we have like, say, three different kinds of equipment that--one of which we'll choose based on availability. So, if you want to know the specifics of those three kinds of engines or whatever, here they are.

And you could maybe even do some sort of a range, like this is the smallest gizmo and this is probably the largest that you can get in southeast Alaska that we would tend to use for this action. Does that help?

Ms. Cathy Needham: Yes.

And then, the construction was certainly--I mean, she hit--when she provided comments, she hit on--her example detail had to do a lot

with that. But--and I understand, based on trying to do an analysis, on range.

But, how do we address the timing, like construction timing? I mean, this is--as far as I understand it right now, there is no set time of year that construction's going to begin. We don't know, like, we're going to construction in the summer of 2000 whatever. And so--and a lot of potential impacts would be based on whether or not we expect species to be present during construction. So, it's a little bit harder to narrow down time--or to have a window of doing that when we don't know about timing.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Yeah. The only--there are a couple of things I can suggest.

One is that you do your analysis based on the assumption that you're doing it--you're doing whatever activity at the bad time of the year, whatever that is, and put a clear caveat that, if we do it in another month, there may be no problem at all.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: And the other thing, I guess, would be to clearly identify times when things must occur because of temperature or weather or something like that--well, those are the same things, to give them as much information as you can.

Again, I think assuming the--not the worst, but the least favorable is--well, it's a way to give them something to grab onto.

But, I would say to put in very large block letters, "If we do this at another time of the year, there's not going to be any problem at all."

Ms. Cathy Needham: Or, less of a problem.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Yeah. Right.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: The other thing, of course, is to try to talk to Sadie and walk her through a construction process so she understands your difficulty.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Um-hmm. Okay.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Uh-huh.

Mr. Dennis Chester: Yeah. Cathy, the only thing I'll add is that I think the less information we have, the less nailed down some of these things are, the harder it will be to get concurrence and the more likelihood it'll be--that it'll have to go to more of a consultation and a biological opinion type of action.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Right.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: And I'll just jump in here. You know, we have deliberately not nailed all this down because, you know, unlike doing a dam and a hydropower project in Arizona where you can construct it 365 days a year, we have seasonalities of when you can pour and when you can construct certain things. You know, the weather for laying a submarine cable tends to be in the summer months when the

weather is better and you're not dealing with a rocking boat when you're trying to specifically stay on a exact GPS coordinate, and all the ramifications of having nice weather for those types of things.

That being said, I have discussed with this Cathy and also with Dianne. What we're going to try to do is to come up with more of a detailed narrative approach without locking ourselves into something. And let me just share with you my concern. And it's not necessarily agency's concerns, but just so you have a big picture of where we're coming from.

We don't want to say we're going to do--or start construction on May 1st and then we don't get our license 'til June 1st, because we have no control when we will receive a license or when we will get a notice to proceed, and then we have to wait a full year because we--the way we drafted it here. So, I'm going to try to build in some flexibility in this proposed action, you know, use common sense, kind of explain what we're trying to do and why we're trying to do it so agencies have maybe a better, clearer picture.

One of the things I've discussed with our engineering folks, and this is a lot more work on our engineering folks and obviously on our construction end, is that, okay, what if we got a notice to proceed in the first quarter? What if we got a notice to proceed in the second quarter? What if we got a notice to proceed in the third quarter? And what would we have if we have a notice to proceed in the fourth quarter?

Economically, there may be one or two quarters where we don't proceed and we would just stall and wait to a better period, because trying to mobilize in the winter or trying to do other stuff may have economic consequences in addition to environmental consequences. So, that's an exercise that we have begun, but it has not been completed.

But, going back to your comments, Dennis, you know, I think if I can provide you guys a better or cleaner picture of how we're trying to do it and when we're trying to do it, you know, it may clear up some speculation in people's mind of what exactly we're trying to do, and then you're trying to adjust, you know, the wildlife aspects onto that.

So, I mean, I'm just giving you some situational awareness. Does it sound like I'm moving on the right track with you and then also with the other agencies?

Mr. Dennis Chester: Well, yeah. I think--you know, yeah, I don't think anybody's expecting you to say, yeah, we're going to start on May 1st. It's more of a seasonality kind of thing. In other words, I'll go back to the Lake Dorothy example.

They determined that they needed to do their dam work at low flows. Well, we pretty much know what that season is. And so, that would--you know, in looking at general times. You know, okay, we can't pour cement during winter, so we're going to have to do that kind of work in the summertime when the temperature's at such and

such. And so, it looks like these months would be when we would be able to do that kind of work.

I think that's the general type of stuff that you're talking about and I think what most folks would consider reasonable.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Okay.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Richard, do you have any insights into that, since your agency also does 106--section 7 consultation?

Mr. Richard Enriquez: Yeah. I guess just to try to kind of capture it a little bit, let me start with if the Forest Service would be the lead agency on requesting a consultation from the Fish and Wildlife Service, in this case Dennis, say for example, would be--you know, they have--would be doing the assessment. And then, they're--we have an agreement with the Forest Service that they say--you know, they would do all their analysis and then they would say, based on the information provided--and again that's where the importance of the information that is gathered, if you will, in these--in the--for the wildlife and, say, even for the fish.

But, that would be used into--in the analysis, and then the Forest Service would come to us, come to the Fish and Wildlife Service and say, "Okay, Fish and Wildlife Service, we have done an analysis and we think that, you know, there's no--that it would not negatively impact, you know, T&E species. Okay."

And so--and we would submit a response, you know, that we concur or we don't concur. And it's pretty much the same if FERC would do

that other than, you know, they would submit to us a direct section 7-
-request for a section 7 consultation. And then, we would respond by
saying--providing like a species list of whether or not there were
species in the area and some information even--we've been even
including information on candidate species just for information so
that can be made part of the record. Does that kind of make sense to
you folks?

Ms. Cathy Needham: Yes, it makes sense to me.

Mr. Richard Enriquez: Cathy, you can call me if you want more
information. I can help. But, I think it's just a matter, in this
case, I guess--what I heard said here was that FERC will be the lead
agency. So, it's pretty much kind of--you know, once the analysis or
your--the wildlife analysis information is gathered, FERC is going to
look at it and then submit to us a request for section 7 consultation.
I believe that's what--the path we're following here.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Right.

And I think--I've been thinking about this, and I think that we
would make the request simultaneous with issuing the draft NEPA
document, because we may be making statements in our letter of request
like fisheries would or would not be harmed. This would not be blah,
blah, blah. And we would want to have REA out at the same time to
have the detailed analysis of how we reached those conclusions.

Mr. Richard Enriquez: Right, and especially it's important, if
you make reference to certain pages or a document as a whole and we

look at it and say, okay, based--we concur the information provided, blah, blah, blah, we would use that information in which--to render a consultation.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Right.

And also, FERC staff may add mitigative measures that JHI had not proposed. And that would be part of proposal that we would send forward to the two services. So, our proposed action may not be exactly what the applicant proposed.

Mr. Richard Enriquez: Okay.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Yeah.

Mr. Richard Enriquez: Right.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay. So, thanks. I think I have a lot clearer idea of what you guys are expecting as a group. I mean, I kind of knew in talking with Dennis where we were headed with this. But, you know, I think it's good to have a group discussion to know that each--for are each of the players and what needs to be integrated into it.

So, for the section of the wildlife analysis that deals with threatened and endangered species, right now until I get the updated--provided information that Duff can provide to help with sort of that proposed action piece of it, I don't think that we can move too much more forward with that particular effects analysis. But, as soon as

that--you know, Duff, as soon as the additional proposed action information comes back, then we can move with that.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Oh, Cathy?

Ms. Cathy Needham: Yeah.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: There is one thing.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Page 21, when you're talking about your introductory paragraph on the environmental effect of humpback whale, you give the length of the two submarine segments of the transmission line, and they don't match up with the lengths in page seven.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay, page 21.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: So, yeah, unless you're making some small distinction that I missed. Yeah, the--.

Ms. Cathy Needham: --I'm trying to write it down while I'm thinking at the same time.

No, the transmission line is--I mean, there's two potentials for the transmission line. The first one is where it would come across Gilbert Bay and then it would go overhead along, you know, the Sham [sp] Peninsula and then go submarine again across Port Snettisham, which is the alternative that we're trying to do the effects analysis on.

There's a potential alternative that that the transmission line is--comes off of, you know, the docking facility and goes submarine completely all the way over to where it connects into the--on the opposite side of Port Snettisham on the north side, which would be a longer segment. So, I don't know if that is the discrepancy. I'd have to pull up the documents and--.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: --No, it--what it is, on page seven, you say that the section that goes from the--let's see, from the powerhouse to the Snettisham Peninsula is 9,700 feet on page seven. And then, on page 21, that becomes 8,700 feet.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: And then, the segment that runs across Port Snettisham on page seven is 16,000 feet, and on page 21 it's 17,000 feet.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: These are not big deals. But, when you--when we're--when the agencies are trying to write their reports, we look at things like this and go, "Okay, which number do we use?"

Ms. Cathy Needham: Right. No, I completely understand. I'll make sure that we get the right number and that it's consistent in there. I appreciate you catching that.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Okay. Yeah.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay. Do we need to--there was another discussion topic that I had that's outside of the biological--the T&E stuff. So, are we ready to move into that?

Ms. Dianne Rodman: You had some stuff about what--something about NMFS and 4E.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Oh, well, what we did--we had a draft wildlife analysis that we turned in, and then Dennis went through it and made a lot of comments in terms of moving some sections around a little bit, pieces of it. And then, he pointed out that the effects analysis that we do needs to be on what we expect the impacts of the project to be on the species based on what's being done.

And our original document had a lot of language in it that was-- that said things like, "Well, you could reduce the impacts to migratory birds by not doing--cutting vegetation in a certain amount of time during nesting seasons" for whatever species. So, we took that out of the analysis because there is no commitment by any party that the mitigation measure will be conducted specifically.

So, we can't--so, Dennis's suggestion is that we analyze impact to migratory birds based on they could be--you know, what the impact would be based on if they don't have requirements of when they can clear vegetation. And then, not clearing vegetation during certain windows could be a potential 4E.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Ah, okay.

Ms. Cathy Needham: And so, the original wildlife analysis document now doesn't have the sort of potential mitigation measure in it, because we--until somebody commits--or until it's part of the proposed action, we can't--we should be analyzing just the components of the proposed action and their effects on specific species.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Ah, okay. All right.

Well, I thought--the way your comments were, I thought that you thought that NMFS was a 4E agency. And I was going, "No, hun-uh."

Ms. Cathy Needham: Oh, okay. Yeah. I probably didn't explain it well when I sent it out, but that's my understanding of it. And of course Dennis can correct me if I'm not understanding that part of it right.

Mr. Dennis Chester: No, I think that's basically it. There was just some basically potential mitigations in her analysis that were not, I guess, part of the proposed action, which are any action or alternative. And it was pretty much beaten into our head that, you know, there's no legal obligation to do that.

We don't make--in our analyses, basically, there is no level of commitment for any--for the agency or whatever the, you know, group is that's doing the project to do those. They have to be part of the action and described so that there is, A, a commitment and B, that everybody who's analyzing that project is analyzing the same project.

So, if, you know, wildlife was promoting some mitigation over here in their document and archeology is doing the same thing in their

document, but, you know, the archeologists never see the wildlife mitigations and vice versa, then they're not analyzing the same action and they may have consequences to other resources that are not immediately obvious to the--you know, say the wildlife resource. So, it's just, you know, being consistent for one thing, and then there's the legal side of it as well.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Well, okay.

Ms. Cathy Needham: But, in that respect, my understanding is it's Juneau--if there is a commitment for doing a specific thing, and this is kind of a lead in to my next topic, then it should be analyzed. And so, if there's already something that's--if it's already part of the proposed action that's being looked at in terms of effects analysis by all resource groups, then it should be included. And that one--the one I want to talk about next is the sockeye salmon.

So, my understanding is that it's Juneau Hydropower's intention to increase production of sockeye coming out of Sweetheart Lake, and to a point where that increase is measurable and enforceable. And we have--since we have--that has potential impact to wildlife if production equals an increase in return.

And so, my understanding is that, because the--working towards having an increase in production is part of a proposed action, that the issue on sockeye salmon--being able to say one way or another that sockeye will increase and return, then we can actually do an effects

analysis of what the additional sockeye at--returning to--adult sockeye returning to Sweetheart Creek, what does that have in terms of potential, like, secondary effects between bears--competition between bears, and then bears and humans.

And so, last when Dennis and I talked about it, it's like, well, what we really need to know is what is the aquatics group--what is aquatics' analysis going to say in terms of return of sockeye salmon, like the amount of additional production that Juneau Hydropower is working towards is actually going to increase. And we won't be able to put a number on it, but maybe if aquatics is going to say it's highly likely that sockeye will be returning, then we probably need to include what impacts that may or may not have on wildlife.

So, Dennis, in my discussions with Duff, the aquatics analysis isn't complete. But, in terms of aquatics' work group and their discussions and Juneau Hydropower's working with DIPAC [sp], they do believe that sockeye salmon--the sockeye salmon return will be larger than it currently is. And so, my understanding is we should probably keep that piece of information as part of the proposed action--or not part of the proposed action, but part of the effects--potential effects.

Mr. Dennis Chester: Okay. You know, like I said, I guess, you know, I think there could be quite a bit of debate about it. And I'm not going to--since I'm not the fish biologist, I'm not going to, you know, say my thoughts are the truth.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Right.

Mr. Dennis Chester: I don't think that anybody knows the truth.

But--so, yeah, like I said, from my standpoint, I guess I would just try and be consistent with the other analyses for the project. If they're saying there's going to be a larger return, then we should be consistent with that.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Right.

And I guess my only--the only thing I want to throw out there is the aquatics analysis, they're doing more work this summer. So, they're stuff is not--their conclusions or their analysis on this particular piece is not necessarily going to be done in the next couple of months.

So, by saying that--I mean, I understand the importance of being able to cite some type of information that says production's going to lead to increasing escapement. But, we're not--I don't know that we're going to be able to actually cite that out of the aquatics analysis for this project, since it won't be complete.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Well, let me jump in here a second just so I give everyone that's not--I mean, Shawn's been on most of these meetings, and I think John Matkowski sat on a couple of the DIPAC or the aquatic meetings. Maybe Dianne was on one of them too.

What has been agreed to to date is that--you know, we kick around the thing what is measurable and enforceable. Juneau Hydropower has

proposed a very expensive fish collection barge system. We've worked with DIPAC. It's been designed by DIPAC. We're working with National Marine Fisheries Service to use the best technologies available for these type of operations, and thousands of dollars has been invested in the design and engineering of this system.

That being said, that system may or may not achieve the results that it's intended to. We have worked with DIPAC for a plan B and also for a plan C. And so, there's some redundancy in the effort.

And what has been agreed to, because we need to have enforceable and measurable, is that we're going to commit to a 5 percent increase in the output of smolts leaving the lake. Now, that's very low, but it's a bar that can be measured and it can be enforced. It is likely and it is Juneau Hydropower's intention to do better than that, but it is 5 percent.

Now, I don't have the escapement numbers off the top of my head. But, if 8,000 fish are harvested or bring back to be--that are potentially harvested, and that's on a high side, a 5 percent increase--assuming that the fish go out and they all come back, that 5 percent come back, we're looking at 400 unique fish. So, I think we need to address it, but I don't know, you know, how detailed--I'm just sharing some of the numbers of what that represents.

Now, you know, there is concerns with parties raised that if we doubled the output it could cause other problems. And DIPAC is not in

agreement with necessarily doubling. We don't want to rock the boat. We just want to improve the fishery.

But, in my discussions with Eric Prestegard [sp] at DIPAC, if the fish barge is an utter failure we have a backup plan which could still increase the number of sockeye returning. And so, I think it would be prudent that at least we be consistent with the aquatics groups that, you know, this 5 percent is the minimum bar which is going to be enforceable underneath probably some licensing conditioning somewhere down the road, that, you know, at least in the wildlife analysis that we at least acknowledge that increase.

Dianne and John, does that make sense so that we have consistency between the different studies and the different areas of work?

Mr. John Matkowski: Yeah, from our initial phone calls. I mean, I think it was just more of understanding the system and, like you said, making something measurable and enforceable. And I know we weren't discussing escapement as being something that we would look at. It's more how many fish--how many of the smolts get down the falls and make it out to sea.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Correct.

Mr. John Matkowski: But, I still--thinking about it, I'm still trying to figure out what--you know, what kind of data you can provide.

And also, like you said, if you are improving, is it--you know, what are the effects of that on other resources? How is that changing

the system from the baseline or what is it now, so whether it's an enhancement or not? I guess more fish is better, but those fish, you know, weren't naturally there either. So--.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: --Well, they don't--the sockeye--also it's a no deposit, no return fishery. And so, they don't necessarily spawn, so they're not scouring out the natural run of pink and displacing their spawning grounds.

They are obviously taking oxygen out of the water. And they're obviously, you know, plankton feeders so there's periods where, you know, more fish leaving out changes, you know, on a very significant, in my mind, portion just because it's a very small increase of fish would--you know, they eat more, or that that small amount of increase would eat more, leaving Gilbert Bay. So, I mean, there is a measurable effect. I don't know what we could do to measure that effect. I mean, it's very small.

Shawn, any of your thoughts? I mean, you've been sitting in most of these aquatic meetings and DIPAC meetings too. Your thoughts on this matter?

Mr. Shawn Johnson: Yeah. First, trying to measure--well, first let me say I know the intent is to increase the number of smolts getting out, and that could very well happen. But, at this point, I don't know that we can say that's a foregone conclusion. If we want to discuss the potential impacts of that, fine.

But, we don't know if there's going to be more smolts getting out, the same number of smolts, or fewer smolts. And right now we don't even know how many smolts are getting out, so trying to look at post project and say we want to increase the number of smolts getting out by 5 percent or 10 percent, well, how many are getting out now? We don't know.

And as far as looking at how many fish are caught in the fishery, I mean, that's so highly variable for a lot of natural reasons. So, trying to look at post project catch--the total catch of these--these sockeye and relate that back to the project is, you know, as we've discussed before, very problematic.

But, actually we need something measurable and, you know, quantifiable and enforceable. But, as far as trying to do it on the migration or how many are caught coming back, that's a tough one.

Mr. Dennis Chester: And this is Dennis. From my perspective, I--you know, I don't disagree or, you know, I have no qualms, no issue with JHI trying to increase the output of smolts.

That's really not the issue in my--what I was looking at was the wildlife analysis. It basically was saying, because we're going to increase the output of smolts, then we're going to have all these other things that are going to happen. And I guess it was a pretty long reach, in my mind, because there are certainly a lot of assumptions that go into that without any real basis or data to back it up I guess was the point.

And when I look at it, and based on discussions I've had with fisheries biologists that, you know, just putting more smolts out there certainly doesn't guarantee more return. And then, there's the issue of, okay, even if some number do--more do return, how detectable is that to the bears or the people who are fishing there? A 5 percent increase, for example, in the fish--in the number of sockeyes that were there from my experience would probably not make a difference to the fishery.

But, you know, that being said, if it--if we want to address that as a potential effect, you know, it's not going to make or break the document. It just seems really farfetched to me.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Well, this is me weighing in. My concern is, you know, I want to be consistent as well as I don't want to have someone come back later that we might have missed something. And so, even mentioning it kind of, in my mind, helps because we're consistent between the aquatics and the wildlife. And I would hate to have someone from the public say, well, you guys did the wildlife but, you know, Juneau Hydropower's now bringing back more sockeye. Was there or is there, you know, any consideration made on--you know, I'm looking from a NEPA review perspective.

Dianne or John, your thoughts on that? I mean, am I tracking correctly?

Mr. John Matkowski: I just don't think the assumption should be made that it's going to improve anything, because you don't know, you

know, what is--like, yeah, what is getting better? Five percent of-- you know, it could be variable every year how many smolts get out. Does DIPAC have any information on that? I thought they just dropped them in and let them go.

So, that could just be within the standard--.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: --Deviation.

Mr. John Matkowski: Yeah. I mean, it could--it's so variable.

I don't know. I've been trying to wrap my head around it a little bit when we were discussing it. It's just--it's a complicated one. You have this--I guess when you deal with entrainment and things it's also very variable. There's a lot of information that you need to figure out what the effects are.

So, even listing it is something--you know, if we're increasing it by 5 percent from not knowing, you know, if it's zero if they--if there was 100 percent mortality. I don't know. It's just--there needs to be more information before any other assumptions are made. We're trying to answer a question with a question.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: I realize it's really tough, because there isn't the data there. That's what we're dealing with with DIPAC in the meetings that as well. And that's why we're coming to a very low bar of try to get back to something that's measurable, enforceable.

And that's why we were settling on more of like a 5 percent, because, you know, with counters--with fish counters, after we have

the tail rates in we will be able to measure success. Having the exact number prior to is difficult just because, you know, different icing conditions and different lake conditions could affect the amount of smolts you just start with.

Mr. John Matkowski: Right.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: And so, there's a lot of variables, not only the ones out in sea, but the ones at the lake there's variables. So, you know, it's a hard ball to wrap around.

I guess my perspective is that, you know, it'd be difficult because one assumption or one variable change could really impact how that affects going back to the wildlife analysis. I guess my concern is that I would just want, from Juneau Hydropower's point of view, just to have that mentioned is that that is part of our proposed action, or, you know, there was an attempt. And maybe it doesn't have any more analysis done to it because it's unproven.

I just would hate to not be consistent with the public of what we're intending trying to do and what we're actually investing thousands of dollars in to do. So, I guess that's where I'm coming from. Where that affects the wildlife analysis, hey, I just want to-- I also want to make it easy for Cathy.

I don't want to put her in a round room and tell her to find a corner either. And I--you know, we don't want to be searching for a Holy Grail that doesn't exist on this thing but--you know, and trying to make it more difficult than it needs to be. So, I'm just trying to

find a way that we can, you know, come to closure on it but also not ignore that--you know, what our plan is.

Mr. Dennis Chester: And I guess one other suggestion I might have, and maybe Shawn knows some of this, or at least who to talk to, would be, you know, how does Fish and Game manage that? Do they manage it as a--as the number of fish returning as the limiting resource, or is it crowding issues there? Or, you know, what are the concerns as far as management there now and, you know, would some extra fish change that at all?

Mr. Shawn Johnson: It's a--ComFish manages that fishery. I don't think there's any real active management other than just, you know, you need a PU permit to fish there and you have to report how many you caught back to the ComFish. So, all really--all we're really doing is keeping track of how many fish are caught in that fishery and how much use it's getting.

Mr. Dennis Chester: Okay.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

I think that's all of my discussion topics, Duff. I didn't know--actually, Dianne, it sounds like you had a chance to go through and give it a really good detailed review. Are there other comments that you want to send before I get jumping back into this thing?

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Hopefully this afternoon I'll be able--I did them on hard copy. I could put them in the document that Duff sent me and send them back to you.

Ms. Cathy Needham: That would be great.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Yeah. Okay.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: I'll try to do that this afternoon. But, if not, I'll do it Monday, okay?

Ms. Cathy Needham: Yeah, definitely. I appreciate any of the comments and edits that we can have.

Is anybody else going to provide comments? I'm just trying to decide in terms of my time if I should jump back in and start doing--well, there's some things that I just can't do until we've narrowed down the proposed action pieces that are going to be included in the analysis.

But, it's--it seems more efficient that if I got comments from those that are intending to do it in the next couple weeks and then address them all at the same time. It would prevent having to have various versions based on when different people provided different comments. So, at this point should I just expect Dianne's, or is anybody--Shawn or Ryan, are you guys going to--have you had a chance to take a look at it, or are you going to wait until it's more beefed up? Richard?

Mr. Ryan Scott: I'll jump in there. You know, I think we had this discussion last time that--you know, when is the best timing to get in with comments. And I have gone through it once and I'll go

through it again. And if I see something that jumps out at me, I'll-- you know, I'll make a note and get it back to you within your timeframe just to make it easy on you.

That said, you know, it may be that other things come up down the road and we'll make comments whenever and however it's appropriate then. But, certainly we'll take a look at it again. And if we see anything, expect them, you know, within the couple weeks you just described to us. And if not, then I think it's safe, at least from our--my perspective, and Shawn, you know, weigh in here, then we're okay with moving forward with what you got.

Mr. Shawn Johnson: Yeah, I've gone through it once with Ryan and his staff and I, having discussed what we read. And I think a lot of our concerns and issues will be addressed in our side agreement studies.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay.

Richard?

Mr. Richard Enriquez: Cathy, I think for now we're just going to let it--we'll just wait 'til later on so you won't be getting--this go round, there will be no comments from Fish and Wildlife Service.

Ms. Cathy Needham: Okay. Thank you.

Okay. Duff, did you have anything to close this out, or should we talk about sort of a timeframe for the next teleconference now?

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Well, I want to cover a couple more issues quickly on the agenda and then we can go to the next possible or potential meeting date.

And so, if we're done with the review of the wildlife document, I'll take it over from here, Cathy, unless you have anything further on the wildlife review.

Ms. Cathy Needham: I am done unless there are questions or concerns that the group wanted to note.

Mr. Dennis Chester: None from me. Thanks, Cathy.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Okay, great. If there's no further question, I'll just move along.

At our last meeting, you know, it was agreed to that JHI and Alaska Fish and Game will work on a side agreement. And Ryan, I'm just going to--and Shawn, you know, whenever you guys are available and we can find a mutual time, we'll just start working on that, I guess.

And if, you know, we can--I guess there is no format except that, you know, I want to make it work. So, I know you guys are getting busy. I'm always busy too. And--but, I guess maybe my suggestion is we just get an e-mail of when we can meet and start that process, if that sounds like that's acceptable to you as a way to go forward.

Mr. Shawn Johnson: Hey, Ryan, are you still there?

Mr. Ryan Scott: Yeah, I'm here.

Mr. Shawn Johnson: Oh, I thought I heard somebody hang up.

That works for me, but Ryan's really the person to answer that question.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Okay.

Mr. Ryan Scott: Yeah. So, Duff, I'll shoot you a note as soon as I get back in the office this afternoon and, you know, see what your schedule is for next week.

And I agree, you know, it's--I appreciate your patience. We've--trying to get some things off the ground here and then--but, JHI and the Sweetheart stuff is very high on your priority list. So, I think we'll--if we can get started, at least sit down initially next week, we should try to figure that--a time out that works for everybody.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Okay, sounds good.

Just so you know, next Thursday and Friday I'm going to be traveling out of state. But, we'll endeavor to do this--I'd like to get moving on it as soon as possible. So, I'll work around whatever you can do.

Mr. Ryan Scott: Yeah, roger that.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: And then, the other thing is we have five Moultrie cameras ready to go. The lake was frozen as of--well, it was half frozen as of last week. It is breaking up. We did have some heat over the weekend this last weekend and early this week. And so,

you know, it's probably either broken up or going to be broken up here pretty quickly, and it is our intention to get in there soon.

And then, I also--you know, maybe we can work on this offline, Ryan. But, if you or anyone of your folks want to go up there to help us actually set those up, and it sounded like there was some indication that that might be an intention, we just need to work out those logistics and when we should do it, and we'll make it happen.

Mr. Ryan Scott: Yeah. No, that sounds great. It's good to hear the lake's letting loose.

You know, I looked at the map you sent a few weeks ago with the cameras you'd put up or intended to put up down on Gilbert Bay. So, those cameras are up and running now? Is that correct?

Mr. Duff Mitchell: That's correct.

Mr. Ryan Scott: Okay, great. Yeah.

I think the intent would be definitely that, one, it's not, you know, two of us go with you and help you do that. And, you know, it's more of a location thing. Where can we get the most bang for our buck? And we can talk about that, you know, if we can get together early next week or even this afternoon, whatever works best for you.

We can talk about where to--the logistics of that and start thinking about--I guess in our minds we have some ideas, you know, that have been--that are consistent with places we thought were high

priority areas leading up to this. So, we can confirm those and figure out as a group where the best options are.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Yeah. And one of our ideas was--just because it'd be nice to have, you know--I mean, Brian's [sp] a hunter and I can read the instructions on how to set up these game cameras. But, you guys have--you know, have the experience of doing this, and also what has the highest probability of capturing good photos next to game trails and whatnot.

You know, one of our thoughts was--is that, you know, we go up to the lake, get everything ready so that the boat--we haven't--you know, we have to do some season maintenance to make sure everything's running well and whatnot, and then maybe, you know, one of your employees fly in the day. We just spend that whole day just setting up the game cameras at the locations, you know, that we've identified that's a good spot to do it.

And then, you know, if we get in there and then that doesn't work, then your employee can make the decision, okay, well, maybe we should put it here. We just feel comfortable with that. But, even if you can't do that, we'll do the best job we can based on the maps and the whatnot that we can do.

You know, if you guys want to stay there overnight, we got a nice camp. But, you can take some time to look at the project and the lake and the habitat that's out there. But, we'll work together early next week and maybe we'll get some specifics on that area too.

Mr. Ryan Scott: Yeah, that sounds good.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: I guess the only other thing that we have is, unless there's--any other questions have come up, is there anything else that anyone would like to discuss with regards to the wildlife area and studies?

And hearing none, going back to what Cathy was asking is when the next meeting would be. I think that, one, I have to do a proposed action update for her, and Cathy also needs to get integration with some other comments.

And I don't know if it'd be wise to put a date specific wildlife group meeting--it would be nice to also have the game cameras and everything set up maybe prior to the next meeting just so that we can confirm that those things are moving along and also, you know, with the progress that we're making with the JHI and ADFG agreement--Alaska Fish and Game agreement.

So, I'm leaning toward maybe not setting up a date right now unless there's a burning need for another agency to make a date specific update here in the near future.

Mr. Shawn Johnson: I don't think Fish and Game needs any date set now. You'll be working with Ryan next week, so we're--I think we're good to go for now.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: That sound good to you, Dennis and Richard, to leave it just open for right now?

Mr. Dennis Chester: Yep.

Mr. Richard Enriquez: Yeah, that's fine.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Okay.

Well, is there anything else, Cathy, that we might have missed that you wanted to cover?

Ms. Cathy Needham: No, I think I'm good.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Okay, guys. And John and Dianne, any last words?

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Can't think of--.

Mr. John Matkowski: --No, I'm good here--.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: --Anything.

Mr. John Matkowski: Thanks.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Okay.

Well, thank you, everybody. Appreciate it. Appreciate your hard work, Cathy. And we'll just keep working 'til we get 'er done, so to say.

And with that, we'll close the meeting. And we'll be in contact with everybody on the various components. I'll be with Fish and Game next week, and then we'll keep everybody informed as we have the need for another wildlife group meeting.

Mr. Dennis Chester: Okay.

Mr. John Matkowski: Sounds good.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Okay. Yeah.

Mr. John Matkowski: Bye.

Mr. Duff Mitchell: Everybody have a good weekend.

Mr. John Matkowski: All right.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Thank you.

Mr. John Matkowski: You too.

Mr. Dennis Chester: Thanks. Bye.

Mr. Ryan Scott: Bye.

Ms. Dianne Rodman: Bye.

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