From: Mooney, Philip W (DFG) [phil.mooney@alaska.gov]
Sent: Friday, June 24, 2011 2:04 PM
To: Christopher Brewton; Charles Mike Prewitt; Kent Bovee; Karl Wolfe; Dean Orbison; Jessica Stockel
Cc: Jeff Feldpausch; Richard Enriquez; Andrew Thoms; Sue Walker; Miller, Monte D (DFG); White, Kevin S (DFG); Johnson, Shawn L (DFG); Chris Leeseberg
Subject: RE: Draft Wildlife Resources Study Plan, Takatz Lake Hydro Project, FERC No. 13234
Attachments: Smith_Van_Daele_8.pdf

Christopher et al.:

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Wildlife Resources Plan, Takatz Lake Hydro Project, FERC No. 13234. I'm sending these comments via email to expedite the process. Kevin White and I have discussed a few items we believe would be beneficial to consider:

1. Monitoring of snow depth - Using a transect(s) across an east/west and elevational gradient, measure/monitor snow depth in the project area using relatively low-cost ibutton sensors. These data would be helpful for providing environmental context for the wildlife (fish and other) monitoring data that is collected for the project. For example, since winter severity is a strong driver of many wildlife populations in Southeast Alaska (SEAK) it is important to have parallel wildlife monitoring and snow depth information to assess whether patterns seen in wildlife abundance or distribution reflects mild-average-severe winter conditions. The existing NWS weather stations are at sea level and not likely representative of the strong climate gradients that occur, both from elevational and longitudinal standpoints, throughout the central Baranof study area.

2. Opportunistic radio-tracking of marked mountain goats - During Kent's pre-scheduled transit flights across the island the City should take advantage of the opportunity to conduct radio-tracking of marked mountain goats. These are likely to help Kent interpret the observations he is collecting via ground based monitoring. For example, general knowledge of whether goats are on summer or winter range or have shifted out of his "view shed" will help him assess how representative his observations are of the overall area he is responsible for monitoring. These flights would be extremely beneficial to identify kids and the timing of their birth and appearance and locations in May and thru early-June. ADFG will ultimately be able to provide detailed GPS records of where collared animals are distributed at specific times but most of these data will not be available until GPS data are downloaded from released collars at the end of the collar deployment period (2014 for the 7 store-on-board collars). Consequently, having relatively "real-time" data on mtn goat distribution can assist Kent in adjusting his observational sampling efforts to maximize efficiency and help interpret his findings in the short term.

3. Opportunistic radio-collaring of brown bears –(see the attached paper) -The preconstruction and construction phases of the Blue Lake and Takatz Lake hydroelectric projects have the ability to displace brown bears. The displacement may compound competition between bears with overlapping or adjoining home ranges, resulting in bear mortality either from each other or from the possibility of displacement into areas with higher human contact. I would recommend that the projects take advantage of opportunities to capture/collar bears in the immediate project areas. The GPS locations will give us specific information related to bear locations at various times of the year, including den sites, as well as seasonal habitat use patterns. It will also give us some degree of bear interaction and overlap with mountain goats. The VHF signal may provide useful in having approximate locations of the bears when crews are working in the area.

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From: Jessica Stockel [mailto:jessica@cityofsitka.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 01, 2011 8:26 AM
To: Chris Leeseberg; Johnson, Shawn L (DFG); Mooney, Philip W (DFG); White, Kevin S (DFG); Miller, Monte D (DFG); Sue Walker; 'Richard Enriquez'; Jeff Feldpausch; 'Andrew Thoms'
Cc: Christopher Brewton; Charles Mike Prewitt; Kent Bovee; Karl Wolfe; Dean Orbison
Subject: Draft Wildlife Resources Study Plan, Takatz Lake Hydro Project, FERC No. 13234

To:

Chris Leeseberg, US Forest Service, Sitka Ranger District

Shawn Johnson, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)

Phil Mooney, ADF&G

Kevin White, ADF&G

Monte Miller, ADF&G

Susan Walker, NMFS

Richard Enriquez, USFWS

Jeff Feldpausch, Sitka Tribe of Alaska

Andrew Thoms, Sitka Conservation Society

From: Christopher Brewton, Utility Director
Subject: Draft Wildlife Resources Study Plan, Takatz Lake Hydro Project, FERC No. 13234

Attached please find the Draft Wildlife Resources Study Plan.

If you have questions on this document, don't hesitate to contact me at 907-747-1870, or via email.

We encourage you to review and provide comments. Comments are due no later than July 1, 2011.
Thank you for your continued participation in the Takatz Lake hydro project licensing.

Christopher Brewton

Utility Director

Electric Department

City & Borough of Sitka