

**Wildlife Advisory Committee  
HEP Subcommittee  
May, 28, 2014  
Spokane, WA**

**DRAFT Meeting Notes**

**Attendees:** Jason Kesling (BPT), Paul Ashley (PSMFC), Matt Berger (KT), Kelly Singer (CCT), Katie Earon (STOI), Tom Prewitt (CDAT), Carl Scheeler (CTUIR), Scott Soultz (KTOI), Kathy Cousins (IDFG), Keith Kutchins (UCUT), Peter Paquet (NPCC), and Neil Ward (QW Consulting)

**By Phone:** Chris Weaton (PSMFC), Loren Kronemann (NPT), Aren Eddingsaas (SBT), Tom O’Neill (NHI), Philip Key (BPA), and Norm Merz (KTOI)

<b>Item 1</b>	<b>Introductions and Approval of Agenda</b>
<b>Item 2</b>	<b>Briefing on Draft Fish and Wildlife Program Related Issues</b>
	<p>Peter Paquet provided an overview of the Wildlife Mitigation Section of the NPCC’s Draft Fish and Wildlife Program with emphasis on the portion pertaining to the proposed use of habitat units as the preferred unit of measurement for mitigation accounting and the Habitat Evaluation Procedure (HEP) methodology as the approach to estimate habitat units lost and acquired. Peter informed the group that the NPCC continues to endorse the existing Program language and that the proposed program language was copied from the WAC Charter. Peter stressed that the goal of the meeting was not to develop comments relative to the draft Program language, but instead evaluate the merits of HEP.</p> <p>Prior to reviewing the HEP process and potential alternative approaches, Matt Berger, on behalf of the UCUT organization, briefed the participants on the letter that Keith Kutchins delivered to the WAC regarding the UCUT’s proposal to improve wildlife mitigation efforts in the Columbia Basin (Attachment 1). Included in the UCUT’s letter was a recommendation to phase out HEP as a wildlife crediting tool, as well as the Regional HEP Team after the completion of current reporting requirements.</p>
<b>Item 3</b>	<b>Group Discussion: Develop Approaches and Strategies for Addressing Issues</b>
	<p>Prior to reviewing the merits of HEP and alternative methods for crediting and monitoring, Paul Ashley provided an update during which he informed the participants that the “old-guard” (i.e., John Andrews and Paul) would be “fading out” in 10 months and that they are attempting to complete the unfinished reports. Paul indicated that the top priority is new projects followed by unfinished projects (e.g., Colville Reservation property purchase in 1997 (closing-out) and the WDFW acquisition along the Snake River (closing-out). It is Paul’s goal to provide the region with the information by March 31, 2015. Paul also indicated that they are transferring the information to PSMFC where it will be stored until the region decides how it wants to make the information available.</p> <p>The participants were asked whether HEP is still the correct tool for wildlife crediting, as well as where the region is relative to the use and acceptance of HEP. Participants agreed that HEP was initially used because, at the time, it was the state-of-the-art tool; however, other techniques are now available that are considered superior to HEP. Some participants characterized HEP as a “coarse bean-counting” tool. Participants agreed that if they want a monitoring tool, HEP is not the best choice. This has been backed-up by the ISRP during their</p>

	<p>reviews in which they reported HEP does not inform us about biological responses and the populations. The participants agreed that the biggest issue associated with HEP is that it was not developed to monitor species responses.</p> <p>Peter informed the group that it is the WAC's responsibility to identify a solution for the limitations that are associated with using HEP as a crediting tool. Peter led the participants in an effort to frame the issues associated with continuing to use HEP, as well as identifying methods that could potentially be used to replace HEP (Attachment 2). Participants were asked whether HEP is still the best "tool" for the purpose of wildlife crediting. Meeting participants agreed that the current version of HEP (circa 1982) is now outdated and that it is not necessarily used how the USFWS envisioned its use, but instead has been modified to meet individual needs. Attachment 2 reflects the participants attempt to identify issues associated with continuing to use HEP as well as the challenges that could exist if different methods are employed.</p>
Item 4	<b>Develop Workplan and Schedules for Completing HEP Recommendations</b>
	A specific workplan and schedule were not developed for completing the HEP recommendations.
Item 5	<b>Next Steps and Other Issues</b>
	<p>The following questions were asked throughout the meeting and will need to be answered during the coming months.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the uses of HEP and how well are they functioning?</li> <li>2. Has HEP served its purpose and what tools are in place to replace it?</li> <li>3. Is there a preferred and acceptable alternative method that provides crediting and monitoring?</li> <li>4. Do we need a regional approach to crediting?</li> <li>5. What would the program look like without HEP?</li> </ol>
Item 6	<b>Next HEP Subcommittee Meeting</b>
	<p style="text-align: center;">HEP Subcommittee Meeting  July 9, 2014  1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. (Pacific)  Portland, OR  NPCC Office</p>

**ATTACHMENT 2**

	<b>Continue to use HEP</b>	<b>Comments and Concerns</b>	<b>No longer use HEP (move towards a monitoring/crediting hybrid)</b>	<b>Comments and Concerns</b>
<b>Cons</b>	Is not a monitoring tool		See comments relative to alternatives	
	Outdated			
	Lack of regional support			
	Does not tell us anything about biological responses of species and populations			
<b>Pros</b>	Provides useful information	Value is limited	Would be able to use a method that allows for evaluation of biological responses	
	Good for crediting and identifying values as applied to target species	Not all managers agree with this characterization		
<b>Alternatives</b>	Modified HEP (regional habitat values, ocular HEP)	Use full version including monitoring	CHAP	
			IBI	
			CHAT	
			Remote Sensing	
			Acres/RVI	
			Existing tools used by FERC projects	
			Settlements/Agreements – (regional, individual, capitalization(e.g., Willamette River) <b>BPA has developed a template that they will be providing</b>	How would you address address facilities with multiple entities (e.g., McNary)
				Timing could lead to bow wave
				O&M Stewardship agreements do not need crediting, use of acres and dollars (negotiate lump sum (earn interest) so can operate and maintain property at a reasonable level)
				Equity issue