

Vital Signs Indicators Project: Cultural Resources Subgroup Meeting Notes

Tuesday, February 12, 2008

Gorge Commission office, White Salmon, WA

Attendees:

Greg Griffith, Washington Dept. of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Marge Dryden, USFS - Scenic Area

Jeremy FiveCrows, Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission

Greg Webb, US Army Corps of Engineers

Sally Donovan, Donovan & Associates

Jeannette Burkhardt, Yakama Fisheries Project

Sally Duncan, OSU Institute of Natural Resources

Jeff Tryens, Gorge Commission consultant

Jennifer Kaden, Gorge Commission

Jennifer Kaden provided an overview of upcoming meetings for the Indicators Project: Assessment Committee meeting February 20 to review/approve project objectives; TAT, CAT and joint TAT/CAT meetings on February 25, to look at prioritized lists of indicators and provide feedback; Gorge Commission meeting April 8, 2008 to review/approve project objectives. Greg Griffith recapped comments raised about the Cultural Resources indicators at the joint TAT/CAT meeting held January 25, 2008. Comments included whether the objectives/indicators should include the rebuilding of historic structures that no longer exist; whether the public would be able to see maps of cultural resources sites; and an overall concern there were too many indicators (across all the subgroups). Greg Griffith asked whether it made sense for this sub-group to review the work of the other sub-groups to help assess whether we've captured all important topics. Jeff Tryens said he could send that information to the sub-group chairs who could share it with their groups. This also is part of the function/role of the TAT.

Indicators: The group discussed changes made to the draft indicators since the group's last meeting on January 22. Some refinements and additions were suggested by the project consultants. There was a discussion about how the measuring would be done for adverse impacts to monitored sites – whether it would be cumulative or a year to year count. It was explained that the number of sites monitored each year changes, as does which sites are monitored. The number of sites inventoried also changes – and not all inventoried sites are monitored. Jeff Tryens urged the group to think about how to come up with a representative sample of sites that could be monitored on a regular basis. The sample should provide an indication of the health of the overall resource. Jeff asked whether there was a database of all sites and their condition. Marge Dryden said there was, more or less, such information in one form or another. Jeff asked whether we could use the condition of archeological resources at the time the Scenic Act was adopted and go forward from that point. Marge thought we could try.

The group discussed what was meant by stakeholders and decided it included: property owners, tribal governments, archeological contractors, local governments, government agencies, and utility companies. Jennifer Kaden said she would add this to the footnotes.

The group decided to change the first indicator for each objective to measure resources “not adversely affected” instead of “undisturbed” because the terminology was more broadly used and understood by cultural resource professionals. Jennifer and Marge agreed to work on a footnote to provide a definition of “adversely affect.”

The group revised the indicator related to stakeholder understanding of the importance of each cultural resource to focus on stakeholder understanding of the protection process for cultural resources. It was also agreed that the indicator related to public understanding of the importance of archeological resources be extended to the objectives for historic resources and traditional cultural properties. The group also added an indicator under each Objective to measure stakeholder understanding of the importance of cultural resources, but this was later determined to be unnecessary because it is implied that stakeholders who understand the protection process understand the importance of the resources.

At Greg Griffith's suggestion, additional indicators were drafted to measure how much of each resource is being tracked and recorded. The group discussed how this information is fundamental to indicate how much energy is devoted to protecting cultural resources.

The draft indicators were modified to read as follows:

Objective 4.1: Protect and enhance significant archeological resources.

- 4.1.a) Percent of monitored archeological sites that are not adversely affected each year.
- 4.1.b) Percent of all monitored archeological sites that have been damaged by human activity
- 4.1.c) Percent of monitored, damaged archeological sites where mitigation or enforcement has occurred.
- 4.1.d) Number of archeological resources enhanced.
- 4.1.e) Percent of stakeholders understanding the archeological resources protection process.
- 4.1.f) Percent of residents of and visitors to the Gorge understanding the importance of archeological resources.
- 4.1.g) Percent of acres in the NSA that have been surveyed for archeological resources.

Objective 4.2: Protect and enhance significant historic resources.

- 4.2.a) Percent of monitored historic resources that are not adversely affected each year.
- 4.2.b) Percent of all monitored historic resources that have been damaged by human activity.
- 4.2.c) Percent of historic resources damaged where mitigation or enforcement occurs each year.
- 4.2.d) Number of historic resources rehabilitated each year.
- 4.2.e) Percent of stakeholders understanding the historic resources protection process.
- 4.2.f) Percent of residents of and visitors to the Gorge understanding the importance of historic resources.
- 4.2.g) Number of new significant historic resources identified each year.

Objective 4.3: Protect and enhance significant traditional cultural properties.

- 4.3.a) Percent of monitored traditional cultural properties that are not adversely affected each year.
- 4.2.b) Percent of all monitored traditional cultural properties that have been damaged by human activity.
- 4.3.c) Percent of monitored traditional cultural properties damaged where mitigation or enforcement occurs each year.
- 4.3.d) Number of traditional cultural properties enhanced per year.
- 4.3.e) Percent of stakeholders understanding the traditional cultural properties protection process.
- 4.3.f) Percent of residents of and visitors to the Gorge understanding the importance of traditional cultural properties.
- 4.3.g) Number of new significant traditional cultural properties identified each year.

Rating Matrix: Jeff Tryens explained a rating matrix he developed to help each sub-group begin prioritizing the draft indicators. The group suggested the rating scale be changed from 0-2 to 1-5 (1 being the lowest rating, and 5 being the highest rating) and Jeff agreed that would work. The group expressed reservations about rating the indicators on how understandable they are to the public and Jeff suggested this might be a good role for the CAT.

Because of time constraints, the group only had time to evaluate the "Importance to measuring the health of the resource" for each indicator under Objective 1. The group decided those values could repeat for the respective indicators under Objectives 2 and 3. Jennifer suggested that she and Marge Dryden, Greg Griffith, and perhaps Greg Webb, could work on the part of the matrix that measures the availability and feasibility of data and try to add those values before the draft matrix is shared with the TAT and CAT for their February 25 meetings.

No future meeting date was set. The group will likely meet sometime after the joint TAT/CAT to refine the rating matrix.