

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: July 11, 2006

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-266)

TO: Mrs. Dorie Welch - KEWU-4
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Project Title: End Creek Habitat Restoration

Project No: 1992-026-01

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis (See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): 1.3 Restoration of channelized river and stream reaches; 1.4 Pre-implementation evaluation of proposed enhancements; 1.5 Install grade control structures and check dams; 1.6 Install large woody debris structures; 1.8 Bank protection through vegetation management; 1.9 Structural bank protection using bioengineering methods; 6.10 Build fencing to limit livestock access.

Location: T1S, R38E, Sections 22, 23, 26, 10 miles north of LaGrande, Union County, Oregon

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA, in cooperation with CTUIR, private landowners, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), proposes to implement a wetland habitat restoration project in the Willow Creek Watershed in Union County, Oregon. The End Creek subwatershed is a tributary of Willow Creek, which is a tributary of the Grande Ronde River.

Historically, the project area contained meandering stream channels, wetlands, and numerous springs. In an effort to enhance drainage for agricultural production, End Creek and several unnamed streams were channelized, resulting in a series of linear ditches currently lacking riparian vegetation with eroding stream banks. The project will implement a variety of restoration activities including: restoration channel construction; re-establishment of native/native-like tree, shrub, and grassland communities; terrace construction to direct floodplain water flow; floodplain pond construction; weed control; and riparian grazing management to restore fish and wildlife habitat on over 540 acres.

Specific activities proposed include:

- Construct 4.34 miles of new channel for End Creek, South Fork Willow Creek, and McDonald Creek, and 7.88 miles of spring-fed tributary channels.
- Construct approximately 0.68 miles of earthen terraces.
- Construct approximately 4 miles of fences.

- Contour floodplain ponds (10 ponds, 14.63 acres).
- Divert existing channelized stream reaches into new channels.
- Trap and haul salvage of fish before water diversion into new channels.
- Remove and/or relocate 5 culverts and 1 irrigation headgate.
- Reclaim of 2.2 miles of existing channelized stream reaches and 3.04 miles of existing ditches.
- Instream placement of 58 cross vanes, 221 rootwad revetments, and approximately 750 pieces of woody debris.

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by Allen Childs, CTUIR, and meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species under the jurisdiction of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) that may occur in the general vicinity of the project area are: Snake River Basin steelhead and Snake River spring/summer Chinook salmon. BPA initiated Formal ESA Section 7 Consultation and Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Essential Fish Habitat Consultation on March 21, 2006. BPA received a Biological Opinion from NOAA Fisheries on June 28, 2006. NOAA concluded that the proposed action is not likely to jeopardize the further existence of the listed Snake River steelhead or Chinook salmon. NOAA also found that the proposed action will not result in the destruction or adverse modification of the critical habitat designated for listed Snake River steelhead or Chinook salmon.

BPA found, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) agreed, that the proposed action would have no effect on the following USFWS ESA listed species: bald eagle, gray wolf, Canada lynx, fisher, Howell's spectacular thelypody, and bull trout.

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, NRCS, in cooperation with the CTUIR Cultural Resource Protection Program, initiated consultation with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in February 2004. CTUIR and NRCS completed a cultural resource investigation and submitted a report to SHPO; concurrence was granted in January, 2006. In the concurrence letter, SHPO reiterated NRCS's recommendation that the ditch exposing a particular site be lined with geotextile fabric before refilling. Although no further archaeological research is needed, if any cultural material is encountered during the proposed project activities, all activities surrounding the site should cease immediately and an archaeologist will be contacted to evaluate the material.

The CTUIR, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS, ODFW, Grande Ronde Model Watershed Program (GRMWP), NRCS, Union County Planning Department, Oregon Department of State Lands (ODSL), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the adjacent landowners are the primary stakeholders in the proposed project and all worked collaboratively in the planning process. Project proposals were submitted and reviewed through GRMWP and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB). The project was reviewed in two public forums (advertised in the local newspaper and on the radio): 1. the Union County Soil and Waters Conservation District Board Meeting in December 2005 and 2. the GRMWP Board of Directors meeting in April 2006. The five adjacent

private landowners were provided an opportunity to review the project through the ODSL permitting process and were given 15 days to review and comment on the proposed activities.

Standard water quality protection procedures and Best Management Practices will be followed during the implementation of the End Creek Habitat Restoration Project. No construction is authorized to begin until the proponent has obtained all applicable local, state, and federal permits. All terms and conditions outlined in obtained permits, the SHPO concurrence letter, and the NOAA Biological Opinion must be strictly adhered to.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program, as well as BPA's Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265) and ROD. This Supplement Analysis finds that: 1) implementing the proposed action will not result in any substantial changes to the Watershed Management Program that are relevant to environmental concerns; and 2) there are no significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the Watershed Management Program or its impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Kelly Mason

Kelly Mason

Environmental Specialist - KEC-4

CONCUR:

/s/ Kathy Pierce

Kathy Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer - KEC-4

DATE: July 12, 2006

Attachments:

End Creek SA Checklist

NOAA Fisheries ESA Sec. 7 Biological Opinion

SHPO Concurrence letter

cc: (w/o attachments)

Mr. Allen Childs-CTUIR

cc: (w/ attachments)

Ms. Deb Virgovic-NRCS

Mr. Alan Bahn-NRCS