

factsheet

July 2009

Bigfork land acquisition protects trout habitat

The Bonneville Power Administration is working with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks to fund the state's acquisition this fall of a 70-acre parcel of land along the north shore of Flathead Lake near Bigfork, Mont. About 45 acres of this parcel are seasonally flooded by Flathead Lake; another 25 acres consists of wetlands, grass, and shrub habitats. The lake is home to native bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout that would benefit from shoreline and riparian protection.

The property adjoins the east portion of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Flathead Lake Waterfowl Production Area. Conservation of this property would increase the wildlife connectivity between the Swan Mountain and Salish Mountain ecosystems, and would help to protect and restore fisheries habitat, protect water quality in Flathead Lake and area wetlands, and maintain and enhance area wildlife habitat.

This acquisition is part of a larger program of land acquisitions and conservation easements funded by BPA and coordinated between MFWP, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and BPA.

The acquisition would provide BPA with credit for partial mitigation of resident fish habitat losses due to the construction of Hungry Horse Dam, a federal dam located on the South Fork of the Flathead River, and inundation of portions of the South Fork Flathead River drainage.

Land to get management plan

Once these lands have been acquired, which is expected in fall 2009, BPA would acquire a conservation easement, ensuring that this habitat remains protected. MFWP will develop a management plan to guarantee protection and enhancement of the habitat. Pending BPA's approval of the management plan, any activities that could damage habitat would be prohibited.

For more information

For more information, please contact Cecilia Brown, BPA, at (503) 230-3462, toll-free at (800) 282-3713 or via e-mail at ckbrown@bpa.gov. You may also contact Joel Tohtz at Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks at (406) 751-4570 or jtohtz@mt.gov.



Bigfork Land Acquisition

Flathead County, Montana

