

factsheet

August 2009

Hancock Springs conservation easement protects steelhead habitat

The Bonneville Power Administration is currently working with the Yakama Nation to fund the Methow Conservancy's acquisition of a 80-acre voluntary conservation easement. The easement is on riparian habitat surrounding Hancock Springs and Hancock Creek in Okanogan County, Wash.

The property provides habitat for spring chinook, bull trout and summer steelhead, which are classified as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. The property is also habitat for a population of reintroduced coho salmon, a species whose native population has been absent from the Methow River for decades.

The proposed easement would preserve and restore anadromous fish habitat through funding from the 2008 Columbia Basin Fish Accords. The historic Accords established firm, 10-year funding commitments, largely from BPA, to habitat and hatchery actions as well as measurements for biological benefits. They build on NOAA Fisheries' biological opinions for listed salmon and steelhead and the Northwest Power and Conservation Council's fish and wildlife program.

This property was selected for protection because it ensures the ongoing success of a BPA/Yakama Accord-funded restoration project on Hancock Creek. The project has resulted in large numbers of summer steelhead spawning and rearing in restored habitats throughout the creek. Also, the unprotected riverfront properties in this corridor are at high risk of residential development, which severely impacts riparian areas through bank hardening, soil compaction and soil erosion.

The property proposed for easement contains fish habitat that would provide BPA with credits for partial mitigation of anadromous and resident fish habitat losses due to the Columbia River hydroelectric system.

Land to get stewardship plan

If the proposed easement is acquired, which is expected in fall 2009, a conservation easement would be placed on the property to ensure that the fisheries values and habitat are protected in perpetuity. Upon the acquisition of the conservation easement, a stewardship plan will be enacted to protect and enhance the riparian habitat into the future. The Methow Conservancy would hold the easement and provide long-term stewardship of the easement agreement, including monitoring and enforcement.

Pending BPA's approval of the stewardship plan, any activities that could damage habitat (such as harvesting wood products, grazing livestock or constructing buildings in the riparian zone) would be prohibited on this land.

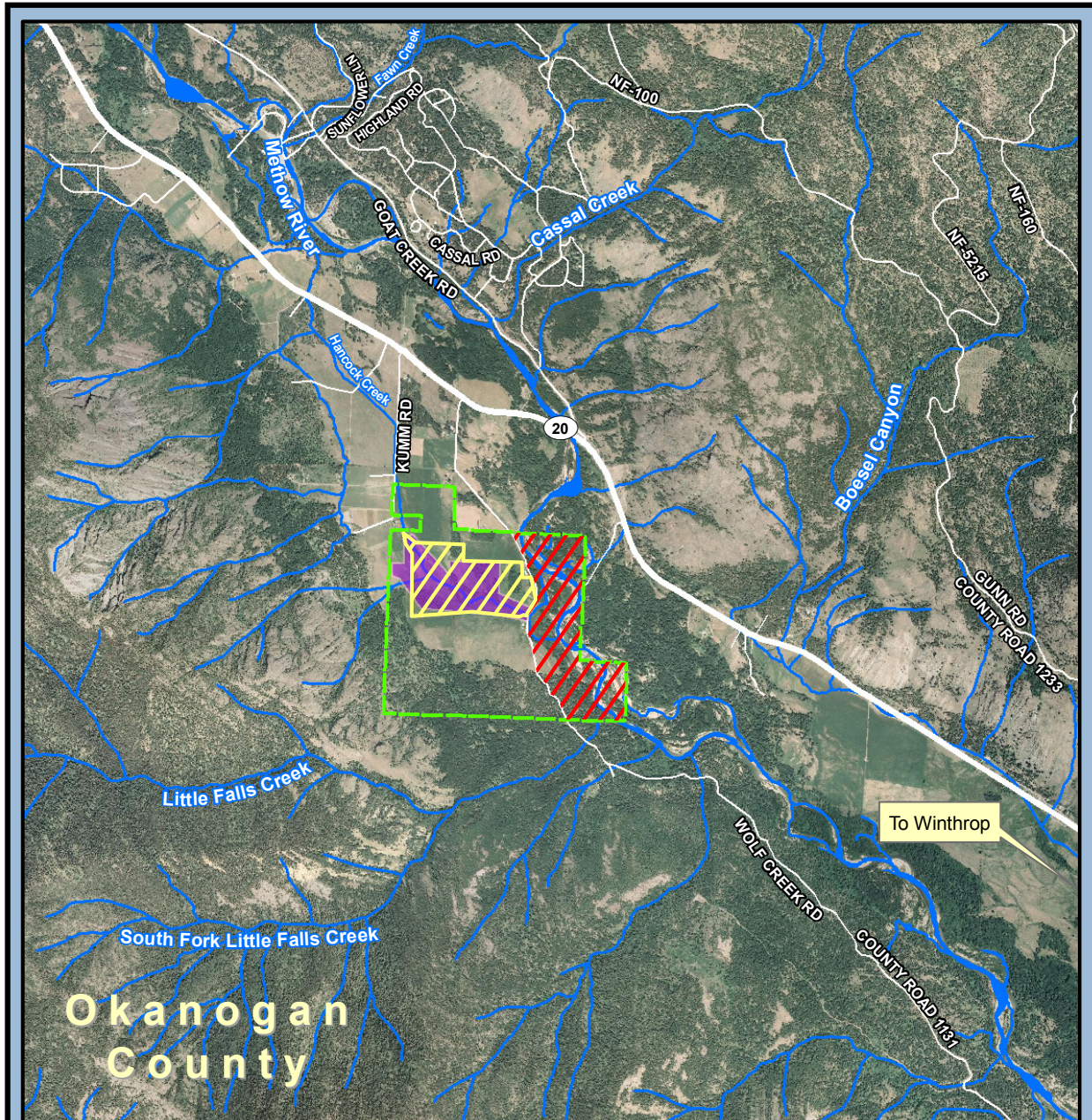
For more information

If you have questions about this proposal or would like additional information, please contact Jay Marcotte, BPA, at (503) 230-3943, toll-free at (800) 282-3713 or via e-mail at jgmarcotte@bpa.gov. You may also contact John Sunderland, Methow Conservancy, at (509) 996-2870 or via e-mail at john@methowconservancy.org.







Hancock Spring Conservation Easement

Okanogan County, Washington



Hancock Springs Conservation Easement (80 Acres)
Rendezvous Mountain Quadrangle

-  Subject Property
-  Existing Easement Area
-  Proposed Easement Area (updated)
-  Proposed Easement Area (previous)

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

