

United States Government
memorandum

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

DATE: September 18, 2006

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-277)

TO: Jay Marcotte - KEWL-4
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Proposed Action: Walla Walla River Basin Fish Habitat Enhancement – Gose Street

Project No: 1996-046-01

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis (See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): 1.15 Fish Passage Enhancement – Fishways

Location: Walla Walla County, WA

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

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund the CTUIR to construct two pool and chute fish passage structures beneath the Gose Street Bridge in Mill Creek, located in the City of College Place, WA. The existing concrete fish pool weir structure (Photo 1) at that location doesn't provide effective fish passage and is planned to first be removed from the site prior to replacement with the new fish passage structures. This existing structure was constructed in the 1970s by a local conservation group but does not provide effective fish passage movement in this segment of Mill Creek. The proposed concrete passage structures (example on Photo 2) would be consistent with state and federal criteria and standards for fish passage and are expected to greatly provide effective and safe fish passage particularly for adult steelhead and other salmon moving to upstream spawning grounds.

The legal description of the proposed project is T7N, R35E, Section 23 SE SE and T 7N, R 35E, Section 24 SW SW and is not within tribal Indian property. The area of project affect includes the entire width of Mill Creek and levees, beginning about 20 meters downstream from the Gose Street Bridge and continuing upstream about 100 meters to the second sheet pile weir. Minimal work is anticipated on the right and left banks or levees of Mill Creek, except to blade a vehicle access road to the Mill Creek channel. No disturbance is proposed or necessary to the existing concrete Gose Street Bridge footings. Work is planned to be conducted during the normal instream work window (July 1 – October 31) with a likely project start being around mid-September 2006.



Photo 1. Facing North at the existing concrete weir barrier to be removed beneath the Gose Street Bridge. (Photo taken in July of 2005). Photo by Jed Volkman (CTUIR).



Photo 2. Example of a pool and chute fish passage structure. The final design for the Gose Street Project will include two similar structures located beneath the bridge.
Photo by Jed Volkman (CTUIR).

During the construction period, water in Mill Creek is planned to be isolated and diverted around the work site so as not to adversely affect water quality. Wood forms will be built within the prepared streambed to allow for construction of the new cement fish passage structures. Rock of various gradations will be used as needed. The streambed will be prepared for construction with the use of various machinery which may include dozers, excavators, compactors, and other hand tools. A short access road (about 16 feet wide by 24 feet long) is planned on the right bank of Mill Creek immediately downstream and adjacent to the Gose Street Bridge.

This access road will largely be scraped with a blade but all surface disturbances are planned to be restored to pre-project conditions after construction of the fish ladders.

Analysis:

The expected beneficial effects of the project will provide upstream adult fish passage passed the location of the current concrete structure that currently does not function well. The area of potential affects from constructing the project would primarily be within the existing flood channel that includes the stream bed, cobble banks, and levees. Most of the worksite proposed for the fish passage upgrades have previously been disturbed by man, largely for purposes of flood control that includes cement, rocks embedded in cement, and natural river gravel/cobble/rock. During the instream construction period of lowest flows (summer), in some years this has been reduced to merely two cubic feet per second, hardly adequate to support a fishery. Water temperature during this period has been recorded to be sublethal to all salmonid species.

Endangered Species: Listed threatened and endangered species that could be present in the project area are the bald eagle, summer steelhead, and bull trout. NOAA Fisheries has also identified critical habitat for summer steelhead in the project area of Mill Creek. BPA determined that there would be no adverse effect on bull trout from constructing the project during the planned work. The FWS (Michelle Ames) agreed. BPA's reasoning for this call is as follows: no bull trout have been observed in the immediate vicinity of the project, lack of adequate or marginal habitat during the work window, significantly increased water temperatures that could be harmful to any bull trout during the work period, the likelihood of bull trout occurrence during the work window is extremely improbable, no probability of short-term adverse impacts to bull trout from this action, any surface water that is part of Mill Creek during construction will be isolated from the work area, BPMs are planned to be used to avoid effects on bull trout and other fish during construction, and anticipated long-term benefits of improving fish movements would cause benefits to any bull trout that could be in the project area. This constitutes ESA compliance for non-anadromous species.

A Habitat Improvement Program Biological Opinion (HIP BO) was implemented largely because of any sediment deposits from construction could be transported downgradient from the work area and affect fish downgradient, because beneficial long-term benefits should be disclosed, and because the HIP BO was suggested by NOAA Fisheries (Diane Driscoll). Therefore, the CTUIR assisted BPA in preparing Form 1 to the HIP BO and a copy is maintained in KEC's file, including concurrence from NOAA Fisheries' on the project engineering design. Accordingly, the CTUIR will follow the resultant terms and conditions in accordance with the HIP BO's Custom Report. This constitutes BPA's ESA compliance for anadromous fish.

Cultural Resource: The Area of Potential Effect was shared with the THPO and SHPO during early consultation in May 2006. The THPO responded by asking to be kept apprised of BPA's determination to protect and conserve the cultural resources. Because the work is largely restricted to the channel of Mill Creek, access to the work site will be on the existing levees, and the area has largely been altered by human presence, BPA concludes that there will be no affects to cultural and historic resources.

An historical perspective of previous work at the Mill Creek/Gose Street site is maintained in BPA's Environmental Planning office that presents a chronology of construction events at the APE. Based on this information, there are no structures and landscape features over 50 years of age that has the potential to be affected by actions currently proposed. Rock and gabion structures established in the channel over 50 years ago were subsequently washed out after flood events. And the current footings of the Gose Street Bridge were constructed in 1969 that replaced the original bridge footings constructed decades before. The levees have been periodically modified and upgraded over the years. In their letter of September 12, 2006, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with our findings that no historic properties would be affected by the project.

Public Involvement: Funding for the new fish ladders are being cost-shared from BPA, the Walla Walla Watershed Alliance, Pacific Coastal Salmon Funding, and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, with BPA contributing about 63 percent. A variety of groups/entities have been notified about the project either first handed or word of mouth through meetings and other ways. The following groups have been involved or notified about the project: the Walla Walla County Conservation District, Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council, Pacific Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Budget Oversight Group, BPA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla Watershed Alliance, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA Fisheries, the Mill Creek Group, and the CTUIR. Landowners have also been kept informed about the project and the proponents will continue the information exchange information about the proposed fish ladders and promoting stream habitat restoration.

No environmental land audits or permits are required for the proposed work. The proponents have applied for a Hydraulic Permit Approval (HPA) through the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

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. In addition, the actions are consistent with the Walla Walla Subbasin Plan and Northwest Power Planning Council.

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. Support material associated with this environmental clearance is found in the project file.

Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required. Environmental provisions are listed in the Attachment.

/s/ Carl J. Keller

Carl J. Keller
Environmental Project Manager

CONCUR:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: September 18, 2006

Attachment:
Environmental Provisions

cc:

Mr. Jed Volkman, Fisheries Habitat Biologist, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, P.O. Box 638, Pendleton, OR 97801

Attachment

ENVIRONMENTAL PROVISIONS

Gose Street Fish Ladders

The following provisions apply:

- The contractor shall construct the stated diversion improvements in accordance with the prepared Form 1 of the HIP Biological Opinion for anadromous fish, to include but not be limited to the following:
 1. Construction shall be in accordance with approval by a NOAA Fisheries' engineering staff;
 2. Site Rehabilitation Plan;
 3. Pollution Control Plan;
 4. Best Management Practices;
 5. Isolation of inwater work;
 6. Restriction of heavy equipment;
 7. Work during the acceptable instream work window when fish are least likely to occur in the project area.
- A biologist will oversee the construction to ensure interests are being incorporated into the final design, and to minimize/avoid possible adverse resource effects.
- In the event that archaeological or historic materials are discovered during project activities, work in the immediate vicinity must stop, the area secured, and the SHPO notified.
- Constructing the project will be consistent with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Nationwide Permit 200601017 (issued on September 13, 2006), HPA, and other permits and authorizations, and terms and conditions therein.
- The project will be consistent and compliant with the: Northwest Power and Conservation Council's Fish and Wildlife Program; BPA's Watershed Management Program Final EIS (DOE/EIS-0265); NOAA Fisheries Anadromous Salmonid Passage Facility Guidelines and Criteria; State's Fishery Management Plan, NOAA Fisheries Salmon Recovery Plan.
- If there are any changes in construction activities that require relocation or change of work parameters, or for actions that have not been previously evaluated as work sites, construction shall not proceed until the KEC Environmental Lead for this project can evaluate those changes.

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