

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: September 21, 2005

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-234)

TO: Jay Marcotte
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager – KEWU-4

Proposed Action: Ahtanum Creek Watershed Restoration Project

Project No: 1999-013-00

**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; 1.5 Install Grade Control Structures and Check Dams; 1.6 Install Large Woody Debris Structures; 1.7 Install Boulders and Other Habitat Complexity Structures; 1.8 Bank Protection Through Vegetation Management; 1.12 Hardened Fords; 1.17 Rearing Habitat Enhancements; 2.1 Maintain Healthy Riparian Plant Communities; 2.3 Create wetlands to Provide Near Channel Cover and to Store Water for Later Use; 2.14 Enhance Large Woody Debris Recruitment; 3.29 Herbicide Application; 4.1 Irrigation Management; 4.2 Water Measuring Devices 6.10 Access: Fencing.

Location: Ahtanum Creek Watershed, Yakama Reservation, Yakima Subbasin, Washington

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the Yakama Nation

Description of the Proposed Action: Yakama Nation Tribal biologists will collect data on existing conditions within the Ahtanum Watershed in order to identify factors limiting production of salmonids. Ahtanum Creek Watershed Restoration Project (Project) activities will occur mostly within the Yakama Nation boundaries. The collected data will be used in planning efforts to prioritize effective habitat restoration activities, changes in current land management practices, and vegetation management activities.

Habitat restoration measures that will be implemented include restoration of channelized river and stream reaches, measures to prohibit further channelization, installation of grade control structures, structural bank protection, installation of habitat complexity structures, and installation of alternative water source for cattle to protect a riparian area. Sensitive riparian areas will be identified in order to manage them to promote and enhance wildlife habitat. Changes will be made to existing land management practices to minimize adverse effects to wildlife and fish habitat, including fencing riparian areas in order to restrict cattle access.

Measures will be implemented to promote healthy native plant communities in riparian areas and floodplains. Revegetation practices include seeding and planting in riparian and floodplain areas to

protect and stabilize banks and minimize erosion and sedimentation. Vegetation management will include control of invasive plant species that are considered noxious weeds.

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by Brandon Rogers, Yakama Nation Fisheries Biologist II (reviewed on February 7, 2005, attached). The Project meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

Pursuant to its obligations under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), BPA initiated Section 7 consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). A Biological Assessment was submitted to USFWS in August 2004 and a concurrence received by letter on September 23, 2004. BPA made a project determination of no effect to bald eagle or Ute's Ladies Tresses and a may affect, but not likely adversely affect bull trout. The location and timing of the projects were important in this determination, as well as the incorporation of conservation measures that would minimize the project effect on bull trout.

One listed anadromous fish species occurs in the project area. Middle Columbia Steelhead, a threatened species under the jurisdiction of NOAA fisheries, occurs in most of the Project area waterways. Some project activities may adversely affect this species. An Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation using the BPA Fish and Habitat Improvement Program (HIP) Biological Opinion (BO) has been completed (approval email dated 8/16/04 attached). This programmatic consultation also encompasses consultation with NOAA for Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Identified projects must be conducted in accordance with the applicable terms and conditions identified in the HIP BO. Applicable terms and conditions are attached. Yakama Nation is also working with the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission to obtain a Section 10 permit for collection and sampling activities associated with the Middle Columbia steelhead.

A cultural resource review of the portions of the proposed project sites that will be subject to ground disturbance will be completed prior to implementation of those activities. This review will include a literature search and a field survey by a qualified cultural resource specialist. The project area is located on the Yakama Reservation and the Yakama Nation Cultural Resources Program will determine if the project will have an effect on cultural or historic resources. A review and cultural resource report was filed for the side channel reconnect project. If cultural deposits are found during any phase of the proposed project or if the nature of the undertaking changes, ground-disturbing work will cease and a Yakama Nation cultural resource specialist will be contacted immediately.

Standard protection measures for activities in or near streams and wetlands will be followed during the implementation of the Project. The necessary permit approvals for this project have either been obtained or are in the process of being obtained (Shoreline exemption from Yakima County, Section 404 Permit from Army Corps of Engineers). No construction will be authorized to begin until the applicant has obtained all required permits and approvals.

Public involvement has taken place as part of the Project. The Project will be implemented on Tribal land by Tribal members and Tribal staff. Tribal members are kept aware of the activities of the Fisheries Resource Management Program through the Natural Resources Quarterly Bulletin, which is made available to the public. Information is also disseminated through announcements on the Tribal radio station, and announcements and articles in the local newspaper. Non-tribal members have access to these sources of information. Students at the local college, Heritage College, are exposed to the project through some of the curriculum.

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/ Donald L. Rose 9-22-05

Donald L. Rose

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4

CONCUR:

/s/ Kathy Pierce

DATE: 9-22-05

Kathy Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer – KEC-4

Attachments:

Completed NEPA Compliance Checklist for Watershed Management Projects

USFWS Section 7 Consultation Concurrence Letter

Habitat Improvement Program (HIP) BO Approval Email dated August 16, 2004

HIP BO Form 1

Terms and Conditions for BO Approval

cc: (w/ attachments)

Mr. Brandon Rogers, Fisheries Biologist II, Yakama Nation