

Supplement Analysis
for the
Columbia River Basin Tributary Habitat Restoration Programmatic Environmental Assessment
(DOE/EA-2126/SA-90)

Sweetwater Creek Stream Enhancement and Webb Road Bridge Replacement

BPA project number 1999-017-00
BPA contract number 84044 REL 67

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Introduction

In December 2020, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the Bureau of Reclamation completed the Columbia River Basin Tributary Habitat Restoration Programmatic Environmental Assessment (DOE/EA-2126) (Programmatic EA). The Programmatic EA analyzed the potential environmental impacts of implementing habitat restoration actions in the Columbia River Basin and its tributaries.

Consistent with the Programmatic EA, this Supplement Analysis (SA) analyzes the effects of the Sweetwater Creek Stream Enhancement and Webb Road Bridge Replacement Project (project) in Nez Perce County, Idaho. The project objective is to realign a section of lower Sweetwater Creek, increase channel complexity, and replace an undersized bridge on Webb Road. These actions aim to increase instream habitat and improve fish passage to support spawning and rearing of Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed Snake River steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*).

This SA analyzes the site-specific impacts of these activities to determine if the action is within the scope of the analysis considered in the Programmatic EA. This SA also evaluates whether the proposed project presents substantial new circumstances or information about the significance of the adverse effects that bear on the analysis and that were not addressed by the EA. The findings of this SA determine whether additional National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis is needed pursuant to Department of Energy (DOE) NEPA Implementing Procedures.

Proposed Activities

BPA proposes funding the Nez Perce Tribe (NPT) to implement the project on Sweetwater Creek, about 4 miles southwest of Lapwai, Idaho. The project area is within the Nez Perce Indian Reservation on a tribal trust allotment (TA-369B) used for agriculture. Project actions would span approximately 26 acres—directly impacting about 10 acres—and encompass 1,000 feet of Sweetwater Creek along with the replacement of the Webb Road bridge (Figure 1). Webb Road runs through TA-369B and there are two private driveways on the north side of the road on each side of the creek, limiting floodplain connection. South of Webb Road, the creek borders an agricultural field where historical channel straightening has resulted in a simplified channel with minimal fish habitat. Because the existing channel and bridge are misaligned, there is excess sediment deposition upstream and degradation of spawning and rearing habitat downstream. This misalignment also causes frequent overtopping, stranding juvenile fish in adjacent agricultural fields as high flows recede.

Restoration actions would include creating a new main channel upstream of the bridge to better align the flow under the bridge, replacing the bridge with an appropriately sized bridge, converting the existing main channel to a side channel, and improving floodplain connectivity and habitat with wood structures and native plants.

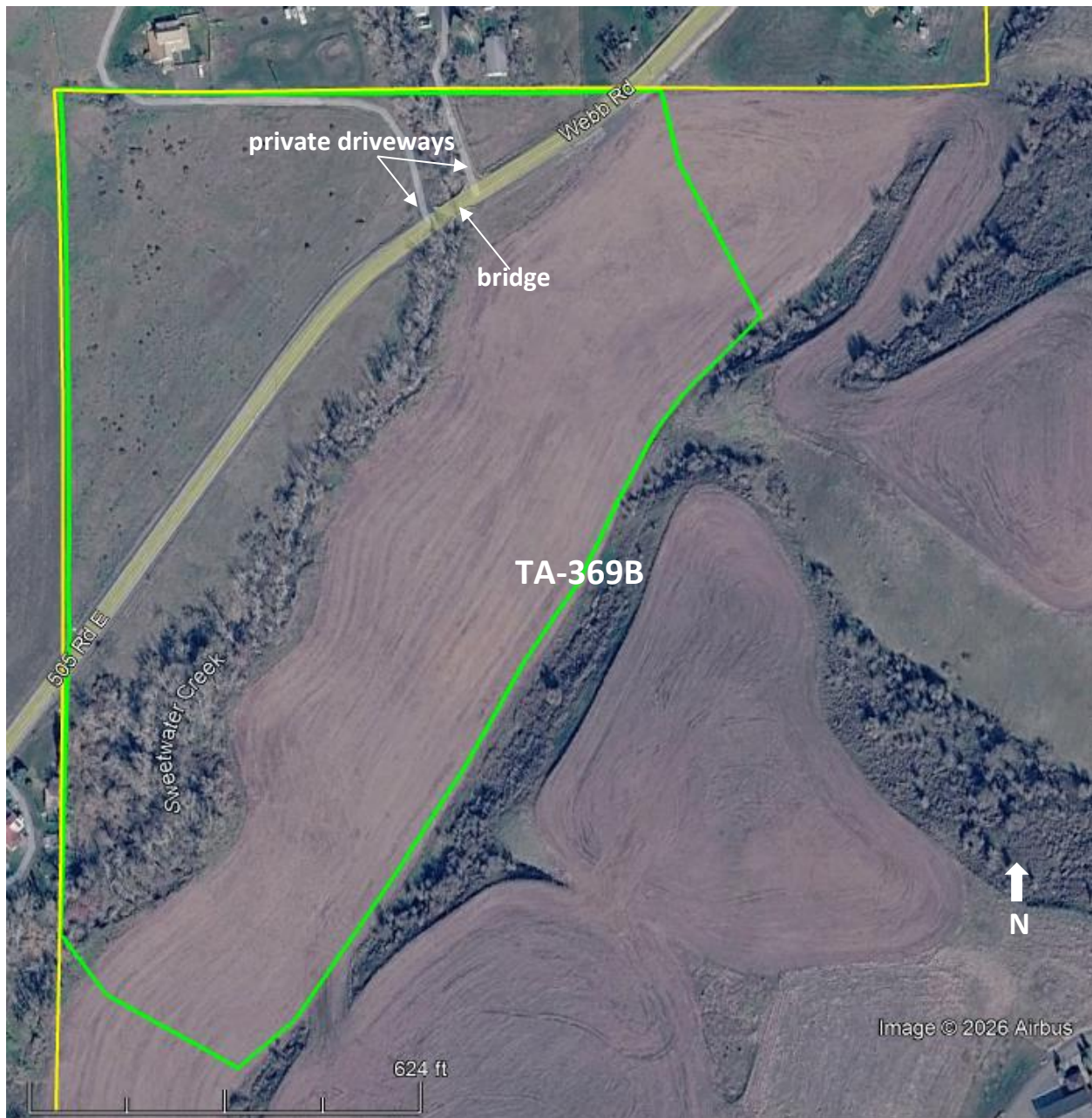


Figure 1. Project area boundaries (shown in green) for the proposed action. Partial boundary of TA-369B shown in yellow.

About 8,000 cubic yards of material would be excavated (up to 10-feet-deep) upstream of the bridge to create a more sinuous main channel segment that aligns with the bridge, redirects flows, and reconnects the floodplain. Excavated materials would be used to fill areas in the floodplain and existing channel, create or stabilize banks, and anchor wood structures. The main channel would be about 76 feet longer than the existing channel, most of which would be retained as a side channel. To facilitate this, a new side channel segment would be excavated about 200 feet upstream of the bridge to direct flows from the existing channel into the new main channel. The remainder of existing channel leading to the bridge (about 200 feet) would be filled. Grading would occur around the main channel to reconnect the floodplain and direct flows into the side channel during high-flow events. Crews would construct alternating riffles (5) and pools (5) in the main channel, importing about 1,200 cubic yards of streambed material to construct the riffles.

The project would install roughly 22 engineered wood structures across the floodplain and in channels upstream of the bridge, with some partially buried up to 4-feet-deep into banks. Boulders would be used as ballast for the ends of larger logs before the bank is backfilled. Each wood structure would consist of two to eight large logs (20-feet to 40-feet-long, 18-inch-diameter), with smaller wood, branches, and debris woven into the interstitial spaces. Select structures would be anchored using 10-foot-long posts (8-inch-diameter) driven approximately 5 feet into the ground or streambed.

To restore disturbed riparian areas, crews would excavate 2-foot-deep trenches (ranging from 20 to 70 feet long) along channel margins and inside the floodplain. These trenches would be planted with live willow stakes (1-foot spacing), live cottonwood stakes (4-foot spacing), or one-gallon alder containers (15-foot spacing) before being backfilled with excavated material.

Existing gravel driveways within the project area would be decommissioned and relocated farther from Sweetwater Creek. On the west side of the creek, 625 feet of the existing driveway would be decommissioned and replaced by a new 550-foot segment shifted 400 feet westward. On the east side, 150 feet would be decommissioned and replaced by a 230-foot segment shifted 200 feet eastward. Both new segments would tie into existing access points at the property line, graded and surfaced to match original conditions. Approaches to Webb Road would meet county specifications and may include drainage culverts.

To replace the bridge, the crossing and 315 feet of paved roadway on each side would be removed and hauled offsite. Main channel excavation (700 cubic yards of material) would extend downstream for 200 feet from the bridge before merging with the existing channel. This shift moves the channel alignment approximately 50 feet west under the bridge. About 270 cubic yards of imported streambed material would be added and graded to match upstream and downstream slopes. Two log structures would be buried into the river-left bank downstream of the bridge, backed by a planted willow trench. The existing channel in this section would be backfilled.

The new crossing would be a deep pile and cap bridge with a 57-foot span. Eight steel H-piles would be driven 45 feet deep on each side of the creek (spaced 5 feet apart across the road width). To support the bridge, a concrete pile cap (4-feet-wide by 4-feet-deep by 34-feet-long) and an upper abutment wall (18-inches-thick by 32-feet-long) would be secured to the piles. Concrete wingwalls (12-inches-thick by 15-feet-long) running parallel to the road at each corner of the bridge would retain road fill. Fill would be added around the concrete supports and graded to match the existing road prism. Angular rock would armor the bank between the piles and the creek, wrapping around the toe of the road prism slope.

The bridge deck and guardrails would be constructed on top of the support structures. Because the finished grade would rise approximately 2.5 feet, 315 feet of road approach on each side would be regraded and repaved with asphalt to match the new elevation. Road signs, guardrails, and fencing would be cleared prior to construction. Fencing would be reinstalled in its original location, while signs and guardrails would be placed based on the new bridge location and according to the Federal Highway Administration Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

Two temporary staging and stockpile areas would be established in the agricultural field south of the road (1.5 acres) and the unused field north of the road (1.3 acres), along with gravel construction entrances (15-feet-wide by 100-feet-long). The north entrance would remain after construction as the entrance to the new driveway. Two additional temporary staging areas would be established closer to the creek to store natural materials and provide access to work areas—1.5 acres in the southern field (overlapping the new main channel alignment) and 0.7 acres in the northern field.

Construction would utilize heavy equipment including excavators, dump trucks, water trucks, haul trucks, road paving equipment, and hand-operated power tools. After construction, any excess excavated material would be placed outside the floodplain, graded to match existing ground, and seeded with native grass. Disturbed areas, including access routes and staging areas, would be decompacted to a depth of 6 inches, seeded with native mixes, and mulched.

The site would be monitored for several years after construction is complete. NPT would implement adaptive management procedures—including structure modifications, adding new structures, additional channel grading, and replanting—if native plants are slow to establish or there are structural failures, fish passage barriers, or infrastructure risks. Annual weed monitoring would trigger manual removal (e.g., hand pulling, mowing, weed eating) or targeted herbicide applications by the NPT as needed.

Funding this project would fulfill commitments under the 2020 National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Columbia River System Biological Opinion. These actions also support ongoing efforts to mitigate for effects of the Federal Columbia River Power System on fish and wildlife in the mainstem Columbia River and its tributaries pursuant to the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act of 1980 (Northwest Power Act) (16 U.S.C. (USC) 839 et seq.).

Environmental Effects

Chapter 3 of the Programmatic EA, as summarized in relevant parts below, discusses typical environmental disturbances and impacts associated with habitat restoration in the Columbia River Basin. Implementing this project would require heavy equipment and crews to excavate channels, place fill, construct riffles, plant native vegetation, install a bridge, regrade and repave roads, and relocate driveways. Post-construction maintenance may also include manual and chemical weed control. These activities would temporarily disturb soil, damage vegetation, generate noise and emissions, close Webb Road, and increase local traffic. Below is a description of the potential site-specific impacts of the proposed project and an assessment of whether these impacts are consistent with those described in the Programmatic EA.

1. Fish and Aquatic Species

The effects of using mechanized equipment, manually working in and around Sweetwater Creek, and future weed treatments are consistent with the analysis in the Programmatic EA, Section 3.3.1.2 (*“Environmental Consequences for Fish and Aquatic Species”*), which describes overall low impacts to fish and aquatic species after considering moderate short-term adverse effects and beneficial long-term improvements.

ESA-listed steelhead and their designated critical habitat are present within the project area. No other aquatic state species of concern or ESA-listed species are known to be present within the project area. BPA completed ESA Section 7 consultations on the effects of the project’s actions on these species in its Habitat Improvement Program ESA Section 7 consultation with NMFS, which found that such actions would likely adversely affect these species and their designated critical habitat in the short term but would not likely result in jeopardy to the species or result in destruction or adverse modification of their designated critical habitat.

Short-term construction activities would expose, displace, reconfigure, or compact earth using mechanized equipment within and along Sweetwater Creek. These actions would create conditions where sediment could be released into the creek for short periods of time. The amount of sediment anticipated from the project would be moderate.

Initial excavation, channel creation, and wood structure installation upstream of the bridge would be conducted in the dry prior to in-water work starting in July. Erosion control best management practices (BMPs) would be implemented before excavation work. Temporary soil berms, installed outside the ordinary high-water mark, would isolate the work area from the active channel. Once upstream work is complete, the berms would be removed to introduce water to the area. Temporary sediment discharges would be expected from the introduction of first-time flows into these areas but would be minimized by following the staged rewatering guidelines, as detailed in Appendix B of the Programmatic EA (*“General Mitigation Measures Applicable to All Actions”*).

The driveway relocation, downstream main channel excavation and fill of the existing channel, bridge replacement, stream reconstruction under the bridge, and installation of two wood structures downstream of the bridge would also produce temporary sediment discharges into the creek. To

minimize impacts, work would be restricted to the in-water work window (July 1 to September 30), temporary erosion controls would be installed before work starts, crews would isolate the channel from the bridge to the end of the work area downstream using cofferdams, and the creek would be diverted through a bypass pipe. Though the amount of sediment discharged would be elevated, turbidity levels would be below levels harmful to fish and at durations not anticipated to cause harm as evaluated in Section 3.3.1.2.1 of the Programmatic EA (*"Short-Term Effects to Fish and Aquatic Species from Construction Activities"*).

Construction activities, noise, and vibrations would temporarily displace aquatic organisms from their preferred habitats for the duration of the project. To minimize impacts within the isolated downstream work area, crews would perform a fish salvage (using electrofishing and netting to safely relocate individuals out of the work area) prior to dewatering. While the salvage process itself causes temporary stress to fish and some localized loss of invertebrates is expected, these measures prevent widespread mortality from stranding.

Roadway repaving and post-construction site restoration would occur after the bridge replacement is complete and actions may have the potential to temporarily discharge sediment into the creek. Erosion control BMPs would be implemented prior to work to limit run-off into the creek.

Future chemical weed treatments could introduce herbicides to aquatic environments and affect aquatic species and their habitats. To minimize risks, NPT would maintain strict riparian buffers, apply only approved herbicides, use licensed applicators, and minimize drift and overspray.

The anticipated amount of activity and aquatic species disturbance is consistent with the analysis in Sections 3.1.3.1, 3.3.1.2.1, and 3.3.1.2.2.3 of the Programmatic EA (*"Dewatering for Instream Work," "Short-Term Effects to Fish and Aquatic Species from Construction Activities,"* and *"Invasive Plant Control and Vegetation Management (Category 3) Effects on Aquatic Species,"* respectively). The Programmatic EA disclosed direct, harmful, and sometimes fatal impacts to individual aquatic species, including displacement of fish from their preferred habitat.

The project's long-term beneficial effects include the creation of more complex habitats through creation of a new main channel, improvements to the side (existing) channel, and installation of wood structures; improved passage from a wider bridge and flows aligned directly under the bridge; an increase in floodplain access; and enhanced native riparian cover. Monitoring and treatment of weed species in the years after construction would also help support the community of native plant species. These beneficial effects are consistent with the analysis in Section 3.3.1.2.2 of the Programmatic EA (*"Effects to Fish and Aquatic Organisms unique to the Categories of Action"*). Overall, the project would have moderate short-term adverse effects on fish and aquatic species and beneficial long-term improvements, consistent with those described in the Programmatic EA.

2. Water Resources

The effects of using mechanized equipment, manually working in and along Sweetwater Creek, and future weed treatments are consistent with the analysis in Section 3.3.2.3 of the Programmatic EA (*"Effects Conclusion for the Proposed Action on Water Resources"*), which describes overall low water quality impacts after considering short-term adverse effects and beneficial long-term effects. There would be no effect on water quantity from water withdrawals. There would be the potential for improved water quantity from increased recharge of groundwater since the connection between surface flows and the floodplain would be increased over both space and time.

Temporary, localized sediment inputs would occur during excavation, grading, introduction of flows to newly excavated areas, riffle construction, installation of wood structures and tree trenches, and replacing the bridge. Restoration actions would disturb lengths of stream and banks consistent with the analysis in Section 3.3.2.2.1 of the Programmatic EA (*"Sedimentation and Turbidity Effects"*), but resulting sediment discharges likely would not be greater than what occurs naturally during annual high-flow events. Short-term impacts would be minimized by installing sediment barriers in all work areas,

removing vegetation and soil from equipment before starting work, sealing fine materials into riffles, and staged rewetting to slowly introduce flows into dewatered areas, as detailed in Section 2.4 of the Programmatic EA (*"Mitigation Measures and Design Criteria"*). Chemical weed treatments could transport herbicides to aquatic environments during or after application. Mitigation measures would be applied to reduce impacts, including using an approved list of products and application methods, using a licensed applicator, minimizing drift, and ensuring riparian buffers are maintained. Consistent with the analysis in Section 3.2.3.2.2 of the Programmatic EA (*"Herbicide Applications and Contamination of Aquatic Habitats"*), effects would be moderate.

The long-term effects of this project would be improved distribution of stream flow and energy, increased floodplain interaction to improve water storage, a reduction of summer stream temperatures from improved stream form and instream habitat structures, and increased native riparian vegetative cover. Overall, the project would have moderate short-term adverse effects and beneficial long-term improvements on water resources, consistent with those described in the Programmatic EA.

3. Vegetation

The effects of using mechanized equipment, manually working in and along Sweetwater Creek, and future weed treatments are consistent with the analysis in Section 3.3.3.3 of the Programmatic EA (*"Effects Conclusion for the Proposed Action on Vegetation"*), which describes overall moderate impacts to vegetation after considering moderate short-term adverse effects and beneficial long-term effects.

There are no state or ESA-listed plant species present in the project area. Although the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Conservation (IPaC) tool lists Spalding's catchfly (*Silene spaldingii*), ESA-listed Threatened, as potentially occurring in the area, there is no designated critical habitat and no confirmed presence onsite. The site is in an area that has been used for agriculture for years and is surrounded by additional agricultural and residential properties. These lands lack habitat conditions required for Spalding's catchfly, and it is unlikely any would be present in the project area. Therefore, the project would have no effect on ESA-listed plant species.

Project implementation, including excavation and fill activities, installation of wood structures and tree trenches, creation of new driveway segments, replacement of the bridge, establishment of staging areas and access routes, and future weed treatments would have moderate short-term impacts on vegetation. Direct impacts would be over about 10 acres. Plants within the project area would be removed, graded over, and trampled during implementation. If weeds are found in the area in the future, they would be removed manually or with herbicides to allow native plants to thrive. Impacts would be minimized through implementation of mitigation measures, such as using existing access routes, seeding and planting native species in any disturbed areas, preventing the spread of noxious weeds by washing construction equipment, minimizing drift or overspray of herbicides, maintaining buffer zones for weed treatments around riparian areas, and disposing of weeds in a manner that would prevent their spread. Over the long term, increased floodplain inundation and the removal of invasive weeds would foster more diverse and resilient native plant communities. Thus, the overall effects of the project on vegetation would be beneficial and moderate and would be consistent with the effects described in the Programmatic EA.

4. Wetlands and Floodplains

The effects of using mechanized equipment, manually working in and along Sweetwater Creek, and future weed treatments are consistent with the analysis in Section 3.3.4.3 of the Programmatic EA (*"Effects Conclusion for the Proposed Action on Wetlands and Floodplains"*), which concluded that overall impacts to wetlands and floodplains would be low after considering short-term, adverse effects and beneficial long-term effects.

According to the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory, no wetlands currently exist in the project area. The project is designed to reconnect the creek with its floodplain, creating the hydrology necessary to establish future wetlands. There would be adverse impacts in the short term from excavation in the

floodplain, crushing or removing vegetation, temporarily changing hydrology as soils are manipulated and creek flows are isolated, filling in sections of the existing channel, and future weed treatments. Impacts would be minimized through implementation of mitigation measures, such as using existing access routes, seeding and planting native species in any disturbed areas, using an approved list of products and application methods, minimizing drift or overspray of herbicides, using a licensed applicator, maintaining buffer zones around riparian areas, and disposing of weeds in a manner that would prevent their spread. The project would obtain a required permit issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and a Section 401 water quality certification from Idaho Department of Environmental Quality. The project would adhere to all requirements and prescriptions set forth in the permit and certification.

Consistent with the Programmatic EA, there would be long-term benefits to the floodplain and any newly created wetlands from increased channel-floodplain connectivity, improved capture and deposition of sediment, and healthier native plant communities. Overall, the project's effects on wetlands and floodplains would be low, consistent with those described in the Programmatic EA.

5. Wildlife

The effects of using construction equipment, manually working in and along Sweetwater Creek, and future weed treatments are consistent with the analysis in Section 3.3.5.3 of the Programmatic EA (*"Effects Conclusion for the Proposed Action on Wildlife"*). The Programmatic EA describes low impacts overall to wildlife after considering certain short-term adverse effects to individual wildlife species, such as potential construction-related mortality, and beneficial long-term effects from improved habitat.

No ESA-listed or state-listed wildlife species are known to be present within the proposed project area. IPaC lists the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), ESA-proposed Threatened, and Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee (*Bombus suckleyi*), ESA-proposed Endangered, as having the potential to be present in the project area, but there is no designated critical habitat for either species within the project area. Due to current agricultural land use practices and nearby residences, desired habitat conditions and sufficient food sources for ESA-proposed species are not abundant in the project area and it is unlikely these species would be present in the project area. Therefore, the project would have no effect on ESA-proposed wildlife species.

Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) can be found in Nez Perce County year-round, but no active nests exist in the project area and there are few mature trees to provide nesting locations. If a nest is observed during work, NPT would employ protection measures (e.g., timing and distance restrictions) as necessary to ensure eagles would not be harmed as a result of the project. Over the long term, eagles would benefit from improved food availability and newly established riparian trees. Therefore, the project would have no adverse impacts to bald and golden eagles.

The short-term effects from this project would be less than those analyzed in the Programmatic EA because the planned restoration actions would have far less impact to wildlife habitat (about 10 acres). Construction activities and future manual weed treatments would destroy the habitats of small animals but would only temporarily displace medium-sized or larger animals from their preferred habitats during implementation. These animals would likely re-occupy the site once human activity moved or ceased.

Effects to wildlife from chemical weed treatments in the project area would be moderate, consistent with the analysis in Section 3.2.3.2.1 of the Programmatic EA (*"Herbicide Applications and Terrestrial Species"*). Weed treatments could result in direct contact of herbicides with small animals still in the project area when work is performed. Medium and large-sized animals would likely leave the area before any treatments. Indirect contact with herbicides (e.g., dermal contact with sprayed vegetation, ingestion of contaminated vegetation) is possible but it is unlikely exposures would be lethal. Effects would be minimized by following mitigation measures, such as using an approved list of products and application methods, application by a licensed applicator, and minimizing drift and overspray.

Abundant similar wildlife habitat is present adjacent to the project area, effects from weed treatments and construction activities would be limited in duration, and there would be long-term beneficial improvement of wildlife habitat and no long-term negative changes to wildlife habitat. Overall, the project's effects on wildlife would be low, consistent with effects described in the Programmatic EA.

6. Geology and Soils

The effects of future weed treatments, using mechanized equipment, and manually working in and along Sweetwater Creek are consistent with the analysis Section 3.3.6.3 of the Programmatic EA (*"Effects Conclusion for the Proposed Action on Geology and Soils"*). The Programmatic EA describes moderate overall effects after accounting for mitigation measures and long-term benefits.

The short-term effects from this project would be less than those analyzed in the Programmatic EA because the planned restoration actions would have far less impact to soils. While heavy machinery and herbicides would temporarily affect soil structure and biology, treated areas would be relatively small and the project would be implemented with mitigation measures designed to reduce adverse effects, such as minimizing the area of impact, applying erosion control measures before work starts, site decompaction and seeding after construction, using an approved list of herbicides and application methods, and using a licensed applicator.

Long-term improvement to soils is expected once disturbed surfaces are seeded and riparian plantings are established to help stabilize the soil surface. Long-term improvement to sediment transport and floodplain access within the project reach would restore natural sediment-forming processes. Overall, the project's effects on geology and soils would be moderate, consistent with the analysis in the Programmatic EA.

7. Transportation

The effects of this project in and along Sweetwater Creek are consistent with the analysis in Section 3.3.7.3 of the Programmatic EA (*"Effects Conclusion for the Proposed Action on Transportation"*), which describes low impacts to transportation.

Webb Road would be closed to traffic at its juncture with Highway 95 (about 2 miles east of the bridge) and at its juncture with Webb Canal Grade (about 0.35 miles west of the bridge) for up to five months (from June through November) during bridge construction and paving. Local traffic would continue to have access to properties along the closed sections of Webb Road. The two properties on either side of the bridge would have their driveways moved away from the immediate work area before bridge construction starts. Temporary detour signs would be installed along roadways in accordance with an approved traffic control plan that complies with the state-adopted Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

During the initial upstream work, Webb Road would not be closed and effects on transportation would mainly be from project vehicles accessing the site using Webb Road. Temporary access routes would be on existing fields and would not impact local traffic on Webb Road. In the long term, the project would move two driveways away from the creek banks and floodplain. Replacement of the bridge would improve the effectiveness of the stream crossing and thereby reduce maintenance requirements (and cost) and lower the risk of flood damage or road loss over time. This level of impact to transportation would be low, consistent with the analysis in the Programmatic EA.

8. Land Use and Recreation

Impacts to land use and recreation are consistent with the analysis in Section 3.3.8.3 of the Programmatic EA (*"Effects Conclusion for the Proposed Action on Land Use and Recreation"*), which concludes that land use practices at underlying project sites would remain unchanged in most cases. Some sites may have slight modifications to use practices such as grazing, and small areas along streams may revert from agricultural uses to the wetland and riparian conditions from which they had historically been converted. Recreation impacts would most likely occur on public lands and include

temporary adverse impacts from construction activities that would be observed, heard, and would cause traffic delays or changes in site access.

Webb Road would be temporarily closed but would reopen for use by the public once bridge and road construction is complete. The existing bridge and roadway are managed and maintained by Nez Perce County, as the new bridge and roadway would be after construction. The remainder of the project is on TA-369B, a portion of which is used for agriculture. TA-369B is under the jurisdiction of NPT and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). About 3.5 acres of the agricultural field south of Webb Road would permanently revert to an area of natural stream channel and floodplain. An additional 1.5 acres of this field would be temporarily utilized for staging and access, shifting back to agricultural production after construction. The staging and access areas would be decompacted and seeded with native grasses after construction to protect soil until agricultural operations resume. Two driveways on the north side of the road cross through unused fields in TA-369B to connect private properties to Webb Road and are recorded under easements. The driveways would be permanently relocated in the same fields, farther from the creek, and a similar amount of land would be decompacted and seeded with native grasses when the driveways next to the creek are removed. BIA would modify the agricultural lease agreement and the driveway easement agreements before construction to reflect the permanent and temporary changes in TA-369B. There are no public recreational opportunities in the project area, and it is not accessible to the public. This would not change during or after project implementation. Thus, there would be no impact to recreation.

Overall, the project would have low effects on land use and recreation, consistent with the analysis in the Programmatic EA.

9. Visual Resources

The effects of the proposed project in and along Sweetwater Creek is consistent with the analysis in Section 3.3.9.3 (*"Effects Conclusion for the Proposed Action on Visual Resources"*), which describes low impacts to visual resources.

The project would have short-term, minor visual impacts from construction activities, vehicles accessing the site, and in the future, presence of crews to remove weeds. Part of the project is on a public road and initial work upstream of the bridge would be easily seen by road users. Once the bridge construction starts, work would likely only be seen by residents with properties adjacent to the project area since the road would be closed to non-residential traffic. There are four residences within 500 feet of the project and residents would likely see construction activity. Over the long term, the new bridge, realigned channel, and established native vegetation would blend into the surrounding rural landscape, presenting a natural appearance. The project's effects on visual resources would be low, consistent with the analysis in the Programmatic EA.

10. Air Quality, Noise, and Public Health and Safety

The effects of the proposed project in and along Sweetwater Creek is consistent with the analysis in Section 3.3.10.3 of the Programmatic EA (*"Effects Conclusion for the Proposed Action on Air Quality, Noise, and Public Health and Safety"*). This section describes low impacts to air quality, noise, and public health and safety.

Air quality impacts from vehicle and equipment exhaust, dust, and possible future herbicide applications would be temporary and localized in nature, with no long- or short-term violations of state air quality standards. There are four residences within 500 feet of the project and it is not expected that construction exhaust, dust, or drift from herbicide application would reach any of these properties. Construction activities, as well as future weed treatments, would temporarily elevate ambient noise levels and would likely be heard by nearby residents. However, activities would take place during daylight hours only, would not be likely to exceed typical noise from regular agricultural operations near the residences, and would not result in long-term changes to noise levels.

Routine safeguards would minimize risks to worker and public safety for the duration of construction and site restoration. Operating construction vehicles and equipment inherently carries potential safety risks to operators; however, staff training and implementing BMPs, such as daily on-site safety precautions, would minimize that risk during construction activities. Bridge and road construction would follow state adopted guidelines for these activities, including an approved traffic control plan and signed detour routes. Future weed treatments would follow mitigation measures to reduce risks to workers and the public, including having a licensed applicator that would develop an herbicide transportation and safety plan before transporting or applying any herbicides, making the risk from herbicides insignificant. This level of impact would be low, consistent with the analysis in the Programmatic EA.

11. Cultural Resources

The effects of this restoration action in and along Sweetwater Creek are consistent with the analysis in Section 3.3.11.3 of the Programmatic EA (*"Effects Conclusion for the Proposed Action on Cultural Resources"*). The Programmatic EA describes low impacts to cultural resources because cultural resources would be avoided by project construction and effects would be appropriately resolved through the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 consultation process.

BPA sent a letter to the NPT and the NPT Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) initiating consultation and making a determination of no historic properties affected on May 23, 2025 (BPA Cultural Resources No.: ID 2025 034). No responses were received by the end of the 30-day response period.

The project's effects on cultural resources would be low since adverse effects from the project to cultural or historic resources would be appropriately resolved through the Section 106 consultation process, consistent with the analysis in the Programmatic EA. In the unlikely event that cultural material is inadvertently encountered during the implementation of this project, BPA would require that work be halted in the vicinity of the finds until they can be inspected and assessed by BPA in consultation with the appropriate consulting parties.

12. Socioeconomics

The effects of this restoration project in and along Sweetwater Creek are consistent with the analysis in Section 3.3.13.3 of the Programmatic EA (*"Effects Conclusion for the Proposed Action on Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice"*), which describes low impacts to socioeconomics.

As described in the Programmatic EA, the project would not require permanent employees, displace residents, or alter local housing availability in or near the project area. The project would generate short-term employment for those directly implementing the activities and would provide small short-term cash inputs to local businesses for fuel, equipment, and meals. The project's effects on socioeconomics would be low, consistent with effects described in the Programmatic EA.

13. Climate Change

The effects of this project in and along Sweetwater Creek are consistent with the analysis in Section 3.3.14.3 of the Programmatic EA (*"Effects Conclusion for the Proposed Action on Climate Change"*), which describes low impacts to climate change.

Due to the short duration of construction activities and the relatively small number of vehicles and equipment involved, project-related greenhouse gas emissions are anticipated to be low. This minimal contribution of temporary greenhouse gas emissions would be offset over the long term by enhanced floodplain functionality, including improved groundwater recharge, long-term carbon sequestration in newly established wetlands, and reduced water temperatures from a restored riparian canopy and instream structures. The project's effects on climate change would be low, consistent with those described in the Programmatic EA.

Findings

BPA finds that the types of actions and the potential impacts related to the proposed Sweetwater Creek Stream Enhancement and Webb Road Bridge Replacement Project are similar to those analyzed in the *Columbia River Basin Tributary Habitat Restoration Programmatic Environmental Assessment* (DOE/EA-2126) and Finding of No Significant Impact. There are no substantial changes in the EA's Proposed Action and no substantial new circumstances or information about the significance of the adverse effects that bear on the analysis in the EA's Proposed Action or its impacts within the meaning of NEPA and the DOE NEPA Implementing Procedures. Therefore, no further NEPA analysis or documentation is required.

Jacquelyn Schei
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Concur:

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer