

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: May 22, 2006

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-261)

TO: Sarah Branum - KEWL-4
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Project Title: Hood River Habitat - West Fork Large Woody Debris 2006

Project No: 1998-021-00

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis

(See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): 1.6 Install large woody debris structures; 1.7 Install other habitat complexity structures; 1.8 Bank protection through vegetation management; 1.9 Structural bank protection using bioengineering methods; 2.1 Maintain healthy riparian plant communities; 2.6 Native seeds inventories; 2.7 Avoid exotic species.

Location: Vacinity of Dee, Hood River County, Oregon

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon (CTWSRO)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund a portion of a project, in cooperation with CTWSRO, to place large woody debris in a tributary to the Hood River, in order to provide improved habitat for listed fish. The project location includes approximately 1200 feet of the West Fork Hood River close to the confluence of Elk and McGee Creeks and continues downstream to the Jones Creek confluence. A portion of the proposed project takes place where a major BPA transmission line crosses the West Fork Hood River. The riparian soils and vegetation in this area have been altered to provide an environment conducive to the powerlines. This area is consistently maintained by BPA, and the riparian area is mostly lacking vegetation, with the exception of some willow trees and shrubs, and adjacent to the project area other riparian vegetation includes alder, vine maple, cedar, and fir trees. The plants in the BPA right-of-way are routinely managed by chemical means. Access to the proposed project will be by existing public roads.

This large wood placement project is aimed at creating spawning, rearing, and refuge habitat for all stages of Middle Columbia River steelhead and chinook. Generally the goals of the project are to increase channel roughness, create habitat complexity, and help restore the connectivity of the river and its floodplain. Following project implementation, there will be some rehabilitation to the project site. This will include reseeding the area with native trees and vegetation. Also, by implementing the project during the instream work period, water quality effects will be minimized due to low streamflows.

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by Joe McCanna, CTWSRO, and meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD). BPA is required to consider the effects of the proposed action on species listed under the Endangered Species Act. A field survey in June, 2005, indicated that further consultation would be required on potential impacts to listed fish in the West Fork Hood River.

BPA determined that there would be no effect on terrestrial species with the potential to occur in the project area, including bald eagle and northern spotted owl. CTWSRO cooperated with the USDA Forest Service on further consultation for fish, employing a programmatic Biological Opinion from 2003. This programmatic opinion provides terms and conditions for implementation of the proposed project, concluding formal consultation.

BPA consulted with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the CTWSRO on potential affects of the proposed action on historic properties, including cultural resources. A BPA archaeologist conducted a survey in June, 2005, and BPA determined that there would be no adverse affect on any cultural resources. The SHPO concurred with the determination on July 22, 2005 (SHPO Case No 05-1847). The CTWSRO Tribal Historic Preservation Officer did not comment on the survey.

Because the proposed project includes placement of material in the stream, CTWSRO was required to obtain applicable permits from Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. DSL provided a letter permit on March 30, 2006 (DSL Application Number 35898-GA). The Army Corps provided a letter permit on May 4, 2006 (Corps No. 200500705).

The proposed project was advertised in the local newspaper, and was a topic of discussion at an open public meeting of the Hood River Watershed Group. The members of the groups include federal, state and local government representatives, user groups (timber, irrigation, agriculture, etc.), and any interested members of the public. Aside from the normal question-and-answer discussion during the watershed group meeting, no formal public comments were submitted.

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/ Richard Yarde
Richard Yarde
Environmental Specialist

CONCUR:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce
Kathrine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: May 23, 2006

Attachment:
Compliance Checklist

cc: (w/o attachment)
Mr. Joe McCanna, CTWSRO, 6030 Dee Highway, Parkdale, OR 97041