

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: November 3, 2005

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-240)

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

Proposed Action: Yakima Tributary Access and Habitat Program – Wilson Creek-Eaton Property Instream Habitat Improvements

Project No: 2002-025-01

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis (See Appendix 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
- 1.15 Fish Passage Enhancement—Fishway
- 1.17 Rearing Habitat Enhancements
- 2.1 Maintain Healthy Riparian Plant Communities
- 2.7 Avoid Exotic Species
- 2.9 Erosion Control and Revegetation at Project Completion
- 2.10 Biological Vegetation Control

Location: Kittitas County, Washington

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and Kittitas County Conservation District

Description of the Proposed Action: The Bonneville Power Administration is proposing to fund a fish habitat improvement project with the Kittitas County Conservation District on the Wilson Creek--Eaton Property. The project is intended to restore the channel within the reach that was formerly backwatered behind a diversion structure, by fencing out livestock, recontouring the banks and providing instream and overhead cover for fish. Additionally, water quality will be improved by removing a portion of the fine sediment that has accumulated behind the former diversion structure and stabilize the remaining material.

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by Anna Lael with the Kittitas County Conservation District and meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

In complying with requirements of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the listed species that may occur in the general vicinity of the project area (Mid-Columbia steelhead trout, gray wolf,

or bald eagle) would not be adversely affected by the proposed project with the possible exception of steelhead trout. Gray wolves have been observed within 10 miles of the project area, however the chance of encountering individual gray wolves in an area of sub-optimal habitat is minimal. The proposed project is not expected to adversely affect gray wolves or their habitat due to the nature of the proposed work and the fact that the project is located in an area of regular human use, which gray wolves generally avoid. Bald eagles routinely use the Yakima River and its tributary streams throughout the year, and are known to roost within the Yakima River corridor in relatively close proximity to the proposed construction site. Roosts are generally located in older, larger trees or snags with large lateral limbs. However, no such trees are present within the immediate vicinity of the project, and no alteration of habitat or prey items will result from the proposed activities. Noise from construction activities at the project site would be the only potential disturbance to foraging eagles, however noise related to ring well installation will be in short intervals and will not rise above the background noise associated with normal agricultural activities on surrounding lands. Therefore, BPA has determined there to be no effect to gray wolf, or bald eagle. The proposed project is located in potential spawning, rearing and/or migration habitat used by steelhead trout, however no steelhead have actually been documented within the project area. The proposed project has the potential to impact steelhead in the short term as a result of habitat modification and/or sedimentation. The proposed project may adversely affect Middle Columbia River Steelhead or their habitat for the duration of the project, but over the long term will enhance local spawning and rearing habitat, and enhance riparian vegetation within the action area. BPA has determined that if conducted in accordance with the applicable terms and conditions identified in the ESA Section 7 Consultation Biological Opinion (BO) and Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Essential Fish Habitat Consultation for BPA's Habitat Improvement Program (HIP BO), the Wilson Creek—Eaton Property Habitat Improvement Project meets the requirements of consistency and no further consultation is required.

In complying with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, a cultural resources inventory was conducted on the Wilson Creek—Eaton Property by the Yakama Nation Department of Natural Resources, concluding that there were no historic properties identified in the project area. The cultural resources inventory report recommends that an archaeological monitor be present during ground disturbing activities. In a letter dated August 3, 2000, the Washington State Historic Preservation Office concurred with the findings and recommendation. In the unlikely event that archaeological material is discovered during project implementation, work will be halted in the vicinity of the finds until an inspection and assessment can be done.

Standard water quality protection procedures and Best Management Practices will be followed during the implementation of the Wilson Creek—Eaton Property project. No construction is authorized to begin until the proponent has obtained all applicable permits and approvals.

Public/stakeholder involvement has occurred as part of the Wilson Creek—Eaton Property project. The Kittitas County Conservation District has proactively and cooperatively worked with landowners, tribal representatives, and local, state, and federal agencies to apprise them of the project scope and status. Individual consultation has been done with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Yakama Nation, John Eaton (landowner), and other nearby landowners.

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/ Dawn R. Boorse

Dawn R. Boorse
Environmental Specialist – KEC-4

CONCUR:

/s/ Kathy Pierce

Kathy Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer – KEC-4

DATE: November 8, 2005

Attachment:

NEPA Compliance Checklist

cc: (w/o attachment)

Ms. Anna Lael – Kittitas County Conservation District

Mr. Stephen Kropp – Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife