

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: August 26, 2003

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-120)

TO: Chris Furey, KEWR-4
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Proposed Action: Water Entity (Consolidated Water Rights Acquisitions 2003)

Project No: 2002-013-00

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis (See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): 4.18: Purchase / Negotiate Water Right; 4.19: File for Instream Water Right

Location: Walla Walla, Yakima, and Methow basins, Washington; Willamette and Deschutes basins, Oregon; Salmon basin, Idaho; Blackfoot and Bitterroot basins, Montana

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, implemented by Oregon Water Trust, Washington Water Trust, Deschutes Resources Conservancy, Idaho Department of Water Resources, Trout Unlimited, and Montana Water Trust

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund 22 water rights acquisition projects in several basins across Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana. The funding will be administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the entity administering the Columbia Basin Water Transactions Program, initiated under RPA 151 of the National Marine Fisheries Service's 2000 Biological Opinion on the Operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System. The water rights acquired will be left instream to increase flow and improve water quality. Increasing instream flow of water-limited streams benefits fish listed under the Endangered Species Act.

The 22 individual projects are detailed on the attached spreadsheet. The details provided include subbasin, amount of water acquired, duration, location, type (permanent or temporary) and cost of the acquisitions. In most cases, the projects are temporary leases of water rights from consumptive users (agriculture) to benefit streams that tend to be dewatered during the irrigation season. For more information, see the attached spreadsheet.

Analysis: The compliance checklists for these projects were completed by various project managers at the organizations listed in the spreadsheet, and meet the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

No other environmental review or consultation is required as part of the proposed projects, because there is no ground disturbance or construction associated with the proposal. Although BPA has a programmatic consultation document with NOAA Fisheries that would meet all consultation requirements under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, it is BPA's determination that funding projects that temporarily or permanently stop the consumptive use of water has no effect on listed species.

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 08/26/03

Richard Yarde
Environmental Specialist

CONCUR:

/s/ Thomas C. McKinney

Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: August 26, 2003

Attachments:

Environmental Checklists
Spreadsheet detailing transactions

cc: (w/o attachments)

Andrew Purkey, NFWF, 806 SW Broadway, Suite 750, Portland, Oregon 97205