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United States Government **Department of Energy**

Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: 2/9/99

REPLY TO ATTN OF: ECN-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS, Project No. 99010-00

TO: John Baugher - EWN-4
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Proposed Action: Mitigate Effects of Runoff and Erosion on Salmonid Habitat on Pine Hollow

Budget No: F5224

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis (See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): 1.8 Bank Protection through Vegetation Management, 2.7 Avoid Exotic Species, 3.2 Conservation Cropping Sequence, 3.7 Critical Area Planting, 3.12 Terracing, 3.17 Sediment Basins, 3.18 Sediment and Water Control Basins, 6.1 Deferred Grazing, 6.2 Planned Grazing System, 6.3 Control Grazing Intensity, 6.5 Water Supply: Pipeline, 6.7 Water Supply: Trough, 6.8 Water Supply: Well, 6.9 Water Supply: Spring Development, 6.10 Access: Fencing, 6.13 Vegetation Stabilization: Range Seeding, 6.14 Vegetation Stabilization: Critical Area Planting, 6.15 Vegetation Stabilization, Brush/Weed Management.

Location: Pine Hollow Watershed, John Day Sub-basin, Sherman County, Oregon..

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), and the Pine Hollow Watershed Council and Sherman Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

Description of the Proposed Action:
Pine Hollow runs into the west side of the John Day River at RM 85. The ability of the Pine Hollow Watershed to function properly has been seriously impaired by historic management and human activity in the watershed and by natural catastrophic events. Poor water distribution, large pasture size, and poor forage condition in the some of the uplands create uneven grazing patterns and areas of degraded range conditions. The riparian and bottom areas have beeen areas of livestock concentration, as well as ground disturbance by Pacific Gas Transmission (PGT) for gas pipeline installation and maintenance. These activities, combined with catastrophic flood events (1964, 1978, 1995, and 1996), have left sections of the bottom of Pine Hollow and some of its tributaries dry and stripped of vegeation.

Pine Hollow contains summer steelhead and inland redband trout. Historically, Pine Hollow provided about twenty miles of spawning habitat. Destruction of riparian vegetation by livestock concentration, PGT maintenance activities and catastrophic flood events is responsible for destructive effects to spawning and rearing habitat, including low summer flows, and high water temperatures. In April 1996, the BLM, SWCD, landowners and ODFW collaborated on a

spawning and population survey. This survey found that the main channel of Pine Hollow consisted of 80% dry channel, with the most degraded and dry channel occurring in the lower reach, from RM 0 to RM 5.5. High peak flows during winter interfere both with rearing and with migration success. Nevertheless, steelhead and redband trout were found in all reaches of the main channel, and in some side canyons. In 1996, one redd (egg cluster) was found in two miles of stream. In 1997, five redds were found in nearly the same survey area.

The PGT pipeline was installed in 1961. In December 1964, a flood caused sections of pipe up to 1000 feet long to be exposed and floated due to scouring. As a result of this and other storms, PGT has annual to biennial maintenance requiring the use of heavy equipment in the lower 6.8 miles of Pine Hollow to maintain its access road and the protective covering of soil and rock on the pipline. With improved riparian vegetation and channel stability, the need for mechanical maintenance should be considerably reduced.

If the current problems in the Pine Hollow Watershed are not addressed the area will continue to experience accelerated surface runoff, leading to erosion, flooding, and siltation of spawning beds which could eliminate fish habitat.

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by the SWCD and meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

Section 7 consultation was conducted with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under the requirements of the Endangered Species Act. Of concern are the potential impacts from proposed project construction activities to the bald eagle, peregrine falcon, and bull trout. As a result, a biological assessment was completed and sent to USFWS. USFWS concurred on December 7, 1998, with BPA's finding that the proposed project as described in the BA, would not likely to adversely affect the bald eagle, peregrine falcon and bull trout.

A Cultural Resources Survey of the project area was conducted in August, 1998. No cultural resources were identified in the project area. The proposed project would have no effect on cultural resources.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with Section 2.1, 7.7, 7.8G, 7.8H, and 7.11C of the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. The attached Supplement Analysis finds 1) that the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265) and ROD, and; 2) that there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

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Dawn R. Boorse
ECN Project Lead
Environment, Fish and Wildlife Group

Concur:

_____
Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: _____

Attachments:
NEPA Compliance Checklist
USFWS Concurrence Letter on BA
Cultural Resources Survey

cc:
L. Croff - ECP-4
B. Beraud - ECN-4
N. Weintraub - ECN-4
J. Marcotte - EWN-4
P. Key - LN-7
Official File - ECN (EQ-15)

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