

United States Government

Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: June 23, 2004

REPLY TO: KEC-4
ATTN OF:

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-149)

TO: Mickey Carter
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager - KEWU-4

Proposed Action: Idaho Model Watershed Habitat Projects – Rocky Mountain Ranch River Fence

Project No: 1994-017-00

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis (See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): 2.1 Maintain Healthy Riparian Plant Communities, 4.12 Filter Strips, 6.1 Deferred Grazing, 6.10 Access Fencing

Location: Custer County, Idaho

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the Custer Soil and Water Conservation District

Description of the Proposed Action: The Bonneville Power Administration is proposing to fund the installation of approximately 1,850 feet of jack post and pole fence along the Salmon River in Custer County, Idaho. The proposed fence will meet or exceed BPA's minimum requirement of a 35-foot setback. A warm spring will also be protected within this riparian enclosure. The goal of this project is to enhance salmon and steelhead rearing and migration habitat through exclusion fencing.

Analysis: The NEPA compliance checklist for this project was completed by Karma Bragg with the Custer Soil and Water Conservation District (June 17, 2004) and meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species that may occur in the general vicinity of the project area are gray wolf, Canada lynx, bald eagle, Ute ladies'Tresses, Snake River chinook salmon, Snake River steelhead trout, and Columbia River Basin bull trout. It was determined that the proposed fence construction project would have no effect on these species. The area proposed for construction is used primarily for farming. Bald eagle, gray wolf and Canada lynx are not known to occur in the immediate vicinity of the project. Ute ladies'Tresses has not been recently documented in the area. Since the site is used primarily for farming the ground has been disturbed annually as part of the farming activities. ESA listed fish may be present in the vicinity of the project but will not be affected because the project does not involve instream work and no ground disturbing activities are planned. In addition, all work will take place a considerable distance from the streambanks.

Requirements associated with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act were handled by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), in cooperation with staff from the U.S. Forest Service (Boise National Forest), under their existing Programmatic Agreement with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). A description of the Rocky Mountain Ranch River Fence project and site information was reviewed by a qualified archaeologist and it was determined that an archaeological survey was needed. Although the proposed project does not involve any ground disturbing activities (and

therefore no effect to cultural and/or historic resources is expected), NRCS has agreed to conduct a ground survey prior to installation. All survey findings will be forwarded to the Idaho SHPO for consideration. In the unlikely event that archaeological material is discovered during project implementation, an archaeologist should be notified immediately and work halted in the vicinity of the finds until they can be inspected and assessed.

Standard water quality protection procedures and Best Management Practices should be followed during the implementation of the Rocky Mountain Ranch River Fence project. No construction is authorized to begin until the proponent has obtained all applicable local, state, and federal permits and approvals.

Public involvement has occurred as part of the Rocky Mountain Ranch River Fence project. This project was coordinated through the Upper Salmon Basin Technical Team composed of representatives from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA Fisheries, Shoshone Bannock Tribe, and Idaho Department of Fish and Game. In addition, the Custer Soil and Water Conservation District holds monthly meetings that are open to the public in which this project was discussed.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with Section 7.6A.2, 7.6B.3, & 7.8E.1, of the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. This 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.

/s/ Shannon Stewart 6-23-04

Shannon C. Stewart

Environmental Specialist – KEC-4

CONCUR:

/s/ Thomas McKinney

Thomas C. McKinney

NEPA Compliance Officer – KEC-4

DATE: 6-23-04

Attachments:

NEPA Compliance Checklist

Cultural Resource Project Review Status, April 23, 2004

cc: (w/o attachments)

Ms. Karma Bragg – Custer Soil and Water Conservation District