

United States Government

Department of Energy  
Bonneville Power Administration

# memorandum

DATE: January 22, 2002

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-74)

TO: John Baugher  
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

**Proposed Action:** Oregon Fish Screening Project, Screen Replacements

**Project No:** 1993-066-00

**Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement**

**Analysis (See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS):** 1.8 Bank Protection; 1.9 Structural Bank Protection using Bio Engineering Techniques; 1.10 Structural Bank Protection using Engineering Structures; 1.14 Reduce Scour and Deposition at Hydraulic Structures; 1.15 Fish Passage Enhancement-Fishways; 1.16 Spawning Habitat Enhancements; 1.17 Rearing Habitat Enhancements; 2.1 Maintain Healthy Riparian Plant Communities; 2.4 Provide Filter Strips to Catch Sediment and Other Pollutants; 2.6 Native Seed Inventories; 2.7 Avoid Exotic Species; 3.7 Critical Area Planting; 3.13 Diversion Ditch; 4.23 Intake and Return Diversion Screens; 4.25 Consolidate/Replace Irrigation Diversion Dams; 6.14 Vegetation Stabilization-Critical Area Planting

**Location:** Grant, Umatilla, and Walla Walla Counties, Oregon

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA is proposing to fund a project that will provide immediate and long-term protection for anadromous and resident fish species in the John Day River Basin through the replacement of out-of-criteria screening devices on private irrigation diversions and dam structures. Approximately 20 screening devices will be replaced under this proposal. These screening projects will take place in the upper mainstem of the John Day River and its tributaries, and in the upper reaches of the Middle Fork of the John Day River and its tributaries. These areas scored highest in the Priority Screening Criteria point system adopted by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.

**Analysis:** The compliance checklist for this project was completed by Steve Allen with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

The majority of the proposed screen replacement projects are located in areas that contain Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed Mid-Columbia steelhead, and some sites also include listed bull trout. Most of the projects are located off channel on private agricultural lands. As reported by R. Z. Smith of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in December 2001, off channel screen replacement projects are exempt from ESA Section 7 consultation when the subject irrigation ditch is shut-off or bypassed leaving a dry work site or one that fish cannot access. As possible, these conditions will be followed for the 20 proposed screen replacement projects. In cases where conditions cannot be met, NMFS will be consulted with prior to construction to ensure that the project is in compliance with ESA guidelines for steelhead. Staff from the ODFW John Day Screening and Passage Program will work in cooperation with department biologists to identify possible impacts to other sensitive species prior to project work. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and any other agencies that have jurisdiction in the project area will be contacted to ensure that the project is in compliance with species protection guidelines. In addition, the projects will concur with the ODFW Habitat Policies and Standards and the Natural Resource Conservation Service Field Office Technical Guide for Best Management Practices for erosion control which will help to protect listed fish and their habitat.

The screens that will be replaced in the John Day Basin were originally constructed in the mid 1950's and 1960's. Typically during construction, there can be anywhere between 30 to 150 yards of soil moved to place a screen project. The majority of the planned projects are located off channel, on private agricultural land and most of these soils are in an already disturbed state. Given present site conditions, it is unlikely that cultural resources would be impacted by these screen replacement activities. Site surveys will be performed prior to construction, and if any cultural resource related items are discovered, construction will not proceed until the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the appropriate Tribes are consulted. For projects that will take place on public lands, federal agency cultural resource staff will be consulted with prior to project implementation, as well as the SHPO and any affected Tribes if deemed necessary. The Oregon SHPO concurred with these cultural resource findings and conditions on January 11, 2002.

The proposed screen replacement projects will take place off channel and the subject irrigation ditches will be shut-off or bypassed so that work can occur in the dry. Given these conditions, these projects will not require state or federal permits to proceed. In the unlikely event that work cannot be accomplished following the above guidelines, appropriate in-stream work permits will be obtained prior to construction including an Oregon Department of State Lands permit and a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit.

The landowners involved in the proposed screen replacement projects are taking part on a voluntary basis. Potential participants were sent letters informing them of the screening program and asking for their voluntary participation. This program was also publicized at Watershed Council meetings in the John Day River Basin. The project proponents have consulted with affected tribes, state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, local governments, and nearby landowners about the program. Partnerships on this program have been formed with the following: Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation, Burns Paiute Tribe Department of Environmental

Quality, OR Department of Forestry, OR Department of State Lands, OR Water Resources Department, OR State Police, NMFS, USFWS, Natural Resource Conservation Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and affected Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

**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/ Shannon C. Stewart

Shannon C. Stewart  
Environmental Specialist

CONCUR:

/s/ Thomas C. McKinney

Thomas C. McKinney  
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 1-22-2002

**Attachments:**

NEPA Compliance Checklist  
Oregon SHPO Response Letter

cc: (w/o attachments)

Steve Allen, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

bcc: (w/o attachments)

L. Croff - KEC-4

N. Weintraub - KEC-4

P. Key - LC-7

H. Adams – LC-7

bcc: (w/ attachments)

Official File - KEC (EQ-14)

SCStewart:scs:5928:01/22/02

W:\KEC\SAs - EQ-14\W:\KEC\SAs - EQ-14\Watershed Managment 0265\  
SA-74-EIS-0265-Oregon Fish Screen Replacement.doc