

DATE: January 5, 2005

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for Yakima/Klickitat Fisheries Project, Tillman Creek Wetland Mitigation (DOE/EIS-0169-SA-09)

David Byrnes
Project Manager - KEWL-4

Proposed Action: Yakima/Klickitat Fisheries Project – This is an offsite mitigation project for groundwater well operations at the Cle Elum Fish Research Facility. This mitigation project will increase the wetland edge along Tillman Creek, and enhance the buffer functions by planting native vegetation.

Project No.: F3204

Location: Cle Elum, Kittitas County, Washington.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and Co-Managed by the Yakama Nation (YN) and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

1. Introduction

The Yakima Fisheries Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (YFP EIS) (USDOE/BPA 1996) analyzed impacts of undertaking fishery research and mitigation activities in the Yakima River Basin. The EIS focused on the impacts of construction, operation and maintenance of anadromous fish production facilities in order to conduct research designed to increase knowledge of supplementation techniques. Spring chinook were the priority species analyzed in the EIS, however, Coho feasibility studies, potential harvest benefits, and predation impacts for returning natural production of Coho salmon to the Yakima River Basin were also evaluated. Subsequent Supplement Analyses (SA's) have analyzed the potential impacts of research activities relating to this experimental design program (DOE/EIS-0169-SA-01 through SA-08). The purpose of this Supplement Analysis (SA) is to determine if a Supplemental EIS (SEIS) is needed to analyze the changes proposed in the Yakima Klickitat Fisheries Project (YKFP) Tillman Creek Wetland Mitigation.

2. NEPA Analysis to Date

The Bonneville Power Administration is funding ongoing studies, research, and artificial production of several salmonid species in the Yakima and Klickitat river basins. BPA analyzed environmental impacts of research and supplementation projects in the Yakima basin in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) completed in 1996 (USDOE/BPA 1996), and in Supplement Analyses DOE/EIS-0169-SA-01 through SA-08.

3. Description of the Proposed Action

The proposed action to be analyzed under this SA is the creation of approximately 0.65 acres of wetland adjacent to Tillman Creek, a small tributary to the Upper Yakima River, as well as enhancement of an upland buffer area and installation of habitat features.

4. Analysis

This project is intended to mitigate for wetlands impacted by the operation of a well at the Cle Elum Spring Chinook Supplementation Facility. The project is located approximately 0.6 miles upstream of the confluence of Tillman Creek and the Yakima River.

The YKFP Project EIS studied the collection of salmonid broodstock, incubation of eggs and rearing of fry in hatcheries, the acclimation and release of smolts, and related ecological studies in the study of natural production. The project is adaptively managed to allow appropriate refinements to the supplementation program and the associated monitoring and evaluation program. The YKFP facility sites were selected to minimize floodplain and wetland impacts. Detailed floodplain studies were conducted and facilities were sited by experienced floodplain hydrologists.

A variety of wetlands were identified in the vicinity of the Cle Elum Hatchery. Based on qualitative habitat surveys and wetland delineations, wetland habitat potentially affected by planned YKFP facilities were identified and recommendations made to relocate facilities or acclimation sites. Wetlands in the area consisted of the oxbow ponds and excavated depressions that were intermittently surrounded by sedges, cattails, rushes, alder, bitter cherry, chokecherry, black cottonwood, red osier dogwood, wild rose, snowberry, black hawthorn and blue elderberry. The proposed facilities site was located to minimize losses to any wetlands in the area and was built on a terrace above the oxbow ponds, in an area that had been previously disturbed.

Initial well field investigations were performed at the site under a contract BPA had with the Bureau of Reclamation. Final designs of a well field and well drilling were contracted with CH2M Hill. Over twenty well sites were drilled beginning in 1990 for testing, monitoring or production. Currently, there are six production wells operated to support the Cle Elum Hatchery.

During the period of 1997 to the present, groundwater pumping caused gradual changes to an adjacent wetland. Impacts have been investigated and evaluated by BPA and Sheldon & Associates. It was determined that there has been a shift of wetland function, but not a reduction in wetland area. This information was reported to Washington Department of Ecology, which then required BPA to mitigate for the wetland impacts as a condition of BPA receiving water right permits for the groundwater supply to the hatchery.

BPA proposes to mitigate for impacts by restoring wetland functions at a nearby site, Tillman Creek. Wetland creation would be accomplished by excavating an area of disturbed upland habitat to an elevation adequate to engage Tillman Creek hydrology. Native plants, representative or expected wetland and upland communities would be targeted for installation. The proposed project is expected to result in an increased wetland and fish habitat function at Tillman Creek.

A Biological Evaluation of the proposed Tillman Creek wetland mitigation project was prepared and consulted on with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA Fisheries) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). It has been determined by USFWS that the proposed action may affect, but it not likely to adversely affect bald eagle, Canada lynx, bull trout, gray wolf, grizzly bear, marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl and Ute Ladies-tresses, nor result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat for northern spotted owl or proposed critical habitat for bull trout, and will not jeopardize the continued existence of the western yellow-billed cuckoo.

NOAA Fisheries has considered the determination of effects under Section 7 (a)(2) of the ESA and its implementing regulations and determined the proposed action is expected to avoid adversely affecting Mid-Columbia River steelhead and is expected to improve local fish habitat relative to baseline conditions, NOAA concurs with BPA's determination of "may affect, not likely to adversely affect". Under Section 305 (b)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, NOAA Fisheries is not providing conservation recommendations at this time for Essential Fish Habitat (EFH).

A Tillman Creek Wetland Mitigation Project Cultural Resource Assessment for Kittitas County, Washington was prepared. No significant cultural materials were identified in the areas where BPA proposes to conduct ground-disturbing activities for the Tillman Creek Wetland Mitigation Project.

This SA is contingent upon approvals of appropriate Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application (JARPA), Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA), Washington Department of Ecology (WDOE) 401 Water Quality Certification, Corps of Engineers (COE) Section 404 permits and any other required permits for Washington State Fish Habitat Enhancement Project requirements of RCW 77.55.290.

No additional effects beyond those discussed in the EIS, subsequent supplement analyses or ESA consultations are expected by the proposed action. There would be no land disturbance activities that would affect historical or cultural resources.

5. Findings

As documented in this Supplement Analysis, the potential impacts from the creation of approximately 0.65 acres of wetland adjacent to Tillman Creek are not substantially different from those discussed in the Yakima Fisheries Project EIS (DOE/EIS-0169), ROD, Supplement Analyses (SA-01 through SA-08), and related biological assessments and biological opinions. No additional impacts would occur in connection with these activities. There are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, a supplement to the YFP EIS is not needed.

/s/ Patricia R. Smith

Patricia R. Smith

Environmental Project Manager - KEC

CONCUR:

/s/ Thomas C. McKinney

Thomas C. McKinney

NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: January 5, 2005

Documentation on file:

- Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), Yakama Indian Nation (YIN), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). 1999a. Biological Assessment on Bull Trout for the Yakima/Klickitat Fisheries Project 1999-2004. March 1999.
- BPA, YIN, WDFW. 1999b. Biological Assessment on Mid-Columbia River Steelhead for the Yakima/Klickitat Fisheries Project 1999-2004. April 1999.
- Bonneville Power Administration, Sheldon & Associates, Inc. 2003. Biological Evaluation of Tillman Creek Wetland Mitigation Plan. July 2003.
- National Marine Fisheries Service. 1999. Biological Opinion on Artificial Propagation in the Columbia River Basin. National Marine Fisheries Service, Northwest Region, Portland, OR.
- United States Department of Energy, Bonneville Power Administration (USDOE/BPA). 1996. Yakima Fisheries Project Final Environmental Impact Statement. DOE/EIS-0169. Portland, OR
- USDOE/BPA. 1999. Supplement Analysis for Yakima Fisheries Project, DOE/EIS-0169-SA-01. Portland, OR
- USDOE/BPA. 1999. Supplement Analysis for Yakima Fisheries Project, DOE/EIS-0169-SA-02. Portland, OR
- USDOE/BPA. 2000. Supplement Analysis for Yakima Fisheries Project, DOE/EIS-0169-SA-03. Portland, OR
- USDOE/BPA. 2000. Supplement Analysis for Yakima Fisheries Project, DOE/EIS-0169-SA-04. Portland, OR
- USDOE/BPA. 2002. Supplement Analysis for Yakima Fisheries Project, DOE/EIS-0169-SA-05. Portland, OR
- USDOE/BPA. 2003. Supplement Analysis for Yakima Fisheries Project, DOE/EIS-0169-SA-06. Portland, OR
- USDOE/BPA. 2003. Supplement Analysis for Yakima Fisheries Project, DOE/EIS-0169-SA-07. Portland, OR
- USDOE/BPA. 2004. Supplement Analysis for Yakima Fisheries Project, DOE/EIS-0169-SA-08. Portland, OR

cc:

J. Kehoe – KEC-4, Bonneville Power Administration
L. Croff – KEC-4, Bonneville Power Administration
T. McKinney – KEC-4, Bonneville Power Administration
P. Smith – KEC-4, Bonneville Power Administration
N. Weintraub – KEC-4, Bonneville Power Administration
D. Byrnes – KEWL-4, Bonneville Power Administration
P. Key – LC-7, Bonneville Power Administration
H. Nigam, Department of Energy/EH-42 (FORS BLDG., Rm 3E080)
D. Fast, Yakama Nation
S. Nicoli, Yakama Nation
P. Spurgin, Yakama Nation
M. Sampson, Yakama Nation
J. Easterbrooks, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
T. Pearsons, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife