Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

September 1, 2015

In reply refer to: KEC-4

To: Parties Interested in the Proposed Yamhela Oaks Conservation Overlook Land Acquisition under the 2010 Willamette Wildlife Habitat Agreement

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) intends to fund the purchase of approximately 170 acres of riparian, wetlands, and off-channel habitat near the town of Yamhill in Yamhill County, Oregon. When the purchase is complete the Yamhill County Soil and Water Conservation District will own and manage the property for fish and wildlife conservation purposes and BPA will receive a conservation easement to ensure that the habitat values on the property are always protected. BPA is sending this letter to inform nearby residents and other interested parties of this land purchase.

Funding this land purchase partially fulfills commitments made by BPA in the 2010 "Willamette River Basin Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Wildlife Habitat Protection and Enhancement between the State of Oregon and the Bonneville Power Administration." This is part of ongoing efforts to mitigate for the impacts to fish and wildlife from the construction and operation of federal flood control and hydroelectric facilities in the Willamette River Basin. When the transaction is complete, this property will become one of a growing network of conservation lands in the Willamette Valley providing important and long lasting fish and wildlife habitat benefits. Conserving habitat on the property also partially fulfills BPA's habitat restoration and protection responsibilities under the Willamette Project Biological Opinions (NMFS 2008, USFWS 2008).

Enclosed you will find a map detailing this land transaction. BPA has prepared a memo and environmental checklist documenting that no further environmental review of this funding action is required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This documentation, known as a categorical exclusion, was approved on August 25, 2015, and is posted on BPA's website at: *http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/categoricalexclusions.aspx*.

Upon completion of the land acquisition BPA and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife intend to establish secure, permanent funding for stewardship of the property. BPA will make a one-time lump sum payment to fund a stewardship account from which Yamhill County Soil and Water Conservation District will draw monies as needed to provide permanent stewardship on the property. Stewardship management actions may include, but are not limited to public outreach, site monitoring, habitat mapping, encroachment monitoring, invasive species monitoring and control, and annual maintenance of boundary fence, signage, or gates.

The Yamhela Soil and Water Conservation District will develop a management plan to guide the protection and enhancement of habitat on the property. BPA and ODFW will review the plan for consistency with the conservation purposes of the land acquisition. If BPA proposes to fund any additional activities on the property we will conduct additional environmental review under NEPA and other statutes as appropriate.

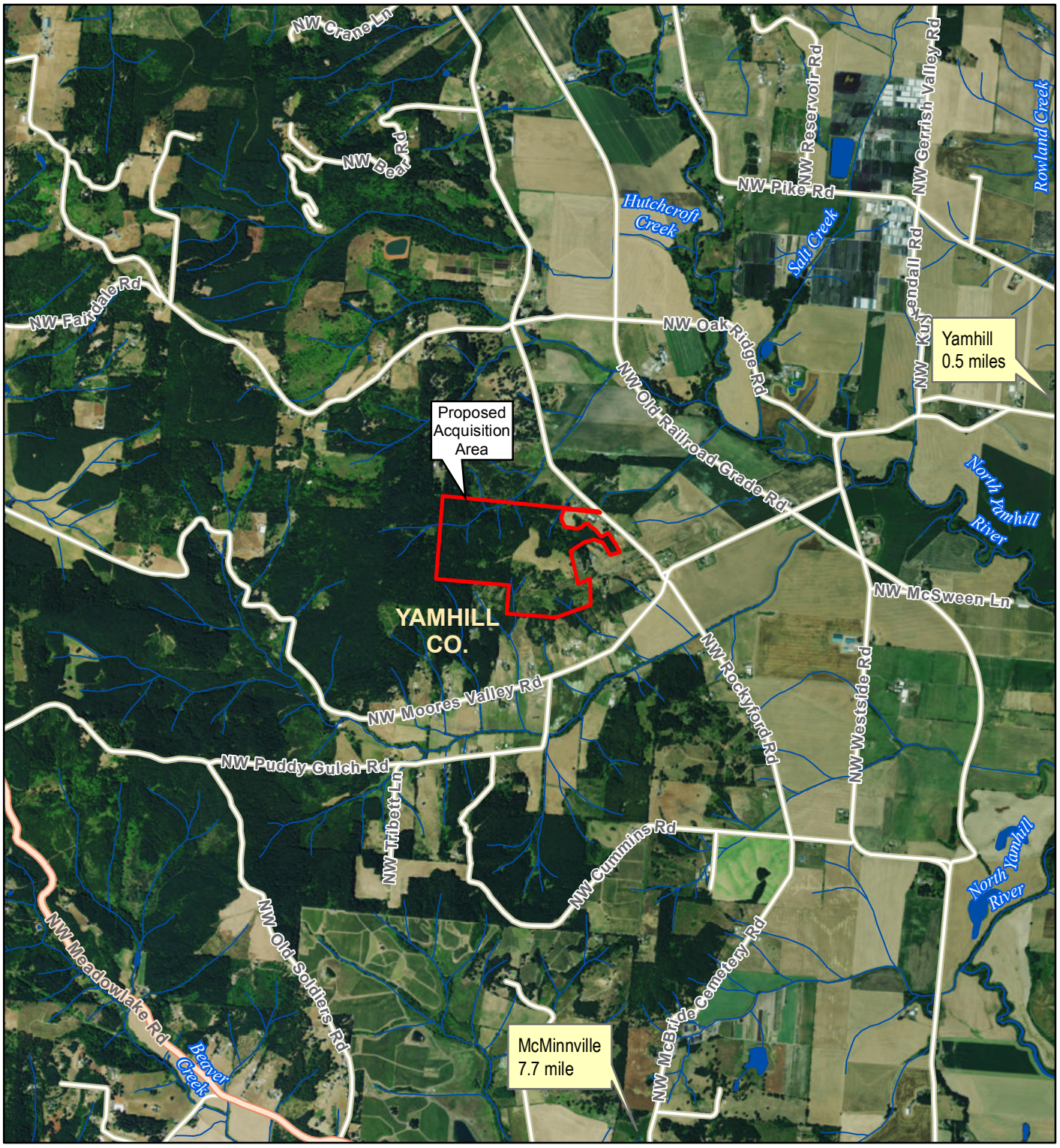
If you have any questions regarding this land purchase, please feel free to contact the project manager, Dorie Welch at (503) 230-5479 or dwwelch@bpa.gov. You can also call toll free 800-622-4519. Please refer to the Yamhela Oaks Conservation Overlook Land Acquisition.

Sincerely,

/s/ David K. Kennedy for

Donald L. Rose
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4

Enclosure: Vicinity Map



Yamhela Oaks Conservation Overlook
Public Notification Map

Yamhill County, OR - Fairdale and Carlton 24k USGS Quadrangles
(169.8 Acres)

Proposed Acquisition Area

Miles

0 0.25 0.5 1

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BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION

August 24, 2015