Department of Energy

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

Official File

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

July 8, 2014

In reply refer to: KEC-4

Dear Landowner/interested party:

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) intends to reimburse the Willamalane Park and Recreation District for the purchase of the 210-acre Thurston Hills Phase 2 property located in Lane County, Oregon. When the purchase is complete, the Willamalane Park and Recreation District will own and manage the property for multiple purposes including recreation and fish and wildlife conservation. 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.

The funding will be provided as part of BPA's ongoing efforts to protect, restore, and enhance habitat for wildlife, Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) and steelhead (*O. mykiss*). In 2010, BPA and the State of Oregon signed a landmark agreement to jointly protect Willamette Basin fish and wildlife habitat. The Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Agreement dedicates stable funding from electric ratepayers for 15 years to preserve at least 16,000 acres of additional Willamette fish and wildlife habitat. The funding for land acquisitions is part of ongoing efforts to mitigate for the impacts to fish and wildlife from the construction and operation of federal dams in the Willamette River Basin. The State of Oregon agreed to engage stakeholders in a public process for allocating ratepayer funds to the most ecologically beneficial and cost-effective habitat projects. Under the agreement, tribes, agencies and others may apply to use the funds to protect and enhance wetlands, floodplains, grasslands, oak woodlands, riparian areas and other rare habitat, consistent with the Oregon Conservation Strategy and the Northwest Power Council's Fish and Wildlife Program.

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 7/8/14, and is posted on BPA's website at: *http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/categoricalexclusions.aspx*.

The Willamalane Park and Recreation District will provide long-term stewardship for the land and will develop a management plan to guide the protection and enhancement of habitat on the property. BPA and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will review the plan and must approve it before it is implemented. Management actions may include the removal of non-native vegetation and weed control and enhancement of native habitats. If BPA proposes to fund any additional activities 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, with BPA at (503) 230-5479 or dwwelch@bpa.gov. You can also call toll free 800-622-4519. Please refer to the "Thurston Hills Phase 2 Easement".

Sincerely,

/s/ Lydia T. Grimm, for
Donald L. Rose
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4

Enclosure:
Map

Thurston Hills 2 Public Notification Map

Lane County, OR

210 Acres

Subject Property

6/9/2014

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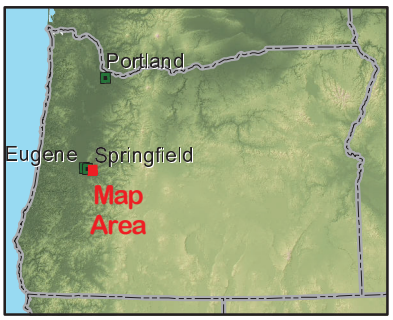
S

0 1 Miles

BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION