

United States Government
memorandum

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

DATE: June 13, 2003

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-106)

TO: Chris Furey, KEWR-4
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Proposed Action: Water Entity (Trout Unlimited Montana Water Project 2003)

Project No: 2002-013-00

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement

Analysis (See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): 4.18: Purchase / Negotiate Water Right; 4.19: File for Instream Water Right

Location: Missoula, Missoula County, Montana

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, implemented by Trout Unlimited Montana Water Project

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund several water rights acquisition projects proposed by Trout Unlimited Montana Water Project (TU). The funding will be administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the entity administering the Columbia Basin Water Transactions Program, initiated under RPA 151 of the National Marine Fisheries Service's 2000 Biological Opinion on the Operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System. The water rights acquired by TU will be left instream to increase flow and improve water quality. Increasing instream flow of water-limited streams benefits fish listed under the Endangered Species Act.

The three projects proposed by TU include: a Diversion Reduction Agreement, where the landowner agrees to leave up to 4 cubic feet per second (cfs) of water in Rock Creek for the 2003 irrigation season; another Diversion Reduction Agreement for the latter part of the 2003 irrigation season, under which the landowner would agree to cease diverting 1.65 cfs on Rock Creek and between 3 to 6 cfs from the North Fork Blackfoot River; the final proposal is one piece of a larger project in conjunction with other local, federal and state entities, to install a pipeline and sprinkler system to replace a ditch and flood irrigation system, which will result in the conversion of 15.11 cfs of water rights to instream flow. TU's contribution to the proposal (and BPA's funding) is limited to working with the landowner to convert the water rights to instream flow; all other components of the project, including the irrigation efficiency work, is being done in conjunction with other federal agencies with independent NEPA and other environmental review and consultation obligations.

Analysis: The compliance checklists for these projects were completed by Stan Bradshaw, TU, and meet the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

The proposed projects are located in the Blackfoot River and tributaries in Montana. There are no anadromous fish listed under the Endangered Species Act in the vicinity of the project. Federally-listed bull trout are found throughout the stream reaches affected by the proposed transactions. Informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding affects on bull trout, is ongoing and will be finished prior to project implementation.

No other environmental review or consultation is required as part of the proposed projects, because there is no ground disturbance or construction associated with the proposal. TU has an extensive program for public involvement, including holding public meetings and using the local media to provide information and solicit comments. TU has also had individual meetings with all known potentially-affected landowners in the area, and coordinated with several state and federal agencies.

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/ Richard Yarde

Richard Yarde
Environmental Specialist

CONCUR:

/s/ James M. Kehoe for

DATE: 6/16/03

Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachments:

3 Environmental Checklists

cc: (w/o attachments)

Mr. Stan Bradshaw, Trout Unlimited, PO Box 412, Helena, MT 59624

Mr. Andrew Purkey, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, 806 SW Broadway,
Suite 750 Portland, Oregon 97205