

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: June 28, 2002

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Wildlife Mitigation Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0246/SA-27)

TO: Ron Morinaka, KEWU-4
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Proposed Action: Abbot Creek Fish Barrier Project (Hungry Horse Mitigation / Habitat Improvements)

Project No: 1991-19-03

Wildlife Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis (See App. A of the Wildlife Mitigation Program EIS): 8.2 Control of Predators and Nuisance Animals

Location: Kalispell, Flathead County, Montana

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund a fishery enhancement project where a fish passage barrier will be installed in Abbot Creek to remove introduced rainbow trout and prevent hybridization with westslope cutthroat trout. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) will operate a fish trap downstream of the barrier for 6-10 consecutive years to manually remove the rainbow trout and hybrid spawners from the population. Removal of rainbow trout and hybrids from the stream will eradicate the existing hybrid population spawning in Abbot Creek and ultimately reduce the threat of hybridization in the Flathead River system. Pending completion of a successful disease screening and authorization from MFWP Fish Health Committee, live fish captured in the fish trap will be transported to a nearby close-basin lake for use in MFWP's Urban Fishing Program.

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by Clint Muhlfeld of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, and meets the standards and guidelines for the Wildlife Mitigation Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

No endangered species will be affected by the proposed project. A list of threatened and endangered species potentially found in the area is included in the attached checklist. However, there is no major construction activity on land; the only construction activities will result from the placement of the instream barrier. No endangered or threatened fish species are found in Abbot Creek. Informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicated that the natural temperature of the creek does not support bull trout, and Abbot Creek is outside of the range of any other species of fish listed under the Endangered Species Act.

BPA has determined that the proposed project does not have the potential to have an affect on historic properties. No construction activities will take place except for the installation of the fish passage barrier instream in Abbot Creek.

The project proponents have applied for and obtained permits for instream work, including a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a Special Use Permit with the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, and other applicable State of Montana permits.

As part of its own planning for the proposed project, MFWP completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) under the Montana Environmental Protection Act. Much of the environmental analysis for the project is documented within that EA. The analysis included public involvement, as follows: a scoping comment period for completion of the EA, in January 2001; public presentations to stakeholders in the region; and public comment coextensive with development of the Flathead Fisheries Co-management Plan.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program, as well as BPA's Wildlife Mitigation Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0246) and ROD. This Supplement Analysis finds that: 1) implementing the proposed action will not result in any substantial changes to the Wildlife Mitigation 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 Wildlife Mitigation Program or its impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Richard Yarde 7-3-2002
Richard Yarde
Environmental Specialist

CONCUR:

/s/ Thomas C. McKinney
Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 7-3-2002

Attachments:
Environmental Checklist
MEPA / NEPA / HB495 Generic Checklist

cc: (w/o attachments)
Mr. Clint Muhlfeld, MFWP, 490 North Meridian Road, Kalispell, MT 59901