



File Code: 1950

Date: June 3, 2008

Dear Interested Citizen,

The Hood River Ranger District on the Mt. Hood National Forest has identified you as an individual, agency, or organization that might be interested in commenting on two aquatic conservation proposals. The first proposal would complete maintenance projects on the Middle Fork Irrigation District. The second proposal would repair flood damage to Coe Bridge and Elliot Crossing on the 2840 Road.

MIDDLE FORK IRRIGATION DISTRICT (MFID) MAINTENANCE PROJECTS

The projects all occur on the Hood River Ranger District in the Upper Hood River Valley. The proposals are discussed below

Clear Branch Dam Mainline Valve Vault Stabilization and Drain Repair

The purpose of this project is to repair the drain system in the area of the valve vault on the pipeline leaving Lawrance Lake (reservoir) and to stabilize the slope immediately uphill from the valve vault. Over the years, the drain rock placed around the valve and vault has filled with fine material. Water no longer seeps from the south slope to move efficiently down slope. This results in standing water in the vault causing a hazard for personnel operating the valve.

MFID proposes to excavate 5-feet deep on the south side of the 36-inch penstock, install a perforated drain pipe, and backfill with drain rock that is already on site and left over from previous projects. MFID would then excavate approximately 6-feet deep on the north side of the 36-inch pipeline and direct the drain pipe to the creek in the area of the stream flow valve outfall. The flow of drain water is very small (in the gallons per minute range). This project would not have any effect on the creek flow and would not require any in-water work. The objective of the project is to lower the groundwater level in the vicinity of the mainline valve.

Once the drain is repaired MFID would finish the project by placing concrete "eco blocks" between the pipeline and the south slope to keep rock and debris from falling onto/into the valve vault and the inspection manholes located up and downstream of the valve. Approximately 20 eco blocks stacked two to three high are estimated to be needed to protect the valve and covers.

Clear Branch Substrate Supplementation

The purpose of this project is to add supplemental substrate (i.e., gravel/cobble) to Clear Branch below Clear Branch Dam in order to replicate the natural sediment routing process currently blocked by the dam. There is a lack of spawning gravel below Clear Branch Dam to the confluence of Coe Creek.

MFID would deliver up to 170-cubic yards of coarse substrate (i.e., approximately ½ to 6-inch



diameter gravel/cobble) to the Clear Branch Dam stream channel below the stilling basin at the base of the dam annually during the coming three year (2008-2010) work period. MFID would place the material at the direction of Forest Service and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). Forest Service and ODFW would cooperatively monitor bull trout, steelhead and spring Chinook spawning in the reach below dam and assess movement and loss of gravel.

Coe Branch Flow Meter Vault Replacement

The purpose is to replace the existing meter vault on the 30-inch diameter Coe Creek pipe. The pipeline conveys water from the Coe Creek diversion to the MFID irrigation system and hydroelectric plants. The vault in place now only extends to the top of the pipe. The new meter requires access around the full diameter of the pipe to place the sensors. This new meter would enable MFID to better track and record water withdraws from the Coe Creek diversion.

MFID proposes to excavate and remove the existing Coe Creek meter vault and replace it with a similar size vault that simply extends 36-inches deeper to provide access around the full pipe diameter. The new vault would be closed on top with a lockable concrete and steel lid and backfilled to be flush with the ground. A steel post would be placed next to the vault for mounting of the meter display.

Coe Creek Fish Screen and Dam Removal Project Test Pit

The objective of this project is to determine rock/boulder size or bed rock elevation in the project area of the Coe Creek Fish Screen and Dam Removal Project. This information is required by engineering personnel for the development of Construction and Bid documents. MFID proposes to excavate a 10-foot deep test pit upstream of the parking area at the Coe Creek Diversion. The proposed test pit would not be in-stream, but would be in the stream bank within the normal high water area on the westside of Coe Creek. Pumps would be used if needed to keep the pit dry while excavation is taking place. Once the test pit is completed, photos and measurements would be taken then the pit would be immediately backfilled and the area returned to its previous condition

Middlefork Irrigation District Pipeline Repair

The purpose is to replace the existing 36-inch diameter pipe damaged by the November 2006 Eliot Branch debris flow. The existing pipeline conveys water from Laurance Lake and the Coe Creek diversion to the MFID irrigation system and hydroelectric plants. MFID needs to replace 1600-feet of the existing 36-inch pipe. A large section of the existing pipeline is buried under excessive overburden resulting from the November 2006 debris flow. The pipeline was damaged by direct impact of rock debris: the force of the debris flow caused both vertical settlement and lateral displacement and deposition of excessive overburden.

The plan is to reinstall the new pipeline in the same alignment as the existing pipeline during the 2008 summer. The existing damaged pipe would be abandoned and left in place to minimize excavation and landscape disruption. Eliot Creek would be diverted temporarily while the concrete encasement work is performed to prevent the hydraulic cement from entering the creek. MFID proposes a temporary culvert or bypass channel that the creek flow would be diverted into while construction and concrete work takes place in the area of the creek crossing.

Approximately 150-feet of the new pipe would be encased in concrete for mechanical protection in the creek area and approximately 3-feet of backfill would be placed above the concrete to

bring the streambed back to its existing elevation.

Construction of the pipeline outside of the creek crossing area would be via excavation of a trench through the debris rock field with anticipated excavation depth to be 6.5 to 7-feet and the pipeline then backfilled to a minimum depth of 3-feet. Two access points (manholes for inspection) would be installed; one on the eastside of the debris field near the tree line and the second access point approximately 75-feet west of the creek. MFID would install one 6-inch drain valve to be located at the low point of the pipeline when that location is field verified. The likely drain location would be near the creek crossing and outside of the concrete encasement; the drain pipe would be directed back to creek. Estimated drain pipe length less than 100-feet. Approximately 40 trees would need to be removed on the eastside of the project. The rest of the project area is void of vegetation due to the debris flow.

Decision to be Made: The Hood River District Ranger will decide whether to implement the Middle Fork Irrigation District Projects. These projects will be analyzed under a categorical exclusion, category 3 “Approval, modification, or continuation of minor special uses of National Forest System lands that require less than five contiguous acres of land” (FSH 1909.15-2007-1, 31. 2, 2/15/07). The analysis for this project will be undertaken by an interdisciplinary team and documented in a project file. If it is determined that no extraordinary circumstances exist (see FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30.3), the proposed project may be documented in a Decision Memo. A decision on this project is expected in June 2008.

ERFO FLOOD REPAIR PROJECTS

Flooding in the fall of 2006 caused significant damage to the 2840 Road. Emergency repairs were completed immediately following the flood. These two projects would make more permanent repairs to the 2840 Road at Elliott Crossing and Coe Bridge. These projects occur on the Hood River Ranger District in the Upper Hood River Valley. Each proposal is discussed below

Coe Bridge Repair

This project proposes to repair the flood damage at the Coe Bridge on the 2840 Road. The stream bank near the southwest corner of the bridge would be excavated and long and/or rock bank stabilization material placed in the back to minimize erosion. Some excavated material would be used to replace the material that has eroded from the base of the southwest wing wall.

Existing and additional rip rap would be relocated and placed to protect the retaining walls, wing walls and abutments. A shallow trench would cut to stabilize and key in the base of the rip rap near the southwest corner of the bridge. Additional rip rap would be available at the site. Some in-stream work and partial dewatering would be necessary to place the riprap.

Elliott Crossing Repair

This project proposes to repair the flood damage at the Elliott Crossing on the 2840 Road. Several actions would be needed to repair the road.

- Construct approximately 1500-feet of single-lane road with turnouts using aggregate

material to reduce erosion. The road would be constructed in the existing location utilizing the existing materials when suitable. The roadway would be elevated to allow the road to be sloped to drain.

- A 48-inch culvert that was installed during the emergency repair work at the blown-out bridge site would be replaced with a culvert of adequate size and length. The 89-inch by 139-inch by 50-foot multi-plate squash pipe installed in the new channel stream would remain in place.
- Excavate and remove old bridge abutments. Construct stable fill slopes on portion of road relocated around the old bridge abutments.
- Retrieve and remove blown-out 70-foot bridge now located approximately 150-feet downstream.

Decision to be Made: The Hood River District Ranger will decide whether to make more permanent repairs to the 2840 Road at Elliott Crossing and Coe Bridge. These projects will be analyzed under a categorical exclusion, category 31.12 4: "Repair and maintenance of roads, trails, and landline boundaries" (FSH 1909.15-2007-1, 31.12, 2/15/07). The analysis for this project will be undertaken by an interdisciplinary team and documented in a project file. If it is determined that no extraordinary circumstances exist (see FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30.3), the proposed project may be documented in a second Decision Memo. A decision on this project is expected by September 2008.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this proposal, please bring them to our attention by **June 20, 2008**. Send comments to Jennie O'Connor, 6780 Highway 35; Mt. Hood/Parkdale, OR 97041. For more information, you may contact Gary Asbridge at (541) 352-6002 or gasbridge@fs.fed.us. Electronic comments may also be submitted to comments-pacificnorthwest-mthood-hoodriver@fs.fed.us in a format such as an e-mail message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc).

Sincerely,

/s/ Gary Asbridge for
DAINA L. BAMBE
District Ranger