

Decision Memo

Fish Tracking Receiver and Antenna Installation

Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest
Logan Ranger District
Cache County, Utah

Decision

I have decided to approve the installation of a small antenna and receiver at the confluence of Spawn Creek and Temple Fork, to track Bonneville cutthroat trout and brown trout tagged with passive integrated technology (PIT tags) within the Temple Fork Basin. This project will facilitate monitoring populations of trout in this area. The antennae will be placed horizontally in the stream and mounted to the stream bottom using small (2"x 6") anchors. The receiver consists of a small computer (palm pilot size) and a battery, which will be placed in a small work box and stored in a small culvert buried upright approximately 20-30 feet from the stream.

The project area, east of Logan, Utah in Logan Canyon, is located in T 13 N, R 3 E, Section 35, at the junction of Temple Fork and Spawn Creek.

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures included as part of the decision are intended to reduce or avoid environmental impacts from the proposed project.

1. To reduce visibility and protect scenic integrity, the equipment should be of a neutral color and/or acid-etched to provide a dull finish.
2. A stream alteration permit must be obtained before installation of the equipment begins.

Scoping and Public Involvement

On October 20, 2008, information on the proposal was provided in a scoping notice mailed to 130 individuals, organizations, and agencies on the District mailing list and posted on the Forest website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/wcnf/projects/proposed>. A 30-day scoping period was provided. The project was also included in the Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) data base in December 2008.

The District received no comment letters in response to the scoping efforts.

Reason for Categorically Excluding the Proposed Action

Based on public input, interdisciplinary team review, past experience, and consideration of the resource conditions listed below, I have determined the effects of implementing this action will be of limited context and intensity and will result in little or no environmental effect to either the physical or biological components of the environment. As such, this is a decision that has been categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement.

The proposed action falls under 36 CFR Part 220 and Forest Service Handbook 1909.15 - Environmental Policy and Procedures Handbook, Chapter 30, Section 31.2 Category 7 – Modification or maintenance of stream or lake aquatic habitat structures using native materials or normal practices. The categorical

exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action. There were no significant effects identified for the resource conditions listed below.

a. Federally listed threatened and endangered species or designated critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species. The wildlife biologist has reviewed the proposal and has determined there will be “no effect” to any threatened and endangered wildlife species or designated critical habitat and “no impact” to any Forest Service sensitive wildlife species because the project is very minor in scope and no populations of habitat will be affected. The fisheries biologist has determined there will be “no effect” to any threatened and endangered aquatic species or designated critical habitat and “no impact” to any Forest Service sensitive aquatic species because the project is very minor in scope and will not affect any populations or habitat. The forest botanist has surveyed the project areas and has determined there will be “no effect” to any threatened and endangered plant species or designated critical habitat and “no impact” to any Forest Service sensitive plant species because suitable habitat is not provided, the plants are not found here, and the project is very limited in scope. Therefore, the project will have no effect on any T,E,S species or critical habitat.

b. Flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds. The forest soil scientist and the forest hydrologist reviewed the fish tracking project and have determined it will have no effect on flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds. Although the project is located within a stream and adjacent riparian area, the project is very limited in scope and will not have any long-term effect on water quality or the riparian area.

c. Congressionally designated areas, such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or National Recreation Areas. The fish tracking project is not in any congressionally designated area and therefore, will not have any effect on any such designated area.

d. Inventoried roadless areas. Although the project is located within the Temple Fork roadless area, it is directly on the western boundary, is within the stream or directly adjacent to it, and is very limited in scope (less than 100 square feet of temporary disturbance). Therefore, this project will not have any effect on roadless area values or the roadless character of the Temple Fork roadless area.

e. Research Natural Areas. The fish tracking project is not located within a Research Natural Area and therefore, will not have an effect on any RNA.

f. American Indian and Alaska Native religious or cultural sites. The Forest archaeologist has determined that no such religious or cultural sites will be affected by this fish tracking project.

g. Archaeological sites, or historic properties or areas. The Forest archaeologist has determined that no archaeological sites or historic properties or areas will be affected by this fish tracking project.

Findings Required by Other Laws

This decision is consistent with the Revised Forest Plan as required by the National Forest Management Act. The project was designed in conformance with forest plan standards and incorporates appropriate Forest Plan guidelines and BMPs. The project is consistent with the desired future conditions as described in the Forest Plan. The fish tracking project is located within the Cache Box Elder Management Area (Forest Plan, pages 4-128 to 4-139).

Administrative Appeal Opportunity and Implementation

This decision pursuant to 36 CFR 215.12(f) is not subject to appeal and may be implemented immediately.

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this decision, contact Jennefer Parker, District Ranger, 1500 East Highway 89, Logan, Utah 84321, (435-755-3620).

/s/Jennefer Parker

March 13, 2009

JENNEFER PARKER
District Ranger

Date

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.