



Department of Energy

Official File

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

July 25, 2011

In reply refer to: KEC-4

To: People Interested in the Acquisition of Lands along the Naches River to Protect Fish and Wildlife Habitat in Yakima County, Washington.

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), with the Yakama Nation, is proposing to acquire two properties that are adjacent to the Naches River in Yakima county, Washington state, for fish and wildlife habitat mitigation (see attached vicinity map). BPA is sending this letter to inform nearby residents and other interested parties of this land purchase. A public notification letter regarding the acquisition of approximately 1.1 acres of land in the area was sent to interested parties on December 8, 2009. The purchase of the property described in that letter was delayed and the scope of the proposed acquisition was subsequently expanded; therefore, BPA is reinitiating the public notification process.

The properties currently proposed for purchase total approximately 7.3 acres and are located approximately 0.3 mile outside of Yakima, Washington in Yakima County. One of the parcels (approximately 1.1 acres) is currently developed for residential purposes, while the other property (approximately 6.2 acres) is currently in an undeveloped condition. The two properties are adjacent to the Naches River and contain tributaries to the Naches River in addition to riparian and floodplain habitat. The Naches River, the largest tributary to the Yakima River, provides habitat for many fish species including salmon and trout. The acquisition of these parcels will benefit ESA-listed summer steelhead, as well as summer chinook, coho, and sockeye salmon. Further, the purchase of these properties will benefit resident bull trout and a myriad of terrestrial species.

Acquiring these properties will provide BPA and the Yakama Nation with important fish and wildlife habitat as part of BPA's environmental stewardship and mitigation responsibilities for fish affected by the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS). The properties are adjacent to an existing BPA-owned hatchery and research facility. Protection of these properties will reduce the threat of future residential development encroachment on the hatchery facility and will contribute to hatchery operations security.

BPA has prepared a memo and environmental checklist documenting that the purchase of these properties is categorically excluded under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and that further environmental review of this funding action is not required. This categorical exclusion was approved on July 21, 2011 and has been posted on BPA's website at:

http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/categoricalexclusions.aspx .

The acquisition of these parcels will be the total extent of the undertaking and no ground disturbing activities are proposed. BPA will facilitate the purchase of and be the owner of the properties. The lands will then be managed under a land use agreement with the Yakama Nation. If future land management activities beyond maintenance of existing habitat conditions occur on these properties, the public will have an opportunity to comment.

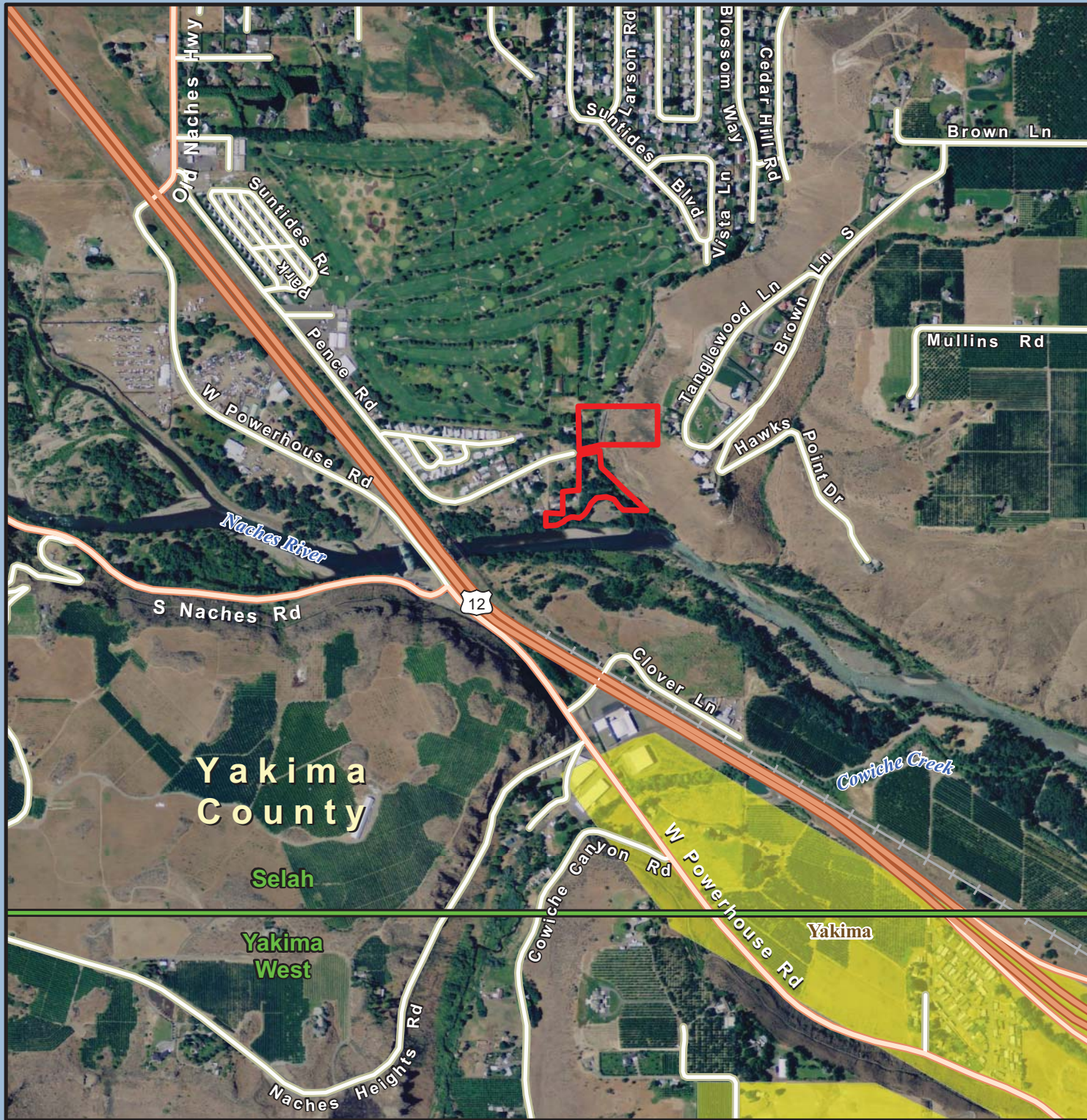
If you have any questions about this proposal or would like additional information, please contact Sandra Fife, BPA Project Manager, at (503) 230-3678, toll-free at (800) 282-3713 or e-mail at safife@bpa.gov. You may also contact Scott Nicolai, Yakama Nation, at (509) 962-6142 or e-mail at ykfphabitat@fairpoint.net.

Sincerely,




A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Katey Grange".

Katey Grange
Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4

Enclosure:
Vicinity Map



Naches River Land Acquisition
 Selah Quadrangle
 (7.3 Acres)

-  Subject Properties
-  Quad Name and Boundary
-  City Boundary

