



**Department of Energy**  
Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3621  
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

Official File

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

February 16, 2012

In reply refer to: KEC-4

**To: People Interested in the Proposed Old Schoolhouse land acquisition under the Federal Columbia River Power System Mitigation Program**

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to fund the purchase of 63.7 acres in Okanogan County, Washington to protect fish habitat and wildlife habitat. The property includes 1,480 feet of Beaver Creek, a tributary of the Methow River. The Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation (MSRF) will purchase the property, and BPA will receive a conservation easement to ensure the habitat is protected forever. The Yakama Nation is proposing to restore fish habitat in and along Beaver Creek after the purchase is complete. MSRF will work with BPA and the Yakama Nation to develop a management plan that protects opportunities for continuance of existing agricultural and residential uses of these properties. BPA and MSRF have agreed that the property can be sold in the future as long as the fish habitat is protected as described in BPA's conservation easement.

BPA would provide funding as part of ongoing efforts to protect, restore, and enhance habitat for Upper Columbia steelhead and spring Chinook that are listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Purchasing this land would partially mitigate for the construction and operation of the dams on the Columbia and Snake River, and would satisfy some of BPA's requirements for the Columbia River basin identified in the National Marine Fisheries Service 2008 Biological Opinion that guides the protection of salmon and steelhead listed under the federal Endangered Species Act.

The enclosed map shows the location of the proposed land purchase. BPA has prepared a memo and environmental checklist documenting that funding the purchase of this property would be categorically excluded under the National Environmental Policy Act, and that further environmental review of this funding action is not required. This categorical exclusion was approved on February 15, 2012, and has been posted on BPA's website at:

[http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental\\_services/categorical\\_exclusions.aspx](http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/categorical_exclusions.aspx)

A stewardship plan that identifies restoration activities and future productive uses allowed to occur on the property will be completed by MSRF in cooperation with the Yakama Nation. MSRF will provide an opportunity for public review and comment on the plan once it has been drafted. BPA will review and must approve the plan before it is implemented.

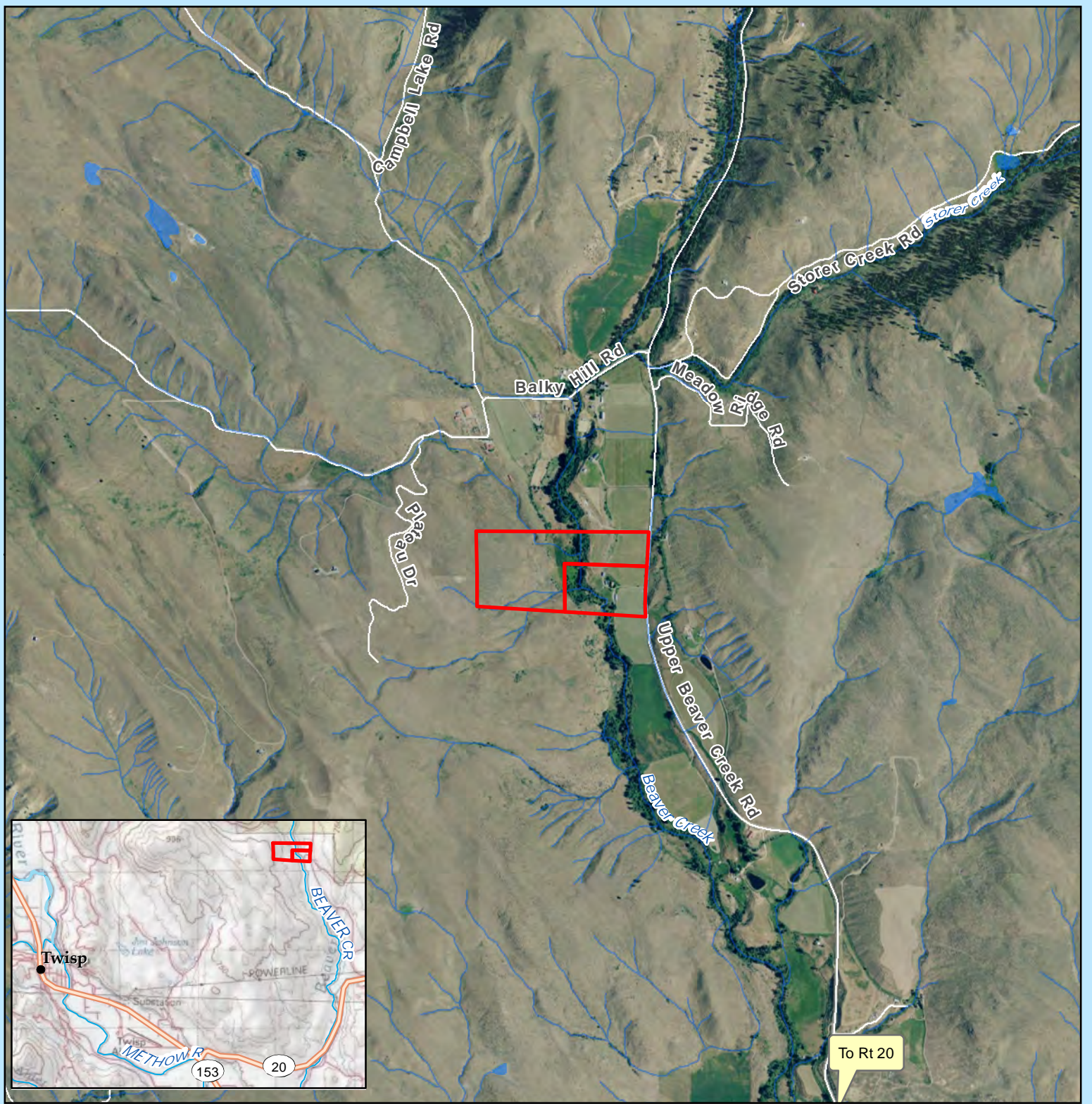
If you have any questions regarding this acquisition, please contact Jay Marcotte, BPA project manager, at 503-230-3943 or [jgmarcotte@bpa.gov](mailto:jgmarcotte@bpa.gov). You can also call toll free 800-622-4519—please refer to the “Old Schoolhouse land purchase”.

Sincerely,

/s/ Ted Gresh, February 15, 2012

Ted Gresh  
Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4

Enclosure:  
Map



Old Schoolhouse Property Acquisition  
 Okanogan County, WA  
 (63.67 Acres)

 Subject Property

