



Department of Energy

Official File

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

January 4, 2012

In reply refer to: KEC-4

To: People Interested in the proposed Wolf Creek Conservation Easement, Dayton, Columbia County, Washington.

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and Salmon Recovery Funding Board of Washington (SRFB) propose to fund the acquisition of a permanent conservation easement on 99.4 acres of privately owned property near Dayton, Columbia County, Washington (see enclosed map). BPA is sending this letter to inform nearby residents and other interested parties of this proposed transaction.

If the transaction is completed, the existing landowner would continue to own the land. Blue Mountain Land Trust (BMLT) would manage the easement and BPA would have third party rights of enforcement. The BMLT would work together with the owners to develop a written plan for stewardship of the property to guide the protection of fish habitat and other natural resources. The conservation easement would place development restrictions on the land to protect habitat values in perpetuity. The transaction is expected to be finalized in January 2012.

The Snake River Salmon Recovery Plan identified the area in which this property is located as a priority area for the protection of spawning and rearing habitat for resident and anadromous fish species. As such, the property is a good candidate for protection due to its location within this priority area and the presence of important spawning and rearing habitat for resident and anadromous fish. The Wolf Fork and the North Fork Touchet River support populations of bull trout and Middle Columbia steelhead that are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The proposed conservation easement would protect forested riparian buffers, functioning floodplains, and dynamic channel migration zones that are all important habitat features for these listed fish.

BPA funding for this conservation easement is provided under the historic 2008 Columbia Basin Fish Accords and builds on the National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service's plans for recovering salmon and steelhead runs listed under the ESA. This purchase would also partially mitigate for anadromous and resident fish habitat lost due to the construction and operation of federal hydroelectric facilities on the Columbia River under the Northwest Power and Conservation Council's Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program.

BPA has prepared a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for our proposed funding of the conservation easement. The categorical exclusion, which was approved on February 15, 2011, has been posted on BPA's website at http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/categorialexclusions.aspx.

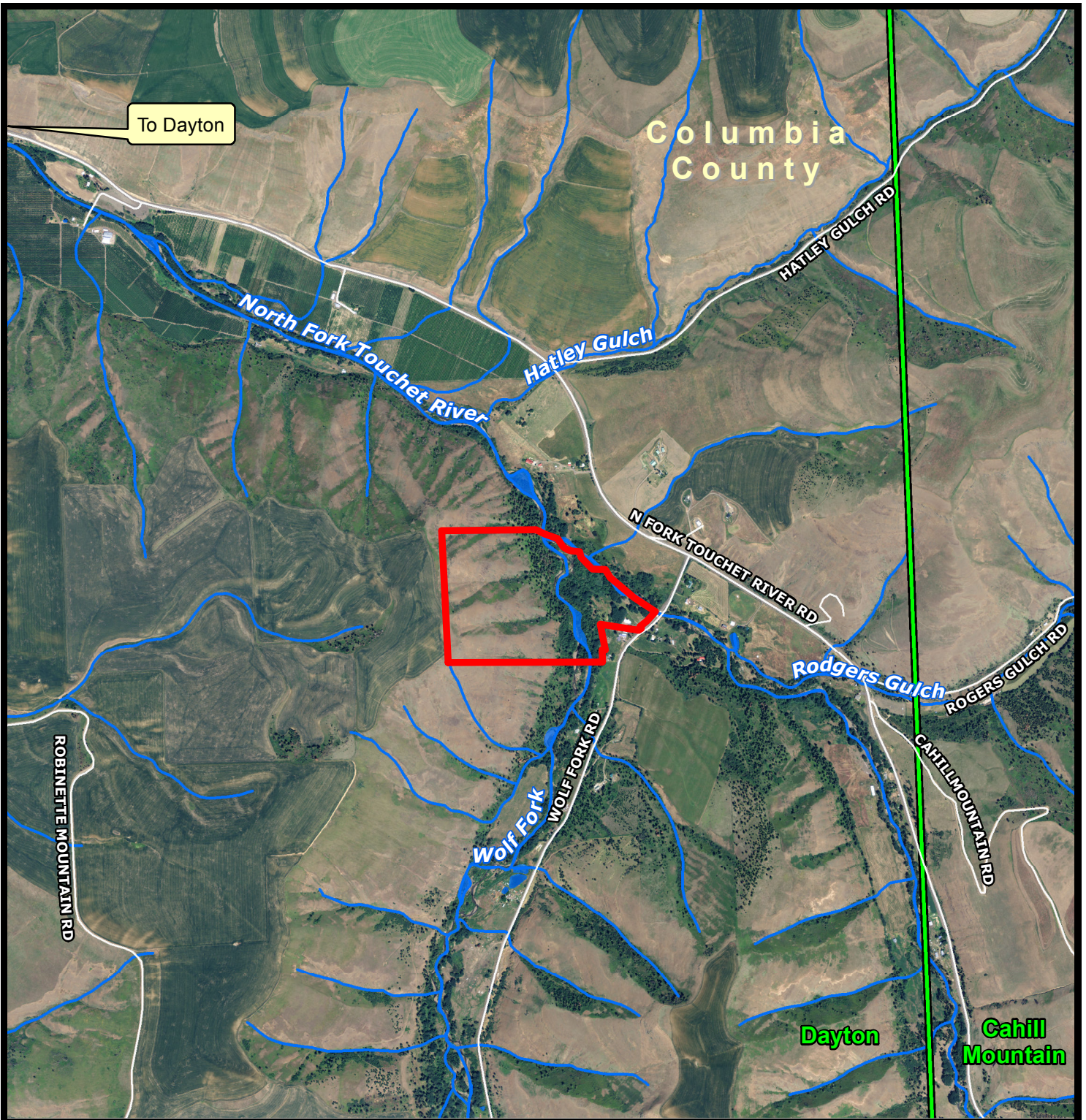
If you have any questions about this proposed conservation easement or would like additional information, please feel free to contact me, the BPA Project Manager, at (503) 230-5115, (800) 622-4519, or stbranum@bpa.gov.

Sincerely,





/s/ Sarah Branum, January 4, 2012

Sarah Branum
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Enclosure
Map



Wolf Fork Conservation Easement
Dayton Quadrangle
(99.4 Acres)

-  Subject Property
-  Quad Name and Boundary
-  Roads
-  Rivers and Streams

