



Fact Sheet

June 2010

Easement would protect Missoula County trout habitat

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To protect fish habitat, the Bonneville Power Administration proposes to fund purchase of about six acres on East Fork Finley Creek in Montana's Jocko River Watershed.

The property, located in Missoula County, is a core recovery area for bull trout. The watershed is designated as critical habitat for this resident fish, which is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. East Fork Finley Creek also supports a genetically pure population of westslope cutthroat trout, a subspecies considered at risk by local tribes and Montana.

Over the years, various land-use disturbances in the Jocko River Watershed have degraded stream channel conditions, elevated temperatures and increased sediment levels in the river, causing fish populations to decline. The watershed was selected as a focus for restoration efforts because the high rate of development in the area increases the risk for damage to more habitat resources.

The privately-owned property is on the Flathead Indian Reservation in an area that is significant to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. BPA proposes to fund purchase of the property by the tribes. The agency would keep the title to a conservation easement on the property.

Establishing the permanent conservation easement would help mitigate for fish habitat lost due to construction of Hungry Horse Dam and inundation of its reservoir. Hungry Horse is a federal dam on the South Fork of the Flathead River. Other agencies involved in the project include Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Land to get management plan

If BPA finalizes the project, a conservation easement will be placed on the property to ensure that the fish and their habitat are protected in the future. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes would provide long-term stewardship of the land and would develop a management plan to guide the protection and enhancement of habitat.

Pending BPA's approval, the management plan would prohibit any activities that could damage habitat, such as harvesting wood products, constructing buildings or allowing livestock to graze.

For more information

If you have questions about this proposal or would like additional information, contact Cecilia Brown with the Bonneville Power Administration at 503-230-3462 or ckbrown@bpa.gov. You may also contact Lynn DuCharme of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes at 406-883-2888 or lynnd@cskt.org.



East Fork Finley Creek conservation easement

Missoula County, Montana

