

factsheet

May 2008

Jocko River conservation easement protects trout habitat in Montana

The Bonneville Power Administration is proposing to fund a 31-acre conservation easement in Montana's Jocko River Watershed for fish habitat mitigation (see map).

Located in Lake County in northwestern Montana, this property is part of a watershed designated as critical habitat for bull trout, resident fish that are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The Jocko River Watershed also supports local populations of resident and migratory westslope cutthroat trout, a subspecies that is considered at risk by local tribes and the state of Montana.

This property, which is located within the boundaries of the Flathead Indian Reservation, was selected for protection for several reasons.

First, it is located within the Jocko River Watershed, a core recovery area for bull trout and is also home to westslope cutthroat trout. Over the years, various land-use disturbances have degraded stream channel conditions, elevated temperatures and increased sediment levels in the river, causing fish populations to decline in the area. This watershed was selected as a focus for restoration efforts because the high rate of development in the area increases the risk that more habitat resources will be damaged in the future.

Additionally, this land is significant to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and evidence of traditional use goes back hundreds of years.

Acquiring the easement would provide BPA with credits for partial mitigation of resident fish habitat losses due

to the construction and inundation of Hungry Horse Dam, a federal dam located on the South Fork of the Flathead River. Other agencies involved with this project include Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Land to get management plan

After BPA finalizes the easement, which is expected in spring 2008, a conservation easement will be placed on the property to ensure that the fisheries values and habitat are protected in perpetuity. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes would provide long-term stewardship for the land and will develop a management plan to guide the protection and enhancement of habitat resources on the property. The public will be given the opportunity to review and provide comments on the management plan.

For more information

If you have any questions about this proposal or would like additional information, please contact Cecilia Brown, BPA, at (503) 230-3462, toll-free at (800) 282-3713 or via e-mail at ckbrown@bpa.gov. You may also contact Lynn DuCharme of the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes at (406) 883-2888 or via e-mail at lynnd@cskt.org.



Jocko River Conservation Easement

Project location and vicinity

