

# factsheet

July 2008

## Jocko River conservation easement protects trout habitat in Montana

The Bonneville Power Administration is proposing to fund a 206-acre conservation easement in Montana's Jocko River Watershed for fish habitat mitigation (see map). Located in Lake County in northwestern Montana, this property was selected for protection for several reasons.

First, this parcel is part of the Jocko River Watershed, which is designated as critical habitat for bull trout, resident fish that are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The 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.

Over the years, various land-use disturbances in the watershed have degraded stream channel conditions, elevated temperatures and increased sediment levels in the river, causing fish populations to decline in the area. 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 within the boundaries of the Flathead Indian Reservation. It is significant to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and evidence of traditional use on the land 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

If this proposed property is acquired, which is expected in summer 2008, a conservation easement would 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.

Pending BPA's approval of the management plan, any activities that could damage habitat (such as harvesting of wood products, grazing or livestock or construction of buildings) would be prohibited from occurring on the property.

### For more information

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



# Jocko River Conservation Easement

Project location and vicinity

