



ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT COORDINATION ANNUAL REPORT

LSRCP Contract #14-16-0001-91504, FY94
October 1, 1993 to September 30, 1994

By

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Lower Snake River Compensation Plan (LSRCP) is to compensate for anadromous fish losses caused by construction and operation of the four lower Snake River hydroelectric dams: Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose, and Lower Granite. These dams were built between 1962 and 1975. In 1976, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was authorized to administer the operation and maintenance funding for the LSRCP hatchery program, the primary compensation tool (Cannamela and Kruse-Malle 1993).

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) listed Snake River sockeye as endangered in December, 1991 (November 20, 1991, 57 FR 58619) pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). Spring/summer and fall chinook were listed as threatened in May, 1992 (April 22, 1992, 57 FR 14653). NMFS published a final rule for critical habitat for Snake River salmon in December, 1993 (December 28, 1993, FR 68543). Because of unprecedented low run sizes, NMFS proposed reclassifying all three runs of Snake River chinook as endangered by emergency rule in August (August 18, 1994 59 FR 42529). Also during the contract period, NMFS initiated an expanded steelhead status review to identify steelhead stocks within California, Oregon, Idaho, and Washington, which may warrant listing pursuant to the ESA (May 27, 1994, 59 FR 27527).

The listings required LSRCP-funded hatchery programs and evaluation studies to not jeopardize the existence or recovery of natural populations of Snake River salmon. The purpose of ESA coordination was to evaluate and coordinate all actions of Idaho's LSRCP programs to ensure that their effects on listed salmon were neutral, minimal (i.e. would not jeopardize), or enhanced the continued existence of listed salmon. The ESA coordinator was responsible for meeting the obligations and legal requirements of the ESA for Idaho Fish and Game's (IDFG) LSRCP Hatchery Operations and Maintenance Program (O&M), Hatchery Evaluation Study (HES), Harvest Monitoring Project (HMP), and Coded Wire Tag Laboratory Program. Additionally, actions of all Idaho programs, including those outside the authority of LSRCP, were to be integrated with LSRCP actions to ensure overall adverse effects on listed species were avoided, and obligations of the ESA were met.

OBJECTIVES

1. Assess LSRCP hatchery and evaluation actions to determine potential effects on listed species
2. Represent IDFG during formal consultation between NMFS and the USFWS.
3. Analyze, update, modify, and submit new Section 10 scientific and enhancement direct take permits as needed.

4. Coordinate and integrate IDFG's LSRCP Section 7 biological assessment (and subsequent biological opinion) and Section 10 scientific/enhancement permits with other related programs.
5. Complete other duties as assigned so that LSRCP and IDFG programs and professional efficiency are enhanced.

METHODS

I relied on previous biological assessments developed by the USFWS and IDFG, published literature, unpublished IDFG data, and the judgement of agency biologists to develop biological assessments for the LSRCP Section 7 consultation and for Section 10 permit applications. The staffs of HES and hatchery O&M programs provided substantial technical assistance and information for Section 7 and Section 10 documents. I incorporated pertinent findings from Federal Register notices and NMFS memoranda into assessments and permit applications. I also developed contacts with NMFS personnel in the Environmental and Technical Services Division in Portland, the regional office in Seattle, the Office of Protected Resources in Maryland, and the Coastal Zone and Estuarine Studies Division in Seattle to facilitate my coordination duties.

RESULTS

Major actions are described by objective. Specific monthly activities were previously documented in monthly reports submitted to LSRCP staff.

Objective 1

Tasks 1.1 through 1.9 (Appendix A) were all completed during the contract period. I completed four biological assessments for LSRCP programs in the Salmon and Clearwater basins for Section 7 consultation. During development of assessments, I coordinated with IDFG staff to develop actions to reduce adverse effects to listed species. Actions included reduction of steelhead smolt releases in the Salmon River primary chinook production areas and acclimation of steelhead smolts at Sawtooth Fish Hatchery prior to release. The Section 7 consultation was particularly prolonged in 1994 in order to address parr and presmolt releases of unlisted broodyear (BY) 1994 chinook from Sawtooth and McCall fish hatcheries (FH). These releases were not assessed in the 1994 Biological Opinion (NMFS 1994). They were tribal initiatives to utilize BY 1993 summer chinook at McCall FH in excess of capacity and to use BY 1993 spring chinook at Sawtooth FH to support Idaho Supplementation Studies (ISS) in the West Fork of the Yankee Fork. Development of information and participation in the consultation required considerable input from IDFG staff. The South Fork Salmon River releases were authorized by informal consultation (Smith 1994). Authorization of releases from Sawtooth FH into the West Fork Yankee Fork was not received during the contract period.

I submitted biological assessments for the 1994 Section 7 consultation to LSRCP staff by November 1, 1993. I also assisted LSRCP staff with assessment of cumulative effects of the LSRCP program. Consultation between NMFS and the USFWS began in early January 1994

and continued through mid-April for smolt releases. During this time period, I submitted additional information and clarification for the consultation package. Initial consultation culminated on April 7 with a Biological Opinion (NMFS 1994) that authorized the release of unlisted LSRCP-produced hatchery Chinook salmon and steelhead, as proposed by IDFG and the USFWS. Informal consultation for release of parr from McCall FH ended July 18, 1994 (Smith 1994).

During the summer, 1994, I began review of previous biological assessments and the literature to prepare for the 1995-98 Section 7 consultation. The timelines for the 1996-98 consultation were advanced compared to previous years. I attended cooperators' meetings for the 1995-98 Section 7 consultation in June and July. I submitted biological assessments to LSRCP by August 1, 1994 and continued revisions to incorporate tribal concerns through the contract period. Section 7 consultation for the 1995-98 period continued into the next contract period as did completion of the Section 7 consultation for 1994.

Objective 2

All three tasks were completed during the contract period for the 1994 consultation. Tasks 2.1 and 2.2 were also addressed for the 1995-98 consultation. During consultation, I acted as liaison between the USFWS and IDFG. I represented IDFG in policy and technical matters regarding the LSRCP program in formal consultation meetings with NMFS, the USFWS, and the LSRCP cooperators. I presented progress of the consultation to IDFG, various policy-makers, and the public, particularly as concern increased about the lateness of NMFS authorization for salmon and steelhead releases. Special terms, conditions, and conservation recommendations were communicated to IDFG policy and technical personnel to ensure our actions were consistent with the authorization received by the USFWS for the LSRCP program.

Objective 3

I completed tasks associated with objective 3 during December through July 1994. The NMFS decision that hatchery-produced juvenile salmon, which were offspring of unmarked adult Chinook (presumably naturally produced), were listed required me to develop Section 10 permit modifications to authorize the release BY 1992 Chinook smolts at Sawtooth FH and McCall FH (Fox 1993). I submitted the modifications in December and IDFG received the release authorization on April 8, 1994.

During March 1994, I revised new Section 10 direct take permits for broodstock collection and artificial propagation at McCall FH and South Fork Salmon River Satellite Facility, Sawtooth FH, and the East Fork Satellite Facility to accommodate release of listed hatchery salmon and collection of listed adults. Our 1994 proposal did not include collecting broodstock at the East Fork Satellite Facility because of projected low run size. During May through mid-July, I responded to considerable comments from NMFS reviewers and provided additional information as requested by NMFS. The applications and subsequent responses required considerable technical development and discussion with HES, hatchery O&M, and other IDFG staff. I acted as a liaison between NMFS and IDFG regarding pre-permit discussion of conservation requirements.

We received Section 10 permits from NMFS for LSRCP hatcheries on June 16, 1994. For the first time, authorization for broodstock collection was based on a target run size greater or equal to 80 adults at the weir. NMFS requested run size updates in May and July for decision-making and added considerable reporting requirements to the permit. After two years of discussion, NMFS also authorized presmolt releases of listed hatchery fish from Sawtooth and McCall FH.

I submitted monthly broodstock and run reports from June through September for Sawtooth and McCall Fish Hatcheries and the East Fork and South Fork Salmon River satellite facilities. NMFS requested these reports to gain status information about the chinook runs, mark proportions, and egg take. Although we collected broodstock for both the Sawtooth and McCall programs, we placed a priority on meeting natural spawner targets upstream of the weirs. The run size at the Sawtooth weir was not sufficient to support development of a reserve broodstock after allocation of reserve fish for natural spawning and all BY 1994 progeny will be dedicated to ISS. We did maintain a BY 1994 reserve group at McCall FH.

Objective 4

Throughout the contract period, most all of the tasks were addressed. However, Task 4.11 was not implemented because IDFG made no progress with securing a Section 6 cooperative agreement with NMFS. LSRCP-funded actions such as chinook broodstock collection and steelhead releases were integrated into our ESA management strategy. I reviewed the "Final Recommendations to the NMFS" from the Snake River Salmon Recovery Team. I attended meetings with IDFG staff on September 6-7 1994, to discuss artificial propagation actions and stock structure with LSRCP cooperators and NMFS. I also assisted with IDFG response to NMFS about artificial propagation and salmon recovery. I presented ESA information at the IDFG research and anadromous meetings and developed status and ESA permit information for participants of the 1994 IDFG redd count training:

During the contract period, I assisted with review of the spring 1994 issue of the IDFG Fish and Game News about recovery options for Snake River salmon. I also provided technical information to CBS news. I assisted IDFG regional personnel with press releases about activities involving Snake River salmon and made public presentations about salmon recovery options. Since the listings, there has been a substantial increase in requests for salmon information from publics representing grade schoolers to book publishers; I responded to numerous requests for salmon information.

Objective 5

I did not attend the LSRCP Evaluation study coordinators meeting during the contract period (Task 5.3) and did not participate in computer training (Task 5.4). All other tasks were addressed. I assisted several projects with field activities that had been authorized by Section 10 permits. I helped coordinate the 1994 IDFG redd count training and met with the NMFS staff member who attended.

I reviewed pertinent Federal Register notices issued during the contract period for IDFG staff and Department response. The notices included emergency rule to reclassify Snake River salmon and the expanded steelhead status review.

The first meeting of the Pacific Salmon Biological Technical Committee (PSBTC) for Snake River steelhead was in July, 1994. I compiled steelhead information for staff members attending the meeting to submit to NMFS for their status review. I also distributed technical notices to IDFG staff for their input.

Related Activities

There were several activities completed during the contract period that were affiliated with Objectives 1 and 3. Because the LSRCP program is an integral component of Idaho's anadromous fish management program, it is crucial to ensure consistency between ESA, the LSRCP Section 7 consultation and related Section 10 permits, and all other Idaho fish management actions affecting listed salmon. To attain integration and coordination with the LSRCP program, I accomplished Objective 3 for the following permits via new applications or updates through annual reports: 1) Salmon research Section 10 direct take permit; 2) State authorized sport fishing season and regulations Section 10 incidental take permit; 3) Idaho Power Company anadromous mitigation program Section 10 incidental take permit; and the 4) Resident Fish Stocking Section 10 incidental take permit. Two release modifications for the Sockeye Captive Broodstock Section 10 direct take permit were also developed. I accomplished Objective 1 for three IDFG-affiliated consultations during the contract period: 1) Steelhead supplementation; 2) Wilderness steelhead studies; and 3) Sockeye predator research.

LITERATURE CITED

Cannamela, D.A. and G. Kruse-Malle. 1993. Fish hatchery evaluations - Idaho. USFWS-LSRCP contract No. 14-16-0001-91505 (October 1, 1990 to September 30, 1991). Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Boise, ID.

Fox, W. W., Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service. [Letter to S. Huffaker, Idaho Department of Fish and Game]. 1993 October 6.

National Marine Fisheries Service. 1994. Biological Opinion for 1994 Hatchery Operations in the Columbia River Basin. National Marine Fisheries Service, Silver Spring, MD.

Smith, J.G., Acting Regional Director, National Marine Fisheries Service. [Letter to W. F. Shake, Assistant Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service]. 1994 July 18.

APPENDIX

Appendix A

ESA Coordination Statement of Work.

I. Objectives

A. General

The listing of Snake River sockeye as endangered and fall and spring/summer chinook as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) requires that LSRCP-funded hatchery and evaluation study programs not jeopardize the existence or recovery of natural populations. Therefore, all future actions of these programs must be assessed to ensure that their effects on listed species are neutral, minimal, or enhance their continuing existence. The LSRCP programs have the potential to provide scientific information that could be useful in recovering the listed species and to increase naturally reproducing populations through artificial reproduction. The ESA coordination effort described in this SOW will work in concert with IDFG's LSRCP Hatchery Operations and Maintenance Program (O&M), Hatchery Evaluation Study (HES), the Harvest Monitoring Project (HMP), and the Coded Wire Tag Laboratory Program to meet the obligations and legal requirements of the ESA. Additionally, actions of all Idaho salmon programs, including those outside the authority of LSRCP, will need to be consistently integrated to ensure adverse effects on listed species are avoided.

B. Specific

1. Assess LSRCP hatchery and evaluation actions to determine potential effects on listed species.
2. Represent IDFG during formal consultation between NMFS and the USFWS.
3. Analyze, update, modify, and submit new Section 10 scientific and enhancement direct take permits as needed.
4. Coordinate and integrate IDFGs LSRCP Section 7 biological assessment (and subsequent biological opinion) and Section 10 scientific/enhancement permits with other related programs.
5. Complete other duties as assigned so that LSRCP and IDFG programs and professional efficiency are enhanced.

II. Tasks

The State of Idaho, Department of Fish and Game shall furnish all supervision, labor, services, materials, tools and equipment necessary to develop ESA permits and ensure that actions implemented by the Department of Fish and Game are consistent and permitted pursuant to Section 7 biological consultation and Section 10 research and enhancement permits. These tasks will be conducted to fulfill the objectives cited above as follows:

A. Objective 1: Assess LSRCP hatchery and evaluation actions to determine potential effects on listed species.

Approach:

The ESA coordinator, working with Idaho's O&M, HES, HMP, and other Departments and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) biologists and managers, will consolidate hatchery and evaluation study program data and use it and relevant literature to analyze and assess the effects of various LSRCP-funded hatchery operations and evaluations on listed salmon species. As the Section 7 biological assessment material is developed, alternatives may have to be developed to limit the effects of hatchery operations and evaluations on the listed species.

- Task 1.1 Obtain quantitative data necessary to evaluate LSRCP-funded programs.
- Task 1.2 Coordinate and assist IDFG and USFWS-LSRCP research staff with quantitative analyses for the biological assessment.
- Task 1.3 Assess effects of all proposed actions and estimate indirect take of listed species using Task 1.2 results and relevant literature.
- Task 1.4 Where necessary, help develop and assess alternatives which will reduce the adverse impacts on listed species.
- Task 1.5 Draft program descriptions, analyses of effects, assessment of effects following the outline biological assessment outline provided by the LSRCP office.
- Task 1.6 Coordinate technical and policy review of Section 7 materials by IDFG staff.
- Task 1.7 Participate with the LSRCP ESA work group for technical analysis and biological assessment development.
- Task 1.8 Assist LSRCP staff with assessment of cumulative effects.
- Task 1.9 Assist LSRCP staff with submission of the final Section 7 biological assessment.

B. Objective 2: Represent IDFG during formal consultation between NMFS and the USFWS.

Approach:

IDFG, as a LSRCP cooperator, must be involved in the USFWS/NMFS consultations for the LSRCP Program under the ESA. During the consultation period, the LSRCP Office will involve all cooperators in ongoing discussions with NMFS regarding their programs.

- Task 2.1 Act as the liaison between the USFWS and IDFG during the formal consultation period to fulfill the cooperator's role in the process.

- Task 2.2 Provide additional documentation, as requested, for the LSRCP Section 7 formal consultation between NMFS and the USFWS-LSRCP office.
- Task 2.3 Represent IDFG during formal consultation meetings.

C. Objective 3: Analyze, update, modify, and submit new Section 10 scientific and enhancement direct take permits as needed.

Approach:

The ESA coordinator, working with IDFG's O&M, HES, HMP, and other Department and USFWS biologists and managers, will consolidate hatchery and evaluation study program data and use it and relevant literature to update and modify, as per NMFS requests, Section 10 applications for various LSRCP-funded hatchery operations and evaluations which involve direct taking of listed salmon species.

- Task 3.1 Develop, in cooperation with the LSRCP office, justification and rationale for directed take of listed species to demonstrate the benefit to the species and provide it to the NMFS permitting and the LSRCP offices.
- Task 3.2 Respond to NMFS requests for any additional information or new permits in the same manner as prescribed in Task 3.1.
- Task 3.3 Submit monthly and annual reports pursuant to permit authorization.

D. Objective 4: Coordinate and integrate IDFG's LSRCP Section 7 biological assessment (and subsequent biological opinion) and Section 10 scientific/enhancement permits with other related programs.

Approach:

The ESA coordinator will help the USFWS LSRCP office ensure that Section 7 assessments and Section 10 permit applications for LSRCP-funded actions are coordinated and integrated with other ESA-related activities, e.g. Idaho's anadromous fish management and research programs, Section 6 agreement(s), and the NMFS salmon recovery plan.

- Task 4.1 Determine and recommend changes in Idaho fish management plans resulting from LSRCP program biological consultations between NMFS and USFWS.
- Task 4.2 Provide parameters of Section 10 research and enhancement permits to IDFG personnel who will implement the actions to ensure that all LSRCP-funded actions are permitted and consistent with permit requirements.
- Task 4.3 Integrate appropriate LSRCP-funded actions described in biological assessments and biological opinions into an IDFG's salmon recovery strategy.
- Task 4.4 Represent IDFG's LSRCP activities to the IDFG Columbia River Coordinator, and the Governor's/Attorney General's offices, as requested.

- Task 4.5 Assist IDFG's Bureau of I and E staff with development of public literature relevant to ESA and the LSRCP chinook salmon program in Idaho.
- Task 4.6 Develop IDFG responses to the draft NMFS chinook recovery plan.
- Task 4.7 Represent IDFG regarding LSRCP activities to the Salmon Recovery Team, as requested.
- Task 4.8 Represent IDFG on LSRCP program chinook salmon issues with public, legislature, and organized groups.
- Task 4.9 Provide staff support to the IDFG anadromous program.
- Task 4.10 Assist LSRCP staff with assessments of progress toward recovery.
- Task 4.11 Ensure coordination with USFWS LSRCP staff on any IDFG Section 6 cooperative agreement developed which might affect or interact with LSRCP-funded programs.

E. objective 5: Complete other duties as assigned so that LSRCP and IDFG programs and professional efficiency are enhanced.

- Task 5.1 Maintain updated knowledge of latest ESA rules and regulations, including NMFS policies and guidelines for implementing ESA and the NMFS Salmon Recovery Plan.
- Task 5.2 Attend IDFG anadromous and research section meetings, as requested.
- Task 5.3 Attend LSRCP Evaluation study coordinators meeting, as requested.
- Task 5.4 Attend other employee training sessions approved or assigned, with emphasis on improvement of computer skills.
- Task 5.5 Spend one day assisting with chinook salmon redd counts.
- Task 5.6 Spend two days assisting with an anadromous fish research project and/or hatchery operations.
- Task 5.7 Spend up to 4 days on IDFG training and assistance activities.

III. Schedule

<u>Task</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Activity</u>
1.1/1.9	Oct 1 - Nov 1	Prepare Biological Assessment for 1994 consultation
2.1/2.3	Nov 1 - Jan. 31	Consultation
3.1/3.2	Oct 1 - Jan 31	Section 10 permit applications
3.3	Oct 1 - Sept. 30	Reporting
4.1/4.11	Ongoing	Coordination within IDFG
5.1/5.4	Ongoing	Meeting, training
5.5/5.6	Aug/Sep	Redd counts
5.7	Intermittent	Miscellaneous

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