



Statewide Technical Assistance

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT PROJECT FW-7-T-9

Subproject I, Job No. 1: Fisheries Program Coordination

Subproject I, Job No. 2: Statewide Water Quality/Quantity

Subproject II, Job No. 1: Panhandle Region Technical Assistance

Subproject II, Job No. 2: Clearwater Region Technical Assistance

Subproject II, Job No. 3: Southwest Region Technical Assistance

Subproject II, Job No. 4: Magic Valley Region Technical Assistance

Subproject II, Job No. 5: Southeast Region Technical Assistance

Subproject II, Job No. 6: Upper Snake Region Technical Assistance

PERIOD COVERED: JULY 1, 2002 TO JUNE 30, 2003

By

Scott Grunder, Fishery Program Coordinator

Cindy Robertson, Staff Biologist

Ray Hennekey, Environmental Staff Biologist

Jerome Hansen, Environmental Staff Biologist

Eric Leitzinger, Environmental Staff Biologist

Mike McDonald, Environmental Staff Biologist

Jim Mende, Environmental Staff Biologist

Gary Vecellio, Environmental Staff Biologist

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JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of: Idaho **Name:** STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Project: FW-7-T-9 **Title:** Statewide Supervision and Coordination

Subproject: I **Job No.:** 1

Period Covered: July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003

ABSTRACT

During the contract period, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department) continued consulting with Idaho Power Company (IPC) regarding relicensing of hydroelectric facilities. These include the Middle Snake River projects, Malad, C.J. Strike, and Hells Canyon Complex. Department staff also participated in relicensing efforts for Avista Corporation's Spokane River projects and the Pend Oreille County Public Utility District's Box Canyon Project.

We continued coordinating with the Idaho Attorney General's Office regarding review and filings pertaining to preliminary applications for permit to develop hydropower on Idaho's waterways. The Department intervened in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission process when proposed projects could adversely impact fish, wildlife, and riparian resources.

Author:

Scott A. Grunder
Fishery Program Coordinator

OBJECTIVES

To supervise and coordinate Department policy and activities regarding the protection of aquatic habitat and resources.

To provide technical assistance regarding aquatic environments to the executive and legislative branches of state government, to state and federal agencies, and private entities.

METHODS

Department personnel review proposals to construct, modify, or relicense hydropower facilities in Idaho or those outside the state that have some impact on the State's resources. Based on scientific information, we recommend measures to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) that will protect, mitigate damages to, and enhance fish and wildlife habitats, and fish and wildlife-based recreation. In many instances, existing research or management efforts provide the basis for comments provided to the FERC. When data are lacking or outdated, we cooperate with the applicants or licensees to design studies that will assist resource agencies and the FERC in decision-making. During the relicensing efforts of existing facilities, Department personnel will make a long-term commitment to assist the licensee during the lengthy FERC consultation process.

The Department has the primary authority to manage all fish and wildlife in Idaho. Idaho Code specifically charges the Department to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage these resources. We serve as the primary consulting agency to other state and federal agencies in issues dealing with potential impacts to fish and wildlife habitats. We also assist private landowners in the design and implementation of land and water use practices where they may impact habitats.

The Fishery Program Coordinator assists the Department's state office and regional personnel to ensure compliance and consistency with Department policy as well as provides technical assistance on a regional and statewide basis.

RESULTS

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Process

During the contract year, as per our authority under the Federal Power Act, the Department submitted formal comments to the FERC describing in detail our recommendations for necessary measures and conditions to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife populations and habitats associated with relicensing hydropower projects. Also, we provided licensees with comments regarding license applications and additional information requests as well as participated in consultation meetings.

The Fishery Program Coordinator spent several months reviewing, coordinating, and developing comments on Idaho Power Company's Draft New License Application for the Hells Canyon projects (FERC No. 1971) on the Snake River. This 25,000-page license application for the

three dams (combined 1,166 MW) was one of the most significant documents reviewed by the Department for a hydropower relicensing effort. Primary issues for the Department include water quality, flow regimes, resident fish restoration, terrestrial habitat, anadromous hatchery funding and enhancements, and recreation. Department staff has been participating in this relicensing effort since the early 1990s.

The Department provided comments to the FERC on their Final Environmental Impact Statement for relicensing the four Middle Snake River projects of Idaho Power Company (Shoshone Falls, Upper Salmon Falls, Lower Salmon Falls, Bliss; FERC Nos. 1975, 2061, 2777, 2778). We also responded to the FERCs preliminary determinations regarding the Department's 10(j) comments. A primary issue is load following at the Bliss Project and its affects on Snake River white sturgeon. The Department recommended a cessation of load following during the sturgeon spawning, incubation, and early rearing periods. The FERC determined that our recommendation, while biologically defensible, was not feasible because the economic and societal considerations of power production outweighed the environmental benefits. The Department will continue to pursue resolution of this important issue.

The Department commented on the FERCs Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the C.J. Strike Project (FERC No. 2055) and their determinations of inconsistency regarding our 10(j) review. Again, a primary issue for the Department is load following and effects on white sturgeon. The FERCs preliminary determination was that the environmental benefits, while plausible, were not significant enough to warrant changes in operations at the facility.

The Fishery Program Coordinator, along with Department regional staff, participated in the White Sturgeon Technical Advisory Committee and coordinated the agency response to Idaho Power Company's Draft White Sturgeon Conservation Plan. This document contained Idaho Power Company's preliminary protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures for sturgeon throughout the Snake River from Shoshone Falls downstream to Lower Granite Dam.

The Department consulted with Idaho Power Company regarding the issue of fish passage at the Malad Project (FERC No. 2726) located on the Malad River, tributary to the Snake River. The Malad River supports redband trout, a state designated species of special concern. Due to the project, the lower Malad River is fragmented into three distinct reaches below the Devils Washbowl (Malad Gorge State Park). Cove Creek, a tributary to the Malad River, is also isolated from the mainstem by a diversion flume. The Department's long-term objective is to restore connectivity to the Malad River allowing volitional passage upstream and downstream, as well as providing for the restoration of fluvial redband trout. The Malad River situation offers a good opportunity to restore a wild trout population in the middle Snake River area.

Other ongoing relicensing efforts that the Department is involved in include Avista Corporation's Spokane River projects and the Box Canyon Project, owned and operated by the Pend Oreille County Public Utility District. Avista Corporation is using an alternative licensing process. The Department continued to participate in the settlement negotiations involving the Box Canyon Project.

The Fishery Program Coordinator continued to monitor applications for permit to develop hydropower on Idaho's waterways. The Department, via the Idaho Attorney General's Office, filed motions to intervene in the FERC licensing process. We also made an increased effort to monitor compliance with terms and conditions of licensed and license-exempt projects. The Department also assisted the Attorney General's Office in drafting comments on the FERCs proposed rulemaking changes for licensing hydropower projects under the Federal Power Act.

Miscellaneous Activities

The Fishery Program Coordinator continued serving on the Forest Practices Act Advisory Committee as the fisheries biologist representative. The committee's directive is to provide recommendations to the Idaho Department of Lands for proposed rule changes to the Idaho Forest Practices Act. The State Board of Land Commissioners must approve all proposed changes to the rules governing forest practices. No significant changes were made to the law this past contract year.

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of: Idaho **Name:** FISHERY PROGRAM
COORDINATION

Project: FW-7-T-9 **Title:** Water Quantity and Quality
Investigations

Subproject: 1 **Job No.:** 2

Period Covered: July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003

ABSTRACT

During the project period, I participated in ongoing negotiations with state, federal, private, and tribal representatives to resolve ESA concerns in the Salmon and Clearwater river basins. I also represented the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department) in continuing in the Snake River Basin Adjudication and state instream flow proceedings. I reviewed the Environmental Protection Agency's draft Salmonid Temperature Guidance for states and tribes and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality's draft Surface Water Monitoring Strategy document.

Author:

Cindy Robertson
Staff Biologist

OBJECTIVES

Continue to prepare and support recommendations for instream flow water rights for selected streams statewide; to be active in the Instream Flow Council as the Department representative; to coordinate the Department participation in the Snake River Basin Adjudication (SRBA); to provide Department comments on water quantity/quality issues that may impact fish, wildlife, and aquatic habitat.

RESULTS

INSTREAM FLOW PROGRAM

Lemhi River

Staff from the Attorney General's Office (AGO), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Upper Salmon Basin Watershed Project, Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR), local water user groups, the Governor's Office, and the Department participated in negotiations to meet an instream flow target to protect endangered chinook salmon migrating through and rearing in the Lemhi River below Hayden Creek. During drought periods, river flows are sufficiently low during the irrigation season that diversions can dry up the channel. Legislation was passed in 2001 to create a natural flow water bank to lease water for an instream flow of 35 cfs from the L-6 diversion to the mouth of the river. The flow is intended to allow passage of adult and juvenile chinook salmon during the low flow period, thereby avoiding a "take" and still allow continued diversion for irrigation. The Lemhi water bank is the first to allow the change of diversionary rights to an instream use and the first using natural flow rights rather than stored water. All other instream flow rights were required to go through a lengthy public information and hearing process and receive the approval of IDWR and the state legislature before they became valid.

The instream flow right is part of a larger conservation agreement implemented among the above parties to minimize the "take" of listed salmon, bull trout, and steelhead in the Lemhi River. Efforts leading to the appropriate Endangered Species Act (ESA) authorization of incidental take continued in 2002 and 2003. The agreement is organized around three implementation tiers. Tier I includes past actions that have been taken to conserve species in the Lemhi. Examples include actions such as the removal of push-up dams, reconnection of dewatered tributaries to the main stem Lemhi, and installation of riparian fencing. Tier II lists actions that will be undertaken in 2003, including the mapping of specific ditch systems where juveniles are frequently found behind fish screens that are intended to prevent their entrapment in irrigation ditches, as well as monitoring adult chinook salmon movement through critical passage reaches, and temperature and flow monitoring. Tier III actions are intended to gather additional information to establish a long-term conservation plan. Examples of proposed future actions include tributary habitat surveys and flow studies on the main stem Lemhi River above Hayden Creek.

Northern Idaho Rivers and Billingsley Creek

No action was taken on the instream flow applications for the North Fork Clearwater, Little North Fork Clearwater rivers, or Kelly and Cayuse creeks. Additional flow data and habitat analysis provided by the Forest Service is currently being reviewed, and I anticipate public information meetings to be scheduled in the fall of 2003. Public information meetings and the formal public hearing on the Billingsley Creek applications were conducted in August and September 2002. Two sections, consisting of five sub reaches of the stream, were proposed for instream flow protection encompassing about four miles of stream. The local public favorably received the applications; and a decision on the approval of the applications was approved by IDWR in October 2002, and subsequently by the 2003 Legislature. The instream flow water rights obtained are described in Table 1.

Instream Flow Council

The Instream Flow Council is an outgrowth of the National Instream Flow Program Assessment (NIFPA) project. The NIFPA project brought together instream flow coordinators from all 50 states and the seven regions of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1995 and 1996 to develop protocols for evaluating the effectiveness of their respective instream flow programs. As a result of the evaluation, participants realized that in addition to the technical aspects of the science of instream flow assessments, they needed to address legal and institutional challenges as well as public involvement in order to have a successful instream flow program. They also concluded that there was a need for continued networking among the states and to standardize the science. They further recognized commonalities in resource management and institutional characteristics between the United States and Canada, and that managers in each country could expand their effectiveness by learning from one another. The Instream Flow Council (IFC), created in 1998, was the culmination of the process started by NIFPA. The IFC, composed of state and provincial fishery and wildlife agencies, was established as a nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve the effectiveness of instream flow programs for conserving aquatic resources.

In 2002, IFC published a book, *Instream Flows for Riverine Resource Stewardship* intended as a "bluebook" of sorts that state and provincial managers could use as a standard for designing instream flow programs and studies for riverine resource management. A second edition of the book is expected out in 2004.

I have represented the Idaho Department of Fish and Game in the Instream Flow Council since its inception, first as Regional Director Elect (1998-2000), then as Regional Director. I ended my term as the director at the biennial national meeting in North Carolina in May 2002.

SNAKE RIVER BASIN ADJUDICATION

Department Water Rights

I continued to coordinate the Department participation in the SRBA during the project period. I reviewed proposed water right decrees for basins 27, 29, 35, and 63 with regional staff, Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR), and the AGO. I am currently working with Idaho Department of Water Resources to transfer use of several irrigation water rights to other uses or places of use in basins 29 and 63.

Nez Perce Tribal Water Rights

I participated on the state's technical team in the SRBA court-mandated mediation discussions with the Nez Perce Tribe (Tribe) to resolve their instream flow claims. NOAA Fisheries (formerly known as National Marine Fisheries Service) entered the mediation in 2000. I attended meetings and participated in conference calls to discuss instream flow methodologies, flow needs, and other habitat-related issues with biologists from the state, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Tribe, and NOAA Fisheries. Progress towards settlement has been made but a number of issues remain unresolved. The state, through the AGO is working to negotiate a settlement with NOAA Fisheries, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Idaho Power, multiple private parties, and the Tribe that would address concerns for improving flow and habitat conditions for anadromous and resident fish species on federal, state, and private lands; and provide the State and private individuals incidental take coverage under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). A draft Term Sheet has been circulated among the parties for review to determine if further negotiations will be fruitful. If elements of the Term Sheet cannot be agreed upon, negotiations will discontinue and the parties will proceed to litigation of the claims.

Table 1. Instream flow water rights for two sections (five sub reaches) of Billingsley Creek, near Hagerman, Idaho.

<u>Water Right</u>	<u>Sub reach Description</u>	<u>Quantity (cfs)</u>	<u>Period of Use</u>
36-8596	(1) Buckeye Ditch to Padgett Ditch	75 135	Apr. 1 to Sept. 30 Oct. 1 to Mar. 31
	(2) Padgett Ditch to Idaho Power Ditch	50 100	Apr. 1 to Sept.30 Oct. 1 to Mar. 31
	(3) Idaho Power Ditch Snake River	30	Jan. 1 to Dec. 31
36-8793	(1) T7S R14E Sect. 30 SENWSW to Sect. 30 NENWNW	26 40	Mar. 1 to Oct.31 Nov. 1 to Feb. 29
	(2) T7S R13E Sect. 13 SENWNE to Buckeye Diversion	100	Jan. 1 to Dec. 31

WATER QUALITY INVESTIGATIONS

EPA Region 10 Draft Temperature Guidance

The Department commented on the October 2002 Public Review draft of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed new guidance to Pacific Northwest states and tribes on development of water temperature standards for water quality to protect. All state agencies' comments were coordinated through the Governor's Office of Species Conservation.

Overall, the state believes the draft guidance is a workable approach for the states, but needs additional refinement. The State supported the following aspects of the guidance: use of a common metric (7-day average of daily maximums) for temperature criteria; division of salmonid rearing use into core and marginal categories; using average beginning and ending dates for seasonal uses such as spawning; recognition of the need for temperature mixing zones; and use of "natural background" provisions, recognizing that water temperature is often above or below optimum for salmonid growth and survival. The State did not support the following aspects: applying high optimal temperature criteria to all but unusually warm conditions (defined by EPA as high temperature experienced 1 year in 10). The State believes that an expectation that the criteria can be met in 1 year in 4 is more reasonable; the 20° C criterion for salmonid migration. Idaho's large, low-elevation rivers likely did not meet the 20° C criterion under "natural" conditions; the use of Use Attainability Analysis for adjusting unattainable criteria. The State expects this will create a large number of approvals of changes to the State Water Quality Standards and is concerned that EPA, based on past history, will be unable to process in a timely manner.

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of: Idaho **Name:** STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Project: FW-7-T-9 **Title:** Panhandle Region Technical Assistance

Subproject: II **Job No.:** 1

Period Covered: July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003

ABSTRACT

The Environmental Staff Biologist (ESB) for the Panhandle Region of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game provided technical assistance on more than 540 proposals, issues and developments that had the potential to affect fish and wildlife resources and the quality of outdoor experiences in the Panhandle Region. Staff from fisheries, wildlife and habitat programs provided technical assistance support to the ESB. Technical assistance took on many forms, including reviewing and commenting on project proposals and documents, verbally or in writing; making site visits; responding to telephone inquiries and complaints; and meeting with individuals and groups to discuss projects and issues. Program emphasis remained high on consultations and site visits regarding State timber harvest proposals. The number of consultations on proposals for lake and streamside development from Idaho Department of Lands remained high as well. We provided substantial technical assistance to both state and federal agencies on the impacts on fish, wildlife, and outdoor recreation of several large and numerous small Idaho Transportation Department projects. The Spokane River Hydro Relicensing Project alternative relicensing process is now fully underway, demanding a substantial amount of time and effort from Panhandle staff participating in the relicensing process.

Author:

Ray Hennekey
Environmental Staff Biologist

Technical Assistance Record 1
Period Covered: July, 2002 thru November, 2002

Agency or Group	Project reviews	Written responses	Meetings	Site visits	Phone Consults	Email, consults, corres.
U.S. Forest Service		5	2	2	5	
Bureau of Land Management					1	
Environmental Protection Agency						
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service			1		6	
U.S. Corps of Engineers		2		4	5	
NRCS			2			
BPA/CBFWA					1	
FERC/Hydro industry			18		4	
Federal Highways Administration						
Bureau of Reclamation						
Tribes						
Idaho Department of Lands		1		1	2	
Timber		3*		1	5	
Lakes		15	3	1	7	
Mining					1	
Idaho Department of Water Resources		15		4	3	
Idaho Transportation Department		1	2	1	7	
Idaho DEQ		1			6	
Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation						
City/County		5		1	1	
Developers		1	1		2	
Other industry groups (<i>includes environmental/engineering consultants</i>)		10		1	13	
Landowners/Individuals		2	1	1	11	
Media					1	
Universities						
Sportsman/School/Conservation					2	
Other States/Provinces					2	
In-house					3	
Miscellaneous (<i>complaints, referrals, etc.</i>)			1		5	
TOTAL	120 est.	61	31	17	117	Not recorded

Technical Assistance Record 2

Period Covered: December, 2002 thru June 30, 2003

Agency or Group	Project reviews	Written responses	Meetings	Site visits	Phone Consults	Email, consults., corres.
U.S. Forest Service	16	12	5		3	
Bureau of Land Management					3	
Environmental Protection Agency	1				1	1
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service			2		27	9
U.S. Corps of Engineers	1	1			3	3
NRCS			1	1	1	
BPA/CBFWA						
FERC/Hydro industry	2	2	28		7	5
Federal Highways Administration						
Bureau of Reclamation						1
Tribes	1		1		5	
Idaho Department of Lands					4	1
Timber	28	7*	1	1	3	
Lakes	35	35			2	
Mining	3	2	2	1	3	3
Idaho Department of Water Resources	25	9			1	
Idaho Transportation Department	2	1	9	3	9	1
Idaho DEQ	1	1	7	1	11	4
Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation	1	1				
City/County	68	12	1	1	1	
Developers						
Other industry groups (<i>includes environmental/engineering consultants</i>)	15	13			15	3
Landowners/Individuals	1	1	2	2	4	1
Media					2	
Universities						
Sportsman/School/Conservation			4		2	
Other States/Provinces	2		1		2	
In-house			1		1	1
Miscellaneous (<i>complaints, referrals, etc.</i>)					7	
TOTAL	202	97	66	10	117	33

* Timber sales comment letters usually addressed a number of different sales proposals.

OBJECTIVES

Provide technical assistance and information on fish and wildlife to individuals, state and federal agencies, local governments and other entities.

Coordinate and provide written responses detailing Department input on potential impacts of proposed developments on fish and wildlife, including recommendations for adequate mitigation measures for project impacts.

Provide documentation of Department positions and policy related to fish and wildlife issues.

Participate in developing Department policies, rules and regulations, and positions on issues of importance that will affect natural resource management by both Department and other agencies.

Support Department fish and wildlife management efforts by participating in fish and wildlife surveys, enforcement, and interdisciplinary teams.

RESULTS

Spokane River Hydro Relicensing (ALP)

Panhandle staff became fully involved in Avista Utilities Spokane River Relicensing (Project) alternative licensing process (ALP) this year. Within Idaho, the project has impacts on Lake Coeur d'Alene, its tributaries, and extensive wetland habitats around the lake and tributaries. The upper reach of Spokane River is also impacted. Two staff regularly participates in 4 technical workgroups (2 each); the ESB participates in an ancillary resource agency work group; and the ESB and one headquarters staff participate in the plenary sessions for the ALP. The Department has played a key role in the design and implementation of studies for the relicensing process on fisheries, wetland habitat, water quality, instream flows and more. One on-going Department fisheries project was substantially expanded in scope by combining with an Avista relicensing fisheries study.

Highway Projects

We have provided substantial technical assistance to Idaho Transportation Department and their consultants regarding numerous large and small highway projects in the Panhandle, both ongoing and proposed. This past year, we also provided substantial assistance to the US Fish and Wildlife Service in the review of Biological Assessments and to Idaho Department of Environmental Quality in their preparation of CWA Section 401 water quality certifications for ITD projects. We have also provided information and assistance to other agencies; and responded to citizen complaints regarding impacts of ongoing ITD projects on fish, wildlife, and natural resources.

Ongoing ITD projects for which we have provided substantial technical assistance include upgrades of two sections of US 95: the Copeland section in the north and US 95 from Worley to Mica, and Clark Fork Bridge replacement. Various staff from several programs, particularly habitat and wildlife programs, have been working with ITD, USFWS and USFS to design and implement a wildlife corridor mitigation and monitoring plan for the US 95 Copeland project. We have remained very involved in consultation on the US 95 Worley to Mica project as well. There have been numerous substantive changes in project design since the original EA was approved. The changes have reinitiated the review and permitting process for specific actions. We have provided assistance to ITD and other agencies to assess and mitigate the effects of numerous design or construction failures on the US 95 Worley to Mica project that resulted in environmental impacts ranging from water quality violations to stream blockages to fish passage barriers. We have also continued to provide technical assistance regarding impacts to fish and wildlife as various substantial revisions in the Worley to Mica project design have been proposed.

State Timber Sales Reviews

In the last year, we reviewed approximately 40 state timber sales for their impacts to fish and wildlife and proposed alternative treatments when appropriate. The ESB and Habitat Program biologists continued the practice of making visits to proposed and past harvest-sites with IDL staff to discuss harvest plans and evaluate potential impacts to fish and wildlife. Because past site reviews were so effective at coordinating harvest needs and protections for fish and wildlife, a number of our site visits this year were in advance of IDL developing and marking the sale; therefore, our suggestions were largely incorporated into the final prescriptions and were described in the Sales Reports we received for review. This represents a vast improvement in the old practice of commenting on sales prescriptions that were pre-determined and difficult to change based on our comments.

Miscellaneous

Workload shifted considerably in the Panhandle after Idaho Department of Water Resources abandoned its implementation of the Stream Channel Protection Act at the end of the last fiscal year. In the past, reviews of applications for Stream Alterations Permits and site visits to consult with landowners and IDWR to review impacts and devise alternative treatments was a substantial part of our effort. This year, we responded to only three stream alteration project proposals referred by the IDWR Boise office, and only one of those formally. The Corps of Engineers, which is now the sole permitting authority for instream work, has not been reliably submitting project proposals for our review and comment. The results have been (1) Corps approvals and implementation of numerous projects that have not had the benefit of a review of impacts to fish and wildlife, with subsequent unnecessary impacts to fish and wildlife resources; (2) a marked increase in the number of unpermitted and unregulated instream projects in the region, again with preventable adverse impacts; and (3) an increase in the number of complaints received regarding unpermitted instream activities, sediment discharges, etc.

Lake encroachments remain high in the region. The ESB commented on approximately 50 lake encroachment permits for IDL this past year; most were for docks and waterlines. Proliferation of private and commercial docks on public waters is a growing concern in our region,

exacerbated by clearing of riparian areas and “cleaning” of inshore areas of wood and brush needed for fish habitat. Trends are also away from wood for floatation and pilings and toward plastics for floatation and decking and metal for pilings, further reducing nearshore fish habitat.

The Panhandle ESB represented the Department on a number of technical committees, including several Watershed and Basin Advisory Groups assisting IDEQ with preparation and implementation of water quality plans (TMDLs); the Pack River Watershed Council; and the Coeur d’Alene Bull Trout Recovery Technical Team. Other Panhandle staff participated in various IDEQ Watershed Advisory Groups, Basin Advisory Groups, and local watershed councils as well.

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of: Idaho **Name:** STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Project: FW-7-T-9 **Title:** Clearwater Region Technical Assistance

Subproject: II **Job No.** 2

Period Covered: July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003

ABSTRACT

Technical assistance was provided on approximately 410 occasions on proposals, issues, and developments that might affect fish and wildlife resources in the Clearwater Region. Assistance included document review, written and verbal responses, site visits, meetings, and internal and external consultation. Primary activities included the Clearwater Elk Habitat Initiative, Senator Mike Crapo's Elk Summit, a formal appeal of the U.S. Forest Service 156,000-acre Middle Black project, continued development of the Long Gulch wetland/fishing site, U.S. 95 expansion and associated terrestrial and wetland mitigation actions, Clearwater sub-basin planning activities, Dworshak report modifications and participation on the Land Management subcommittee, and the Department's Strategic Planning efforts. Programmatic efforts continued with input and site visits to Idaho Department of Water Resources/US Corps of Engineers (COE) 404 and dredging applications, other Idaho Department of Transportation (IDOT) highway projects, Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) timber sales and other land management activities, county and community development issues, and assisting with fisheries and wildlife monitoring and public meetings. During FY 2003, the Environmental Staff Biologist (ESB) supervised the Senior Wildlife Technician position in the Clearwater Region. The primary duties of the Senior Wildlife Technician included Pheasant Initiative and wildlife depredation activities in Latah County.

Authors:

Jerome Hansen
Environmental Staff Biologist

OBJECTIVES

1. Provide technical assistance and information on fish and wildlife issues to state and federal agencies and other entities.
2. Coordinate the Department input on potential impacts of proposed developments to fish and wildlife resources, including input on the adequacy of mitigation measures.
3. Provide written responses and documentation on Department positions and policy related to fish and wildlife issues.
4. Provide internal input and comment on how Department policies, rules, regulations, and positions will affect other natural resource management agencies and private elements.
5. Support Department fish and wildlife management efforts by participating in fish and wildlife surveys, enforcement, and interdisciplinary teams.

RESULTS

Clearwater Sub-Basin Planning

During the past year, Clearwater Region personnel have worked closely with the Soil Conservation Commission, the Nez Perce Tribe (NPT), the Office of Species Conservation, and others in the development of the sub-basin assessment and plan for the Clearwater sub-basin. The assessment and plan have included both aquatic and terrestrial components. Regional staff provided data on aquatic and terrestrial species occurrence, limiting factors, needs, and Department goals and objectives. The ESB has served as the alternate on the Clearwater Policy Analysis Committee (PAC), which oversees the planning effort and the prioritization and implementation of approximately \$12 million worth of Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)-funded projects in the Clearwater sub-basin annually.

The final Clearwater Sub-basin Plan was completed in October 2002. Modifications have been in progress following review of the plan by the Independent Scientific Review Panel.

Clearwater Elk Initiative

The Department is a cooperator with the Clearwater and Nez Perce national forests, the IDL, Potlatch Corporation, COE, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, University of Idaho, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and Sportsmen in the Clearwater Elk Initiative. The Initiative has focused on three primary efforts. These include small-scale, prescribed fire projects, a large scale NEPA effort to select and treat vegetation for improving elk habitats on the North Fork of the Clearwater River, and a programmatic change in fire suppression on approximately 50,000 acres in the North Fork of the Clearwater River.

During the project year, the final EIS was released on two large programmatic restoration proposals in the Clearwater, including the Middle Black (157,000 acres) and the North Lochsa

Face (128,000 acres) projects. Both projects include a mix of prescribed burns, helicopter logging, road obliteration, and minimal road construction, and have included significant Department involvement and support.

The Clearwater National Forest (CNF) has recently been declared an “Endangered Forest” by a consortium of environmental groups in an effort to draw national attention to any future proposed timber harvest on forestlands. Some local environmental groups have openly taken positions against any future timber harvest on the CNF. Past appeals and threats of future appeals have also affected the ability of the CNF to utilize timber harvest as a tool to improve wildlife habitats and have also affected our abilities to achieve collaborative management approaches on the forest that all stakeholders can support.

In March 2003, in an unprecedented move, the Department appealed the 156,000 acre Middle-Black Forest Service Proposal, on the grounds that the proposal fell well short of any biologically significant progress toward restoring early seral habitat in the progress area.

Senator Mike Crapo’s Elk Summit

The ESB worked with Sen. Crapo’s staff on the development of the Elk Summit, a collaborative workshop on Clearwater elk issues on January 25. Participated in all planning, meeting support, coordination with other entities, and primary contact for several speakers. Developed and presented a PowerPoint presentation on elk habitat needs. The summit, facilitated by the Senator, was attended by a diverse group of sportsmen and agency personnel.

Long Gulch

Long Gulch Pond is a 40±-acre site that has been under gravel mining lease with the IDL. The site is an oxbow of the Salmon River cutoff from the river by Highway 95 near Lucile, Idaho. It currently offers some fishing for stocked trout but has significant long-term potential to provide wetland habitats and enhanced fishing recreation.

During the past year, we acquired required permits, including a Corps of Engineers 404, North Central Health District sewer permit, ITD right-of-way, USBLM cultural clearance and an IDL site plan approval and construction permit. The pond was deepened, parking lot improved, and new outhouses installed. Also developed and coordinated biological assessments for listed fish species in order to achieve concurrence from both NOAA Fisheries and the USFWS.

We are continuing to work with BLM on the development of a \$15,000 challenge cost-share grant in the shallow water wetland portion of the area.

U.S. 95 Highway Widening

The Idaho Department of Transportation (IDOT) is in the process of widening U.S. 95 from the top of Lewiston Hill to Moscow from two lanes to four lanes. The preferred alternative includes the realignment of the last five miles of the highway to a new route along Paradise Ridge,

affecting Palouse Prairie and ponderosa pine remnants and a variety of wildlife species. We prepared a detailed assessment of the potential effects of this new route and are working closely with ITD and other entities in an attempt to ensure that adequate terrestrial and aquatic mitigation is provided. We are working with ITD and their consultant in locating and designing appropriate wildlife underpasses and related fencing.

Strategic Planning

The ESB has participated on the Department's Strategic Planning working group over the last year. The plan will guide Department activities over the next 15 years. Specific activities have included the preparation of issues descriptions and the facilitation of internal and external public roundtables to collect and develop goal statements for each issue.

Other Issues

The ESB worked on an interagency team of USFS and Department employees to examine short-term options to increase predator harvest opportunities through access management. After a short public response period and meetings with the Idaho County Commissioners and Nez Perce Tribe, the group opened several roads to better coincide with the earlier spring black bear opener. The project is short-term and will cover a maximum of 3 years.

Additional issues/activities in the Clearwater Region included the continued development of the Dworshak Operational Plan, modifications to the Dworshak Wildlife Inventory report, goshawk nest protection issues on IDL timber sales, and continued recreational dredge applications and associated risks to fisheries (including lamprey).

Table 1. Summary of technical contacts in the Clearwater Region for the period July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003.

Agency or Group	Type of Contact		Total
	Written/Verbal	Meetings/ Site Visits	
US Forest Service	35	19	54
ID Dept of Lands	14	8	22
ID Dept of Water Resources	22	4	26
US Bureau of Land Management	4	1	5
US Army Corps of Engineers	14	10	24
ID Dept of Transportation	19	20	39
Power Companies	2	0	2
Bonneville Power Administration	3	2	5
Clearwater Economic Development Assoc	2	0	2
National Resources Conservation Service	4	2	6
University of Idaho	3	2	5
Idaho Outfitters and Guides	2	1	3
Idaho Dept of Environmental Quality	4	0	4
Nez Perce Tribe	10	4	14
Industry	1	1	2
In House	23	65	88
Counties/Municipal	10	3	13
Public/Individual	22	14	36
NOAA Fisheries Service	5	2	7
US Fish and Wildlife Service	5	4	9
CBFWA/ISRP/NWPPC	0	1	1
Red River TAC	2	0	2
Clearwater Policy Advisory Com	10	2	12
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation	3	0	3
Environmental Protection Agency	2	0	2
District Health	4	0	4
Federal Highways	1	1	2
Bureau of Reclamation	1	0	1
Newspaper/TV	6	2	8
Congressional Staff	4	5	9
Total	237	173	410

Table 2. Summary of recent technical assistance provided by Clearwater Region.

Agency and Report Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2001	2002
Idaho Department Water Resources	138	50	2	46	50	26
US Bureau of Land Management	5	1	36	2	4	5
US Army Corps of Engineers	924	70	17	17	27	24
US Forest Service	122	93	25	83	50	54
Idaho Department of Lands	38	6	12	29	29	22
Idaho Department of Transportation	20	26	0	18	44	39
Industry	0	2	0	0	3	2
Bonneville Power Administration	3	2	17	20	3	5
University of Idaho	7	3	8	33	4	5
County/Municipal	23	26	0	174	14	13
US Bureau of Reclamation	0	0	0	0	2	1
Nez Perce Tribe	1	2	0	5	24	14
SCS/ASCS/NRCS/FSA	6	4	0	5	9	6
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	9	5	0	1	0	0
US Fish and Wildlife Service	0	0	30	0	5	9
Idaho Outfitters and Guides Board	9	22	2	14	2	3
Power Companies	4	1	0	0	2	2
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation	0	1	8	0	0	3
Public/Individuals	12	17	2	11	20	36
Idaho Parks and Recreation	2	1	0	1	1	0
Clearwater Policy Advisory	0	0	0	0	23	12
Clearwater Economic Development Association	13	0	57	0	5	2
Idaho Department Environmental Quality	96	75	0	3	3	4
Federal Energy Management Authority	0	5	51	0	0	0
Internal	0	73	5	47	76	88
Professional	0	0	0	5	7	0
Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority and the Independent Sci. Review Panel		0	0	0	12	1
Red River TAC	0	0	0	0	5	2
Office of Species Conservation					3	0
Idaho Department of Agriculture					4	0
Environmental Protection Agency					1	2
Federal Highways					1	2
District Health						4
Newspaper/TV						8
Congressional Staff						9
NOAA Fisheries						7
Total	52	438	370	389	451	410

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of: Idaho **Name:** STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Project: FW-7-T-9 **Title:** Southwest Region Technical Assistance

Subproject: II **Job No.:** 3

Period Covered: July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003

ABSTRACT

During the period covered by this report, the Southwest Region Environmental Staff Biologist (ESB) provided comments, technical reviews, and support on approximately 249 occasions to federal and state agencies, local governments, individuals, and private organizations. Assistance included both written and verbal conveyance of anticipated effects to fish and wildlife populations or their associated habitats and recommendations to minimize or mitigate impacts.

Significant activities that required extensive amounts of time included: participation with Ada, Canyon, Boise, and Elmore County Planning and Zoning subdivisions and conditional use permits, U.S. Forest Service land management projects, transportation projects, Idaho Department of Lands leases, and other state and federal land management activities. Activities were coordinated and reviewed with the appropriate regional staff and state office personnel for accuracy, thoroughness, and adherence to Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department) policies.

Author:

Eric Leitzinger
Environmental Staff Biologist

OBJECTIVES

Provide and coordinate fish and wildlife-related technical assistance and comment to other government agencies (state, federal, and local), organizations, and private individuals. Protect and/or enhance fish and wildlife habitat.

METHODS

Document review, literature research, field inspection, and consultation with appropriate policy, management, and research personnel were used to provide comments and recommendations on actions proposed by private entities, local governments, and state and federal agencies.

RESULTS

The Southwest Region ESB provided reviews and/or comments for the following entities on the listed number of occasions:

AGENCY/ENTITY	TECHNICAL COMMENTS OR REVIEW	MEETINGS/SITE VISITS	TOTAL
U. S. Forest Service	27	1	28
Bureau of Land Management	5	3	8
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	3	6	9
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	0	4	4
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation	3	3	6
Idaho Dept. of Water Resources	26	0	26
Idaho Dept. of Environmental Quality	2	0	2
Idaho Dept. of Lands	11	7	18
Idaho Transportation Dept.	5	1	6
AGENCY/ENTITY	TECHNICAL COMMENTS OR REVIEW	MEETINGS/SITE VISITS	TOTAL
Idaho Department of Fish and Game	2	2	4
County/City/Private	118	16	134
Idaho Power Co.	0	3	3
Army National Guard	1	0	1
TOTALS	203	46	249

MAJOR PROJECTS

Major projects worked on included reviews and letters for subdivisions, conditional use permits, and other planning and zoning projects, such as the review and comments on Canyon County's Draft Comprehensive Plan and Draft Zoning Ordinance; review and appeal of the proposed Golden Hand Mine in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness; review and comment on the Army National Guard's Orchard Training Range Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment; and review and comment on Idaho Power Company's Hells Canyon Dam complex relicensing application. Activities that are just beginning or are ongoing, and will be major activities this next year, include the Bureau of Land Management plan revisions for Bruneau Resource Area and Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area, Idaho Power Relicensing of the Hells Canyon Dams, and U.S. Forest Service travel plan revisions.

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of: Idaho **Name:** STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Project: FW-7-T-9 **Title:** Magic Valley Region Technical Assistance

Subproject: II **Job No.:** 4

Period Covered: July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003

ABSTRACT

During the period July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003, the Magic Valley Region environmental staff biologist provided technical review, comment, and support on approximately 290 occasions to federal and state agencies, local governments, and individual and private organizations. Technical assistance provided by the environmental staff biologist addressed direct and indirect impacts to fish and wildlife populations and/or habitats. Stream channel alterations, hydropower, urban development, public land livestock grazing, and wind energy development constituted the majority of the workload. All activities were coordinated and reviewed with the appropriate regional staff and state office personnel for accuracy, thoroughness, and adherence to Idaho Department of Fish and Game policy.

Author:

Mike McDonald
Environmental Staff Biologist

OBJECTIVES

To provide technical review, comment, and support to federal and state agencies, local governments, and individual and private organizations regarding projects or activities which affect fish or wildlife populations and/or habitat in the Magic Valley Region.

METHODS

The Magic Valley Region environmental staff biologist (ESB) relied on regional staff, field inspections, literature searches, and professional expertise to form technical comments and furnish recommendations on a variety of aquatic and terrestrial management proposals, which potentially affected fish and wildlife populations and associated habitats.

RESULTS

The following is a breakdown of technical assistance provided by the Magic Valley Region ESB for the period July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003. Each contact represents a meeting, field inspection, tour, or written correspondence:

Agency or Group	Number of written responses, meetings or site visits
U.S. Forest Service (USFS)	17
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	87
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	3
Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)	3
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE)	2
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)	15
National Park Service (NPS)	3
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	4
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	1
Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR)	76
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)	9
Idaho Department of Lands (IDL)	4
Idaho Department of Transportation (IDOT)	10
City/County Government and Private Development	44
Idaho Power Company (IPC)	11
TOTAL	290

MAJOR PRODUCTS OF INTEREST

Bureau of Land Management

Time spent by the ESB and regional wildlife habitat biologists in technical review of BLM projects dominated this reporting period. Technical review focused on grazing related issues, wind energy development, and fire management. Grazing related projects included review of rangeland health assessments, requests for temporary nonrenewable (TNR) grazing, and proposals to convert TNR to active grazing preference. Three large-scale wind energy development proposals are in various stages of planning and implementation in the Magic Valley Region including Cotterel Mountain, Browns Bench, and Bennett Hills. In addition, the ESB served as a member of the Upper Snake River District's Fire Management Draft Amendment interdisciplinary team.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

All contacts with the USFWS during the project period dealt with various Endangered Species Act issues. Most correspondence was related to bull trout.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Contacts with the COE were related to jurisdictional issues and coordinating technical assistance on stream channel alteration proposals throughout the region.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

The ESB provided technical assistance on four new license applications for small hydroelectric facilities in the region. In addition, time was dedicated to meetings, tours, and technical review for relicensing of IPC's Malad River units.

Idaho Department of Water Resources

Site inspection and evaluation of Stream Channel Alteration Permit applications dominated technical assistance with the IDWR and the COE. The majority of applications were for projects in the Big Wood River and Silver Creek Valleys.

The ESB reviewed and inspected 10 applications for new water rights, transfers, and changes in point of diversion.

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

The ESB attended meetings with the DEQ to provide input on water quality issues. Meetings primarily focused on the Total Maximum Daily Load management process for the Little Wood River, the Big Wood River, and Camas Creek. In addition, the ESB provided input to DEQ concerning toxic spills, fish kills, and other water quality violations.

City/County Government and Private Development

The ESB and regional wildlife habitat biologists provided technical assistance on a variety of development proposals throughout the region from private developers, recreation districts, and various city and county municipalities. The majority of development proposals were from Blaine and Twin Falls Counties.

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of: Idaho Name: STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Project No.: FW-7-T-9 Title: Southeast Region Technical Assistance

Subproject No.: II Job No.: 5

Period Covered: July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003

ABSTRACT

The Southeast Region Environmental Staff Biologist (ESB), with support from wildlife, fisheries, and habitat staff, provided technical assistance to public and private organizations in the form of field inspections, meeting attendance, project document reviews, and verbal and written response on some 230 occasions. The largest issues in the Southeast Region during the year included several large Idaho Department of Transportation projects and the continuation of the amendment process on the Caribou Forest plan. Underlying these issues is the potential ESA listing of the sage grouse and possible resubmission of the petition for ESA listing of Bonneville cutthroat trout. In addition, human population expansion from the Wasatch Front in Utah continues to impact winter range and other important wildlife habitats in southern counties. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department) continues to review proposed subdivisions and provide recommendations to cities/counties to protect important wildlife habitats. Finally, numerous watershed advisory groups (WAGs) and several basin area groups (BAGs) meetings were attended.

Author:

Jim J. Mende
Environmental Staff Biologist

OBJECTIVES

To provide technical assistance to city, county, private, state, and federal entities in matters effecting fish and wildlife populations and habitats.

METHODS

Technical assistance was provided through reviews of permit applications, project plans, National Environmental Policy Act documents, site inspections, and meeting attendance.

RESULTS

The major categories for technical assistance in the Southeast Region during this report period were area-wide assessments, water-related issues, several large Idaho Department of Transportation projects and the culmination of the planning process (Table 1). Numerous basin area group (BAG) and watershed advisory group (WAG) meetings were attended as part of the state process, to improve water quality in Idaho's streams and rivers.

Caribou National Forest Plan Amendments

The Caribou National Forest has continued the planning process on Caribou Forest plan. Forest personnel prepared the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), the Final Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP), and the Record of Decision (ROD) for the forest. The relationship between sage grouse habitat and grazing and prescribed burning practices on the forest continues to be one of the key issues. The ESB is working closely with other Department staff to ensure that sage grouse habitat is protected and improved in the future.

Planning and Zoning

People continue to move into Bear Lake, Franklin, and Oneida counties to escape the higher costs and crowding in northern Utah along the Wasatch Front. The ESB has also attended county planning meetings and has provided recommendations on a number of proposed subdivisions impacting big game winter range and other wildlife habitat.

Idaho Department of Transportation

The ESB has been involved in numerous bridge replacement and road modification projects in the last year, including widening of U.S. 89 between Montpelier and Geneva continues. This major widening project through Montpelier Canyon, begun in May 2002, has a completion date of October 2003. The Idaho Department of Transportation is beginning long-term use planning

and widening U.S. 30 (from McCammon to the Wyoming border), U.S. 89 (from Montpelier to the Utah border) and U.S. 91 (from Downey to the Utah border). Issues surrounding all of these projects include wetland impacts, big game migration barriers, direct mortality from collisions, direct loss of wildlife habitat, water quality and fisheries impacts, and adequate mitigation.

Professional Development

In an attempt to effectively communicate fish and wildlife concerns, particularly to federal resource management agencies, the ESB has attended several professional development workshops/seminars. The following is an abbreviated listing:

- Conserving Endangered Species on Non-Federal Lands (USFWS),
- Conservation Genetics Workshop (Dr. Lisette Waits, University of Idaho),
- Endangered Species Act and Section 7 Consultations (USFWS)
- Wind Energy Coordination Meeting (BLM),
- State Historical Preservation Office Activities (IDT)
Section – Society for Range Management)
- Restoration and Management of Sagebrush/Grass Communities
(various federal and State of Nevada agencies),
- Repairing Pacific Northwest Rangelands
(Washington Department of Natural Sciences and Pacific NW)

Committee Participation

The Southeast Region ESB participated on and cooperated with the following committees:

American Falls Watershed Advisory Group
Bear River Basin Advisory Group
Bear River Basin Water Quality Task Force
Blackfoot River Watershed Advisory Group
Portneuf River Watershed Council

Water Quality

Implementation of SB 1284 established basin advisory groups (BAGs) for the Bear and Upper Snake rivers. Blackfoot and Portneuf watershed groups have developed and are active in reviewing and prioritizing 319 (water quality improvement) projects. The ESB attended the Watershed meetings and provided technical assistance.

Table 1. Summary of technical assistance provided by the Southeast Region ESB, 1 July 2002 through 30 June 2003.

Agency/Entity	Technical Comments or Review	Meetings/Site Visits	Total
Idaho Dept of Agriculture	2	--	2
Idaho Dept of Environment Quality	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>13</u>
Idaho Dept of Lands	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
Idaho Dept of Water Resources	<u>11</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>16</u>
Idaho Transportation Dept. (ITD)	<u>10</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>31</u>
In House Communications	16	2	18
Indian Tribes	2	1	3
Individuals	8	10	18
PacifiCorp	3	3	6
Professional Development	2	10	12
Southeast Idaho Cities	4	--	4
Southeast Idaho Counties P&Z	9	2	11
US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE)	7	2	9
US Bureau of Land Management BLM)	12	13	25
US Federal Highways Admin. (FWMA)	1	2	3
US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	2	--	2
US Forest Service (USFS)	10	15	25
US Natural Resource Cons Service (NRCS	5	6	11
US Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)	4	3	7
Mining Companies	4	4	8
Williams Pipeline Corp.	4	2	6
Basin Area Groups (BAGs)	1	6	7
Watershed Advisory Groups (WAGs)			
Totals			239

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of: Idaho **Name:** STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Project FW-7-T-9 **Title:** Upper Snake Technical Assistance

Subproject: II **Job No.:** 6

Period Covered: July 1, 2002 - June 30, 2003

ABSTRACT

During the contract period, the Upper Snake Region Environmental Staff Biologist (ESB) provided comment, technical review, and support on approximately 207 occasions to federal and state agencies, local governments, individuals, and private organizations. Assistance included both written and verbal conveyance of anticipated effects to fish and wildlife populations, their associated habitats, implications to hunting and fishing, and recommendations to minimize or mitigate impacts.

Significant activities that required extensive amounts of time included: participation with the stream channel alteration proposals, 404 wetland alteration proposals, coordination of hydropower related reviews, new water rights and transfers, reservoir and river flow management, transportation projects, Bonneville Power Administration's sub-basin summaries and fish and wildlife mitigation proposals, and other private and state and federal land management activities. Activities were coordinated and reviewed with the appropriate regional staff and state office personnel for accuracy, thoroughness, and adherence to Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department) policies.

Authors:

Don Kemner, Gary Vecellio
Environmental Staff Biologist

OBJECTIVES

Provide and coordinate fish and wildlife related technical assistance and comment to other government agencies (state, federal, and local), organizations, and private individuals. Protect and/or enhance fish and wildlife habitat.

METHODS

Document review, literature research, field inspection, and consultation with appropriate policy management, and research personnel were used to provide comments and recommendations on actions proposed by private entities, local governments, and state and federal agencies.

RESULTS

The ESB provided technical assistance reviews and comments for the following entities on the listed number of occasions. Each contact represents a meeting, site visit, or written response:

U.S. Forest Service (USFS)	18
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	11
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	4
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE)	19
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)	15
Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)	0
Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)	17
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	4
Idaho Dept. of Water Resources (IDWR)	29
Idaho Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ)	8
Idaho Dept. of Lands (IDL)	9
Idaho Transportation Dept. (ITD)	15
Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game (Department)	22
City or County Government	2
Idaho Dept. of Parks and Recreation	5
Non-government organizations	11
East-Central Idaho Rural Community Grants	2
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare	1
Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Lab	7
Low Impact Hydro Institute	2
Private Business or Individual	6
Total	207

SUMMARY OF MAJOR PROJECTS

Major projects included: recommendations for flows on the Henrys Fork and South Fork Snake River; Bull Trout Recovery Plan for the Little Lost Valley, Trumpeter Swan Implementation Plan, working on a BLM Environmental Impact Statement ID team for fire management, Buffalo River hydro relicensing, and attempting to obtain upstream fish passage on Targhee and Howard Creeks.

Flow Recommendation

Several meetings were attended to discuss flows, ramping rates, and timing of releases from reservoirs on the Henrys Fork Snake River and/or South Fork Snake River. Parties participating in the meetings included Bureau of Reclamation, irrigators, Trout Unlimited, Henrys Fork Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, City of Idaho Falls, North Fork Reservoir Company, Pacificorp, Northwest Power Services, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Flow recommendations had implications to fishing on the rivers, flows for fish spawning and production, and trumpeter swans.

Bull Trout Recovery Plan

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began implementation of recovery strategies for the Little Lost River bull trout population. The ESB provided recommendations for development and design of fish passage at the sink trench diversion.

Trumpeter Swan Implementation Plan

Water flow management recommendations for migrating and wintering trumpeter swans on the Henrys Fork River were provided at the Adverse Storage meeting (September, 2002) and a water management meeting conducted by Bureau of Reclamation (October 2002). Representatives from Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Fremont-Madison Irrigation District, Ashton Hydro, North Fork Reservoir Company, Henrys Fork Foundation, City of Idaho Falls Hydro, The Nature Conservancy, and Island Park Hydro attended one or both meetings. Water management recommendations were consistent with flow and storage recommendations in the Trumpeter Swan Implementation Plan.

Bureau of Land Management Environmental Impact Statement

The ESB is a core member of a BLM ID team working on an environmental impact statement for a fire management plan for the BLM Upper Snake Resource Area (Idaho Falls, Pocatello, Burley, and Shoshone BLM districts). The EIS will provide fire (wildlife fire and prescribed fire) management direction and restoration and rehabilitation direction for the BLM districts by amending existing management plans. This assignment was transferred to the Magic Valley ESB (Mike McDonald) when Don Kemner transferred to a new job in late November, 2002.

Buffalo River Hydro Relicensing

The ESB coordinated efforts to investigate feasibility of obtaining upstream fish passage on Targhee and Howard Creeks, both tributaries to Henrys Lake. Involved participants included Idaho Transportation Department, US Forest Service, Idaho Department of Water Resources, the Henrys Fork Foundation, and private landowners. Three fish passage barriers were described and discussions continue on development of passage structures and funding.

Submitted by:

Scott Grunder
Fishery Program Coordinator

Cindy Robertson
Staff Biologist

Ray Hennekey
Environmental Staff Biologist

Jerome Hansen
Environmental Staff Biologist

Eric Leitzinger
Environmental Staff Biologist

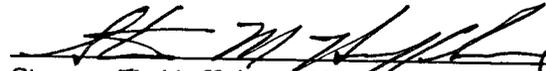
Mike McDonald
Environmental Staff Biologist

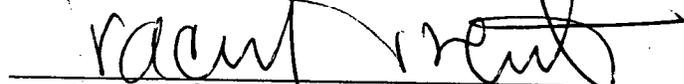
Jim Mende
Environmental Staff Biologist

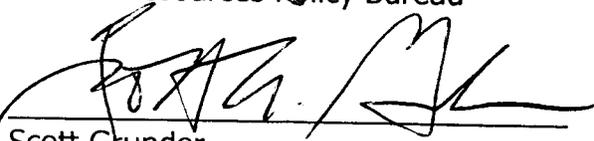
Gary Vecellio
Environmental Staff Biologist

Approved by:

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME


Steven M. Huffaker, Director


Tracey Trent, Chief
Natural Resources Policy Bureau


Scott Grunder
Fishery Program Coordinator