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Statewide Technical Assistance

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT
PROJECT FW-7-T-8

Subproject I, Job No. 1: Fisheries Program Coordination and Supervision
Subproject I, Job No. 2: Statewide Quantity Investigation
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, 2001 to June 30, 2002

BY

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JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of:	Idaho	**Name:**	STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
Project:	FW-7-T-8	**Title:**	Statewide Supervision and Coordination
Subproject:	I	**Job No.:**	1

Period Covered: July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002

ABSTRACT

During the contract period, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) continued consulting with Idaho Power Company (IPC) for the relicensing of hydroelectric facilities on the Snake River. This includes the Middle Snake projects, C.J. Strike, Malad, and Hells Canyon. The IDFG submitted relevant comments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and IPC. IDFG staff also participated in relicensing efforts for PacifiCorp's Bear River projects and Avista Corporation's Spokane River projects. Of note, a settlement agreement was reached with PacifiCorp on their Bear River projects. It establishes significant funding for the restoration, enhancement, and protection of Bonneville cutthroat trout in the Bear River drainage.

As in the last contract year, in coordination with the Office of the Idaho Attorney General, the IDFG has reviewed a number of preliminary applications for permit to develop hydropower on Idaho rivers, streams, and canals. We intervened in many of these proposals since we believe these projects could adversely impact fish, wildlife, and riparian resources.

The Fishery Program Coordinator served his first full year as the fisheries biologist representative on the Idaho Forest Practices Act Advisory Committee. Modest changes to the current rules were deemed acceptable by the interdisciplinary committee to protect fish and wildlife habitats.

Author:

Scott A. Grunder
Fishery Program Coordinator

OBJECTIVES

To supervise and coordinate IDFG 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

IDFG personnel review proposals to construct, modify, or relicense hydroelectric 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 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 is 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, IDFG personnel make a long-term commitment to assist the licensee during the lengthy FERC process.

The IDFG has the primary authority to manage all fish and wildlife in Idaho. Idaho Code specifically charges the IDFG to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage these resources. We serve as the 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 state office and regional personnel to ensure compliance and consistency with IDFG policy.

RESULTS

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Process

During the contract year, as per our authority under the Federal Power Act, the IDFG submitted formal comments to the FERC describing in detail what we recommend as necessary measures and conditions to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife populations and habitats associated with relicensing of hydropower projects. These projects included IPC's Middle Snake River projects (Shoshone Falls, Upper Salmon Falls, Lower Salmon Falls, Bliss) and C.J. Strike. We also provided formal comments to the FERC on the Pend Oreille Public Utility District #1 Box Canyon Project (situated in Washington and Idaho) and the Bear River projects of PacifiCorp. Our comments and recommended terms and conditions were developed and submitted in response to formal requests from the FERC as per their relicensing process.

IPC continued its collaborative efforts to relicense the Hells Canyon complex. IDFG staff participated in aquatic, terrestrial, recreation, resource management, and collaborative work groups. IPC has released the majority of resource study results. These draft documents were released prior to issuance of a draft license application for the projects that will be submitted to the FERC by IPC in the fall 2002. While the terrestrial and recreation resource work groups were able to develop draft protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures, the aquatic resource work group did not. IDFG staff also participated in listed mollusk and white sturgeon conservation planning efforts. These are part of broader Snake River Basin-wide efforts in IPC's relicensing of its hydropower projects.

IDFG staff continued to work collaboratively with IPC and others in relicensing of the Malad River hydropower project. We provided comments to IPC on their draft license application. Major issues associated with the facilities are fish passage, genetics, and entrainment.

Avista Corporation (formerly Washington Water Power) began a collaborative effort to relicense the Spokane River hydroelectric projects located in Washington and Idaho. Only the Post Falls project is situated in Idaho. Both Panhandle Region and State Office staff of the IDFG will participate in this process. We were involved in the settlement agreement reached with Avista Corporation in relicensing its Clark Fork River projects.

The IDFG was involved in reaching settlement with PacifiCorp in relicensing efforts for the Bear River projects (Soda, Grace-Cove, Oneida). An inter-agency team, non-governmental organizations, and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes were part of the negotiations and eventual settlement. PacifiCorp will provide significant funding to

protect, restore, and enhance habitat for Bonneville cutthroat trout in the Bear River drainage. This could involve enhancing riparian-wetlands, restoring connectivity, improving streamflows, developing a conservation broodstock, and improving water quality.

As reported last year, we have seen renewed interest in developing hydropower in Idaho. This scenario is probably largely a result of the supposed energy crisis the United States experienced two years ago, most noticeably in California. Preliminary applications for permit have been submitted to the FERC for some new areas, but primarily on sites that have been previously studied for hydropower potential. Many of these sites have not previously been developed for economic, social, or biological reasons. The IDFG has been coordinating its efforts with the Office of the Idaho Attorney General. We intervened in many instances due to the potential impact on aquatic and terrestrial resources.

Miscellaneous Activities

The Fishery Program Coordinator served his first full year as the fisheries biologist representative on the Forest Practices Act Advisory Committee. The Committee's direction is to provide recommendations to the Idaho Department of Lands for changing the rules pertaining to Idaho's Forest Practices Act. The State Land Board must approve all proposed changes.

The changes proposed by the interdisciplinary committee include large woody debris recruitment, leave trees in stream protection zones, wildlife movement corridors and escape cover, and clearcut size.

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of:	Idaho	**Name:**	FISHERY PROGRAM COORDINATION
Project:	FW-7-T-8	**Title:**	Water Quantity Investigations
Subproject:	I	**Job No.:**	2

Period Covered: July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002

ABSTRACT

During the project period, I participated in ongoing negotiations with state, federal, private, and tribal representatives to resolve Endangered Species Act (ESA) concerns in the Salmon and Clearwater river basins. I also represented the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) in continuing in the Snake River Basin Adjudication and state instream flow proceedings.

Author:

Cindy Robertson
Fishery 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 IDFG representative; to coordinate the IDFG participation in the Snake River Basin Adjudication (SRBA); to provide IDFG 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), US 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 IDFG 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 waterbank 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 waterbank 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. It is also the first time the State has allowed water to be delivered to an unperfected instream flow water right application. 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, bulltrout, and steelhead in the Lemhi River. Efforts leading to the appropriate ESA authorization of incidental take continued in 2002. This agreement is organized around three implementation tiers. Tier I includes past actions that have been taken to conserve species in the Lemhi. Tier

II lists actions that will be undertaken in 2002, and Tier III identifies actions to further improve flow and habitat conditions in 2003 and establish a long-term plan.

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. I anticipate public information meetings to be scheduled in early 2003. Public information meetings and the formal public hearing on the Billingsley Creek applications were conducted in August and September 2002. Three reaches of the stream have been proposed for instream flow protection encompassing about four miles of stream. The applications were favorably received by the local public and a decision on the approval of the applications is pending.

Instream Flow Council

I was active in the Instream Flow Council in 2001-2002. I attended the national meeting in Crossnore, North Carolina in May 2002 where representatives from 38 states and 2 Canadian provincial fish and game agencies participated in discussions about current instream flow issues.

SNAKE RIVER BASIN ADJUDICATION

Department Water Rights

I continued to coordinate the IDFG participation in the SRBA during the project period. I reviewed proposed water right decrees for basins 35, 37, 63, and 65 with regional staff, IDWR, and the AGO. Several rights in basin 65 were dropped because we had discontinued use of the water and didn't anticipate resuming use in the future.

Objection filed by the North Side and Twin Falls Canal companies to our IDFG claims in basin 35 have been resolved. New water management rules have been promulgated and a settlement agreement has been negotiated that specify when and how mitigation for impacts on senior surface right holders by junior groundwater pumpers will be required. IDWR will included language in the General Provisions specifying that the waters of basin 35 will be conjunctively managed with Snake River water. These new

rules will apply to users in the event of a water call. IDFG water rights in basin 35 have been decreed.

Federal Reserve Water Rights

I participated on the State's technical team in the SRBA Court-mandated mediation discussions with the Nez Perce Tribe (NPT). National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) also entered the mediation on behalf of the NPT in 2000. I attended meetings to discuss instream flow needs and other habitat-related issues with biologists from the NPT and NMFS. Progress towards settlement has been made but a number of issues remain to be resolved. The State is working to negotiate a settlement with NMFS and the NPT that would address concerns for improving habitat for anadromous and resident fish species on State and private lands and provide the State and private individuals protection from enforcement actions under the ESA. Negotiations will continue through 2002.

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of:	Idaho	**Name:**	STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
Project:	FW-7-T-8	**Title:**	Panhandle Region Technical Assistance
Subproject:	II	**Job No.:**	1

Period Covered: July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002

ABSTRACT

The Environmental Staff Biologist for the Panhandle Region of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game provided technical assistance on over 540 occasions during the reporting period.

Author:

Ray Hennekey
Environmental Staff Biologist

Table 1. Summary of technical assistance provided by the Panhandle Region Environmental Staff Biologist for July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002.

Agency or Group	Number of Written Responses, Mtgs, or Site Visits	Telephone Consultations
US Forest Service	14	4
Bureau of Land Management	2	1
Environmental Protection Agency	3	
US Fish and Wildlife Service	4	6
U.S. Corps of Engineers	9	12
Natural Resources Conservation Service		3
Bonneville Power Admin/Columbia Fish and Wildlife Authority	3	
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission/Hydro industry	2	11
Federal Highways Administration		2
Bureau of Reclamation		2
Tribes	2	1
Idaho Department of Lands	85 (inclusive)	17 (inclusive)
Timber		
Lakes		
Mining		
Idaho Department of Water Resources	62	20
Idaho Department of Transportation	21	9
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality	20	12
Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation	1	
City/County	71	5
Developers	3	5
Other industry groups *(includes environmental/engineering consultants)*	20	37
Landowners/Individuals	5	29
Media		1
Universities		
Sportsman/School/Conservation	6	12
Other States/Provinces		3
In-house	6	
Miscellaneous *(complaints, referrals, etc.)*	1	9
TOTAL	**340**	**201**

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of:	Idaho	**Name:**	STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
Project:	FW-7-T-8	**Title:**	Clearwater Region Technical Assistance
Subproject:	II	**Job No.:**	2

Period Covered: July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002

ABSTRACT

Technical assistance was provided on approximately 451 occasions on proposals, issues, and developments that might affect fish and wildlife resources in the Clearwater Region. Assistance included document review, written and verbal response, site visits, meetings, and internal and external consultation. Primary activities included Clearwater sub-basin planning activities, Clearwater Elk Initiative, U.S. 95 expansion and associated terrestrial and wetland mitigation actions, continued development of the Long Gulch wetland/fishing site, and the Camas Prairie Railroad abandonment/stream restoration effort. Programmatic efforts continued with input and site visits to Idaho Department of Water Resources/US Corps of Engineers (COE) stream alteration proposals 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 the course of FY 2002, the Environmental Staff Biologist (ESB) began supervising the Senior Wildlife Technician position in the Clearwater Region. The Senior Wildlife Technician will be involved in a variety of activities, including Pheasant Initiative and wildlife depredation activities in Latah County, coordination with the Latah Natural Resources Conservation Service office, and access and other habitat issues.

Authors:

Jerome Hansen
Environmental Staff Biologist

Wildlife - Jay Crenshaw, Sam McNeil, Steven Nadeau, George Pauley, Jim White, Miles Benker, Rita Dixon, and James Teare

Fisheries - Ed Schriever, Jody Brostrom, Larry Barrett, Chris Claire, and Tim Cochnauer

OBJECTIVES

1. Provide technical assistance and information on fish and wildlife issues to state and federal agencies and other entities.

2. Coordinate IDFG 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 IDFG positions and policy related to fish and wildlife issues.

4. Provide internal input and comment on how IDFG policies, rules, regulations, and positions will affect other natural resource management agencies and private elements.

5. Support IDFG 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 IDFG 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.

As part of the Clearwater Terrestrial Assessment, the IDFG sub-contracted with the NPT to develop a comprehensive wildlife database for the Clearwater Region. During the project year, the first iteration of the wildlife database was completed. The work has been conducted by a temporary wildlife biologist supervised by the IDFG's Nongame Biologist.

The database structure was developed in coordination with Conservation Data Center and StreamNet staff in Boise.

Other sub-basin activities include continued coordination with the NPT, Office of Species Conservation, and BPA on the development and proposed implementation of the Salmon River Tributary Enhancement project. The primary goal of this project (proposed for BPA funding) is to protect and/or enhance riparian habitats on Lower Salmon River tributaries important for A-run steelhead and other fish and wildlife species.

Clearwater Elk Initiative

The IDFG 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 500,00 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 IDFG involvement and support. However, the implementation of both projects is threatened by environmental appeals.

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 forest lands. 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.

Use of prescribed fire and wild fire for resource benefit will continue to come under careful public scrutiny, due to watershed issues and to a culture that continues to perpetuate fires as catastrophic events with no benefits. This will be a continuing obstacle as we look for elk habitat improvements through large-scale vegetation treatments and programmatic changes in fire suppression.

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 a May 16, 2001 interagency site visit to the Long Gulch area, IDL expressed a willingness to pursue the steps necessary to ensure protection of the site in perpetuity. During the past year, we finalized a 25-year lease of the site from IDL, including a mineral exclusion to insure protection of the site for the next 25 years. Site visits have been conducted, a draft site plan prepared, and work continues on permits for the installation of a toilet for fisherman, fishing docks, pond enhancements, and new parking areas. We also coordinated 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 selecting final a alternative for 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 if this route is chosen.

Camas Prairie Railroad Abandonment

In the last year, the owner of the Camas Prairie Railroad, stretching from Spaulding to Grangeville, has announced plans to abandon the railroad. Clearwater regional personnel worked closely with all involved parties to ensure that restoration of Lapwai Creek would be a stipulation of any abandonment procedure. The Surface Transportation Board concurred and required the owner of the railroad to provide a stream restoration plan. In the last year, we have worked with the NPT, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and others to develop a restoration plan, focused on removing ballasts from floodplain areas and modifying or removing bridges causing on-

going stream degradation. The IDFG helped negotiate a $50,000 fund for Lapwai Creek restoration, which the NPT will manage.

Other Issues

Additional issues/activities in the Clearwater Region included a significant dredging and levi raise proposal by the COE in Lower Granite pool, the preliminary establishment of critical habitat for bull trout, work with the Meadow Face stewardship group, the continued development of the Dworshak Operational Plan, completion of the Red River HEP 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, 2001 to June 30, 2002.

Agency or Group	Type of Contact		
	Written/ Verbal	Meetings/ Site Visits	Total
US Forest Service	31	19	50
ID Dept of Lands	19	10	29
ID Dept of Water Resources	42	8	50
US Bureau of Land Management	4	0	4
US Army Corps of Engineers	16	11	27
ID Dept of Transportation	32	12	44
Power Companies	2	0	2
Bonneville Power Administration	3	0	3
Clearwater Economic Development Assoc	3	2	5
Professional	3	4	7
Idaho Parks and Recreation	1	0	1
National Resources Conservation Service	4	4	8
University of Idaho	2	2	4
Idaho Outfitters and Guides	1	1	2
Idaho Dept of Environmental Quality	2	1	3
Nez Perce Tribe	15	9	24
Timber Industry	0	3	3
In House	23	53	76
Counties/Municipal	10	4	14
Public/Individual	12	8	20
National Marine Fisheries Service	10	0	10
US Fish and Wildlife Service	5	0	5
CBFWA/ISRP	4	8	12
Red River TAC	3	2	5
Office of Species Conservation	1	2	3
ID Dept of Agriculture	0	4	4
Clearwater Policy Advisory Com	3	20	23
Soil Conservation Commission	1	0	1
Environmental Protection Agency	1	0	1
FEMA	1	0	1
Surface Transportation Board	4	3	7
Federal Highways	1	0	1
Bureau of Reclamation	2	0	2
Total	**261**	**190**	**451**

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

Agency and Report Year	1993	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2001
Idaho Dep. of Water Resources	---	---	138	50	2	46	50
US Bureau of Land Management	---	---	5	1	36	2	4
US Army Corps of Engineers	1	---	9	24	70	17	27
US Forest Service	11	10	122	93	25	83	50
Idaho Department of Lands	2	---	38	6	12	29	29
ID Department of Transportation	---	---	20	26	---	18	44
Potlatch Corporation	4	---	---	2	---	---	3
Bonneville Power Administration	---	---	3	2	17	20	3
University of Idaho	---	---	7	3	8	33	4
County/Municipal	---	---	23	26	---	174	14
US Bureau of Reclamation	---	---	---	---	---	---	2
Nez Perce Tribe	---	---	1	2	---	5	24
SCS/ASCS/NRCS/FSA	2	---	6	4	---	5	9
Federal Energy Regulatory Comm	---	---	9	5	---	1	---
US Fish and Wildlife Service	---	---	---	---	30	---	5
ID Outfitters and Guides Board	1	---	9	22	2	14	2
Forest Industry	---	---	3	---	---	6	---
Power Companies	---	---	4	1	---	---	2
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation	---	---	---	1	8	---	---
Public/ Individuals	5	---	12	17	2	11	20
Idaho Parks and Recreation	2	---	2	1	---	2	1
Public Advisory Group	---	---	---	0	---	---	0
Clearwater Economic Develop Ass	---	---	13	0	57	0	5
Idaho Dept of Environ Quality	---	---	96	75	0	3	3
Federal Energy Mgt Authority	---	---	---	5	51	0	0
Internal	---	---	---	73	5	47	76
Professional	---	---	---	---	---	5	7
Col Basin Fish & Wildl Authority & the Independ Sci Review Panel	---	---	---	---	---	---	12
Red River TAC	---	---	---	---	---	---	5
Office of Species Conservation	---	---	---	---	---	---	3
Idaho Dept of Agriculture	---	---	---	---	---	---	4
Clearwater Policy Analysis Comm	---	---	---	---	---	---	23
Environmental Protection Agency	---	---	---	---	---	---	1
FEMA	---	---	---	---	---	---	1
Surface Transportation Board	---	---	---	---	---	---	7
Federal Highways	---	---	---	---	---	---	1
Total	**29**	**10**	**572**	**438**	**370**	**389**	**451**

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of:	Idaho	**Name:**	STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
Project:	FW-7-T-8	**Title:**	Southwest Region Technical Assistance
Subproject:	II	**Job No.:**	3

Period Covered: July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002

ABSTRACT

During the period covered by this report, the Southwest Region Environmental Staff Biologist provided comments, technical reviews, and support on approximately 520 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 County Planning and Zoning subdivisions and conditional use permits, stream channel alteration and wetland fill applications, National Forest land management plan revisions, hydropower project activities, reservoir and river flow management, 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 (IDFG) policies.

Author:

Robert C. Martin
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 Environmental Staff Biologist provided reviews and/or comments for the following entities on the listed number of occasions:

US Forest Service (USFS)	13
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	22
US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	5
US Army Corps of Engineers (COE)	25
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)	3
Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)	12
Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)	10
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	1
Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)	2
Idaho Dept. of Water Resources (IDWR)	120
Idaho Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ)	3
Idaho Dept. of Lands (IDL)	8
Idaho Transportation Dept. (ITD)	6
Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game (IDFG)	60
County/City Government/Private	180
Total	**470**

MAJOR PROJECTS

Major projects worked on included Idaho Department of Water Resources' stream channel alteration applications; reviews and letters for subdivisions, conditional use permits, and other planning and zoning projects; sub-basin planning and project proposals; Bureau of Land Management plan revisions for Bruneau Resource Area and Snake River Birds of Prey; IDFG strategic planning; spotted frog conservation; and review and assessment of WestRock Resort.

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of:	Idaho	**Name:**	STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
Project:	FW-7-T-8	**Title:**	Magic Valley Region Technical Assistance
Subproject:	II	**Job No.:**	4

Period Covered: July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002

ABSTRACT

During the period July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002, the Magic Valley Region Environmental Staff Biologist (ESB) provided technical review, comment, and support on approximately 326 occasions to federal and state agencies, local governments, and individual and private organizations. Technical assistance provided by the ESB addressed direct and indirect impacts to fish and wildlife populations and/or habitats. Stream channel alterations, water rights, water quality working groups, hydropower reviews, urban development, and public land livestock grazing 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 (IDFG) 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 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, 2001 to June 30, 2002. Each contact represents a meeting, field inspection, or written correspondence:

Agency or Group	Number of written responses, meetings, or site visits
US Forest Service (USFS)	16
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	73
US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	6
Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)	4
US Army Corps of Engineers (COE)	5
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)	12
National Park Service (NPS)	2
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	12
Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR)	95
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)	13
Idaho Department of Lands (IDL)	7
Idaho Department of Transportation (IDOT)	16
City/County Government and Private Development	59
Idaho Power Company (IPC)	6
TOTAL	**326**

MAJOR PRODUCTS OF INTEREST

US Forest Service

The Sawtooth National Forest held Level I consultation meetings with the US Fish and Wildlife Service that included input from IDFG biologists. Meetings were held on a monthly basis and attended by the ESB.

Regional wildlife habitat biologists and the ESB provided technical assistance for the USFS on timber management plans, fuels reduction proposals, and recreational facility upgrades.

Regional wildlife staff and the ESB spent considerable time preparing an Environmental Assessment following National Environmental Policy Act guidelines to continue feeding elk in the South Fork Boise River watershed.

Bureau of Land Management

Technical assistance for the BLM focused on evaluating rangeland health assessments, requests for temporary nonrenewable (TNR) grazing, and proposals to convert TNR to active grazing preference. Regional wildlife habitat biologists provided the majority of technical review during the reporting period.

US Fish and Wildlife Service

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

US 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.

Bureau of Reclamation

All contacts and correspondence with the Bureau of Reclamation related to temporary modification of Minidoka Dam spillway flows during 2001.

The ESB and regional wildlife habitat manager participated in scoping meetings for the Minidoka Resource Management Plan. The regional wildlife habitat manager is serving as a member of the planning team.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Correspondence with the Natural Resources Conservation Service dealt mostly with water quality issues from irrigation return flows to the Snake River and tributaries.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

The ESB responded to several requests from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license holders to allow an exemption to required bypass flows as a result of FERC's request to explore ways to increase electrical production this year. Exemptions were granted for IPC's Milner Dam and Twin Falls facilities. In addition, a significant amount of time was dedicated to meetings regarding relicensing of Idaho Power Company's Malad River units.

Idaho Department of Water Resources

Site inspection and evaluation of Stream Channel Alteration Permit applications dominated technical assistance with the Idaho Department of Water Resources and the US Corps of Engineers. The majority of the applications continue to center around the Big Wood River Valley.

The ESB reviewed and inspected 19 applications for new water rights, transfers, and changes in point of diversion.

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

The ESB attended several meetings with the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to provide input on water quality issues. Meetings primarily focused on the Total Maximum Daily Load management process for the Snake River, the Big Wood River, and Billingsley Creek. In addition, the ESB helped coordinate field data collections for the Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program.

The ESB also participated in technical advisory committee meetings to provide input to the Mid-Snake Watershed and Ground Water advisory groups. In addition, the ESB provided input to DEQ concerning toxic spills, fish kills, and other water quality violations.

Idaho Department of Lands

Correspondence and technical assistance with the Idaho Department of Lands focused on vegetation management proposals and land exchanges.

Idaho Department of Transportation

Technical assistance for the Idaho Department of Transportation centered around bridge replacement proposals and the City of Rocks Scenic Byway. Regional wildlife habitat biologists provided the majority of technical comment regarding terrestrial impacts.

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.

Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority

A significant amount of time was expended providing data and technical review for the Boise River, Mid-Snake, Upper Snake, and Bruneau River sub-basin summaries.

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of:	Idaho	**Name:**	STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
Project No.:	FW-7-T-8	**Title:**	Southeast Region Technical Assistance
Subproject No.:	II	**Job No.:**	5

Period Covered: July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002

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 about 150 occasions. The four largest issues in the Southeast Region during FY 2001 included the Bear River Hydroelectric Projects re-licensing, Northwest Power Council Provincial Reviews - Sub-basin Summary, several large Idaho Department of Transportation projects and the continuation of the amendment process on the Curlew National Grasslands 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 (IDFG) 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, from the Senate Bill 1284 process, were attended.

Author:

Jim J. Mende
Environmental Staff Biologist

OBJECTIVES

To provide technical assistance to city, county, private, and 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 including the Bear River Hydro Re-licensing, followed by the Sub-basin Summary, several large Idaho Department of Transportation projects and the culmination of the planning process on the Curlew National Grasslands plan (Table 1). Numerous Basin Area Group (BAG) and Watershed Advisory Group (WAG) meetings were attended as part of the Senate Bill 1284 process, to improve water quality in Idaho's streams and rivers.

Bear River Hydro Re-licensing

Pacificorp operates four Bear River hydroelectric projects. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) re-licensing process for this complex began in 1995. The projects include Oneida, Soda Point and Grace/Cove (two projects that operate under one license). All current project licenses will expire on October 1, 2001. During the report year, Pacificorp entered into complex negations with the state and federal regulatory agencies, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes and several environmental nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to arrive at a Settlement Agreement(SA) that would be included in the license issued by the FERC. The ESB has worked with personnel from the other agencies and NGOs to develop appropriate responses and to recommend appropriate 10(j) Protection, Mitigation, and Enhancement measures (PM&Es) for the various projects. The ESB benefited immensely from the assistance and

excellent council of the Natural Resource and Policy Bureau staff biologists, in particular, Scott Grunder, Eric Leitzinger, and Cindy Robertson.

One of the IDFG's primary goals is to provide adequate minimum flows in all sections of the river, in addition to reduced ramping rates, tributary and riparian enhancements. With the acceptance of the SA by FERC, funds will be made available by the utility to begin the assessment process of the remaining populations of Bonneville cutthroat trout. Additionally, these funds will be used to identify what habitat modifications can be effected that would begin the establishment of a viable population of Bonneville cutthroat trout throughout their historic range in the Bear River drainage.

Upper Snake River Sub-basin Summary

The Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (CBFWA) was directed by the Northwest Power Planning Council to begin developing sub-basin summaries for the 62 sub-basins in the Columbia Basin. The summaries contain natural resource information collected from the relevant state, federal, tribal, local, and private entities and is used by the reviewers to evaluate proposed restoration activities in the sub-basin associated with power production and its associated effects.

The Upper Snake River Basin includes the main stem of the Snake River from Shoshone Falls to the Gem State Hydroelectric Facility at Idaho Falls. The Blackfoot and Portneuf drainages were addressed separately in the summary. The document represented the current level of information concerning fish and wildlife resources and associated habitats. The IDFG worked closely with the resource specialists representing the Shoshone-Bannock Indian Tribes with additional information provided by the various state and federal resource management agencies.

IDFG personnel made presentations of three different proposals to the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP) in Boise: The first to assess the population parameters and movement of Yellowstone cutthroat trout in the Blackfoot River drainage; the second to identify sage grouse distribution using aerial surveys also in the Blackfoot drainage; and the third proposed drafting a comprehensive water plan for the Snake River downstream of Palisades Reservoir to below American Falls Dam.

None of these proposals were recommended for funding by the ISRP.

Caribou National Forest Plan Amendments

The Caribou National Forest has continued the planning process on the Curlew National Grasslands. 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 Grasslands. The relationship between sage grouse habitat and grazing and prescribed burning practices on the Curlew continues to be one of the key issues. The ESB is working closely with other IDFG 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 was begun in May of 2002. The Idaho Department of Transportation is beginning long-term use planning and widening U.S. 30 (from McCammon to the Wyoming border) and U.S. 91 (from Downey to the Utah border) into 4-lane highways. Issues surrounding all of these projects include wetland impacts, big game migration barriers and direct mortality from collisions, direct loss of wildlife habitat, water quality and fisheries impacts, and adequate mitigation.

Committee Participation

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

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

Senate Bill 1284 Implementation

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 for July 1,2001 to June 30, 2002.

Agency/Entity	Technical Comments or Review	Meetings/Site Visits	Total
Idaho Dept of Water Resources	18	8	26
Municipalities	11	9	20
FERC/Bear River Re-licensing	4	14	18
Idaho Dept of Transportation	3	11	14
US Forest Service	6	7	13
Bannock County Planning and Zoning	6	5	11
US Army Corps of Engineers	7	2	9
Mining/Selenium	4	4	8
Northwest Power Council Provincial Reviews - Sub-basin Summary	2	6	8
Bureau of Land Management	4	3	7
Idaho Dept of Environment Quality	2	5	7
WAGs/BAGs		5	5
Totals	**67**	**79**	**146**

JOB PERFORMANCE REPORT

State of:	Idaho	**Name:**	STATEWIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
Project	FW-7-T-8	**Title:**	Upper Snake Technical Assistance
Subproject:	II	**Job No.:**	6

Period Covered: July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002

ABSTRACT

During the contract period, the Upper Snake Region Environmental Staff Biologist (ESB) provided comment, technical review, and support on approximately 279 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, 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 (IDFG) policies.

Non-technical assistance (paid for with license dollars) was provided to IDFG projects. Non-technical assistance included: trapping mule deer for a fawn survival study; spawning fish at Henry's Lake; conducting a sage grouse lek route; trapping sage grouse for a sage grouse study; trapping and moving nuisance moose; conducting prey species abundance surveys; hunting check stations; and conducting a fish survey on the Henry's Fork River. These activities are not accounted for in the technical assistance results section.

Author:

Don Kemner
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 (telephone contacts are not included):

US Forest Service (USFS)	9
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	10
US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	6
US Army Corps of Engineers (COE)	12
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)	14
Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)	10
Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)	8
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	1
Idaho Dept of Water Resources (IDWR)	100
Idaho Dept of Environmental Quality (DEQ)	7
Idaho Dept of Lands (IDL)	38
Idaho Dept of Transportation (IDOT)	9
Idaho Dept of Fish and Game (IDFG)	21
City or County Government	4
Idaho Dept of Parks and Recreation	2
Non-government organizations	4
East-Central Idaho Rural Community Grants	10
Private	14
Total	**279**

SUMMARY OF MAJOR PROJECTS

Major projects worked on included Fremont-Madison Irrigation District's request to obtain title to Crosscut Canal, dam, and the Teton Exchange Wells, recommendations for flows on the Henry's Fork and South Fork Snake River; Bull Trout Recovery Plan for the Little Lost Valley, Trumpeter Swan Implementation Plan, writing Bonneville Power Administration's sub-basin summaries for the Headwaters and Closed Basins sub-basins; working on a Bureau of Land Management Environmental Impact Statement ID team for fire management, developing resolution to the Edie Creek water right transfer protest, hydro inspections and consultations, and IDFG strategic planning.

Fremont-Madison Irrigation District

Fremont-Madison Irrigation District has requested title transfer of crosscut canal, crosscut dam (Chester dam), and the Teton Exchange Wells from Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). IDFG provided verbal and written comments to BOR on fish, wildlife, habitat, and fishing and hunting implications during a scoping period. The Environmental Assessment is scheduled to be available for public review in late 2002.

Flow Recommendation

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

Bull Trout Recovery Plan

A draft recovery plan was written for bull trout in the Little Lost River and tributaries. A recovery team consisting of members from USFWS, US Forest Service, BLM, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and IDFG wrote the plan.

Trumpeter Swan Implementation Plan

The ESB worked on a sub-committee that developed a water management and flow recommendations chapter for the Implementation Plan. The chapter provides recommendations for water management and storage in Island Park Reservoir and flows on the Henry's Fork below the reservoir for trumpeter swan and fish. The entire draft plan was also reviewed, discussed with the committee, commented upon, and the ESB assisted with writing the draft plan.

Sub-basin Summaries

Summaries of fish and wildlife resources in the Headwaters sub-basin and the Closed Basins sub-basin were written and provided to a contractor for inclusion into overall resource summaries of the sub-basins. The summaries are part of the BPA's sub-basin assessment process.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

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 (wild fire and prescribed fire) management direction and restoration, and rehabilitation direction for the BLM districts by amending existing management plans.

Edie Creek

IDFG protested a water right transfer application in 1997 that would move a water right from Medicine Lodge Creek to Edie Creek. There was concern that additional water removed from Edie Creek may have negative impacts to the riparian habitat and fish resources in Edie Creek. Consultation with the applicant, adjacent landowners, Idaho Department of Water Resources, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, private entities, and the Attorney General's Office resulted in conditions being developed that resolved IDFG's concerns. The

resulting conditions were recommended as stipulations for the water right transfer.

Hydro Inspections and Consultations

Island Park, Buffalo River, St. Anthony, and Ashton Dam hydros were inspected or visited. Recommendations were submitted to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and Pacificorp for changes to emergency bypass flow operations at Ashton Dam. Comments were provided to private entities and FERC on proposed hydro development on Chester, Mackay, and Ririe dams.

Strategic Planning

A committee of employees is developing an IDFG strategic plan. Input from the public, employees, IDFG commission, and legislators were used to identify issues. Issue descriptions are being written.

Submitted by:

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