

Clearwater Focus Program

Idaho Soil Conservation Commission

Annual Report
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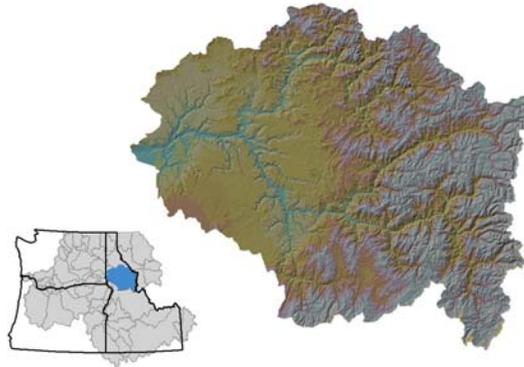
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Clearwater Focus Program
Annual Summary Report
January 1, 2003 – December 31, 2003



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Introduction

The Clearwater River subbasin was designated a coordination program under the 1994 Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (Council) in November 1996. The Clearwater Focus Program is co-coordinated by Idaho State and the Nez Perce Tribe, this Bonneville funded contract is sponsored by the Idaho Soil Conservation Commission (ISCC) on behalf of Idaho State. The contract term for this program has been synchronized with the state fiscal year, which is from July 1 to June 30, to facilitate contract administration and accounting. This report presents a narrative summary of work conducted from January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2003 during which the Clearwater Subbasin Plan was revised for final submission to the Council to be considered as an amendment to the 2000 Fish and Wildlife Program. Activities described in this report took place over parts of two different contract periods. Reporting of tasks and objectives specific to each contract can be found in quarterly reports that have been submitted to the Bonneville project manager.

Clearwater Subbasin Plan

The Clearwater subbasin assessment was originally composed of separate aquatic and terrestrial components, both of which were independently completed in late 2001. During the course of development each was released for review several times. In early 2002, the aquatic and terrestrial components were merged into a single document and again distributed for comment and review. Work to develop a subbasin management plan and subbasin inventory also began in early 2002. The aquatic/terrestrial assessment, subbasin management plan, and subbasin inventory eventually comprised the *October 2002 Final Draft Clearwater Subbasin Plan*. Each of the three components had been released for review several times as they were being developed. The three volume draft subbasin plan was then released four additional times prior to being submitted to the Council on November 13, 2002 as the *October 2002 Final Draft Clearwater Subbasin Plan*. At the Council meeting it was decided not to initiate the formal program amendment process until after the Independent Science Review Panel (ISRP) reviewed the draft and the Clearwater Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) had the opportunity to respond to suggestions. The ISRP released their review findings on February 19, 2003 as ISRP Report #2003-3.

A review of the ISRP Report #2003-3 was prepared by the Focus Program co-coordinator and Ecovista staff (contractor retained to work on the subbasin plan). We summarized the comments and recommendations made in the ISRP's 43 page report and organized them into groups of similar issues. The Clearwater PAC then considered the review and prioritized the groups of issues to be considered. The ultimate list was to be dependent upon the amount of funding and time available for revision work. It was decided that the latest date to submit the revised subbasin plan to the Council would be at the November 2003 meeting and the funding finally became available through the contracting process with the Council in early summer 2003.

The Clearwater PAC met six times between April and November 2003. A technical subcommittee composed of members from the aquatic and terrestrial

subcommittees previously used in developing the subbasin plan, met once in September and four times in October to work on revisions to the management plan. During the revision phase four drafts of amended and new materials for the subbasin plan were made available to contacts on email lists that had been compiled by the Clearwater Focus Program co-coordinators. The Clearwater PAC adopted a motion at the October 31, 2003 meeting to submit the *Draft Clearwater Subbasin Plan* to the Council at their meeting November 19, 2003 in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, where the Focus Program co-coordinators made a brief presentation.

The seven priorities the Clearwater PAC selected and were addressed in the revision phase of the *Draft Clearwater Subbasin Plan* included the following:

1. Increased utility of subbasin plan by enhancing the linkages between the assessment, management plan, and inventory; improve citations for data; and strengthen methodology descriptions.
2. Focal aquatic populations were organized by watersheds and integrated with priorities.
3. An analysis by watershed of the inventory was prepared to identify gaps between ongoing actions and those described in the management plan.
4. The socio-economic characterization of the subbasin in the assessment was expanded.
5. Wetland and riparian habitat objectives were strengthened to simultaneously address terrestrial and aquatic species.
6. An appendix to discuss regional modeling efforts in relation to what was used in the Clearwater subbasin was prepared.
7. Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans (HGMPs) and Artificial Production Review and Evaluations (APREs) were incorporated, by reference, into the plan.

New sections created during the revision phase as a result of the selected priorities and the fish and wildlife program language were the following:

Assessment

- Overview of Data Collection, Analysis and Synthesis, Section 3
- Socioeconomic Overview, Section 4.10

Inventory

- Discussion of Artificial Production Review and Evaluation (APRE) products, Sections 3.5 and 3.6
- Inventory analysis, Section 6

Management Plan

- Discussion sections for each objection in Section 4.2 were added to provide further linkages between the Management Plan and Assessment
- Discuss regional modeling efforts in relation to what was used in the Clearwater subbasin, Appendix D
- How to use the PMUs for project planning and review, Appendix G

- Ten-year implementation budget estimate, Appendix H
- Response to NOAA Fisheries informal comments, Appendix I

Consultations were held with Idaho and central (Portland) Council staff throughout the revision phase to maintain consistency with the Council's program, Idaho Level II and regional Level III planning groups. An informational meeting was held, in January 2003, to orient staff from the Idaho Congressional delegation about Clearwater subbasin planning.

Four meetings were held with NOAA Fisheries staff during 2003 to discuss various aspects of revising the Clearwater subbasin plan and recovery planning for the Endangered Species Act. These meetings were in addition to participation by NOAA as a member of the Clearwater PAC. NOAA Fisheries provided their informal comments, in February 2003, on the *October 2002 Final Draft Clearwater Subbasin Plan*. A conference call to discuss those comments was held with NOAA staff from Portland, Boise, and Grangeville in February 2003. A meeting was held in May 2003 to discuss Interior Columbia Technical Recovery Team work products and how they might relate to the Clearwater planning process. The Focus Program co-coordinators met with the new assistant administrator for the recovery division in June 2003 to discuss Clearwater subbasin planning. The Interior Columbia Technical Recovery Team presented information to the region at a workshop held in Lewiston, Idaho in July 2003.

Participation with the Northwest Power and Conservation Council's review and amendment process to the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Program

Three Council meetings were attended to provide updates on the progress of Clearwater subbasin planning prior to the November 2003 meeting when the plan was submitted. A workshop was held for Idaho Council members, staff, Idaho Office of Species Conservation, and Idaho Department of Fish and Game November 4, 2003 to go over changes in the Clearwater plan made since the October 2002 draft. Discussions were held throughout the year with state and central Council staff regarding the review process and schedule. The availability of the draft plan was announced on the Council's web page after the Focus Program presentation to them at the November 19, 2003 meeting; the Focus co-coordinator listed as the contact for CDs and additional information. The *November 2003 Draft Clearwater Subbasin Plan* was printed and duplicated for distribution. The subbasin plan was published with a CD that contains each of the volumes and appendices that were not printed because of size. There have been 84 sets of the *November 2003 Draft Clearwater Subbasin Plan* distributed this quarter. The ISRP review is scheduled to be complete February 5, 2004, the public review process is scheduled to be complete March 20, 2003, and the Council decision to adopt or not to adopt the Clearwater subbasin plan is to be made on or before November 19, 2004.

Project assistance to sponsors implementing strategies from the Clearwater Subbasin Plan.

Monitoring data were compiled for the Big Canyon Creek watershed early in 2003. The annual coordination meeting for temperature monitoring was held in May; there were two held for Bonneville funded projects; and an additional workshop sponsored by the subbasin COTR for watershed projects. The Potlatch River project began in early 2003. The Focus co-coordinator is on the technical advisory committee and attended five work group sessions during the year. Four other meetings were attended with conservation districts to work on Bonneville funded project activities. A meeting was held with the new Assistant State Conservationist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service responsible for NRCS activities in the Clearwater subbasin to orient him on coordinated activities between the Bonneville funded work, the NRCS, the ISCC, and the Focus Program. The Focus co-coordinator attended the March and December 2003 contracting workshops presented by Bonneville and distributed information on procedures and funding to other Bonneville project sponsors. Five cultural resource review requests were prepared and submitted for project work by the Lewis Soil Conservation District. A meeting was held with Idaho State Historical Preservation Office technical staff to review procedures for submitting requests for cultural resource reviews on Bonneville projects.