

Document ID #P108983

Idaho Fish Screening Improvements
BPA Project 1994-015-00
Contract Number 35392

Final Status Report
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November 4, 2008

Introduction

This project funds two Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) fish habitat biologists to develop, secure funding for, and implement on-the-ground fish habitat improvement projects in the lower Clearwater River drainage and the upper Salmon River drainage.

This report summarizes project activity during the first year of funding.

The Clearwater Region fish habitat biologist began work on January 28, 2008 and the Salmon Region habitat biologist began on February 11, 2008.

Results

Clearwater Region

The fish habitat biologist developed and submitted a 319 grant to the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality in February 2008. This project entitled: “East Fork Potlatch River Riparian Canopy Enhancement”, was ranked as the third highest priority for funding by the Clearwater Basin Advisory Group. The project continues to move forward through the funding process. Funding may be available by the spring of 2009 at the earliest.

Another project was developed, submitted to, and received funding from the Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF). This project is called “Upper Potlatch River Restoration” and will focus on increasing in-stream channel complexity (an identified limiting factor in the upper Potlatch drainage). This project is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2008.

A third project was identified and a proposal was prepared and submitted for funding from the PCSRF on August 31, 2008. This project is called the Pine Creek Bridge – Brocke Property Barrier Removal and Channel Restoration Project. This project will repair a concrete sill associated with a bridge over Pine Creek (a Potlatch River tributary) that is creating a passage barrier for wild steelhead. It will also restore degrade habitat upstream of the bridge.

An MOA was signed between IDFG and Potlatch Corporation to formalize a working relationship that enables IDFG and Potlatch to work collaboratively on fish habitat projects on Potlatch Corporation lands.

The habitat biologist has begun implementing a previously approved PCSRF project (East Fork Potlatch River Large Woody Debris). Initial surveys and identification of the placement of the wood has been completed. We are waiting for approval of permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

She is also developing a proposal in conjunction with the landowner to restore fish habitat on 0.75 miles of the lower East Fork Potlatch River.

Salmon Region

The habitat biologist has been attending the monthly Technical Team meetings and working to develop projects for funding. Five projects have been identified. Funding will be pursued for four of the potential projects. Three of these involve reconnecting tributaries to the mainstem Salmon River. The fourth seeks to restore a degraded Salmon River side channel near Challis Idaho.

The side channel project and a culvert replacement/reconnect project (in combination with a conservation easement) were submitted for PCSRF funding on August 31st, 2008. Work continues on developing the two other tributary reconnect projects. These projects will be submitted for funding at a later date. The habitat biologist has assisted in developing a third project proposal that was also submitted for PCSRF funding on August 31st. This project entails obtaining O&M funds for maintaining fish screens.

The habitat biologist has also been involved with implementing six previously approved PCSRF projects in the Lemhi River drainage, and one Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission approved monitoring project.