Grande Ronde Model Watershed Project

Dark Canyon Riparian Exclosure

Completion Report 2002

March 2003

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Grande Ronde Model Watershed Project

Dark Canyon Riparian Exclosure

Completion Report

July 2002 – December 2002

Project Number 1992-026-01

Contract: 00010479

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Introduction: The Baker Field Office, Vale District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) submitted a project proposal for funding in 2002 through the Grande Ronde Model Watershed Program (GRMWP). The project consisted of constructing two riparian exclosures to prevent livestock grazing in the riparian areas of Dark Canyon and Meadow Creek. The BLM completed the NEPA documentation and supplied the fencing materials. Funding from BPA through the GRMWP was used to complete the construction of the two exclosures. This project was completed in the fall of 2002.

Description of project area: The project area is located in Union County, Oregon on BLM managed land adjacent to Dark Canyon and Meadow Creek, T. 3. S., R. 35 E., Section 24 and 25. Section 24 is along Dark Canyon Creek and section 25 is along Meadow Creek. Approximately 0.4 miles of stream would be protected from grazing with the construction of the two exclosures.

Methods and materials: A two person crew was hired to construct a four-strand barbed wire fence. The fence enclosed the riparian area on both sides of each creek so that no grazing would occur within the riparian area on BLM managed land. Total fence length is approximately 1.25 miles. Materials consisted of metal fence posts, barbed wire, rockjacks, fence stays, and 2x4's.

Summary and conclusions: The fence was constructed in the fall of 2002. The riparian area is effectively excluded from livestock grazing at this time. The construction of the exclosures should enhance riparian vegetation, increase bank stability, and improve riparian and in-stream habitat by exclusion of livestock in the riparian areas.

Monitoring will ensure that the exclosures continues to be effective. Annual monitoring will include photo-points and compliance checks during the grazing season by BLM personnel. The BLM will submit a monitoring report, which includes the results of the annual monitoring, to the GRMWP in years 2005 and 2007.

The exclosures do cross the creeks so maintenance may be needed on occasion, especially after high flow events in the creeks. Material such as logs which are mobilized during high stream flows may damage the exclosures requiring maintenance to keep cattle from grazing in the riparian areas.

Summary of expenditures: The BLM spent approximately \$4,000 on fencing materials and \$1,375 on NEPA compliance. In addition, the estimated cost of the monitoring over five years is expected to be approximately \$1,600.

The \$5,050 that the BLM received from the BPA for the project was used to hire two temporary employees to construct the exclosures.