

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

## **Klamath Tributary Coho Rearing Habitat Enhancement Project**

**Klamath Basin Restoration Program Grant  
# R10AP20080 Salmon River Restoration Council**

**Klamath Project  
Mid-Pacific Region**

**Finding of No Significant Impact**



**FONSI NO. : KBAO-FONSI-12-002**



**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation**

**ORIGINAL**

**APPROVED**

**November 2012**



## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

### Klamath Tributary Coho Rearing Habitat Enhancement Project

#### INTRODUCTION

The United States Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA), dated November 2012 entitled *Klamath tributary Coho Rearing Habitat Enhancement Project Klamath Basin restoration Program Grant*. This EA describes the environmental effects of providing funding to perform enhancement activities for coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) at various locations within the Salmon River subbasin, California. The EA was prepared to satisfy the procedural requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (P.L. 91-190, as amended) and resulted in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Proposed Action.

#### ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING PROPOSED ACTION

##### Proposed Action

The Proposed Action consists of Reclamation providing Klamath Basin Restoration Program (KBRP) grant funding to Salmon River Restoration Council (SRRC) to implement the activities outlined below, as described in the KBRP Grant #R10AO20080 entitled *Klamath Tributaries Coho Rearing Habitat Enhancement Project*, and covered under the subject EA.

The proposed activities include the installation of brush bundles and woody debris (<20" diameter at breast height (dbh) at site specific off-channel habitat locations within the Salmon River subbasin. Site assessments and analyses, both prior and subsequently after placement of brush bundles and woody debris, would occur in order to monitor the fish response to these habitat improvements. The specific proposed habitat improvement activities include.

- Physical Activities: Harvesting of brush bundles and other woody debris (20" dbh) by hand with pruning saws and shears from upland areas that are near, but not adjacent to or that may be shading any stream.
  - Bundling of brush and other woody debris (e.g. sand bar willow and alder) with biodegradable ¼ inch sisal rope (three year expected guarantee), and attaching to existing riparian vegetation or sprigs using sisal rope, or by being keyed into existing vegetation
  - Placing bundles and woody materials (e.g. root wads) in low/no flow areas (i.e. off-channel pools, in-stream pools and alcoves in accordance to the Coho Habitat Utilization Model developed by the Karuk Tribe Fisheries Program and partners, and by methods per the California Salmonids Stream habitat Restoration Manual 199, sec 7-VII24).
  - Bundles and other woody material (e.g. root wads) would be added to riparian habitats so that each site would have an increase of no less 50 percent of the total existing cover.

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- Assessment: Assessment of site habitat conditions would occur both before and after the implementation of bundles and woody material in the riparian areas. This includes monitoring fish presence (quantity, age, and species), habitat size and use, amount of current in-stream cover, and water temperatures at specifically identified reaches of the Salmon River and its tributaries.
- Monitoring: Monitoring would consist of setting up photo points where the life of the project, before, during, and after implementation could be captured.
- Snorkel surveys: would be conducted before and after implementation of brush bundles and woody debris and would involve the insertion of one's head into the pools with a snorkel and mask.
- Location Identification: GPS points would be taken at each proposed project site, with all sites mapped to aid in reporting and prioritization of future site treatments.
- Public Notice and Participation: Landowner outreach and education will assist in the maintenance and monitoring of the sites post implementation where enhancement sites exist on/or adjacent to private property.
- Materials: All materials will be transported by hand. No material would be added directly above culverts.
- Equipment: No heavy equipment would be used.

### **No Action Alternative**

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not provide funding to the SRRC for installation of brush bundles and woody material or for the pre and post monitoring and assessment of such enhancement activities.

### **SUMMARY OF EFFECTS**

The environmental impacts described and analyzed in the EA are not anticipated to have any significant impacts on the human or natural environment. The effects and consequences to environmental categories with the potential to impact the human and natural environment were analyzed in the EA. Evidence of coordination with the appropriate Federal, state, and local agencies are included in the EA, where pertinent. The Finding of No Significant Impact is based upon the following:

**Surface Water Resources** – The Proposed Action includes activities which would temporarily and minimally occur within and adjacent to surface water resources. The potential does exist for temporary increases in turbidity, due to limited in-water-work, limited to human presence within the stream, but would be temporary in nature and only persist during habitat enhancement and monitoring activities.

The project would improve barriers between solar thermal energy and surface water resources, lowering water temperatures aiding in the provision of suitable habitat for present fish species.

No impacts to water quantity are expected. No significant impacts to water quantity are expected.

Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in short-term or long-term significant impacts to surface water quality or quantity.

**Biological Resources** – The Proposed Action consists of the cutting and placement of brush bundles that includes both upland and limited in water work for project implementation. These activities have the potential to result in limited impacts that would be temporary in nature. Since the activity of snorkeling is required for pre and post project monitoring for juvenile coho salmon. Reclamation coordinated with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS; NMFS 2011, Appendix D) who indicated that any potential impacts to fish from snorkeling activities are not a concern and suggested that snorkel training is sufficient to reduce any potential impacts to fish before field activities are conducted.

The SRRC shall ensure that training would take place where snorkelers are properly educated to subtly slide one's heads into pools so as to minimize or eliminate any potential impacts to fish. Therefore, the proposed project would not be expected to have a significant impact to Federally listed fish species. Overall, the proposed project is being performed in an effort to benefit coho salmon in the long term by enhancing key habitat conditions.

Upland species are not expected to be impacted as the proposed project activities are occurring in microhabitat areas adjacent to streams. Impacts to upland vegetation along streams would be low and only hand tools would be used for cutting and placing small brush bundles along the stream banks.

To ensure compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 USC § 703 ET SEQ.), between the dates of March 15 and August 31 all vegetation and surrounding areas scheduled to be disturbed shall be inspected for the presence of bird nests immediately prior to being disturbed. If an active nest is discovered vegetation clearing activities would not be allowed to proceed in the vicinity of the nest(s). No activities shall occur within an appropriate buffered distance from active nests until after the young birds have fledged from the nest. As such, the Proposed Action is not expected to result in negative effects on migratory birds protected under the MBTA.

The Proposed Action would not be expected to have an effect on Bald or Golden Eagles because the proposed activities would be performed using non-mechanical, human and hand tools only for cutting and placing small brush bundles in microhabitats along the stream banks. As such, the proposed activities are not activities that would result in impacts to species protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668-668d).

Based on the information included and analyzed in this EA, no significant impacts to biological resources are expected as a result of the Proposed Action.



**Cultural Resources** – Based on the analysis of implementation of the Proposed Action, Reclamation conveyed on August 11, 2011, the conclusion of Section 106 of the National Historical Preservation Act of 1966 whereby, the Proposed Action was found to have no potential to cause effects to historic properties pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800.3(a)(1). As a result, the implementation of the Proposed Act would not result in impacts to historic properties.

**Indian trust Assets** – Reclamation is required to consider the impact of project activities on Indian Tribal Trust Assets. The proposed project was reviewed by Reclamation's Mid-Pacific Regional Office, Indian Trust Assets Coordinator, Patricia Rivera, on August 11, 2011 and a "do not have potential to affect Indian Tribal Trust Assets" concurrence was received. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts to Indian Trust Assets.

**Climate Change** – The Proposed Action would not result in any significant changes to the composition of the atmosphere and therefore would not result in significant impacts to climate change.

**Environmental Justice** – The Proposed Action would not disproportionately affect minorities or low-income populations and communities. There would not be significant impacts to human health or environmental effects associated with the Proposed Action.

## FINDING

Based on the analysis of the environmental impacts as described in the EA, Reclamation has determined that the proposed federal action leads to a finding of no significant impact to the quality of the human environment and does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. Further, the proposed federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives and do not otherwise include any condition requiring consultation pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of NEPA.

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