

U.S. BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
MID-PACIFIC REGION
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA AREA OFFICE
TRINITY RIVER RESTORATION PROGRAM
WEAVERVILLE, CALIFORNIA

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
REDDING FIELD OFFICE
355 HEMSTED DRIVE
REDDING, CA 96003

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT


In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, and with the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP) office of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the Bureau of Land Management, Redding Field Office, have found that the Proposed Project, supported by the *Trinity River Channel Rehabilitation Site: Limekiln Gulch (River Mile 99.7-100.6) Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS)*, will result in no significant impacts on the human environment considering the context and intensity of impacts.

Supporting documentation in the EA/IS was prepared to meet the requirements of NEPA. The EA/IS is tiered to the *Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)* and *Channel Rehabilitation and Sediment Management Activities for Remaining Phase 1 and Phase 2 Sites, Part 1: Final Master Environmental Impact Report (Master EIR/Programmatic EA)*.

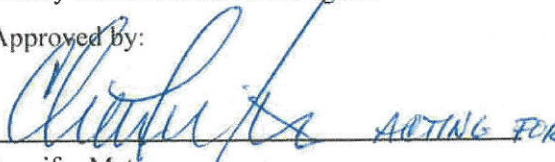
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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Trinity River Channel Rehabilitation Site Limekiln Gulch (River Mile 99.7-100.6)

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BACKGROUND AND NEED

Completion of the Trinity and Lewiston Dams in 1964 blocked migratory fish access to habitat upstream of Lewiston Dam, eliminated coarse sediment transport from over 700 square miles of the upper watershed, and restricted anadromous fish populations to the remaining habitat below Lewiston Dam. Trans-basin diversions from Lewiston Lake to the Sacramento River basin altered the hydrologic regime of the Trinity River, diminishing annual flows by up to 90 percent. Consequences of diminished flows included encroachment of riparian vegetation, establishment of riparian berms,¹ and fossilization of point bars at various locations along the river, as far downstream as the North Fork Trinity River. These geomorphic changes resulted in a decrease in the diversity of species and age classes of riparian vegetation along the river, impaired floodplain access, and adversely affected fish habitat.

In 1994, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as the federal lead agency and Trinity County as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lead agency began the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for developing the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/EIR. The 2000 Record of Decision (ROD) for the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (FEIS/EIR) (December 19, 2000; USDI 2000) directed Department of the Interior agencies to implement the Flow Evaluation Alternative, coupled with additional watershed protection efforts (described in the Mechanical Restoration Alternative), as the Preferred Alternative identified in the FEIS/EIR to restore the Trinity

¹ The condition is not as extensive as early studies indicated (e.g., the Trinity River Flow Evaluation Final Report 1999).

River's anadromous fishery. The ROD directed the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), through the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP), to restore the Trinity River fishery by implementing a combination of higher releases from Lewiston Dam (up to 11,000 cubic feet per second [cfs]), floodplain infrastructure improvements, channel rehabilitation projects, fine and coarse sediment management, watershed restoration, and an Adaptive Environmental Assessment and Management Program. The FEIS/EIR functions as project-level guidance for policy decisions associated with managing Trinity River flows and as a programmatic NEPA document providing first-tier support of related mechanical restoration and sediment management actions.

The TRRP, acting under the guidance of the Trinity Management Council (TMC), provides overall program direction to restore, enhance, and conserve the natural production of anadromous fisheries, native plant communities, and associated wildlife resources of the Trinity River basin. The TMC consists of a collaborative board of natural resource managing agencies, tribes, and local government. TMC member agencies include Reclamation, USFWS, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), HVT, Yurok Tribe (YT), the California Natural Resources Agency represented by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), and the Trinity County. Technical experts associated with each of these entities participate in the design and review of the rehabilitation sites. The TRRP provides technical and administrative support to the TMC related to both scientific evaluation of restoration progress and management implementation.

The TRRP is responsible for the overall implementation of the ROD. The Limekiln Gulch Rehabilitation Site Project ("Proposed Project" or "Project") is part of the mechanical channel rehabilitation component of the ROD that is designed to create, restore, and enhance the full range of anadromous fish habitats in the Trinity River by restoring fluvial processes. Activities to restore fluvial processes include rescaling the river channel and floodplain and augmenting gravel at high-flow placement areas. Specifically, this project includes reducing riparian encroachment, large woody debris (LWD) placement, physical alteration of alluvial features (e.g., floodplains and side channels), construction of hydraulic structures (wood and log features), and removal/replacement of riparian vegetation at strategic locations. Extensive revegetation of native riparian vegetation (woody and wetland species) and management of upland mixed conifer habitats, to mimic historic conditions, is also planned. These rehabilitation activities are expected to increase habitat suitability and availability for salmonids and other native fish and wildlife species during a wide range of river flow conditions.

PROPOSED PROJECT

The Proposed Project includes work at the Limekiln Gulch Rehabilitation Site, located on lands managed by the BLM Redding Field Office. Activities at the site are proposed for construction beginning in 2015, as funding is available.

The Limekiln Gulch site is a 71.33-acre site that extends along the Trinity River from slightly downstream of the confluence of Limekiln Gulch with the Trinity River. The Limekiln Gulch environmental study limit (ESL) and land ownership are shown on Figure 2 in the *Trinity River Channel Rehabilitation Sites: Limekiln Gulch (River Mile 99.7-100.6) Environmental Assessment/Initial Study* (EA/IS). TRRP staff, with interdisciplinary review from the TMC technical staff, developed the site boundaries to incorporate the rehabilitation activities that were considered. The site is located near Poker Bar Road and Steel Bridge Road, which is 3 miles upstream from the intersection of SR-299 and SR-3. The project area encompasses a fairly remote section of the upper river between RM 99.7 and 100.6, and the BLM manages all of the land within the site boundaries. The Limekiln Gulch site is located approximately 6 miles upstream of Douglas City and approximately 4 miles directly southeast of Weaverville, and is just upstream of the BLM's Steel Bridge Campground and downstream of Poker Bar, China Gulch, and Limekiln Gulch proper. Although the project area is near the BLM's Steel Bridge Campground on river left and a road on river right, there is limited access into the project area; only foot access can be obtained on the left side of the river and the access road on the right side is remote and

infrequently used. The project area is located on the *Weaverville, California* 7.5-minute U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) quadrangle, Township 33 North, Range 9 West, Sections 28, 29, and 32 Mount Diablo Base and Meridian. The river elevation at this site is about 1,650 feet above mean sea level.

The Limekiln project area encompasses a stretch of the Trinity River that is relatively straight, flowing from northeast to southwest. At the southern extent of the project area the river turns directly west. From the banks of the Trinity River the landscape rises sharply to the east. As the landscape rises, the landform levels off into a bench back-dropped slightly further to the east by a steep hydraulic cut. Above the hydraulic cut the landscape continues to rise sharply. The vegetation in the area consists of mixed forests and riparian habitat immediately adjacent to the river. The forested portions are heavily wooded with mature coniferous trees and a variety of shrubs.

Rehabilitation activities as described in the Master EIR/Programmatic EA, combined with ROD flow releases, are expected to contribute to the restoration of the Trinity River mainstem fishery. Implementing channel rehabilitation work at the Limekiln Gulch site would continue implementation of the ROD and would contribute to the restoration of aquatic habitat in the mainstem Trinity River through the development of properly functioning channel conditions.

The EA/IS for the project considered two alternatives: the No-Project Alternative and the Proposed Project Alternative. After inclusion of all mitigation measures (discussed in detail in Appendix A and Section 2.4.2 of the EA/IS), impacts from the Proposed Project would be less than significant pursuant to NEPA or CEQA. Details concerning these alternatives and other alternatives considered but not carried forward for evaluation are included in Chapter 2 of the EA/IS.

An interdisciplinary team of the TRRP identified discrete activity areas within the boundaries of the Limekiln Gulch site. Activity areas were identified based on the type of activity that would occur in a specific place and include in-channel, riverine, upland, and construction staging work areas, and roads. Riverine activities are labeled with an R followed by the construction site number (e.g., R-1, R-2); upland activities are labeled with a U followed by the construction site number; in-channel work areas are identified with an IC; and construction staging/use areas are identified with a C. The TRRP has developed programmatic objectives for channel rehabilitation projects that are described in Chapter 2 of the EA/IS. Each activity area was established to meet a suite of specific objectives in conformance with the overall goals and objectives outlined for the TRRP. Ultimately, the goals of the channel rehabilitation efforts are these: to provide functional aquatic habitat for all life stages of anadromous salmonids over a range of flow conditions; to provide suitable salmonid rearing habitat, presently believed to be a limiting factor in the system; and to reestablish healthy alluvial river geomorphic processes that will maintain high-quality salmonid habitat at a dynamic equilibrium. The activities proposed at the site are described below; additional details are provided in Chapter 2 of the EA/IS.

IC-1, Horizontal Tree Structure

IC-1 would consist of one or two large trees keyed into the left bank and extending 60 feet into the stream at an upstream diagonal angle with the root wad furthest into the stream. The structure would locally increase the existing bed elevation by about 3 feet. In addition to being keyed into the left bank, the trees would be ballasted with boulders and pinned with smaller logs. IC-1 is intended to create immediate rearing habitat by obstructing flow along the left bank and providing woody cover. At flows near baseflow, the structure would create a small backwater zone upstream from the trees and an eddy downstream. The IC-1 horizontal tree structure is intended to remain in place for an extended period. Gravel deposition may occur in the backwater and eddy areas along the left bank, while localized scour is expected near the root wads. Additional woody debris is expected to accumulate on the structure, increasing its habitat value over time. It is anticipated that IC-1 would require one or two large trees (36 inch diameter), six to 10 medium trees (12 to 24 inch diameter), 60 cubic yards (CY) of clean gravel and small cobble, and 20 CY of medium to large boulders (1 to 4 foot diameter). Clean gravel to construct this feature would be trucked in from other locations. It is estimated that approximately 60 CY would be

needed for the river crossing and this feature. Gravel would be placed in a stockpile on top of the grade in an existing pull out on the unimproved portion of Union Hill Road. Off road dump trucks would then be used to deliver the gravel to the activity areas, as needed. Gravel material would be clean Trinity Basin gravel.

IC-2, IC-3, and IC-4, Large Wood Habitat Structures

The IC-2, IC-3, and IC-4 wood habitat structures would be located on the left bank immediately downstream from the entrances to the R-1 and R-2 side channels. All three habitat structures would be of similar dimensions, with top elevations approximately equal to the existing riparian berm and horizontal spans extending up to 15 feet into the channel. They would be composed of large wood keyed into the bank and ballasted with boulders. The adjacent side channels would be over-excavated to bedrock in the immediate vicinity of the habitat structures to prevent material from being scoured at those locations and deposited in the side channel immediately downstream. Eddies downstream from the structures would provide slow water habitat with cover and scour zones near their outer edges would add to the local hydraulic diversity. These structures are expected to remain in place for an extended period and additional wood may rack on them over time. Each of these structures would require approximately 15 trees (12 to 14 inch diameter) and several large boulders (approximately 10 CY). The largest of the trees used in these features and IC-1 as well, would be acquired from the U-3 area. Additional trees may be taken from other activity areas, as needed.

IC-5, Side Channel Expansion and Grade Control

IC-5 consists of an excavation to widen an existing side channel located in the right overbank area near the downstream end of the site. This expansion would be combined with the installation of a log and rock structure to reduce flow velocities. The existing side channel, which is currently about 30 feet in width, would be locally expanded to a maximum top width of about 60 feet. Logs, gravel, and small boulders would be used to create a broad-crested riffle-like grade control structure that spans the excavation at its widest point and attains an elevation 2 feet above the existing bed near the channel center. Backwater effects from IC-5 would extend about 200 feet upstream at baseflow, but would have no effect on existing hydraulic conditions at the side channel inlet or alter discharge through the side channel. The wetted area would be stocked with large woody debris and the emergent areas would be planted with riparian vegetation. IC-5 is intended to immediately increase salmonid rearing habitat availability by reducing flow velocities in the existing side channel and providing additional cover. Developing riparian vegetation along the channel margins is expected to increase cover and habitat quality over time. This feature covers 0.14 acres and requires 800 CY of excavation. Approximately six medium trees (12 to 24 inch diameter) and 60 CY of clean gravel and small cobble are needed to construct the grade control riffle.

IC-6, Side Channel Expansion and Grade Control

Similar to IC-5, IC-6 includes an excavation to widen the top width of the existing side channel to about double its current width as well as construction of a log and rock grade control. The primary difference between IC-5 and IC-6 is that the grade control in IC-6 is located near the downstream end of the excavation where the design channel width is only slightly greater than the existing width. Another difference is that the IC-6 grade control is envisioned as a relatively narrow and porous log and boulder structure resembling a beaver dam with a lower notch near the right bank. At summer baseflow, backwater effects from IC-6 would extend about 200 feet upstream to the downstream face of IC-5. IC-6 is intended to immediately increase salmonid rearing habitat availability by reducing flow velocities in the existing side channel and providing additional cover. Developing riparian vegetation along the channel margins is expected to increase cover and habitat quality over time. This feature covers 0.14 acres and requires 800 CY of excavation. Approximately six medium trees (12 to 24 inch diameter) and 12 medium boulders (2 foot diameter) are needed to construct the grade control riffle (approximately 15 CY).

R-1, Baseflow Side Channel

R-1 is a base-flow side channel extending about 1,250 feet through the left overbank area in the upstream half of the site. The channel would have pool-riffle topography featuring side slopes varying from near vertical to about 4:1 slopes, variable widths averaging about 10 feet at the bottom of the cut, and two sloughs. Surface flow would enter this feature through two entrances, both of which would be over-excavated and backfilled with coarse gravel and cobbles capable of transmitting hyporheic flow. The side channel gradient upstream from the second inlet is mild, with a mean water surface slope of about 0.00025. Downstream from the second inlet the mean slope for the remainder of the channel increases to about 0.0035. The entire feature would be stocked with abundant large wood and other cover, and care would be taken during construction to preserve as much existing cover as possible. The R-1 side channel would provide immediate salmonid rearing habitat at low to intermediate flow levels. The R-1 side channel is intended to maintain a base flow surface water connection into the future. Habitat value should increase as additional riparian cover develops along the constructed banks. The R-1 side channel covers 0.55 acres and would require 4,530 CY of excavation. A total of about 30 CY of medium cobble would be placed as substrate in the side channel inlets.

R-2, Baseflow Side Channel

R-2 is a base-flow side channel extending about 520 feet through the left overbank area in the middle of the site. The channel would have pool-riffle topography featuring side slopes varying from near vertical to about 4:1 slopes, and variable widths averaging about 10 feet at the bottom of the cut. Surface flow would enter this feature through one entrance. The inlet to the channel would be over-excavated and backfilled with coarse gravel and cobbles that can transmit hyporheic flow. Due to the low main channel slope adjacent to R-2, the water surface slope through the side channel is also exceptionally low at 0.0004. Flow velocities in the channel are therefore expected to be low at all discharge levels. The entire feature would be stocked with abundant large wood and other cover, and care would be taken during construction to preserve as much existing cover (vegetation) as possible. The R-2 side channel would provide immediate salmonid rearing habitat at all flow levels. Habitat value should increase as additional riparian cover develops along the constructed banks. The R-2 side channel covers 0.21 acres and would require 2,180 CY of excavation. About 15 CY of medium cobble would be placed as substrate in the side channel inlet.

R-3, Channel Expansion

Excavation in the R-3 area would lower an existing relatively barren floodplain surface by up to 3 feet to an elevation of 1,689 feet, which is slightly higher than the summer baseflow water surface elevation. The area is expected to inundate at flows between 600 and 700 cfs. The area would be stocked with woody debris and planted with riparian vegetation. The R-3 excavation would create an arc-shaped expansion in channel width at intermediate and high flows. This expansion would create additional shallow slow water habitat for rearing salmonids when flows exceed baseflow. Woody debris would provide cover to improve habitat value in the area. At higher flows, the expansion would reduce unit stream power, which would encourage gravel deposition and bar formation in the adjacent channel. Excavation at R-3, together with the IC-1 tree placement, may promote deposition in the left half of the existing channel, thereby creating additional shallow-water habitat in an area with cover availability. Establishment of riparian vegetation in the excavated area would improve cover and habitat quality over time. R-3 covers approximately 0.15 acres and would require 460 CY of excavation.

R-4, Riparian Grading

Activities in the R-4 area would include grading to eliminate stranding, improve shallow ponded habitat used by reptiles and amphibians, and remove non-native vegetation. The graded area would be replanted with native vegetation. R-4 would improve floodplain habitats used by various species and control non-native invasive vegetation. This area covers 0.20 acres.

R-5 and R-6, Riverine Wood Placement

The R-5 and R-6 areas extend along the existing channel banks adjacent to the R-1 and R-2 side channels. Selective wood placement and field-determined bank modifications are planned for these areas. Wood used along these banks may be derived from the local riparian stands or harvested from upland spoils or forest health areas. Wood placement along the banks in R-5 and R-6 would improve cover habitat used by rearing salmonids. Additional woody debris may collect along these banks as ROD flows recruit more of the existing riparian vegetation along the river. R-5 and R-6 extend along about 1,200 feet and 750 feet of bank, respectively.

U-1 and U-2, Upland Spoils River Right

The U-1 and U-2 areas are located on river right and would receive excavated material from IC-5 and IC-6. These areas currently contain primarily non-native vegetation. Spoiling in these areas provides an opportunity to reseed and plant with native upland species after project completion to improve upland ecological conditions over the long-term. At a minimum, all upland placement areas would be seeded with native grasses and upland conifers and mulched. The U-1 and U-2 areas cover 0.29 and 0.18 acres, respectively. A total of 1,600 CY of material would be spoiled in the U-1 and U-2 areas.

U-3 and U-4, Upland Spoils River Left

The U-3 and U-4 areas are located on river left and would receive excavated material from R-1, R-2, and R-3. These areas are primarily old hydraulic mining cuts and terraces with approximately 10 ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) and 15 Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii* var. *menziesii*) trees, which vary in size from approximately 2 to 36 inch diameter at breast height (dbh; approximately 4.5 feet), growing on their slopes. The area was selected as the location for placing excavated material so as to avoid impacts to adjacent historic mining features and wetlands. Furthermore, the spoils would be configured to fill the hydraulic cuts so that historic pre-mining slopes are established. The largest trees removed from this area would be used in river left wood structures. A small number (up to five or six) intermediate size trees (between approximately 12 and 30 inches) may be partially buried and left to create upslope wildlife habitat (snag) features. Spoils would be graded to form natural topography and planted with native species after project completion to improve upland ecological conditions over the long-term. Re-vegetation of the area would occur post-project, including replanting of ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir species. Re-vegetation would occur according to the site-specific plan developed for the Proposed Project. The U-3 and U-4 areas cover 0.64 and 0.21 acres, respectively. A total of 7,170 CY of material would be spoiled in the U-3 and U-4 areas.

U-5, Forest Health Area

Selected trees may be harvested from the U-5 activity area to improve forest health and act as a supply for large wood. The area is targeted for selective removal in order to achieve stand conditions that would be more reflective of historical mature forest conditions. Selective tree removal would help to establish mature forest stand conditions along the Trinity River. Thinning would occur on slopes less than about 30 percent. The Forest Health Area would seek to accelerate the development of habitat that is representative of the mature old growth forest that historically existed along the Trinity River. Implementation of the following management actions would accelerate development of post-project target conditions; however, even with Project implementation, development of these mature stand conditions would require time (10 to 30 years) to develop depending on the exact location. Desired Future Conditions would include: 1) mean dbh of trees >18 inches; 2) canopy closure of >60 percent; 3) dominant trees of >60 feet tall; 4) an average of about 15 trees per acre between 18 and 35 inch dbh; and 5) a stand of dominant conifers (six trees per acre) that are 35 inch dbh or greater. Selective removal of smaller trees (generally 6 to 20 inch dbh with none exceeding 28 inch dbh), would set the trajectory for Desired Future Condition of the U-5 area and would provide a source of intermediate and smaller sized wood material to be used for construction of wood habitat structures. Conifers that are encroaching on

large oak and madrone trees (e.g., >20 inch dbh) would be prioritized for removal in order to release these hardwoods for continued and faster growth.

Trees would be selectively marked for removal in the field by a BLM forester, or another authorized party, in coordination with appropriate resources staff. No entry zones for heavy equipment would be marked by BLM resources staff. No trees over 28 inches dbh, or oaks, would be removed, unless deemed necessary for safety by a BLM authorized officer. An excavator would retrieve marked trees with root wads and limbs intact, as possible. Trees with root wads removed would have the subsequent holes filled in and smoothed over to create a natural look to the treated area. Chainsaws would be used to remove selected trees from steep areas adjacent to marked access and wood removal routes. Trees cut with chainsaws would be skidded to the designated wood removal trails (skid trails). Trees and slash would be removed by an excavator or loaded via logging tongs along designated skid paths to a designated area. The wood material would be stockpiled and sorted for use in construction of in-river wood structures. While most of the slash generated would be used in wood jams, any extra material that is not used would be lopped and scattered. Following tree removal, skid trails would be decommissioned and the landscape rehabilitated to natural conditions. Erosion control measures (e.g., water bars, hay, baffles etc.) may be utilized if soil erosion conditions arise. Also, the use of vehicle control measures (e.g., tank traps, large rocks, etc.) may be utilized to ensure access to skid trails is not available, thus helping to limit off-trail use.

This action would establish conditions conducive for old growth trees to increase in vigor, thereby decreasing susceptibility to insects and disease, and establishing a stand that is more resilient to fire, and natural in composition and character. In addition to providing a source of large wood material for construction, this action would help maintain riparian shading and future wood loading to the Trinity River. This area covers 3.63 acres. It is anticipated that approximately 40-50 trees would be marked by BLM staff for selective removal in order to enhance safety and forest health within this area.

C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, C-5, and C-6, Contractor Use Areas

Contractor use areas would be used for construction access, staging, stockpiling, mobilization, gravel processing, and other necessary construction activities during implementation. In addition to the C-1 through C-6 areas that are within the ESL, an existing dirt pullout on top of the hill could be used as a stockpile/contractor use area. This area would be used for street legal trucks to dump their loads, which would subsequently be picked up and transferred to an off-road dump truck that could deliver the materials to activity or contractor use areas.

A-1 and A-2, Access Roads

There is no access to the project area via roads on river left. A-1 is an existing road (Union Hill Road) on river right that would provide access to the project area. The A-1 access road overlaps the existing Union Hill Road from the downstream end of the project area to where it currently dead-ends at the upstream end. Outside of the ESL, some minor upgrades to Union Hill Road would be made to provide equipment access and to maintain drainage/road competence. Improvements would be made from the top of grade (where gravel may be stockpiled in an existing pullout) down to the C-5 feature. All improvements to the road in this area would be made within the existing footprint so there would be no new disturbance outside of the existing road. A-2 is a temporary road that would be constructed by the contractor for access to work areas on river left. It would only be accessed via river crossing within the ESL, and would not connect to Steel Bridge Road on river left.

Post-project, the temporary A-2 road would be decommissioned and re-vegetated. Decommissioning of this road may include re-grading or placing spoils on the roadway in upland access areas to block vehicular access. The existing A-1/Union Hill Road would be decommissioned from the C-5 area upstream to where it currently dead-ends, and replanted with native vegetation. The portion of A-1 that is not being decommissioned and re-vegetated would be left to provide continued access. The existing A-1 road would still allow access up to the C-5 area for recreational use, and would be graded to allow for

easier vehicle turn-arounds and use. The final configuration would maintain current parking capacity and would provide adequate area for vehicles to turn-around.

X-1 and X-2, River Crossings

Temporary crossings would provide access across the river. These temporary crossings would be low water fords to facilitate access for construction-related traffic. All temporary crossings would be designed and constructed to meet the requirements for heavy equipment such as trucks and excavators. In order to construct crossings, clean Trinity River basin gravel would be imported from existing stockpiles off-site to the site via the access road. No gravel processing would be done on-site. It is estimated that approximately 60 CY would be needed for the upstream crossing. Most of the material placed for the X-1 crossing would be utilized in IC-1 at the project's end. Approximately 100 CY would be needed for the downstream crossing, if built. Construction of the downstream X-2 crossing would provide the contractor with increased flexibility to streamline access to the left bank, across a deeper river section, without moving through the entire project area. If required, trucks would bring gravel in to contractor use areas for stockpiling/use. Any temporary crossings would be constructed in a manner that does not impede navigability at the project area.

Crossings would be minimized throughout construction. It is anticipated that use of a river left fueling station could reduce equipment crossings to several a day. Alternatively, a rubber tired articulated dump truck might deliver fuel to the left bank, as needed. Fuel taken across the river would be stored in a double walled containment fuel tank during crossing and within a secondary fuel containment area if stored on the left bank. Fuel storage, transport, and handling would comply with the Project Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (including spill prevention and control plans – refer to Appendix A: measure 4.5-3). In this case most personnel would cross the river by boat.

Up to 15 crossings outside of the summer (July 15-September 15) in-channel work window would take place during revegetation work on the left bank. If temporary crossings were to be used after September 15, the crossing areas would be made unsuitable for spawning prior to September 15 (e.g., anti-spawning mats installed to preclude spawning). After the last crossing, anti-spawning mats would be removed.

Re-vegetation

Revegetation consists of site layout, preparing planting areas, planting a mixture of upland and riparian plant species, and possibly post-planting watering. Plant species would be assigned to different riparian or upland patches. The grading plan avoids removing patches of existing riparian vegetation within the site that currently provide cover and a readily available seed source immediately after construction. Efforts would be made to minimally impact riparian vegetation along the left bank side channels as high quality vegetation conditions currently exist in this location. Constructed side channel slopes would be planted to provide cover for wildlife and fish, shade the channel, speed riparian vegetation recovery, and increase woody plant and age class diversity. Constructed benches and bars are specifically targeted for woody riparian revegetation. Wetland species would be planted in areas appropriate for an individual species' tolerance to varying lengths of inundation. Planted material may be collected local stocks or nursery grown native species. Their sizes may vary by plant species.

The TRRP anticipates that most planting areas would not require watering post project. However, given recent drought years, some intermittent watering of planted areas, during dry conditions may increase plant survival. If this subsequent irrigation is needed, gasoline pumps and hoses would be brought into the site, probably via river rafts. Equipment would be used to water plants as needed, stored on site for use during dry periods or brought in as water demands require. Any irrigation measures would be temporary in nature, and would assist the plants in establishing their roots and in long-term survival. Irrigation measures would be undertaken only in the first three years post-construction, would be used to restore the land to its natural condition, and would have only minimal and temporary impacts on the surrounding environment.

Proposed Project Summary

Overall, the activities proposed for the Limekiln Gulch Rehabilitation Site are intended to emphasize reconnecting the river's floodplain with the river, expanding side-channel habitat, and enhancing the bed and banks of the Trinity River to promote well-distributed aquatic habitat (wetted edge habitat) over a range of flows. Collectively, these activities are intended to enhance aquatic habitat for anadromous fish under a range of flow conditions.

The Proposed Project meets the requirements of the Trinity River ROD, the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Clean Water Act, NEPA, the Clean Air Act, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the BLM Redding Resource Management Plan (RMP), as amended by the Northwest Forest Plan. The Riparian Revegetation Management Plan, prepared in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and the Regional Water Quality Control Board – North Coast Region (Regional Water Board), will be followed to ensure that riparian habitat (e.g., riparian vegetation) is restored in a manner (species and size classes) that supports the TRRP objective of restoring the form and function of an alluvial river over time. Implementation of the Riparian Revegetation Management Plan will also ensure that the State of California's requirement of "no net-loss of riparian habitat" is met through a 1:1 replacement of affected riparian habitat over time. Project monitoring requirements will allow critical evaluation in order to adjust future rehabilitation plans to incorporate those practices that perform best in the field. A comprehensive discussion of these rehabilitation site activities is provided in Chapter 2 of the Master EIR/Programmatic EA.

FINDINGS

The No-Project Alternative and Proposed Project Alternative were evaluated in the EA/IS with respect to their impacts in the following issue areas: land use; geomorphic environment; water resources; water quality; fishery resources; vegetation, wildlife, and wetlands; recreation; socioeconomics; cultural resources; air quality; visual resources; hazards and hazardous materials; noise; public services and utilities/energy; transportation/traffic circulation; environmental justice; and tribal trust. Based on the following summary of the implementation effects of the Proposed Project (as discussed fully in the EA/IS), there would be no significant impacts to the quality of the human environment.

Therefore, an environmental impact statement or a supplement to the existing environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

Land Use

The Proposed Project is located in Trinity County, California and would be consistent with Trinity County's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, which provides development standards for land in Trinity County, including areas located within the Trinity River floodplain. Short-term land use impacts resulting from the Proposed Project would be minimal because of Project design criteria that require maintenance of public and private access to the Trinity River, adjacent residents, and businesses. Additionally, Project implementation would not prevent existing land uses from continuing or impede future land uses. Therefore, impacts on land use would be less than significant.

Geology, Fluvial Geomorphology, and Soils

Implementation of the Proposed Project is consistent with the 10 healthy river attributes described in the Trinity River Flow Evaluation Study that provide a basis for the TRRP efforts to restore and enhance native fish and wildlife populations. Project construction activities and disturbance would increase the potential for short-term wind and water erosion. However, Project implementation would include project

design features such as sediment and erosion control measures to reduce and avoid potential short-term construction impacts on soils. Therefore, impacts on geologic resources would be less than significant.

Water Resources

Based on the USACE Hydraulic Engineering Center River Analysis System (HEC-RAS) model, implementation of the Proposed Project, including excavation or placement of alluvial materials in the 100-year floodplain and low-flow channel, would not increase the base flood elevation of the Trinity River. Additionally, Project implementation would not result in significant risk of injury, death or loss involving flooding or erosional processes. The proposed activities are expected to have minimal, if any, effects on groundwater elevations or groundwater quality. Therefore, impacts on water resources would be less than significant.

Water Quality

Implementation of the Proposed Project, including construction activities in and adjacent to the low-flow channel, could temporarily increase turbidity and total suspended solids in the water column. It could also result in a spill of hazardous materials (e.g., grease, solvents) into the Trinity River. Construction activities would be staged and timed to minimize potential water quality effects, and appropriate project design features, such as placing clean rock berms around work areas and isolating them from the river, would be implemented to avoid and reduce water quality impacts. Therefore, impacts on water quality would be less than significant.

Fisheries Resources

To comply with Section 7 of the ESA, Reclamation initiated informal consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) concerning project effects on the federally and state-listed (threatened) Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast (SONCC) evolutionarily significant unit (ESU) of coho salmon. NMFS affirmed that certain non-flow measures, including the mechanical rehabilitation and sediment management projects identified in the ROD, were considered in its 2000 Biological Opinion issued in response to the FEIS/EIR. In that Biological Opinion, NMFS identified implementation of mechanical rehabilitation projects as reasonable and prudent measures to minimize Trinity River Division effects on SONCC ESU coho salmon. Subsequent to the ROD, NMFS provided the TRRP with documentation necessary to ensure that the 2000 Biological Opinion did in fact consider the types of activities associated with the Proposed Project.

Reclamation recently began to engage in informal technical consultation with NMFS in order to update the 2000 Biological Opinion. In support of a formal re-consultation under Section 7 of the ESA and to obtain an updated Biological Opinion, Reclamation is currently preparing a new Biological Assessment that focuses on advances in and changes to actions associated with the TRRP Implementation Program since 2000 (i.e., the rationale for the continuing adaptation of techniques for channel rehabilitation and fine and coarse sediment management since program inception) that will be used by the NMFS as the information basis for writing their Biological Opinion. While the reinitiated Section 7 consultation is underway and a new Biological Opinion is in development, the 2000 Biological Opinion remains in effect. Reclamation will continue to coordinate with NMFS as it implements the terms and conditions of the 2000 Biological Opinion.

Temporary construction impacts on fish-rearing habitat will be minimized through implementation of project design features; in the long term, changes to physical rearing habitat associated with project implementation are expected to be beneficial. Collective improvements in fluvial channel dynamics contributed by the Proposed Project, in conjunction with future channel rehabilitation projects throughout the Trinity River between Lewiston Dam and the North Fork Trinity River, are ultimately expected to improve rearing habitat diversity for all anadromous salmonids. Because effects would be generally localized and because the Proposed Project includes project design features to avoid and minimize adverse impacts on fish, effects to fisheries resources would be less than significant.

Vegetation, Wildlife, and Wetlands

Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would result in a temporary loss of riparian vegetation. However, in the long term, floodplain function and riverine processes would be restored by the Project and revegetation of alluvial features (i.e., floodplains) would increase structural and species diversity and would speed reestablishment of native riparian vegetation. Long-term changes in river inundation periods are expected to increase both seasonal and perennial riparian habitats. Construction activities associated with the Project would result in the loss of waters, also including wetlands. The project is designed to enhance the functions and services of the aquatic system, including wetlands and other waters.

The proposed action is planned to directly benefit Trinity River riparian habitat and function and has the potential to affect wildlife including special status wildlife species (designated BLM or USFS sensitive species or federally listed threatened and endangered species). Specific design and contract criteria are included in the Project description to ensure that activities occur in a manner that addresses potential impacts to special-status species, including avian and amphibian species. Habitat for both the Pacific fisher (*Pekania pennant*) and northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) is present in the project area. During development of the Master EIR/Programmatic EA, Reclamation conducted informal consultation with the USFWS concerning effects to the ESA-listed northern spotted owl. Based on the consultation, known lack of suitable habitat and spotted owl nests in the area, and Trinity River bird distribution data, Reclamation determined that there would be no effect on the northern spotted owl. The Limekiln project area was specifically evaluated for northern spotted owl habitat and was considered marginal for foraging. However, because the habitat was considered adequate for dispersal, spotted owl surveys were conducted in 2011. During this survey no spotted owls were located within the project area. The project area does not encompass or occur within designated critical habitat for the northern spotted owl; therefore, there would be no effect to northern spotted owl or its designated critical habitat.

Suitable den habitat for the Pacific fisher is not present in the project area but the Trinity River riparian corridor and adjoining upland habitat do provide dispersal and foraging habitat for the Pacific fisher. While the Proposed Project has the potential to temporarily reduce habitat suitability for fisher, the Project would ultimately result in an increase in habitat and an increase in habitat quality for this species.

The activities and prescriptive measures described in the EA, combined with riparian re-vegetation, ensure that the Proposed Project will not result in significant impacts to vegetation, wildlife, and wetlands.

Recreation

The Trinity River was federally designated as a National Wild and Scenic River in 1981. Implementation of the Proposed Project would result in a long-term benefit to the form and function of the Trinity River, thereby enhancing the Outstandingly Remarkable Values for which it was designated as a Wild and Scenic River, including its anadromous fishery. Implementation of the Project would alter the riverine environment; however, construction activities would not permanently affect the scenic or recreational values of the Trinity River for which it was designated.

Although the Proposed Project could result in limited temporary interruptions of public access and use, river access would continue to be available at the Steel Bridge Day Use Area and Campground adjacent to the project area as well as at several public and private access points in the vicinity. Potential disruptions to recreational activities within the project area would be temporary and minimal. Construction of the Proposed Project could affect the safety of recreational users so signage will be employed to notify river users to be cautious of heavy equipment in the river corridor. Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project could lower the Trinity River's aesthetic values for

recreationists by increasing its turbidity; however, increases in turbidity are expected to be localized and of short duration.

Socioeconomics, Population, and Housing

The Proposed Project could directly generate short-term income growth through the payment of wages and salaries, but would result in little long-term increased economic activity. Because of the limited Project size and duration, impacts on socioeconomic conditions, population, or housing would be negligible.

Cultural Resources

Implementing the Proposed Action has been found to have no adverse effect to historic properties pursuant to the Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as implemented through the TRRP Programmatic Agreement [PA; Section 106 alternative program pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.14(b)]: *Programmatic Agreement Among the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Hoopa Valley Tribe, California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding Implementation of the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration*, executed on August 31, 2000, and in effect until August 31, 2020. Avoidance of impacts to cultural resources within the area of potential effects (APE) was possible through project design, with the exception of a portion of Site LK-01. In order to evaluate the site's eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), testing was conducted, focused on the portions of the site falling within the APE, identified as Locus 3. The information recovered from testing Locus 3 effectively recovered all expected significant data from that portion of Site LK-01. The remainder of Site LK-01 is eligible for listing on the National Register. Construction activities will be monitored by a qualified archaeologist to prevent inadvertent impacts.

The avoidance of cultural resources and recovery of data from Locus 3 resulted in a finding of no adverse effect to historic properties from the Proposed Action. The following commitments by Reclamation will help facilitate historic preservation of cultural resources within and in the vicinity of future TRRP project areas.

- 1) Provide funding to the BLM in an amount to be determined, in coordination with the BLM, for the promotion of historic preservation activities and preservation programs administered by BLM, including cultural resources programs that advance historic preservation and documentation, protection of historically significant resources, and public dissemination of cultural resources preservation measures.
- 2) Conduct full documentation of Site LK-01, commonly referred to as "The Premier Hydraulic Mine Site," in coordination with the BLM to assist in future management of this historic property. These efforts will include LIDAR imaging of impacted areas of the site; public interpretation signs discussing mining landscapes in the vicinity of the project area; continued review of archival data; and professional dissemination of recordation and testing results.
- 3) In the event data recovery is determined necessary in the future in order to protect or to mitigate Site LK-01, due to such threats as unauthorized artifact collection or damage to the site, Reclamation will coordinate closely with BLM to conduct data collection and recovery effort sin in compliance with Federal cultural resources laws and in consultations with SHPO as applicable.

As the Project includes these described commitments, Project implementation would have no significant effect to cultural resources.

Air Quality

Construction activities would generate short-term and localized fugitive dust, gas, and diesel emissions, and smoke that could affect air quality. Reclamation would implement project design features, including requiring provisions in construction contract documents, that minimize construction-related impacts on air quality in order to minimize impacts to air quality..

Visual Resources

Potential impacts of Project activities on visual resources would include changes brought about by the removal of vegetation, construction of inundated surfaces, creation of access roads, and the presence of equipment in the project area. These activities could result in temporary degradation and/or obstruction of a scenic view from key observation areas. Over the long-term, implementation of the Proposed Project is expected to complement the visual resources and aesthetic values of the Project area by restoring the function and form typical of an alluvial river. Design of the Proposed Project incorporates the diversity of the landscape and vegetation types in the Project vicinity into the character of the rehabilitated riverine and upland areas. Retention of existing topographic features, as well as natural revegetation and manual planting would lessen the degree of visual impacts and improve the aesthetic quality of the affected reach of the Trinity River.

Hazardous Materials

Activities associated with the Proposed Project would utilize potentially hazardous materials (e.g., oil and fuels) associated with the operation of vehicles and construction equipment during implementation. Implementation of best management practices would minimize the potential for any Project-related hazardous materials to become a public hazard. These practices would ensure that impacts with respect to hazardous materials would be less than significant.

Noise

During the construction phase of the Project, noise from construction activities would temporarily dominate the noise environment in the project area. Construction noise would be temporary and is expected to occur primarily between the months of July and December. To minimize potential noise impacts, construction activities would be scheduled between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. During working hours, Reclamation would ensure that the contractor operates all equipment to minimize noise impacts to nearby sensitive receptors (recreationists along the river, etc.). Noise impacts resulting from implementation of the Proposed Project would be temporary and minimal.

Public Services and Utilities/Energy

The Proposed Project would not disrupt electrical or telephone service within or adjacent to the project area. Implementation of the Project could result in disruption to emergency services, school bus routes, or student travel routes during construction activities. Traffic control associated with project activities would be implemented, and is not expected to cause more than minimal disruptions to public services, if any. Access for mobilization and demobilization of heavy equipment, however, may require a higher level of traffic control for local roadways and may disrupt traffic flow and circulation before, during, and after construction. Disruptions resulting from mobilization and demobilization of heavy equipment are expected to be minimal and of short duration.

Transportation/Traffic Circulation

Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would increase truck and worker vehicle trips leading to and from the project area. Throughout construction, the amount of daily construction equipment traffic would be limited by staging the construction equipment and vehicles in the project area boundary for the duration of work. Impacts related to short-term increases in vehicle trips are minimal. Use of area roads by project-related trucks and heavy equipment would increase wear and tear on the

local roadways. Traffic safety hazards could arise for motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians in the vicinity of the construction access routes as a result of the movement of project-related trucks and heavy construction equipment. The contractor would be required to implement a traffic control plan during construction to maximize public safety and maintain traffic flow. Impacts to transportation and traffic circulation would be minimal to moderate, but temporary and insignificant.

Tribal Trust

TRRP's overarching goals of restoring, enhancing, and conserving the natural production of anadromous fisheries, native plant communities, associated wildlife resources, and overall health of the Trinity River basin are consistent with federal Tribal Trust responsibilities. The primary TRRP goals originate partly from the federal government's trust responsibility to protect fishing rights for ceremonial, subsistence, and commercial purposes of the region's Indian tribes. Under the Proposed Project, the Trinity River would continue to support tribal trust assets. Several short-term impacts would occur that would affect Tribal Trust assets, including geology, fluvial geomorphology, and soils; water quality; fishery resources; and vegetation, wildlife, and wetlands. These impacts are generally associated with construction activities that would temporarily affect resources in the project area. Potential impacts on Tribal Trust assets would be minimized by Project design criteria implemented to protect Tribal Trust assets. The impacts that would occur to Tribal Trust assets would be less than significant.

Environmental Justice

There is no evidence to suggest that the Project would cause a disproportionately high adverse human health or environmental effect on minority and low-income populations compared to other area residents. No disproportionate or specific health risks or other impacts to low-income or minority groups would be associated with the Project.

SUMMARY

Implementation of the Proposed Project is expected to contribute to the long-term environmental quality and sustainability of the Trinity River ecosystem with no significant adverse impacts to the environment.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT in ACCORDANCE with 40 CFR 1508.27

After considering the environmental effects described for the Proposed Project in the *Trinity River Channel Rehabilitation Sites: Limekiln Gulch (River Mile 99.7-100.6) EA/IS*, it has been determined that implementation of the Proposed Action will not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in the EA, is in conformance with the Resource Management Plan, and will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment considering the context and intensity of impacts. Therefore, an EIS is not needed and will not be prepared.

This finding is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR '1508.27), both with regard to the context and to the intensity of the impacts described in the EA or as articulated in the letters of comment.

I have considered the potential intensity/severity of the impacts anticipated from the project decision relative to each of the ten areas suggested for consideration by the CEQ. With regard to each:

- 1) **There will be no significant effects, beneficial or adverse, resulting from implementation of this project.** The finding is not biased by the beneficial effects of the action. The construction of the Proposed Project at the Limekiln Gulch Rehabilitation Site is expected to provide localized improvements in aquatic and riparian habitats currently present at the site. The Project will assist in meeting long-term needs to enhance fish habitat and provide properly functioning river conditions. Viewed within the context of a *healthy* Trinity River, and against implementing the larger river restoration program required under the ROD, this channel rehabilitation Project will not result in any significant impacts.

- 2) **Public health and safety are not significantly affected by the project.** Due to the limited duration of the Project and implementation of public safeguards, public safety will not be at risk. Standard Reclamation practices for notifying the public of heavy equipment activities will be implemented during construction activities.
- 3) **There will be no significant adverse effects on prime farmlands, park lands, floodplains, wetlands, historic or cultural resources, scenic rivers, ecologically critical areas, civil rights, women, or minority groups.** Although there will be no significant adverse effects in these areas, the Project will result in a minor amount of disturbance to river attributes while enhancing the outstandingly remarkable value—the anadromous fishery—for which the river was designated in the Wild and Scenic River system. This Project is programmatically tiered to the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration Program EIS, which recommended implementation of the six components of the ROD. The Proposed Project, which involves implementation of a subset of channel rehabilitation actions from the ROD, has no significant impacts within the context of the entire array of ROD restoration components.
- 4) **Based on public participation and the involvement of resource specialists, effects of the Proposed Action on the quality of the human environment are not expected to be highly controversial.**

The Draft EA/IS was made available for a 30 day public review period when the document was submitted to the California State Clearinghouse in February 2015. The document was circulated to local, state, and federal agencies and to interested organizations and individuals for review and comment on the analysis. The official public review period ran through March 31, 2015. Concurrent with this review period, public notice was provided to solicit additional comments from the public and interested parties. Public notice includes: posting on the TRRP website; advertisements in the Trinity Journal and Redding Searchlight newspapers; letters mailed to local landowners; email notices to interest groups; and signage posted at the Project site informing the public of the availability of the EA/IS for review.

A public open house meeting was held on March 11, 2015, concurrent with the public comment period, to inform residents and stakeholders of proposed activities and to seek comments on the Draft EA/IS. Two comment letters were received on the Draft EA/IS during the public comment period. The federal and state lead agencies have responded to the comments received. The comment letters and responses from the lead agencies are included in Appendix B of the EA/IS. In addition to updating the EA/IS based on public involvement activities that have occurred since the Draft EA/IS was released for public comment and adding the public comments and responses in Appendix B, minor edits and updates were made to the EA/IS. No other changes were determined to be necessary based on public input.

Because the Limekiln Gulch site encompasses a remote section of the upper river with very limited access, and is comprised entirely of public lands managed by the BLM, the temporary implementation activities are expected to have minimal effects on area residents. The public comments were addressed with input from technical staff from the lead, cooperating, and responsible agencies (see Appendix B of the EA/IS). No highly controversial environmental effects were identified.

- 5) **There are no known effects on the human environment that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.** The effects of the Proposed Project have been clearly evaluated in the EA/IS. Similar activities have been completed at past channel rehabilitation sites and collected data and analyses have determined that no unique or unknown impacts to the human environment have resulted.

- 6) **These actions do not set a precedent for other projects that may be implemented to meet the goals and objectives of the Trinity River Restoration Program.** The Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration EIS, the ROD, and the Trinity River Flow Evaluation Report all evaluated and recommended channel rehabilitation projects on the Trinity River below Lewiston Dam. The environmental effects of future projects will be analyzed based on need dictated by the ROD, but the need will be balanced by any new information collected during implementation of this Project and other recently implemented projects.
- 7) **There are no known significant cumulative effects from this Proposed Project and other projects implemented or planned on areas separated from the affected area of this Project beyond those assessed.** Cumulative impacts are analyzed in Chapter 4 of the EA/IS. While some short-term adverse direct and indirect effects may result from the Project, these effects have been analyzed in the EA/IS, and will not lead to significant cumulative effects. Potentially significant long-term Project effects from implementation of the ROD were evaluated in the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration EIS. When considered in the context of cumulative watershed effects, the Project is intended to improve the alluvial processes and function of the mainstem Trinity River and at the same time improve the ability of the Trinity River to mobilize and transport sediment. Cumulative short-term impacts such as soil disturbance and turbidity would occur in response to the Project, but not to an extent that would cause significant impacts to downstream water quality.
- 8) **Based on surveys accomplished prior to this decision, this action will not adversely affect sites or structures eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, or cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.** Reclamation and the BLM work closely with the Hoopa Valley Tribe and the Yurok Tribe as both sit on the TMC, which oversees the TRRP, and both participate in the designing of these projects. The Hoopa Valley Tribe is also a signatory on the TRRP PA. Pursuant to the TRRP PA (Stipulation IV) Reclamation has consulted with Indian tribes, Native American organizations, and individuals regarding implementation of the PA and its stipulations to protect tribal interests. Based on Project design and measures described in the EA/IS, the decision maker has determined that the Project will not result in the destruction of scientific, cultural, tribal, or historic resources.
- 9) **The Project would not adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.** A biological opinion (BO for Trinity River Mainstem fishery restoration EIS and its effects on Southern Oregon Northern California Coast coho salmon, Sacramento River winter-run chinook salmon, central valley spring-run chinook salmon, and central valley steelhead 2000) addressing foreseeable TRRP activities was written in response to a biological assessment that reflected the findings in the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery FEIS/EIR. The opinion was written because Trinity River coho salmon are federally listed as threatened and because the action may affect, and is likely to adversely affect coho salmon. The opinion describes adverse effects that could result from the channel rehabilitation measures that are included in the preferred alternative described in the EIS. Such adverse effects were determined to be minor and short-lived, and less than significant.

During development of the Master EIR/Programmatic EA Reclamation conducted informal consultation with the USFWS concerning effects to the ESA-listed northern spotted owl. Based on the consultation, known lack of suitable habitat and spotted owl nests in the area, and Trinity River bird distribution data, Reclamation determined that there would be no effect on the northern spotted owl. The Limekiln project area was specifically evaluated for northern spotted owl habitat and was considered marginal for foraging. However, because the habitat was considered adequate for dispersal, spotted owl surveys were conducted in 2011. During this survey, no

spotted owls were located within the project area. The project area does not encompass or occur within designated critical habitat for the northern spotted owl; therefore, there would be no effect to northern spotted owl or its designated critical habitat. Reclamation and the BLM determined that a BA was not required since the Proposed Project would have no effect on the northern spotted owl or its critical habitat.

The Trinity River corridor within the project area provides habitat and travel corridors for the West Coast Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of Pacific fisher, which has been proposed for listing as a threatened species under the ESA. Fishers use forest habitats with dense canopy closure, large diameter live trees (conifers and hardwoods) and snags (dead trees) with cavities and other deformities, large diameter down wood, multiple canopy layers. The old growth habitat on site is not considered sufficient for denning; however, the riparian area may be utilized for migration. Habitats in the project area, such as montane hardwood and montane hardwood-conifer habitats, may provide suitable den sites. As a result, the Project could affect habitat for fishers. Due to the abundance of similar habitat in the area, the temporary loss of foraging habitat would be a less than significant impact.

No federal or state-listed threatened or endangered plant species occur within or adjacent to the site boundaries defined for the Project.

- 10) **Implementation of the Project does not threaten a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.** Implementation of the Proposed Project does not threaten violation of any laws. Its implementation meets requirements under the ROD, the ESA, the Clean Water Act, the Federal Land Protection and Management Act (FLPMA), NEPA, the Clean Air Act, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and BLM's RMP for the Redding Field Office.

The Project described in this finding is fully consistent with BLM's RMP, FLPMA, and CEQA. The following permits are required to authorize the project:

- Section 404, Clean Water Act, Nationwide Permit 27 (San Francisco District, USACE);
- Section 401, Clean Water Act Water Quality Certification (Regional Water Board);
- Section 10, Endangered Species Act, Incidental Take Permit (NMFS);
- Encroachment Permits (Trinity County or California Department of Transportation); and
- Floodplain Development Permit (Trinity County).

Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations

The Proposed Project to implement the rehabilitation activities, including those specifically under the jurisdiction of BLM, is consistent with the intent of the RMP with respect to resource management conditions. The Project is also consistent with the direction provided in the BLM's Trinity River Recreation Area Management Plan.

Implementation Date

The Proposed Project is expected to be constructed beginning in summer 2015, depending on financial and environmental clearances. Heavy civil construction will end in-river in September and will be completed by December. Revegetation will take place during construction as possible, and in fall and winter months following construction.

Contact

For additional information concerning the Proposed Project, contact Brandt Gutermuth, Project Manager, Trinity River Restoration Program, P.O. Box 1300, and 1313 Main Street, Weaverville California, 96093. Phone: (530) 623-1800.

