



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Malheur
National
Forest

P.O. Box 909
John Day, OR 97845
(541) 575-3000
Fax (541) 575-3001
TDD (541) 575-3089

File Code: 2200/2670

Date: October 14, 2011

Gary Miller
La Grande Field Office
USDI Fish and Wildlife Service
3502 Highway 30
La Grande, OR 97850

Dear Gary,

Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (as amended) and its implementing regulations on interagency cooperation (50 CFR 402), this letter and the enclosed three biological assessments (BAs) initiate a request by the Malheur National Forest for consultation with the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service on the authorization of livestock grazing activities that “may affect, likely to adversely affect” and/or “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” Columbia River bull trout and its designated critical habitat.

We respectfully request a Biological Opinion (BiOp) on the effects of the Blue Mountain Ranger District’s authorization of livestock grazing activities on the Blue Mountain, Upper Middle Fork John Day, and the Lower Middle Fork John Day Allotments. In addition, we are requesting a Letter of Concurrence (LOC) on the effects of the authorization of livestock grazing activities on the Camp Creek and Bear Allotments.

These three final BAs include the following eight grazing allotments, however only the above mentioned five allotments have a presence of bull trout or critical habitat:

- **Blue Mountain/Camp Creek/Long Creek;**
- **Upper Middle Fork John Day/ Lower Middle Fork John Day/Slide; and**
- **York/Bear**

The permittees of these allotments have been granted applicant status as defined in 50 CFR 402.02, and will have up to 30 days to review the draft BiOp upon completion, inclusive of the 135-day consultation period. Your staff has reviewed the draft BAs for Blue Mountain, Camp Creek, Upper Middle Fork, and Lower Middle Fork Allotments. The comments you submitted to us on 9/20/2011 have been addressed in our enclosed final BAs.

If you have any questions, please contact Ian Reid, acting Malheur National Forest Threatened



and Endangered Species Coordinator by telephone at 541-575-3363 or by email at ireid@fs.fed.us. We look forward to working with you and your staff in the future to conserve threatened fish species and their habitat in the John Day Basin.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Teresa RAAF". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

TERESA RAAF
Forest Supervisor

cc: Ian Reid, John Gubel, Janet L Plocharsky, Rene Mabe