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# United States Department of the Interior

## IDAHO FISH AND WILDLIFE OFFICE

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JUN 04 2009

Suzanne Rainville  
Forest Supervisor  
Payette National Forest  
800 W. Lakeside Drive  
McCall, Idaho 83638

Subject: East Fork South Fork Salmon River Bridge Repair Project—Valley County,  
Idaho—Concurrence  
113.0300 14420-2009-I-0414

Dear Ms. Rainville:

This letter transmits the Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) concurrence on the effects of the East Fork South Fork Salmon River (EFSFSR) Bridge Repair Project (Project) on the Payette National Forest (Forest) to species listed under the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended. In a letter dated May 26, 2009, and received by the Service on May 28, the Forest requested consultation on the determination under section 7 of the Act that the proposed project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect the bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*). The Forest has determined that the project will have no effect on the Canada lynx (*Lynx Canadensis*) or the northern Idaho ground squirrel (*Spermophilus brunneus brunneus*), and the Service acknowledges these determinations.

The proposed project is being undertaken by the Forest and Valley County, and this consultation covers both interrelated portions of the project. The EFSRSR Bridge was damaged during the 2007 East Zone Complex Fire, and needs to be maintained with a new in-stream pier, a new superstructure, some streambank armor, and work on the additional piers. This work will be accomplished by constructing an equipment pad from the roadway down the bank along the upstream side of the first abutment. A work platform consisting of rip rap will also be constructed below the ordinary high watermark to support a crane for removal of parts of the superstructure. Upon completion of the rip rap work platform on the McCall side, a similar river access approach will be constructed along the downstream side of the second abutment (see the Assessment for drawings). A working platform (58 by 32 feet) will be constructed in the river, and measures will be taken to keep the work area dry. These work areas will allow the necessary maintenance on the bridge to occur.

The biological assessment (Assessment) provides a complete description of the Project including a number of design features that were incorporated to minimize or avoid undesirable impacts on a variety of resources, including listed species.


Service concurrence that the project is not likely to adversely affect bull trout is based on the following rationales presented in the Assessment.

1. The EFSFSR is within the action area of the Project. The risk of adverse effects to spawning bull trout is discountable because no spawning has been documented in the action area.
2. The EFSFSR is used by bull trout as a migratory corridor and overwintering habitat. Telemetry data for the area shows that bull trout are not likely to be present in the action area during proposed project implementation because of Project timing. The potential mechanisms of effect to bull trout include sediment delivery (turbidity) and chemical contamination to bull trout habitat. Project timing and design features requiring the use of sediment control and chemical spill prevention/control will minimize the potential risk of adverse effects to bull trout and their habitat to an insignificant level. Furthermore, the work pads described above will not block passage for any bull trout that may be in the area.

Because the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) partnered with the Forest in the development of the Assessment and in Project coordination with Valley County, this concurrence is applicable to the Forest's action and the Corps's issuance of a 404 permit. The Forest served as the lead agency in this consultation.

This concludes informal consultation on the proposed Project under section 7 of the Act. A complete record of this consultation is on file at this office. If the project proposal addressed in this letter is modified, environmental conditions change, or additional information becomes available regarding potential effects on listed species not already considered, you should verify with the Service that your conclusions are still valid. Thank you for your continued interest in the conservation of threatened and endangered species. Please contact Allyson Turner at (208) 685-6952 if you have questions concerning these comments.

Sincerely,

  
for Jeffery L. Foss, State Supervisor  
Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office

cc: NOAA Fisheries, Boise (Edwards)  
Corps, Boise (Martinez)