



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

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September 18, 2006

Carl B. Schreck
Oregon Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit
Department of Fisheries and Wildlife
Oregon State University
Corvallis, Oregon 97331

Re: Request for IMST review

Dear Carl,

USFWS, ODFW, and USFS staff has produced a draft feasibility study that assesses the potential for reintroducing bull trout into the Clackamas River Subbasin. We feel it would be prudent to have an independent review by a credible scientific/academic entity. The Independent Multidisciplinary Science Team was suggested and we are, therefore, submitting this request for review of the Draft Clackamas River Bull Trout Reintroduction Feasibility Assessment by the IMST. We can have staff available to attend your next meeting in October to present background material and a summary of the feasibility study.

The feasibility study was identified in the 2000 Draft Bull Trout Recovery Plan as a priority action item for the Clackamas River Core Area recommended by the Clackamas Bull Trout Working Group, a consortium of state, federal, private and non-governmental persons convened to help develop a recovery plan for bull trout in the Willamette Basin. The feasibility study was tasked to evaluate both the habitat, donor stock, and ecological factors associated with a reintroduction effort. The specific tasks addressed in the Draft Clackamas River Bull Trout Reintroduction Feasibility Assessment are as follows:

1. Review available information that documents their historical presence, extirpation, factors for decline, and amelioration of those factors for decline.
2. Assess the adequacy (quantity and quality) of suitable habitats within the Clackamas River Subbasin. This assessment would compare the historic distribution to currently suitable habitats, and would assess existing production capabilities for sustaining an independent population of bull trout in the Clackamas River Subbasin.
3. Review all genetic information collected on extant populations (McKenzie, Hood River, Deschutes, Lewis, and Klickitat) and identify the most suitable donor stock.
4. Assess the benefits and risks to both the donor stock and recipient population.

5. Investigate the food web requirements for ensuring a successful reintroduction.
6. Evaluate the ecological interactions with other native species and display potential consequences to ESA listed anadromous species.
7. Review available reintroduction techniques and identify their strengths and weaknesses (e.g., fry releases, artificial propagation, etc.).
8. Provide an overall summary and outline adaptive management considerations (including monitoring and evaluation) based on Tasks 1-7, above, for developing a proposal for action.

In the IMST review of the feasibility study, we would like to know the following:

- Is it credible?
- Have we used the right tools to answer our questions?
- Are there other more appropriate tools?
- Are there other issues that should be addressed?

We would like to have the feasibility study finalized by the end of this year. We would like to have feedback from the IMST by the end of November, if at all possible. If this timeline does not work for you, then we would like to know when IMST would be able to complete a review.

Thank you in advance for considering our request.

Sincerely,



Chris Wheaton, Northwest Region Supervisor

Cc: Kemper McMaster, Chris Allen - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Gary Larson, Dan Shively - U.S. Forest Service
Jeff Boechler, Todd Alsbury, Mary Hanson - ODFW