

PACFISH/INFISH FIELD REVIEW

**Umatilla National Forest
Vale District, Baker Resource Area**

Oct. 10-12, 2006

Deputy Field Review Team members:

Dorothy Mason, Team Lead, Vale District/OSO, Bureau of Land Management,
(Dorothy_Mason@or.blm.gov.)

Jerry Cordova, USFWS, Bend Field Office, (jerry_cordova@fws.gov.)

Kim Kratz, NOAA Fisheries, Habitat Conservation Division, Regional Office, Portland, OR.
(kim.kratz@noaa.gov.)

Dan Fissell, FS Region 6, (dfissell@fs.fed.us)

Eric Archer, PIBO Effectiveness Monitoring, (ekarcher@fs.fed.us)

Al Doelker, Oregon State Office, Bureau of Land Management, (Al_Doelker@or.blm.gov.)

Jim Golden, Deputy Regional Forester, Region 6, Portland OR, (jgolden@fs.fed.us)

Kim Titus, BLM Branch Chief for Planning and Monitoring, Portland OR, (Kim_Titus@or.blm.gov)

Participants in addition to Review Team:

Al Scott	FS
DelAnn Ferguson	FS
Kathy Ramsey	FS
Kevin Martin	FS
Kristy Groves	FS
Craig Dixon	FS
Brad Lathrop	FS
Tim Collins	FS
Tom Mafera	FS
Ed Calme	FS Contractor
Spencer Hovekamp	NOAA
Eric Murray	NOAA
Jackie Dougan	BLM
Ted Davis	BLM
Polly Gribskov	BLM

Field Review Objectives

These are for specific project or activities to be reviewed in the field:

1. Determine whether PACFISH and INFISH standards and guidelines are understood and being implemented correctly.
2. Determine whether PACFISH and INFISH and Biological Opinion requirements are understood and being implemented correctly.
3. Determine whether implementation monitoring requirements are understood and being correctly implemented according to the latest version of the IIT Monitoring Module.
4. Identify needs for training or guidance associated with PACFISH or INFISH direction, BOs or monitoring.
5. Identify any barriers to PACFISH/INFISH implementation.

Specific Local Objectives

No specific questions were posed by the field units for the Review Team.

GENERAL FINDINGS

Commendations:

All units reviewed were very familiar with PIBO requirements. Both FS and BLM have implemented PIBO for several years in this area. It was positive to see how specialists and managers across the units were familiar with PIBO requirements and were able to demonstrate their awareness through the management actions.

The Level 1 and 2 teams are well organized and well versed on the projects reviewed. It is apparent that these processes are working smoothly in this area. There was consistent and active participation by the Level 1 and 2 representatives for NOAA on the tour. The FWS representatives had planned to participate as well but due to unforeseen circumstances were unable to participate. They are regular and consistent members in the Level 1 and 2 teams here. This was a positive statement as to the effectiveness of streamlining consultation for this area.

OBSERVATIONS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

North Fork John Day Ranger District Clear Creek Restoration Project

Commendations:

- This proactive project was started prior to the 1998 BOs and appears to be implemented in accordance with the BOs mechanisms, terms and conditions. The staff showed significant initiative in attracting outside dollars, persistent education and outreach to the community which eventually led to community buy-in. This project will help in the attainment of RMOs by improving shade, long-term large wood recruitment, and formation of undercut banks but will take decades.

Observations:

- Restored floodplains are relatively flat and could be accessed by vehicle from nearby roads. Dispersed recreation may increase on restored sites.
- The review team was uncertain whether a completed Watershed Analysis provided the context for determining if Clear Creek was the best watershed to perform this work. The importance of this project should be verified by a watershed analysis. Has the unit completed a watershed analysis for Clear Creek and are they completing one watershed analysis per year?
- It appears that the project is being implemented with the project BO terms and conditions and the unit understands and is implementing the PACFISH/INFISH standard and guides related to this project.
- The team feels the only implementation monitoring requirement (from PIBO) is the Line Manager Certification Report. The Forest has submitted a signed 2005 Line Manager Certification Report.

Recommendations:

- Complete watershed analysis for Clear Creek, if not already done, to provide physical and biological justification for this project and its relationship to objectives of larger scale plans or strategies. One watershed analysis per unit is required by current policy. A watershed analysis here would provide justification for future projects in context with existing work and changed baseline conditions. It would also validate progress towards achieving the objectives of past and future projects.
- Control of dispersed recreation on the site through application of the applicable PACFISH/INFISH standards and guides (e.g. RM-1, RM-2, RM-3) is necessary to prevent impairment of the benefits provided by the restoration action.
- Field units are encouraged to use the PACFISH/INFISH Implementation Monitoring Database to record and report stream/riparian-related implementation monitoring requirements for activities

other than grazing or outside of the requirements of PACFISH, INFISH, and the Biological Opinions. It has been designed to accommodate requirements other than PACFISH or INFISH standards.

- Due to the scope and extent of this project, the review team recommends that project effectiveness monitoring evaluate benefits of this design for application to future projects.

Vale District, Baker Resource Area South Fork Walla Walla River

Commendations:

The unit appears to be implementing the South Fork Walla Walla ACEC Management Plan. The BLM has made substantial improvements to the parking area, trailhead and adjacent streambanks. The BLM continues to provide education to visitors, signing, litter cleanup, campfire obliteration, and maintenance as needed to the trailhead. The end result is they manage recreation in a manner consistent with PACFISH/INFISH and the 1998 Biological Opinions except possibly, for the lower parking area at the trailhead. The result is a significant improvement to the recreational experience and the Riparian Habitat Conservation Area (RHCA).

The review team appreciates the sensitive discussions between the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), Federal, state and local governments and private landholders in an effort to resolve access to private in-holdings. The BLM appears to be complying with the terms and conditions of the SF Walla Walla Biological Opinions.

Observations:

- The projects the review team observed were recreation, trailhead administration, and the land owner access proposal.
- The trailhead, located within the RHCA, is not consistent with PACFISH/INFISH Standard and Guides (S&Gs) (RM-1, RM-2 apply). The lower parking lot is next to the stream would not comply with S&Gs if constructed today.
- The review team can not determine if the existing “six-week work window” prevents the attainment of Riparian Management Objectives (RMOs). For instance, large woody debris or pool frequency objectives do not appear to have been attained.
- The team feels the only (PIBO) implementation monitoring requirement is the Line Manager Certification Report. The Vale District, Baker Resource Area, has submitted a 2005 Line Managers Certification Report.

Recommendations:

- Prior to additional actions in the RHCA, evaluate and document that the action(s) will not prevent the attainment of RMOs (RM-1, RM-2 apply).

- PIBO Effectiveness Monitoring integrator reach will allow us to assess trend over time and tell us if the RMOs are being attained in this watershed.
- Field units are encouraged to use the PACFISH/INFISH Implementation Monitoring Database to record and report stream/riparian-related implementation monitoring requirements for activities other than grazing or outside of the requirements of PACFISH, INFISH, and the Biological Opinions. It has been designed to accommodate requirements other than PACFISH or INFISH standards.
- If access is modified from the current practice then the BLM needs to assure that the action is consistent with PACFISH/INFISH Standard and Guide (S&G) RM-2.

RM-2. *Adjust dispersed and developed recreation practices that retard or prevent attainment of RMOs or adversely affect listed anadromous fish/inland native fish. Where adjustment measures such as education, use limitations, traffic control devices, increased maintenance, relocation of facilities, and/or specific site closures are not effective in meeting RMOs and avoiding adverse effects on listed anadromous fish/inland native fish, eliminate the practice or occupancy.*

- If the modification includes construction of new bridges compliance with S&G RM-1 is required.

RM-1 PACFISH: *Design, construct, and operate recreation facilities, including trails and dispersed sites, in a manner that does not retard or prevent attainment of the RMOs and avoids adverse effects on listed anadromous fish. Complete Watershed Analysis prior to construction of new recreation facilities in RHCA. For existing recreation facilities inside RHCA, assure that the facilities or use of the facilities will not prevent attainment of RMOs or adversely affect listed anadromous fish. Relocate or close recreation facilities where RMOs cannot be met or adverse effects on listed anadromous fish avoided.*

RM-1 INFISH: *Design, construct, and operate recreation facilities, including trails and dispersed sites, in a manner that does not retard or prevent attainment of the RMOs and avoids adverse effects on inland native fish. Complete Watershed Analysis prior to construction of new recreation facilities in RHCA within priority watersheds. For existing recreation facilities inside RHCA, assure that the facilities or use of the facilities will not prevent attainment of RMOs or adversely affect inland native fish. Relocate or close recreation facilities where RMOs cannot be met or adverse effects on inland native fish avoided.*

- If the modified action includes issuance of a road use permit or right of way, compliance with S&G LH-3 is required.

LH-3 *Issue leases, permits, rights-of-way, and easements to avoid effects that would retard or prevent attainment of the Riparian Management Objectives and avoid adverse effects on listed anadromous fish / inland native fish. Where authority to do so was retained, adjust existing leases, permits, rights-of-way, and easements to eliminate*



effects that would retard or prevent attainment of the Riparian Management Objectives or adversely affect listed anadromous fish / inland native fish. If adjustments are not effective, eliminate the activity. Where the authority to adjust was not retained, negotiate to make changes in existing leases, permits, rights-of-way, and easements to eliminate effects that would prevent attainment of the Riparian Management Objectives or adversely affect listed anadromous fish / inland native fish. Priority to modifying existing leases, permits, rights-of-way, and easements would be based on the current and potential adverse effects on listed anadromous fish / inland native fish and the ecological value of the riparian resources affected.

- The review team recommends developing a Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) to continue fostering cooperation between agencies, Tribes and private land owners and to assure that future management in this watershed is coordinated (S&Gs; WR-2, FW-4, RF-1 apply).

WR-2. *Cooperate with Federal, State, local, and Tribal agencies, and private landowners to develop watershed-based Coordinated Resource Management Plans (CRMPs) or other cooperative agreements to meet Riparian Management Objectives.*

FW-4. *Cooperate with Federal, Tribal and State fish management agencies to identify and eliminate adverse effects on native anadromous fish /native fish associated with habitat manipulation, fish stocking, fish harvest, and poaching.*

RF-1. *Cooperate with Federal, Tribal, State, and county agencies, and cost-share partners to achieve consistency in road design, operation, and maintenance necessary to attain Riparian Management Objectives.*

- The review team recommends participating with the Forest Service in any future SF Walla Walla River watershed analysis (S&Gs; RF-2a PACFISH and RF-2a INFISH apply).

RF-2a PACFISH: *For each existing or planned road, meet the Riparian Management Objectives and avoid diverse effects to inland fish by: A. completing watershed analyses prior to construction of new roads or landings in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas in priority watersheds.*

RF-2a INFISH: *For each existing or planned road, meet the Riparian Management Objectives and avoid diverse effects to inland fish by: A. completing watershed analyses prior to construction of new roads or landings in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas in priority watersheds.*

- If bridges are constructed, comply with S&G RF-4.

RF-4 PACFISH: *Construct new, and improve existing, culverts, bridges, and other stream crossings to accommodate a 100-year flood, including associated bedload and debris, where those improvements would/do pose a substantial risk to riparian conditions. Substantial risk improvements include those that do not meet design and operation maintenance criteria, or that have been shown to be less effective than designed for controlling erosion, or that retard attainment of Riparian Management Objectives, or that do not protect designated critical habitat*

from increased sedimentation. Base priority for upgrading on risks to listed anadromous fish and their designated critical habitat and the ecological value of the riparian resources affected. Construct and maintain crossings to prevent diversion of streamflow out of the channel and down the road in the event of crossing failure.

RF-4 INFISH: *Construct new, and improve existing, culverts, bridges, and other stream crossings to accommodate a 100-year flood, including associated bedload and debris, where those improvements would/do pose a substantial risk to riparian conditions. Substantial risk improvements include those that do not meet design and operation maintenance criteria, or that have been shown to be less effective than designed for controlling erosion, or that retard attainment of Riparian Management Objectives, or that do not protect designated critical habitat from increased sedimentation. Base priority for upgrading on risks to priority watersheds and the ecological value of the riparian resources affected. Construct and maintain crossings to prevent diversion of streamflow out of the channel and down the road in the event of crossing failure.*

Umatilla National Forest Heppner Ranger District

Commendations:

The range program appears to be knowledgeable in PACFISH/INFISH monitoring.

The two DMAs visited appear to be placed in the proper location and implementation monitoring is being conducted as directed.

The Forest has done an admirable job working with permittees to improve rangeland and riparian conditions. The Forest has developed a long term shared vision that has successfully improved rangeland and riparian conditions and should be fostered and passed on to future employees. This long term consistency has been vital to their successful range program.

It appears the forest is working well with the EM team and compliance with IM monitoring requirements.

The initiative the forest has taken to acquire funding to fence riparian areas allotments is a good example of interagency cooperation.

Compliance with IM year end reporting is commended.

Observations:

Stubble height is being used to base pasture grazing management decisions as trigger in season monitoring. Only trend monitoring in the DMAs is being done by the EM team. Greenline trend monitoring sites have been established by botanist but not in the DMAs – appears to be two separate efforts.

It does appear that the forest is transitioning from reading the historical “Parker 3-Step” condition and trend studies (over 300 forestwide) to a newer protocol. These studies are historically located in the uplands, away from the riparian areas. The forest did also indicate that they do also intensively monitor the riparian terraces. This was done because the species composition is quite different. The terraces are composed of the bluegrass, tufted hairgrass species whereas the greenline is composed of the more coarser sedges. It appears the inseason triggers are determined by the stubble height on the terraces versus the actual greenline.

Recommendations:

Suggest moving Greenline reaches to the DMAs to reduce the redundancy of monitoring efforts. Establish long-term trend monitoring at all DMAs. We suggest the Forest staff refer to the Memo dated 07/27/05 – PACFISH/INFISH Biological Opinion, Clarification of Riparian Monitoring and Assessment Protocols and Implementation (attached).

CONCLUSIONS AND DEPUTY TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

1-The Review Team felt there is a need for experience and data to be shared regarding restoration of dredge pile mine tailings. Reclamation efforts are ongoing through out the west in riparian areas affected by dredges. Each area seems to create their own data and experiences. The Review Team suggests the Deputy Team consider holding a symposium to document, share and discuss this important stream and riparian restoration information.

2-The Review Team suggests the Deputy Team revise the protocols for the Field Review to create a more random process for project selection and DMA review sites. This can be done by the Field Review Coordinator in cooperation with the State or Regional Monitoring Team representative. This will prevent field units from ‘showcasing’ only the best projects and facilitate a more objective review of projects and DMA sites.

FEEDBACK FROM THE UNITS TO THE REVIEW TEAM

No feedback from the units was provided to the Review Team as of the time of the Close out.

Attachments

Reply Refer To: 2200/2600/4100/6500(FS)/ 6840(BLM) (OR-931)P **Date:** July 27, 2005

EMS TRANSMISSION

FS-Memorandum

BLM-Information Bulletin No. OR-2005-159

To: Forest Supervisors and District Managers

Subject: PACFISH/INFISH Biological Opinion - Clarification of Riparian Monitoring and Assessment Protocols and Implementation

District Managers and Forest Supervisors are accountable for implementing the monitoring requirements of the 1998 PACFISH/INFISH Biological Opinions for salmon, steelhead, and bull trout. Accordingly, managers should ensure proper completion of monitoring information and appropriately act upon the results. The guidance contained in the following enclosure is intended to assist the field units with understanding current monitoring protocols and complying with PACFISH/INFISH Standard and Guide Grazing Management-1.

This memorandum identifies appropriate long- and short-term riparian assessment and monitoring protocols for use on grazing allotments in eastern Oregon and Washington in watersheds containing Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed salmon, steelhead, and bull trout. Use of the identified protocols complies with the 1995 interim strategies for PACFISH/INFISH and the 1998 Biological Opinions for salmon, steelhead, and bull trout. The protocols would also apply to critical habitat for fish species that may be designated in the future under ESA, as appropriate.

Over the last 10 years, the Interagency Implementation Team (IIT) has provided oversight and direction for PACFISH/INFISH Biological Opinion monitoring. Implementation Monitoring, conducted by Forest and District staff, and Effectiveness Monitoring, completed by a centralized team from the Rocky Mountain Research Station, are both components of the IIT monitoring program.

Until recently, Implementation Monitoring has primarily used stubble height determinations along streambanks as a means to assess grazing effects in accordance with the PACFISH/INFISH decision and the 1998 Biological Opinions. Also, project level Biological Opinions have included stubble height monitoring standards as a term and condition and as formal performance standard in grazing permits. In some cases, stubble height has been the **only** monitoring tool used for assessing livestock effect in riparian areas. The sole dependence on stubble height as a monitoring tool could lead to erroneous determinations about riparian conditions. In 2003, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Forest Service (FS) commissioned the University of Idaho to conduct a research project to assess the proper use of stubble height as a monitoring tool.

This research determined that there is no scientifically established cause and effect relationship between a specific stubble height level and long-term riparian conditions. Therefore, stubble height monitoring data alone should not be used as a substitute for long-term rangeland ecological monitoring.

All units are encouraged to review the guidelines and to apply the monitoring guidance contained therein, in whole, part and/or in addition to, appropriate monitoring that may already be in place. The level of integration is to be determined at the local level, dependent on what is already occurring. Appropriate long-term trend monitoring methods for riparian areas have been evaluated for use by field units at the Designated Monitoring Areas, and references are included.

If you have any questions, please contact Al Doelker (BLM) at 503-808-6067, Craig MacKinnon (BLM) 503-808-6157 or Dan Fissell (FS) at 541-467-5117.

/s/Jim Golden(for)
LINDA GOODMAN
Regional Forester, Region 6
USDA Forest Service

/s/Cathy L. Harris (for)
ELAINE M. BRONG
State Director, OR/WA
USDI Bureau of Land Management

Enclosure

FS Distribution

R6 RO, Cal Joyner
R6 RO, Alan Christensen
R6 RO, Nancy Phelps
R6 RO, Dan Fissell
R6 RO, Dave Heller
R6 RO, Linda Ulmer
R4 Rick Henderson
WO, Janette Kaiser

BLM Distribution

WO-230 (204LS)
ID-931 (Tim Burton)
OR-035 (Dorothy Mason)
OR-050 (Ronald Wiley)
OR-931 (Al Doelker, Michael Haske, Joe Moreau)
OR-931 (Rosemary Mazaika)
OR-931 (Craig MacKinnon)

K:\ro\nr\services\correspondence\phelps\2210-2520-2670_coverltr_PIBO_memo_2005_0628.doc
Edit:nr:jahern:208:6/28/2005
Re-edited:jahern:7/12/2005