

In the Rufus Woods sub-basin, the ACOE have been administering contracts to address wildlife mitigation for the ten-foot pool rise to Chief Joseph Dam. The protocols and work are conducted under the ACOE Design Memorandum 52. The Synopsis reads as follows:

This design memorandum (DM) presents a plan for preserving habitat for endangered species and for mitigating wildlife losses caused by increasing the elevation of Rufus Woods Lake an additional 10 feet. Recommended mitigation methods include constructing domestic livestock exclusion fences in selected areas, installing irrigation systems and planting desirable species of shrubs and trees to increase carrying capacity of habitat, constructing and installing goose nest structures and raptor poles in strategic locations, constructing goose islands and goose brooding pastures, and omitting reservoir perimeter area cleaning. In addition, this plan includes a 5-year study of mule deer populations, including their movements and habitat use. The Bald eagle, a threatened species, also was considered in this plan and will benefit from its implementation. This plan intends only to maintain the "status quo" in wintering Bald eagle use and is not intended as enhancement.

The ACOE is doing an evaluation on DM 52 this year and the Colville Tribes would like to see the following changes to be more in line with sub-basin plans and current wildlife mitigation efforts with BPA funding.

This DM 52 started in the early 1980's and today is out of date with current management practices. Several points the CCT wish to make regarding this DM 52 are; the species used were non-native (Russian olive, Siberian pea, Himalayan blackberry, etc.) and were artificially supported by irrigation. The soils on most sites are not suitable for riparian species without life support from the irrigation system. The irrigation system is outdated and costly. It makes no sense to irrigate a site only to have to go in and mow the vegetation so water cannons on the system get water to the plants to make them grow. The BPA provides the ACOE monies to mitigate these sites. Our point is to allow the CCT and WDFW the opportunity to mitigate these sites by incorporating them into the ongoing mitigation programs for Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph dams. The ACOE is not a land management agency and does not have the personnel or equipment to address mitigation for wildlife losses from the ten-foot pool rise. They usually contract the work to the CCT and WDFW on an annual basis. Lets eliminate the middleman and do the work directly using those funding allocations the ACOE receives from BPA.

CCT would appreciate any and all comments from the Wildlife Committee on this subject.