COMPREHENSIVE INVENTORY AND PRIORITIZATION OF FISH PASSAGE AND SCREENING PROBLEMS IN THE WENATCHEE AND ENTIAT SUBBASINS

PROJECT ID: 29027

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The following represent YSS's response to concerns identified in the ISRP "Preliminary Review of Fiscal Year 2003 Proposals for the … Columbia Cascade Provinces", ISRP 2002-2, March 1, 2002.

CONCERN 1: MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN TERMS OF ACCURACY AND SUCCESS.

RESPONSE: There are several levels at which the data collected in the inventory are verified. The project supervisor and others from the Salmonid Screening, Habitat Enhancement, and Restoration (SSHEAR) Inventory Unit will periodically field check the crews to ensure that they are following data collection protocols. The frequency of these evaluations will depend upon the experience of the crews and the findings of previous monitoring. A second way in which the field crews are checked is during periodic database queries, looking for data entry errors and violations of the protocol. A third way the data are checked is when project biologists are scoping high priority projects. Part of the scoping process involves a biologist verifying the information in the file and, along with an engineer, verifying that the site is a problem for fish.

CONCERN 2: THE NEED FOR SAMPLING OF FISH PRESENCE TO DETERMINE PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS. THAT IS, ARE FISH PRESENT BELOW A BARRIER BUT DO/DO NOT PASS?

RESPONSE: The barrier assessment protocol has a procedure for identifying whether a stream is fish bearing. That procedure is based upon the direct observation of fish, the physical characteristics of the stream, or by map information. The physical characteristics that are used to determine a fish-bearing stream are taken from the Forest Practices Rules (Chapter 222 WAC). Map information that can be used to verify fish use include water type maps generated by the Department of Natural Resources, WDFW Priority Habitats and Species database, and StreamNet. Inventory crews will make notes on fish

observed during the inventory activity, and characterize the abundance as high, medium, low, or none.

It is important to note that the barrier assessment protocol is based upon criteria contained in WAC 220-110-070. These criteria are based upon the assumption that even the weakest of fish would be able to swim through a culvert if the criteria are met. Therefore, a culvert could be categorized as a barrier, but still passes fish. In this case, the culver would be categorized as a partial barrier, and everything being equal (species, stock status, habitat gain, cost of correction), will have a lower priority index (PI) than a total barrier.