

Sokolowski, Rosana

From: Pope, Von
Sent: Wednesday, January 08, 2014 2:54 PM
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Cc: Sokolowski, Rosana; Smith, Michelle
Subject: RRWF update - meeting on March 5, 2014

Good Afternoon Rocky Reach Wildlife Forum (RRWF) Members,

The following is an update regarding RRWF activity and a request to meet on March 5, 2014 from 10 – 12 to cover some of the topics below.

No response was received to the October 31, 2013 draft meeting minutes or the 2014 RRWF weed control proposal sent out on November 6, 2013, so those documents are now final.

As we discussed in our October meeting, the Rocky Reach Wildlife Management Plan expires on September 22, 2015 and a new 5-year plan must be submitted for FERC approval. The payment agreements associated with the plan also expire in December of 2015. There has been some discussion about when to submit the new 5 –year plan, in late 2014, for approval before the current plan (and payment agreements) expire, or mid- late 2015 which may require modification of the existing payment agreements to continue working under the existing plan into 2016. The RRWF needs to decide when to submit a new 5-year plan.

The Ute Ladies Tresses Subcommittee will also be passing on a letter for RRWF approval to modify the 5 –year survey requirement for Ute ladies' tresses.

At the meeting, we can also discuss the City of Entiat application for a marina on Rocky Reach Reservoir that I informed you about on 12/30/2013.

We should not need more than a couple of hours to get through these topics. I will send out an agenda and draft letter from the Ute ladies tresses' Subcommittee in February. Please plan on attending this meeting on March 5 from 10- 12.

Sincerely,

Von

Von Pope
Wildlife Programs Manager
Chelan County PUD
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RRWF Integrated Terrestrial Invasive Plant Control Plan 2014 Project Proposal

Purpose

The Integrated Terrestrial Invasive Plant Control Plan (ITIPCP) was developed by the Rocky Reach Wildlife Forum (RRWF) (Chelan County PUD 2012) as the integrated noxious weed control program required in the Rocky Reach Settlement Agreement (Chelan PUD 2006). The ITIPCP outlines the process for using the annual funding available to the RRWF under Section 4.4 of the Rocky Reach Wildlife Habitat Management Plan (RRWHMP) to implement project proposals. This 2014 Project Proposal is a component of the ITIPCP necessary for project implementation and requires RRWF approval before implementation.

Consistent with the Rocky Reach Settlement Agreement (Chapter 7; Section 4.2.5, Chelan PUD 2006) and the RRWHMP (Section 4.4, Chelan PUD 2009) Chelan PUD shall, in consultation with the RRWF, make available \$10,000 per year for the term of the new license and any subsequent annual licenses for implementation of an integrated noxious weed control program in the Rocky Reach Wildlife Area (RRWA). The RRWA is defined as a 3-mile buffer from the center of Rocky Reach Reservoir (Chelan PUD 2009). Implementation of the integrated noxious weed control program will be conducted by Chelan PUD personnel or other qualified personnel selected by the RRWF (Chelan PUD 2006). Projects proposed shall not require maintenance or monitoring to ensure success, rather, all projects are one-time treatments (Chelan PUD 2009).

Recent wildfire (2010 Swakane fire) within the RRWA has led to an increase in the cover of invasive plant species, including Dalmatian toadflax (*Linaria genistifolia ssp. dalmatica*) and diffuse knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*), which are both class B noxious weeds in Chelan County, Washington (Chelan County Weed Control Board website, 2012). The heaviest infestations occur in post-fire areas between Burch Mountain, near Rocky Reach Dam, and the Entiat River along Rocky Reach Reservoir. This area is important mule deer and bighorn sheep winter and spring range. The area also hosts known populations of sensitive plants.

Much of the area impacted by Dalmatian toadflax occurs within roadless areas with steep canyons and rocky areas, making chemical control difficult to impossible. In 2012, the RRWF facilitated the release of over 21,000 biological control insects between Burch Mountain and the Entiat River to help control the spread of Dalmatian toadflax and diffuse knapweed (RRWF 2012). However, the density of plants (particularly Dalmatian toadflax) is so great that additional biological control has been recommended in order increase the population of biological controls at an even faster rate.

Therefore, the RRWF proposes to use funding available under Section 4.4 of the RRWHMP (up to \$20,000) to reduce the cover of Dalmatian toadflax and diffuse knapweed within the RRWA between Burch Mountain and the Entiat River via the release of biological control insects during the spring and summer of 2014 consistent with the ITIPCP.

Project Detail

The RRWF proposes one action for funding under Section 4.4 of the RRWHMP through the ITIPCP in 2014. Approval of the project proposal will initiate action on the approved project and, per RRWF approval of project completion, approve the release of funds under Section 4.4 of the RRWHMP.

Proposal 2014

The RRWF proposes that Chelan PUD contract with the WSU Extension to collect and release the biological control agents *Mecinus janthinus*, *Larinus minutus*, and *Cyphocleonus achates* for Dalmatian toadflax and diffuse knapweed at multiple locations within the RRWA between Burch Mountain and the Entiat River, with emphasis in Swakane Canyon. The WSU Extension may subcontract or assign other entities to conduct or assist with this work, but billings related to the work will be via the contract between Chelan PUD and the WSU Extension. Releases will take place during spring and summer of 2014. Timing of releases will take into consideration the phenology of Dalmatian toadflax and diffuse knapweed at the proposed release sites. Releases may have to occur at different times and intervals so as to give the biological control agents the best opportunity to become established at the proposed release sites.

Many of the proposed release sites are located far from main roads and will involve hiking into the sites to conduct the releases. Proposed release areas are shown in Figure 1, and were selected in consultation with the land managers (USFS, BLM, and WDFW) and RRWF members. However, the number and location of release sites may change depending on phenology, cover, availability of biological control agents, and site conditions at the time of release.

The WSU Extension will mark release sites with GPS and photo each release site and include this documentation with the final billing to Chelan PUD. A final summary report with will be provided to the RRWF stating the number and location of release sites, dates of release, and approximate number of biological control agents released at each site.

The RRWF has accrued \$50,000 in weed control funds since the RRWHMP approval in 2009. Between 2012 and 2013, the RRW has spent \$38,610.39. Unspent dollars from 2009 to 2013 total \$11,389 plus the 2014 allocation of \$10,000 brings the amount available up to \$21,389. Therefore, the contract with WSU Extension will not exceed \$20,000 and work will be conducted between March 2014 and October 2014. Upon completion of the project, Chelan PUD will pay the contract amount and invoice the RRWF for reimbursement by December 1, of 2014.

Considerations for Species of Conservation Concern

Populations of three sensitive species of plants are known to occur within the RRWA. The plant species of concern for each project proposal are listed below. Both WDFW and the USFS were contacted to assess presences of sensitive species. Biological control agents

proposed for this project have been approved for widespread use on Dalmatian toadflax and diffuse knapweed within Washington State. The biological control agents proposed for this project have demonstrated narrow host specificity, attacking only closely related Eurasian species with no effect to non-target native plants (Wilson et al 2005). The biological controls are already widely used within Chelan County and may already exist at some of the proposed sites, but the RRWF proposes to increase numbers of these agents in the field so as to reduce cover of Dalmatian toadflax and diffuse knapweed. At this time, we are not aware of any property owner limitations or restrictions that would prevent this activity.

Proposal 2014-A – Toadflax biological control

Species	Wa State Status	Federal Status
Chelan rockmat <i>Petrophyton cinerascens</i>	Endangered	Species of Concern
Longsepal globemallow <i>Ilamma longisepala</i>	Sensitive	USFS Sensitive
Thompson’s clover <i>Trifolium thompsonii</i>	Threatened	Species of Concern

Literature Cited

Chelan County Noxious Weed Control Board website. Accessed May 10, 2012
http://www.co.chelan.wa.us/nw/nw_weed_list.htm

Chelan PUD. 2012. Rocky Reach Wildlife Area Integrated Terrestrial Invasive Plant Control Plan. Rocky Reach Hydroelectric Project, FERC Project No. 2145. Wenatchee, WA.

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Chelan PUD. 2006. Rocky Reach Settlement Agreement. Rocky Reach Hydroelectric Project, FERC Project No. 2145. Wenatchee, WA.

Wilson, L. M., S. E. Sing, G. L. Piper, R. W. Hansen, R. De Clerck-Floate, D. K. MacKinnon, and C. Randall. 2005. Biology and Biological Control of Dalmatian and Yellow Toadflax. USDA Forest Service, FHTET-05-13.

Figure 1. Proposal 2014-A: Potential release sites for Dalmatian toadflax and diffuse knapweeds biological control agents in Chelan County.

Areas likely to be infested with toadflax (south, south-southeast, and south-south west slopes, shown in orange).

