

## **GRMWS PROJECT PROPOSAL**

### **1. Project Name:**

Blackhorse/Lick Creek Riparian Protection Fence

### **2. Applicant:**

Us Forest Service – Wallowa Mts. Office  
88401 Hwy 82  
Enterprise, Oregon 97828  
541- 426-4978  
541-426-5522 (FAX)

### **3. Participating Landowner(s) and Agencies:**

US Fish & Wildlife  
US Forest Service  
Wallowa County Natural Resource Advisory Council (Title II)

### **4. Project Contact(s):**

Kelly Birkmaier	(technical contact)	541-426-5665	<a href="mailto:krbirkmaier@fs.fed.us">krbirkmaier@fs.fed.us</a>
Teresa Smergut	(technical contact)	541-426-5547	<a href="mailto:tsmergut@fs.fed.us">tsmergut@fs.fed.us</a>
Cynthia Erickson	(contracting rep)	541-426-5684	<a href="mailto:cerickson@fs.fed.us">cerickson@fs.fed.us</a>
	(contracting officer)	541-xxx-xxx	

### **5. Project Location:**

T4S R46 & 47 Beginning at the Lick Creek Guard Station in Section 1 the fence runs southeast passing through the NENE Sec 12, and SWSW of section 7, continuing southeast through the NWNW Sec 18, ending in the S ½ Section 18: approximately 5.25 miles in length. The fence is entirely within the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, Wallowa County Oregon. Please refer to attached map.

### **6. Project Objectives:**

Fisheries: Protect approximately 5 miles (50 acres) of stream habitat from livestock impacts for:

- Steelhead (ESA-Threatened, Snake River Basin ESU)
- Spring Chinook Salmon (ESA-Threatened, Snake River Basis ESU)
- Bull Trout (ESA-Threatened, Columbia River ESU)
- Redband Trout

#### Watershed:

- Protects and maintains approximately 50 acres of riparian habitat currently in excellent condition from livestock impacts in Upper Lick Creek and tributaries.
- Prevents livestock from adversely affecting water quality (sediment, temperature) in the headwater areas of Lick Creek watershed to benefit fisheries and water quality lower in the watershed including Big Sheep Creek.

This project is in the Imnaha Subbasin and is tied to the Imnaha Subbasin Plan through the following document:

**Recommendations to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council  
on the Imnaha Subbasin Priority Strategies to Guide the 2007-2009  
Project Solicitation**

**Prepared by the Nez Perce Tribe  
Department of Fisheries Resource Management  
October 4, 2005**

Page 5, table 12: Lick Creek is identified as a priority for protection and restoration for Spring Chinook and steelhead.

Page 6, section 5.3.2.1 Natural Production Objectives and Strategies:

- 6) **Fence and plant riparian zones/Develop offsite watering facilities.** Where opportunities exist, work on public, federal, state, tribal and private lands will be conducted to improve riparian habitat. Fencing and/or offsite water development is utilized to manage use of the riparian zone by livestock and planting of native vegetation is done to speed the recovery process once grazing or other land uses have been modified. Riparian habitat improvements can directly impact stream temperatures and sediment inputs (through stabilizing stream banks and filtering runoff).
- 7) **Modify channel and flood-plain function.** Where opportunities exist, work on public, federal, state, tribal and private lands will be conducted to improve form and function of stream channels. This work involves directly (active restoration and bioengineering) or indirectly (passive restoration) returning stream channels to a functional state that is determined by the valley form, geology, soils, vegetation and climate. Specific parameters often targeted by this type of work include channel width and depth, sinuosity, slope, flood prone area, ratio of channel features, etc.
- 10) **Increase protective status of priority habitats.** Where habitats have high value due to their current productive capacity or general importance to particular species, they should be protected to maintain their value. This can be accomplished by easements and other kinds of natural resource protection agreements, or on public lands by varying kinds of protections authorized by statute or rule.
- 11) **Modify detrimental land use activities.** Change land use activities leading to degradation of habitat, thereby allowing stream attributes impacted by these activities to recover without intervention. A common example of this kind of work is riparian buffers where streamside areas are protected from uses such as livestock grazing, timber harvest or agricultural crops (mainstem Imnaha and Big Sheep Creek).

## **7. Project Description:**

a. Introduction - The Lick Creek/Blackhorse Protection fence is approximately 4 miles in length and will be constructed as a “lay down” fence prohibiting cattle drift into Upper Lick Creek from the Marr Flat cattle & horse allotment. This fence will be laid down every fall after livestock vacate the Blackhorse Pasture and put back up prior to livestock entry the following year.

b. Existing Condition – The Upper watershed of Lick Creek was formerly part of a sheep allotment that shared a boundary with the Marr Flat Allotment, Blackhorse Pasture which contains about 8,472 acres. The grazing on this allotment is permitted to 4 different permittees. Livestock have a tendency to drift off the Marr Flat Allotment from the Blackhorse Pasture and therefore access portions of the upper watershed of Lick Creek and its tributaries. Although the habitat in this portion of the watershed is in excellent condition, if allowed to remain in these areas, or by encouraging use from other cattle, (bring others along with them), livestock could:

- trample streambanks allowing for more sediment input into the stream,
- browse woody vegetation decreasing vigor and shade cover,
- change stream morphology by disrupting streambed characteristics, or
- possibly step on redds.

Although at this point in time effects from livestock grazing are not significant, in these areas of Lick creek, permittees rely on frequent riding to intercept cattle prior to reaching Lick Creek. This is not always successful in keeping cattle out of areas where Chinook salmon and bull trout are spawning. This project would eliminate livestock access to the stream reducing any adverse affects from grazing.

c. Specific Actions -

Task 1. Construct 5.25 miles of 4 strand barb/smooth wire lay down fence

Task 2. Place one cattle guard on the 39 road (refer to map).

Task 3. Place one cattle guard on the 3925? Road (refer to map)

d. Benefits – Specific benefits include:

- Protection of habitat in currently in excellent condition (streambanks’ vegetation).
- Enhancement of water quality and fisheries habitat lower in the watershed.
- Allow permittees to spend more time in other areas of the allotment to ensure grazing management objectives are being met.

e. Project Maintenance –

The permittees on this allotment will be responsible to put the fence up prior to the grazing season, maintain portions as needed and lay the fence down at the end of the season. This will be accomplished by modifying the term grazing permit and including this requirement in the Annual Operating Instructions.

f. Permits – Consultation with US Fish & Wildlife and NOAA will be initiated in 2009 for this project. The Forest Service will also follow the planning process and NEPA requirements.

g. Monitoring Plan – The Forest Service will monitor the contract during fence construction to ensure contract specifications are being met. In addition, forest service personnel will monitor the fence condition pre, during and post grazing season to ensure permittees are fulfilling their maintenance obligations. Frequent visit will also occur in the Upper Lick Creek area to monitor for livestock presence and/or grazing effects.

h. Work Dates – Work would begin after snowmelt and when soils are dry enough to be stable. This would most likely be mid-June.

## **8. Project Budget**

(see attached)

## **9. Attachments**

Project Budget

Project Map