

**Bonneville Power Administration  
Fish and Wildlife Program FY99 Proposal Form**

**Section 1. General administrative information**

**Wanaket (formerly Conforth Ranch) Wildlife Mitigation Project**

**Bonneville project number, if an ongoing project** 9009200

**Business name of agency, institution or organization requesting funding**  
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

**Business acronym (if appropriate)** CTUIR

**Proposal contact person or principal investigator:**

Name Carl Scheeler  
Mailing Address P.O Box 638  
City, ST Zip Pendleton, Oregon 97850  
Phone (541) 278-5267  
Fax (541) 276-4348  
Email address wildlife@ucinet.com

**Subcontractors.** List one subcontractor per row; to add more rows, press Alt-Insert from within this table

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Mailing Address</b>	<b>City, ST Zip</b>	<b>Contact Name</b>
<b>Umatilla County Weed Control Board</b>	<b>3920 Westgate</b>	<b>Pendleton, OR 97801</b>	<b>Matt Voile</b>
<b>Cris Inc. (Fish screen maintenance services)</b>	<b>PO Box 400</b>	<b>Umatilla Or 97882</b>	
<b>Unidentified nursery contractor.</b>			

**NPPC Program Measure Number(s) which this project addresses.**

**7.6.A, 7.6 B, 7.6.C, 11.3A, 11.3D**

**NMFS Biological Opinion Number(s) which this project addresses.**

**N/A**

**Other planning document references.**

**Conforth Ranch Wildlife Mitigation Feasibility Study, McNary Oregon (USDOE Bonneville Power Administration Division of Fish and Wildlife, USDI U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Wanaket (Conforth Ranch) Wildlife Mitigation Project Management Plan and Environmental Assessment(BPA and CTUIR), CTUIR Wildlife Mitigation Plan for the John Day and McNary Dams,**

If the project type is “Watershed” (see Section 2), reference any demonstrable support from affected agencies, tribes, local watershed groups, and public and/or private landowners, and cite available documentation.

**The Wanaket Wildlife Project is a wildlife mitigation project for McNary target wildlife mitigation species.**

**Subbasin.**

**Mainstem Middle Columbia River, Lower Umatilla Subbasin**

**Short description.**

**Protect, enhance, and mitigate wildlife habitat impacted by hydroelectric development in the McNary Project Area. Achieve NPPC wildlife mitigation objectives in a cost efficient manner by protecting and enhancing existing public lands with in-kind habitats located on-site where original habitat inundation occurred.**

**Section 2. Key words**

Mark	Programmatic Categories	Mark	Activities	Mark	Project Types
	Anadromous fish		Construction		Watershed
	Resident fish	X	O & M		Biodiversity/genetics
X	Wildlife		Production		Population dynamics
	Oceans/estuaries		Research	+	Ecosystems
	Climate	+	Monitoring/eval.		Flow/survival
	Other	+	Resource mgmt		Fish disease
		+	Planning/admin.		Supplementation



<b>Obj 1,2,3</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Task a,b,c</b>	<b>Task</b>
1.	Provide for project operations and maintenance including access management.	a.  b.  c.  c	Flood irrigate property to provide wetland habitats for McNary Target Wildlife Mitigation Species.  Develop sub-contract and solicit bids for maintenance of intake screens.  Maintain project fencing to protect upland and wetland habitat values.  Regulate access management on a permit-only basis to protect wildlife use of habitats during critical life history stages.
2.	Survey and control noxious weed infestations.	a.	Develop and implement sub-contract with for weed control.
3.	Collect and propagate native plant materials for future use in vegetation enhancement projects.	a.  b.	Identify on-site upland shrub and grass species that provide appropriate material sources.  Develop sub-contracts with unidentified contractor for collection and propagation of materials.

**Objective schedules and costs**

<b>Objective #</b>	<b>Start Date mm/yyyy</b>	<b>End Date mm/yyyy</b>	<b>Cost %</b>
1	12/99	12/00	90%
2.	12/99	12/00	5%
3	12/99	12/00	5%

**Assumptions: 1)Budget needs to include all management for FY99. 2)Management effectiveness of this project area may be supplemented by inclusion of a complex encompassing proposed Wallula HMU, Juniper Canyon HMU, and Columbia Gorge HMU Wildlife Projects. Incorporation of these HMU's will result in increased resource management efficiency.**

**Schedule constraints.**

**Constraints - None identified.**

**Major Milestones - For this 1999 project proposal, all activities are related to operations and enhancement. A HEP update and Futures Analysis will have been completed in 1998, so major milestones are not expected in FY99.**

**Completion date.**

**Operations and Maintenance and Enhancement will be covered under the NPPC Wildlife Program which requires BPA to provide adequate O&M funding to sustain the project as long as the hydro system operates (FW program measure 11.2.C.1.)**

**Section 5. Budget**

***FY99 budget by line item***

<b>Item</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>FY99</b>
Personnel		\$46,664.50
Fringe benefits		\$13,066.06
Supplies, materials, non-expendable property		\$30,100.00
Operations & maintenance		
Capital acquisitions or improvements (e.g. land, buildings, major equip.)		\$0.0
PIT tags		\$0.0
Travel		\$9,700.00
Indirect costs		\$33,840.00
Subcontracts		16,629.44
Other		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$150,000.00</b>

***Outyear costs***

<b>Outyear costs</b>	<b>FY2000</b>	<b>FY01</b>	<b>FY02</b>	<b>FY03</b>
Total budget	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
O&M as % of total	75	75	50	50

**Section 6. Abstract**

**The CTUIR is proposing to continue protecting, enhancing, and mitigating wildlife and wildlife habitat impacted by construction of the McNary Hydroelectric Power**

**Project. Later phases of the project contemplate potential additions of adjacent BLM and private lands to the project.**

**Primary objectives of the project proposal are to protect and mitigate wildlife and wildlife habitat. The project is located within the McNary Project area and provides a unique opportunity to mitigate wildlife habitat losses in-kind and on-site where the original inundation impacts from hydropower development occurred.**

**Key habitat located on the Wanaket Wildlife Area includes upland shrub steppe and riparian habitat. The project includes habitat for eight (8) McNary target wildlife mitigation species including: spotted sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*); Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*); yellow warbler (*Dendraica petechia*); mink (*Mustela vison*); western meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*); California quail (*Lophortyx californicus*); mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*); and downy woodpecker (*Picoides pubescens*). Wanaket consists of approximately 2,750 acres and could provide an estimated 2,334 Habitat Units (HU's) of protection credit and 2,495 Habitat Units of enhancement credit against BPA's Hydro related debt.**

**Monitoring and evaluation of habitats is based on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Evaluation Procedures (USFWS, 1980).**

## **Section 7. Project description**

### **a. Technical and/or scientific background.**

**In 1980, Congress passed the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act (Public Law 96-501). This act, in part, mandates that mitigation is to occur for fish and wildlife losses resulting from the construction and operation of federally-licensed hydroelectric facilities in Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon. The act also established and charged the Northwest Power Planning Council (NWPPC) with the development of a comprehensive fish and wildlife mitigation program. The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is responsible for implementation of the NWPPC fish and wildlife program funding recommendations.**

**In 1991, the USFWS prepared for BPA the Conforth Ranch Wildlife Mitigation Feasibility Study, McNary Oregon. The study estimated that management of the property for wildlife would result in habitat unit gains of 19 for meadowlark, 420 for quail, 431 for mallard, 466 for Canada goose, 405 for mink, 49 for downy woodpecker, 172 for yellow warbler, and 34 for spotted sandpiper. The estimated total was 2,495 habitat units, a 110% gain over the estimated 2,274 existing habitat units.**

**The Wanaket Wildlife Project was established in 1993, and will continue until title is passed to the CTUIR and a long-term maintenance agreement is negotiated. The**

management plan and Environmental Analysis were finalized (Finding of No Significant Impact ) in 1995.

In October 1994, the CTUIR contracted with the BPA to develop a Tribal mitigation plan for lands in Washington State that were ceded to the U.S. Government by the Walla, Umatilla, and Cayuse Indian Tribes in the 1855 Treaty of Walla Walla. In addition, the CTUIR also contracted with BPA in July 1995 to expand the planning effort to include ceded lands in northeast Oregon. In October 1997, the CTUIR published their plan which identified both generalized and site-specific wildlife mitigation projects. The plan identifies the mainstem Columbia River corridor, particularly existing public lands in the vicinity of the Walla Walla River and Juniper Canyon, and high priority areas to protect, enhance, and mitigate wildlife and wildlife habitat.

An update of the original HEP was conducted by the CTUIR in October of 1995 to incorporate adjustments to the wildlife area boundary and subsequent changes in cover type acreage. A net decrease in acres occurred in shrub-steppe, irrigated pasture (agriculture), and emergent wetland cover types. A corresponding decrease of 46 HU's from the original HEP analysis occurred (2,380 to 2,334 HU's).

A futures analysis will be conducted in 1998 to evaluate ongoing and planned habitat enhancement and restoration activities and provide an estimate of HU's achieved over time on the wildlife area. Following proposed incorporation/acquisition of adjacent ACOE and other lands, an additional HEP update will be performed to demonstrate the HU's achieved through incorporation of those lands.

**b. Proposal objectives.**

The development of dams for hydropower, navigation, flood control, and irrigation in the Columbia River Basin resulted in widespread inundation of riparian, riverine, and upland wildlife habitats (NPPC 1994; BPA et. al., 1993). In addition, dam development inundated traditional Native American hunting, gathering, and fishing areas, destroyed pre-historic and historic Indian village sites, and flooded sacred Indian burial grounds. From time immemorial, the Columbia Plateau supported a diversity and abundance of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and supplied local Indian tribes with natural resources for subsistence, traditional lifestyles, economic, and cultural and spiritual well being (CTUIR, 1994).

The Power Act mandates that fish and wildlife losses resulting from development of the federal hydroelectric system in the states of Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington be mitigated. The Power Act established and charged the Council with the task of developing a comprehensive fish and wildlife mitigation program to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat in the Columbia Basin (Power Act 1980, Section 4 (H)(1)(A), page 12; NPPC 1994, Section 2, page 2-1).

**This program, initially adopted in 1982, was amended in 1984, 1987, 1991-1993, and 1994. Consistent with Section 1003(7) of the Power Council Fish and Wildlife Program, BPA is authorized and obligated to fund implementation of projects that will help reach the Power Council wildlife mitigation goals and objectives.**

**Objectives of the CTUIR's proposal is to continue implementation of the Wanaket Wildlife Mitigation project to achieve the goals and objectives of the NPPC Fish and Wildlife Program and assist BPA in meeting obligations to compensate for lost wildlife habitat in the Columbia River Basin. Specific goals and objectives for these management units include:**

- 1) implementation of the existing management plan to provide and protect perpetual benefits for McNary target wildlife mitigation species. The Wanaket Wildlife Area, as stated earlier, currently provides an estimated 2,334 Habitat Units for McNary Target Wildlife Mitigation Species. Access management will also continue to be regulated on a permit-only basis to protect wildlife habitats from disturbance during critical life history stages including nesting and brood rearing.**
- 2) survey and control of noxious weeds is practiced on all 2,750 acres of the Wanaket Wildlife Area. Consistent noxious weed control measures are necessary to protect wetland and upland habitat values. Noxious weed threats are attributed to vectors including adjacent irrigation canal systems, undeveloped industrial lands, county and state roadways, and agricultural lands.**
- 3) collect and propagate of native plant material including shrubs and bunchgrasses for outyear planting and enhancement projects.**

**c. Rationale and significance to Regional Programs.**

**Regionally, upland shrub-steppe habitats are threatened. This habitat, once common in the Columbia Plateau, exists now only in scattered tracts and a few large contiguous tracts including the COE/BLM complex proposed for this project, Boardman Bombing Range, and the Umatilla Army Depos in Oregon and the Hanford Nuclear Reservation and Yakima Bombing Range in Washington. OWC coordinated planning, prioritization and implementation of mitigation projects using ODFW GAP analysis and landscape level restoration ecology methodologies applied in coordination with other resource managers in Oregon and Washington, will help assure long term viability of this project and shrub-steppe habitats in the region. The location of these lands in proximity to other Corps Leases and with Wanaket Mitigation Area will reduce costs through economies of scale and reduced duplication.**

**d. Project history**

## **1. History of Bonneville Wildlife Mitigation Efforts**

**Under the Northwest Power Act, the Council is required to include in its Fish and Wildlife Program measures to “protect, mitigate, and enhance” fish and wildlife affected by the development and operation of hydroelectric facilities on the Columbia River and its tributaries. Bonneville’s Administrator is required to use his funds and authorities to carry out such mitigation in a manner consistent with the Council’s Program.**

**Prior to 1988: At the Council’s direction, Bonneville funded wildlife loss studies for construction of and inundation by the major hydroelectric dams. The first studies completed were those for Libby and Hungry Horse Dams. The Council reviewed the losses, amended its Program to specify the number of acres of habitat and species that would constitute adequate mitigation and authorized Bonneville to proceed with mitigation projects.**

**Rather than carry out the mitigation itself, Bonneville undertook negotiations with the State of Montana with the intent of having Montana undertake the mitigation. Because year-to-year contracts with Montana were not viewed as an administratively practical way of acquiring and maintaining habitat, the Council and the region’s utilities encouraged Bonneville to consider establishing a trust fund, giving Montana flexibility to acquire and maintain habitat as the opportunity arose.**

**As stated earlier, two HEP’s have been completed for the Wanaket Wildlife Area. In 1991, the USFWS prepared for BPA the Conforth Ranch Wildlife Mitigation Feasibility Study, McNary Oregon. The study estimated that management of the property for wildlife would result in habitat unit gains fo 19 for meadowlark, 420 for quail, 431 for mallard, 466 for Canada goose, 405 for mink, 49 for downy woodpecker, 172 for yellow warbler, and 34 for spotted sandpiper. The estimated total was 2,495 habitat units, a 110% gain over the estimated 2,274 existing habitat units. The study also demonstrated local public support for the project and recommended the project. Reservations and objections were voiced only by adjacent industrial interests that occupy lands adjacent to Wanaket.**

**The HEP update was conducted by the CTUIR in October of 1995 to incorporate adjustments to the wildlife area boundary and subsequent changes in cover type acreage. A net decrease in acres occurred in shrub-steppe, irrigated pasture (agriculture), and emergent wetland cover types. A corresponding decrease of 46 HU’s from the original HEP analysis occurred (2,380 to 2,334 HU’s).**

### **e. Methods.**

**Methods to carry out implementation of the management plan will consist of project will consist of flood irrigation, fence maintenance, and access management. Other**

**objectives for 1999 include noxious weed control and native plant collection and propagation.**

- 1) Implementation of the primary Management Plan elements.**
  - a) Flood Irrigation -To supplement naturally occurring wetlands found in the McNary Potholes, flood irrigation is practiced in late spring/early summer and late summer/early fall months utilizing a pumpstation located on the McNary Pool. Two Certificates of Water Rights and their associated permits allow the CTUIR to apply a total of 4,763.5 acre feet of water. The permitted irrigation season is March 1 to October thirty-one. Water is distributed throughout the western and southern portions of the Wanaket Wildlife Area utilizing approximately 10 miles of gravity-fed canals. Application of water is timed to provide waterfowl brood rearing habitat for McNary Wildlife Target Species, the mallard and Canada goose, as well as 10 other waterfowl specie. Natural drawdown of flood irrigated habitats is practiced to mimic natural hydrologic regimes and provide feeding habitat for various shorebirds. Late summer/early fall applications provide feeding and resting habitat for McNary Wildlife Target Species Mallard and Canada goose, and as many as 18 other waterfowl species. Thousands of migratory waterfowl utilize Wanaket during migration.**
  - b) Sub-contracts are developed and bids solicited for screen maintenance and cleaning needs.**
  - c) Fencing-Fencing, typically four-strand barb wire, is used to protect upland and wetland habitats from livestock trespass and to regulate visitor access. Significant reductions in livestock trespass have resulted in decreased forage and shrub utilization and improved nesting habitat for the Mallard and Western Meadowlark, both McNary HEP Wildlife Target Species.**
  - d) Access Management-To protect habitats and wildlife use of those habitats during critical life history stages (nesting, brood rearing, and hunting seasons), access is strictly regulated through a permit system. Currently, permits are only issued three days of the week during the waterfowl and upland bird hunting seasons utilizing a lottery drawing process. This permitting process limits the number of people that may use the Wanaket Wildlife Area, protects wildlife needs during critical life history stages, and allows for partial protection during hunt seasons while at the same time providing rate-payer access. Vehicular access is restricted to administrative use at all times of the year. This minimizes disturbance during nesting/brood rearing stages.**
- 2) Noxious Weed Control- Noxious weeds in the project area are chemically treated three times a year by Umatilla County Weed Control. Application is accomplished with a combination of methods utilizing backpack, All Terrain Vehicle, and Tractor mounted spray units.**

3) **Native Plant Establishment-** Native grass mixes have been developed by Grassland West Seed Company based on historical vegetation, soil types and project elevation. Grasses are seeded with a harrow or broadcast seeder. Indigenous trees and shrubs are planted as cuttings or bareroot stock. Bareroot trees are subbasin specific trees produced from seed or cuttings at the CTUIR Native Plant Nursery. Native grass re-establishment has been 50% or greater. Tree mortality has dropped dramatically with the Tribal nursery's trees. Success rates of nearly 75% have been achieved on other CTUIR vegetation enhancement projects.

Resource assessments include HEP (USFWS, 1980), and botanical, and archaeological resource surveys. The area is known for its rich ethnographic and cultural resources. CTUIR's Cultural Resource staff conduct file and literature searches, pedestrian surveys and/or archeological excavations in proposed habitat enhancement areas to determine if cultural resources potentially eligible for inclusion to the National Register of Historic Places are present on the site. Final reports documenting their findings are prepared and submitted to the BIA Umatilla Agency Real Property Management Office (for implementation efforts on the Reservation) and to the State Historic Preservation Office (for implementation efforts, both on and off the Reservation.) All cultural clearances are obtained in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Cultural resources important to the CTUIR have been identified on the properties and the Tribes continue to utilize these lands for exercise of treaty rights.

The project will provide a linkage between tracts of land currently under management by two distinct federal agencies (e.g, Corps and BLM).

**f. Facilities and equipment.**

Facilities and equipment for this project will be funded through the BPA wildlife budget. Equipment and facilities necessary to implement the scope of work described above generally exists currently.

**g. References.**

**Childs, Allen. 1997. Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Wildlife Mitigation Plan for the John Day and McNary Dams, Columbia River Basin. Prepared by the CTUIR for U.S. Dept. Of Energy, Bonneville Power Administration, Portland, OR. 54pp.**

**Rasmussen, L. and P. Wright. 1991. Conforth Ranch Wildlife Mitigation Feasibility Study, McNary Oregon. Prepared by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for U.S. Dept. Of Energy, Bonneville Power Administration, Portland, OR. 46pp.**

**Rasmussen, L. and P. Wright. 1990b. Wildlife impact assessment, McNary Project, Oregon and Washington. Prepared by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for U.S. Dept. Of Energy, Bonneville Power Administration, Portland, OR. 46pp.**

## **Section 8. Relationships to other projects**

Umatilla Tribe Wildlife Coordination/Umatilla Riparian Corridor Coordination. Mitigation planning and coordination throughout the Ceded Territory which references and integrates the Wanaket Wildlife Area. Potential additions to the Wanaket Wildlife Area are proposed and analyzed in this plan, and the relationship of this project to other priority mitigation areas is discussed.

### **Securing Wildlife Mitigation Projects in Oregon**

This new project proposal would allow for the development of a complex of lands containing valuable shrub/steppe and wetland habitats to provide in-kind and on-site habitat values for the McNary project. Protection of these habitats would be achieved on a larger scale and the project areas would serve as shrub/steppe refugia and plant material sources. If the proposal is successful, Wanaket would make a logical inclusion into the complex due to its location and identical habitat types. Management costs over time would be expected to reduce due to economies of scale.

## **Section 9. Key personnel**

**All CTUIR Department of Natural Resource staff funded under this project are professionally trained and meet standard job descriptions (professional and technical grade and series requirements) established under the CTUIR Policy and Procedures Manual (under current revision, 1998). Technical staff involved in implementing the work identified under this proposal includes biological and administrative staff.**

**Name: Carl Scheeler**

**Title: Wildlife Program Manager**

**Months funded this project: 1**

**Education: MS Wildlife 1981 Oregon State University**

**Experience: 15 years fisheries/wildlife experience; last 10 years CTUIR Program Manager; expertise in multi-project development, coordination, and oversight.**

**Name: Allen Childs**

**Title: Wildlife Biologist**

**Months funded this project: 4**

**Education: BS Wildlife Management 1989 Eastern Oregon University; A.S.**

**Science/Fish and Wildlife Management 1985, College of Eastern Utah**

**Experience: 12 years fisheries and wildlife experience**

**Biological Technician**

**Education: High School Diploma**

**Experience:5 years wildlife technician experience**

**Biological Technician**

**Education: High School Diploma**

**Experience:2 years wildlife technician experience**

## **Section 10. Information/technology transfer**

**Project reports of accomplishments are produced quarterly and annually. Project personnel sponsor field tours at any time requested to show accomplishments, challenges, and techniques. Project personnel also frequently participate in local public forums (workshops, classrooms, clubs, etc.).**

**All entities involved in stream habitat alterations (proponents and permitting agencies) conduct pre and post implementation tours annually to discuss project needs/recommendations and project successes/failures.**