



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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John McAvoy, P.E., Major Projects Manager
Federal Highway Administration
Oregon Division
610 East 5th Street
Vancouver, Washington 98661

Richard F. Krochalis, Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
915 Second Avenue, Suite 3142
Seattle, Washington 98174

Subject: Informal Consultation for the Columbia River Crossing Test Pile Study Project, Multnomah County, Oregon and Clark County, Washington (USFWS Number: 13420-2011-I-0020)

Dear Mr. McAvoy and Mr. Krochalis:

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed your November 2010 letter (received November 18, 2010) requesting informal consultation and accompanying biological assessment (BA) for the Columbia River Crossing Test Pile Study Project. The project proposes to install six temporary piles in the Columbia River near the proposed Interstate-5 (I-5) bridge to determine potential noise and turbidity levels expected for vibratory and impact installation. The project will also determine the level of impact driving necessary for temporary piles to reach load bearing capacity. Information from the test pile project will be used to predict the extent of noise generated by temporary pile installation during construction of the proposed I-5 bridge and demolition of two existing I-5 bridges, and to craft better avoidance and mitigation measures for potentially disturbed aquatic and wildlife resources. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are the lead Federal action agencies for this consultation. The FHWA/FTA made a determination that the proposed project "may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect" bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) and designated critical habitat.

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Based on the proposed action as described in the BA, the Service concurs with the FHWA/FTA's determination that the proposed project as described above "may affect, and is not likely to adversely affect" bull trout and proposed critical habitat for the following reasons: 1) it is unlikely bull trout will be within the action area; and 2) the primary constituent elements of critical habitat are not likely to be degraded to an extent that is measureable or permanent.

If you have any further questions regarding this project please contact Kathy Roberts of my staff at (503) 231-6179.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Henson". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Paul Paul Henson, PhD
State Supervisor