

August 27,2002

Eric Murray  
United States Department of Commerce  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
LaGrande Field Office  
3502 Hwy 30  
LaGrande, OR 97850

Re: Emergency consultation final report for the 747 Fire on the South Fork John Day River.

Dear Eric Murray:

The 747 Fire started on July 13, 2002 as a result of a lightning strike in the Black Canyon Wilderness Area of the Ochoco National Forest. Erratic fire behavior and high temperatures allowed the fire to spread rapidly. The majority of the fire remained on the Ochoco National Forest, however, approximately 494 acres of Bureau of Land Management lands in T. 14 S. R 26 E., Sec. 22, 26, and 35 and approximately 50 acres in T. 15 S., R26 E., Sec 2 also burned. The South Fork John Day River and numerous tributaries are important spawning and rearing habitat for the Mid Columbia ESU summer steelhead, listed as a threatened species.

No fire line activities were required on the north side of the fire in Sec. 22 and 23. It appeared the few lightly burned patches of BLM lands were suppressed with helicopter water drops. The same appeared to be true on private lands surrounding the 80 acre BLM tract. This 80 acre tract is an upland tract of grass and juniper with a small ephemeral drainage in the southwest corner that was outside the fire perimeter.

The fire spotted across the South Fork John Day River in the vicinity of Aldrich Gulch on July 19, 2002. Four heavy retardant drops along the ridge approximately 3/8 mile east of the river on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> allowed Oregon State and BLM fire crews to get a hand line in and stop the fire spread. No fire lines were necessary on the north or south burn perimeter and suppression consisted of a hose line to individual hot spots within the fire.

A hand line was constructed on private land south of the river along the south fire boundary and continued to the west across BLM lands to tie in with a cat line on the Ochoco National Forest in the west 1/2 of Section 2. This hand line was on steep timbered north facing slope along the river and a more gentler north slope ridge top closer to the forest boundary to the south and west in N 1/2 of Sec. 2. The hand line construction connected rimrock to rimrock which broke up the line continuity so water barring was minimal.

The fire burned in a mosaic pattern along the south and west side of the South Fork John Day in the southwest 1/4 of Section 26 and northwest 1/4 of Section 35. No suppression activities occurred along the river.

No rehabilitation efforts are planned or necessary for the fire area on BLM lands. Since the majority of the fire was on the Ochoco National Forest you should contact the Rager Ranger District for any rehabilitation efforts on National Forest lands.

This will conclude the Bureau of Land Management's responsibility under Emergency Consultation for the 747 Fire. If there are any questions or concerns please contact John L. Morris, Fisheries Biologist for the Upper John Day area of the Central Oregon Resource Area.

Sincerely

Danny L. Tippy  
Acting Resource Area Manager