

## **BLM Study Review of Hells Canyon Studies**

E.3.2-17 Habits of Bald Eagles wintering in Northeastern Oregon and Adjacent Areas of Washington and Idaho

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The objectives of the study were to: 1) Document the number of bald eagles wintering in NE Oregon; 2) Identify and determine the pattern of use of foraging areas; 3) document food habits, and ; 4) Locate and document the magnitude and pattern of use of night roosts.

### **2. CONCLUSION**

There has been a substantial increase in bald eagles winter use of Oxbow and Hells Canyon reservoirs. Icing of HCC reservoirs can dramatically lower use of HCC reservoirs by bald eagles. The diet of wintering bald eagles on Snake River reservoirs includes: warm-water fish, waterfowl, gamebirds and deer.

### **3. STUDY ADEQUACY**

BLM agrees that survey data was adequate to identify general bald eagle numbers and roost areas. BLM also agrees that protection of roost trees and stands is a high priority. The study objectives were met.

### **4. BLM CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**CONCLUSIONS:** The study provided good baseline information on bald eagle use of the HCC and some valuable recommendations for future management.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** According to the report: “Large trees are scarce adjacent to the reservoirs and it appears that the only efforts to grow large trees are in areas of high human use (e.g., campgrounds, boat ramp sites). Consequently, trees for hunting and feeding perches may have been limited and human activities could have compounded the problem by keeping eagles from using existing trees.” We agree with IPC’s “Human Activities” section of the report and believe that IPC should begin a tree planting and care program to plant suitable tree species for the future at locations along the reservoirs at less suitable locations for human recreational activities.