

Fact Sheet

July 2015

BPA partners with Idaho to secure more than 4,600 acres to benefit fish

Habitat conservation – public notice

DATE: July 2015

LOCATION: Leadore, Lemhi County, Idaho
(see map on page 4)

ACRES: 4,682 (nearly 10 miles of in-stream and riparian habitat along the mainstem of the Lemhi River)

PURPOSE: The Bonneville Power Administration is partially funding the purchase of a conservation easement that would permanently protect nearly 10 miles of in-stream and riparian habitat near the town of Leadore in Lemhi County, Idaho.

This acquisition will partially mitigate the impacts to salmon and steelhead from the construction, inundation and continued operation of federal hydroelectric dams in the Columbia River and Snake



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Headwaters of the Lemhi River at the confluence of Texas and Eighteen Mile creeks. Leadore Land Partners Ranch, 2012

River basins. The conservation of habitat is one component of a broader, comprehensive strategy to improve conditions for fish at all stages of their life in the river.

The location of the conservation easement covers important spawning habitat for Snake River spring/summer chinook salmon and steelhead. This easement will also help preserve gains made for in-stream flow, tributary reconnection, riparian improvement and in-stream habitat rehabilitation in the Lemhi River and the following tributaries: Big Springs Creek, Canyon Creek, Hawley Creek, Eighteen mile Creek, Texas Creek and Big Timber Creek.

The property is located at an ideal elevation to buffer warming effects anticipated through climate change. At nearly 6,000 feet, the habitat protection and restoration, as well as water management enabled by this easement, will provide cold water refugia to these important fish populations into the future.

For example, this easement will permanently protect groundwater springs that are the source of Big Springs Creek, which hosts a major rainbow-steelhead trout spawning ground (over 500 redds in 2014). The landowner has agreed to maintain a minimum in-stream flow of 15 cubic feet per second in order to preserve water in the creek year round. The landowner will further improve flow through other actions, such as

the elimination of a ditch on the Lemhi River and participation in a 72-hour high flow event during which water withdrawals will be curtailed to mimic or enhance channel forming and maintaining events.

When combined with similar efforts on neighboring conservation easements on the Lemhi River, these actions will result in 100 cubic feet per second flowing through more than 25 miles of main river and tributary habitat. These flushing flows will help increase egg and smolt survival over time as gravels are consistently washed clean for successive brood years.

SPECIES BENEFITED: Snake River spring/summer chinook, steelhead

TYPES OF LAND: In-stream and riparian

TYPE OF ACTION: BPA is working with the Idaho Office of Species Conservation and the Lemhi Regional Land Trust to negotiate a conservation easement on 4,682 acres owned by the Leadore Land Partners. In exchange for its financial contribution, BPA will receive a conservation easement that will prevent habitat conversion and secure rights to restore and maintain fish habitat.

LAND MANAGEMENT: The Lemhi Regional Land Trust will work with the landowner to develop a habitat management plan within eight months, which will be available for public review and input. These plans are designed to protect and enhance the habitat for the benefit of fish and wildlife. Activities that may damage habitat, such as logging or new building construction, are generally prohibited on the easement unless specified otherwise. BPA reviews the plan for best management practices to protect the habitat, as well as for consistency with the terms and conditions of the conservation easement. Once accepted by BPA some elements of the plan may be funded through our Fish and Wildlife Program.

PARTNERS: Leadore Land Partners, Idaho Office of Species Conservation, Lemhi Regional Land Trust

For more information

Joe De Herrera at 503-230-3442 or jldeherrera@bpa.gov. You may also call toll free at 800-622-4519.



Osprey fledgling photo taken on Leadore Land Partners Ranch.



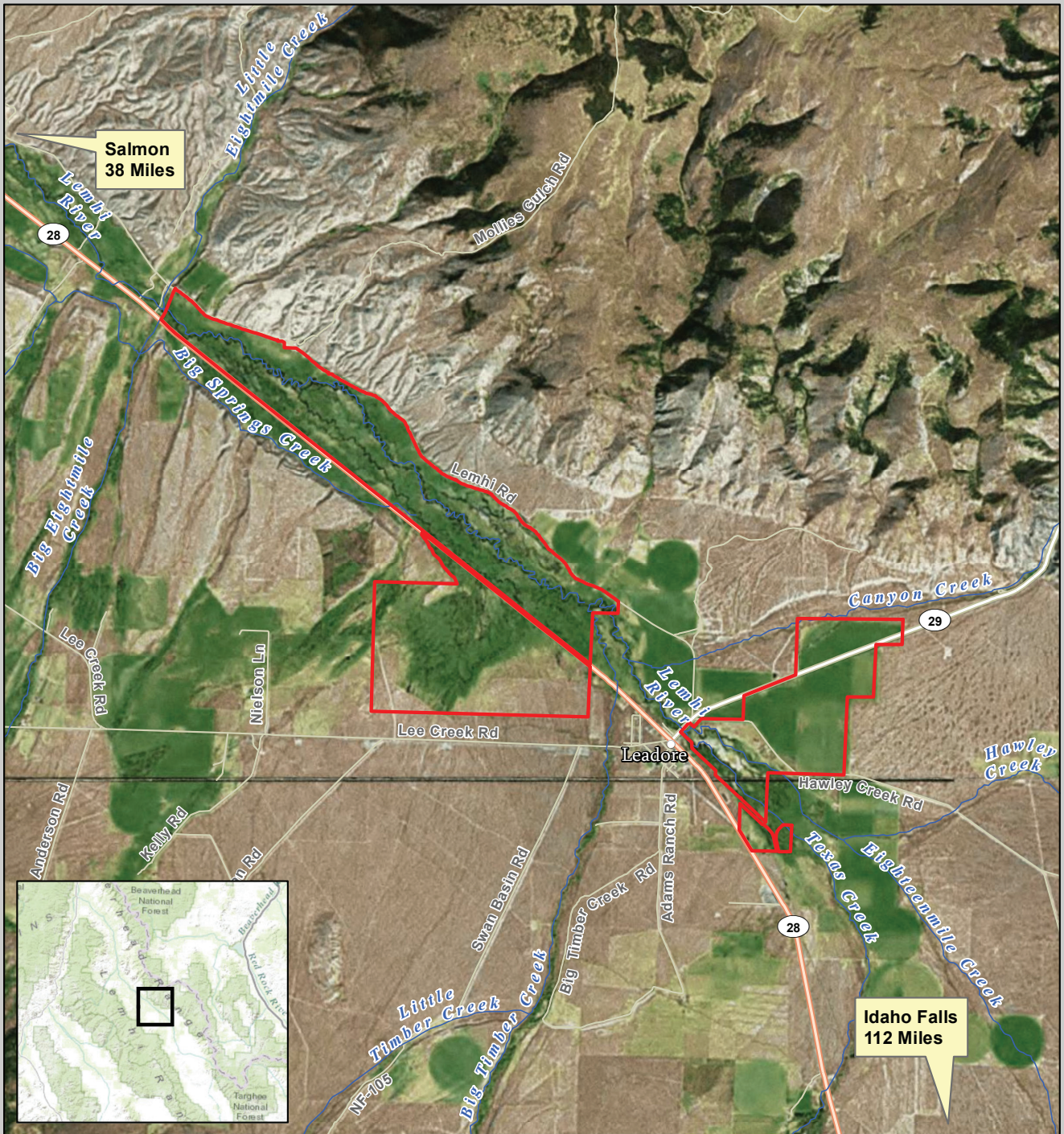
The property protected by Upper Lemhi River conservation easement meanders peacefully in Leadore, Idaho.



The confluence of the Lemhi River and Big Springs Creek.

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Upper Lemhi River Conservation Easement Public Notification Map

Lemhi County, ID
4,682 Acres

Subject Property

6/23/2015

