

**Biological Evaluation
for the
Intersection Snake River Avenue & Southway Avenue
Lewiston, Idaho**

**Project No. STP-7014(102)
Key No. 9029**

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I. SUMMARY

The Snake River Avenue and Southway project would make transportation improvements to Snake River Avenue and Southway in the City of Lewiston, Idaho. The following table summarizes the effects of the proposed project on the federally listed species for Nez Perce County (USFWS File #912.0300, Species List 2006-SL-0552).

Species	Status	Determination
Bull trout	Threatened/Critical Habitat	May affect, not likely to adversely affect
Spring/summer and fall Chinook salmon	Threatened	May affect, not likely to adversely affect
Steelhead	Threatened/Critical Habitat	May affect, not likely to adversely affect
Sockeye salmon	Endangered	May affect, not likely to adversely affect
Gray wolf	Experimental/Non-Essential	Not likely to jeopardize
Canada lynx	Threatened	No effect
Bald eagle	Threatened	No effect
Spalding's catchfly	Threatened	No effect

II. INTRODUCTION

Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (as amended in 1978, 1979, and 1982), requires all federal agencies to review all actions authorized, funded, or carried out by them to ensure that actions authorized, funded, and/or conducted by them are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any federally listed species, or result in destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat for such species. The purpose of this Biological Evaluation (BE) is to address the proposal for construction of the Snake River Avenue/Southway Project. This BE assesses the potential impacts of the proposed project on bull trout, spring/summer and fall Chinook salmon, steelhead, and sockeye salmon.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) listed the Columbia River bull trout population segment as Threatened under the ESA on June, 1998 and NOAA Fisheries Service listed in 1992 the spring/summer and fall Chinook salmon and steelhead as Threatened and sockeye salmon as Endangered under ESA. The objective of this BE is to provide information to facilitate an evaluation of the potential impacts of the proposed project on bull trout, spring/summer and fall Chinook salmon, steelhead, and sockeye

salmon under the jurisdiction of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries (NOAA Fisheries Service). Appendix B provides an assessment of the other species listed in Nez Perce County and the rationale for the “No Effect” determinations made in the summary table above.

The species addressed in this BE and Appendix B are based on the federally listed Threatened and Endangered species list provided to District 2 of the ITD (USFWS File #912.0300, Species List 2006-SL-0552). These species are depicted in Table 1 below. The proposed project is adjacent to the Snake River. NOAA Fisheries listed this section of river as critical habitat for the Snake River steelhead Ecological Significant Unit (ESU), Snake River sockeye salmon, and Snake River spring/summer and fall Chinook salmon (Federal Register, Volume 70, 2005).

Table 1. List of endangered and threatened species for Nez Perce County.

Species	Scientific Name	Federal Status
Bull trout	<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>	Threatened/ Critical Habitat
Spring/summer and fall Chinook salmon	<i>Oncorhynchus tschawytscha</i>	Threatened
Steelhead	<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>	Threatened/Critical Habitat
Sockeye salmon	<i>Oncorhynchus nerka</i>	Endangered
Gray wolf ¹	<i>Canis lupus</i>	Experimental/Non- Essential Population
Canada lynx ¹	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	Threatened
Bald eagle ¹	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Threatened (wintering area)
Spalding’s catchfly ¹	<i>Silene spaldingii</i>	Threatened
¹ The gray wolf, Canada lynx, bald eagle, and Spalding’s catchfly are addressed in the No Effects Statements, Appendix B.		

An Environmental Assessment (EA) is being conducted to assist local, state, and federal decision makers in identifying the best course of action to pursue in improving the safety and operation of the Snake River Avenue and Southway corridors. Specifically, the objective of this EA and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is to evaluate proposed courses of action and make decisions in the best overall public interest based on a balanced consideration of the need for safe, efficient transportation; the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the proposed improvements; and the national, state, and local environmental protection goals.

III. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

Location

The City of Lewiston in cooperation with the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) proposes to make transportation improvements to both Snake River Avenue and Southway in the City of Lewiston. The proposed improvements to Snake River Avenue begin at the Country Club Drive Intersection (MP 3.76) and extend approximately two miles north to the intersection of the US-12 Dike Bypass (MP 1.7) (see Figure 1). The project limits on Southway begin at the 8th Street Intersection and extend west about 0.75 miles to the Snake River Avenue Intersection. The intersections of Southway/Snake River Avenue and Southway/8th Street are currently the only signalized intersections within the project limits.

Action Area for the Proposed Activities

Land uses along the corridors are largely commercial/light industrial with some residential on Southway east of the Snake River Avenue intersection. Important recreational facilities exist on the west side of Snake River Avenue including the Kiwanis Park, the Levee Boat Ramp and parking area, and the Lewiston Levee Recreation Trail. In addition, the newly constructed Southway Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail runs along the south side of Southway.

The action area for bull trout, spring/summer and fall Chinook salmon, steelhead, and sockeye salmon would be at the immediate project site and the short distance downstream on the Snake River that would potentially be influenced by minor increases in suspended sediment. This is approximately 300 yards downstream.

Proposed Action - Preferred Roadway Build Alternative

The build improvements proposed for Snake River Avenue and Southway are described by segments and the preferred alternative for each segment is described below:

Snake River Avenue

Proposed road improvements include lane increases for Snake River Avenue, installation of associated curb, gutter, and sidewalks, and reconfiguration of the Southway intersection. Details by road segment are described below.

Country Club Drive to the Southway Intersection:

This segment of Snake River Avenue is currently a 2-lane facility and includes the grade-separated intersection with Bryden Canyon Road which connects Lewiston across the river into Clarkston, WA. Traffic analyses indicate the need for additional traffic lanes between Bryden Canyon Road and Southway. Therefore, an increase to three lanes that includes a continuous, two-way left turn lane is proposed from Country Club Drive to the Bryden County Road, and an increase to five lanes is proposed from Bryden Canyon