



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
CLEARWATER REGION

3316 16th Street
Lewiston, Idaho 83501

December 21, 2007

C.L. "Butch" Otter / Governor
Cal Groen / Director

RECEIVED
DEC 28 2007
IDWR/North

Mr. Joe R. Maxwell
Natural Resource Manager
Lower Granite Natural Resources Management Section
Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers
100 Fair Street
Clarkston, WA 99403

Dear Mr. Maxwell

REFERENCE: PROPOSAL TO DEVELOPE A WATER RIGHT AT HELLSGATE STATE PARK

The Corps of Engineers has requested IDFG input regarding a proposal to develop a well in Hellsgate State Park. Water from the well would be used to irrigate the state park and to irrigate several wildlife habitat areas on the upper bench of the Hellsgate Habitat Management Unit. The well would replace water currently diverted from the Snake River because the Snake River diversion has consistently presented maintenance problems.

Your letter did not indicate the volume of water that you plan to request in your water right application; however, in a telephone conversation Mark Graves, COE Clarkston, indicated that you plan to request a withdrawal equal to your current in-river withdrawal and that the water would be used for the same places and purposes as the current Snake River withdrawal. For all practical purposes, your proposal is to change the point of diversion from the river to a well, with no change in the amount of water appropriated.

The proposed site for the well indicates that the well would very likely be in direct continuity with the Snake River. However, the volumes to be withdrawn would equal those currently diverted from the Snake. Since your past withdrawals from the Snake have not caused adverse impacts to fish, wildlife or habitat, it is reasonable to assume equal withdrawals from the well would not have adverse impacts.

Based on the understanding that the well will entirely replace the Snake River withdrawal (*i.e.*, the river diversion will be abandoned), and your requested withdrawal from the well will equal the existing instream appropriation, IDFG has no objection to the proposed development of a well at Hellsgate State Park.

Please contact Ray Hennekey, Region 2 Environmental Staff Biologist, if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Cadwallader", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Dave Cadwallader
Clearwater Regional Supervisor

DC/rh/gl

c: Bart Butterfield, NRPB
Keith Franklin, IDWR CDA