



TEASDALE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSOCIATES

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March 26, 2007

Kerby Cole, Ph.D., P.E.
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
1118 F Street
Lewiston, ID 83501

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WATER RESOURCES
WESTERN REGION

Dear Mr. Cole:

The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) asked us to invite comment from local resource agencies on an application to appropriate water from French Creek in the Salmon River basin for a small private hydropower project. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) determined that this project is exempt from its jurisdiction. The project is located in Section 24 Township 24 North Range 3 East (Figure 1).

The French Creek micro-hydropower project proposes to divert 2.0 cubic feet per second (cfs) from lower French Creek to produce a peak rate of 15 kilowatts for a rural home site owned by Mr. and Mrs. Carl Smid. French Creek is a steep boulder-cobble bed stream that joins the Salmon River about 20 miles upstream from the town of Riggins in Idaho County. French Creek is an ungaged stream for which there is no historic discharge record. According to estimation procedures developed by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) the mean annual discharge for Lower French Creek is estimated to be 100 cfs and the minimum average monthly flow (February) is estimated to be 24 cfs. The USGS flow duration computation method suggests that stream flows in February will be greater than 8 cfs for 80 percent of the time.

The micro-hydro project is a run-of-the-river design in which no water will be impounded in the stream or stored off-channel. The diverted flow will bypass approximately 3,000 feet of stream channel beginning at about 1.5 miles above the confluence of French Creek and the Salmon River. The elevation difference between the inlet and outlet locations is approximately 160 feet. Flow would be diverted to a 10 inch diameter PVC penstock pipe to be buried in the existing access road along the east side of French Creek. Inlet and outlet works will be constructed in the stream channel and will likely affect 100 to 200 feet of riparian zone. The diverted flow would reenter French Creek through an energy-dissipater tail race channel located approximately 1.0 mile above the confluence with the Salmon River.

Electrical power would be generated by a commercially manufactured Pelton type turbine system installed in a powerhouse shed located on the east bank of French Creek. All facilities will be constructed on property owned by the Smids. The conceptual layout of the micro-hydropower project is shown in Figure 2.

We met with the Idaho Department of Water Resources and Idaho Fish and Game last August in Boise to discuss possible impacts of the project. Cindy Robertson, IDWR Fisheries Program Manager, identified several concerns that are being considered in the design of the project:

- Formation of ice in the intake structure and in the stream
- Screening of the diversion works
- Location of the penstock within the roadway

- Control of surface erosion on the road
- Construction impacts on riparian areas

We are evaluating the potential of these impacts and will describe the mitigating design features and construction control procedures in the supplemental information submittal to IDWR.

We would appreciate your comment on these issues, or other possible impacts of concern to IDEQ. Please send written comments by mail to the address above or by email to teasdale@genesee-id.com. You may also contact me by telephone at (208) 285-1637 or discuss the project with Richard Lindsey, P.E. at Cuddy and Associates in Orofino at (208) 476-4643.

Sincerely,



Gregg N. Teasdale, Ph.D., P.E.

cc: Cuddy and Associates
Daniel A. Nelson, IDWR- Coeur d'Alene

French Creek Micro-hydropower Project

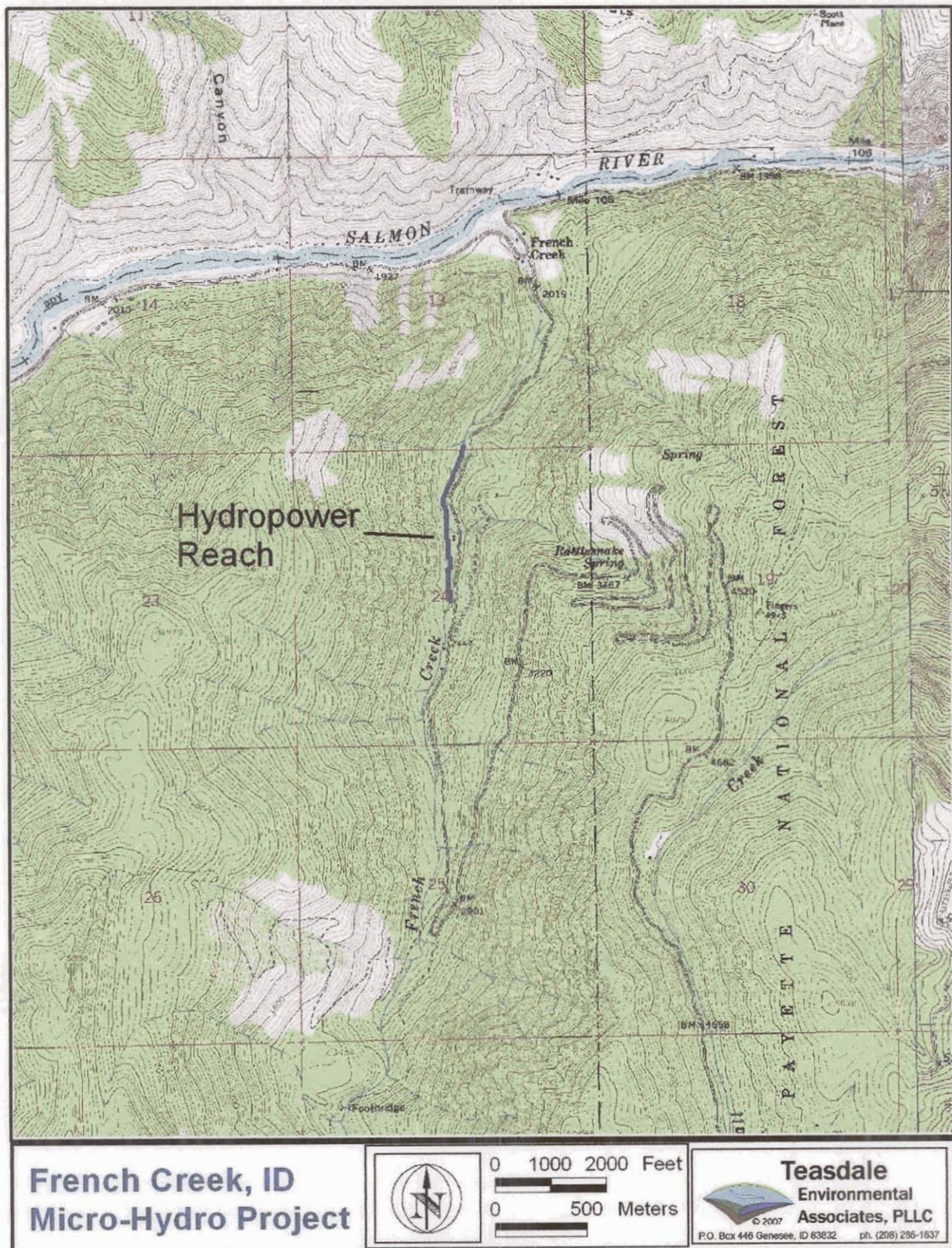


Figure 1 Location of the French Creek micro-hydropower project.

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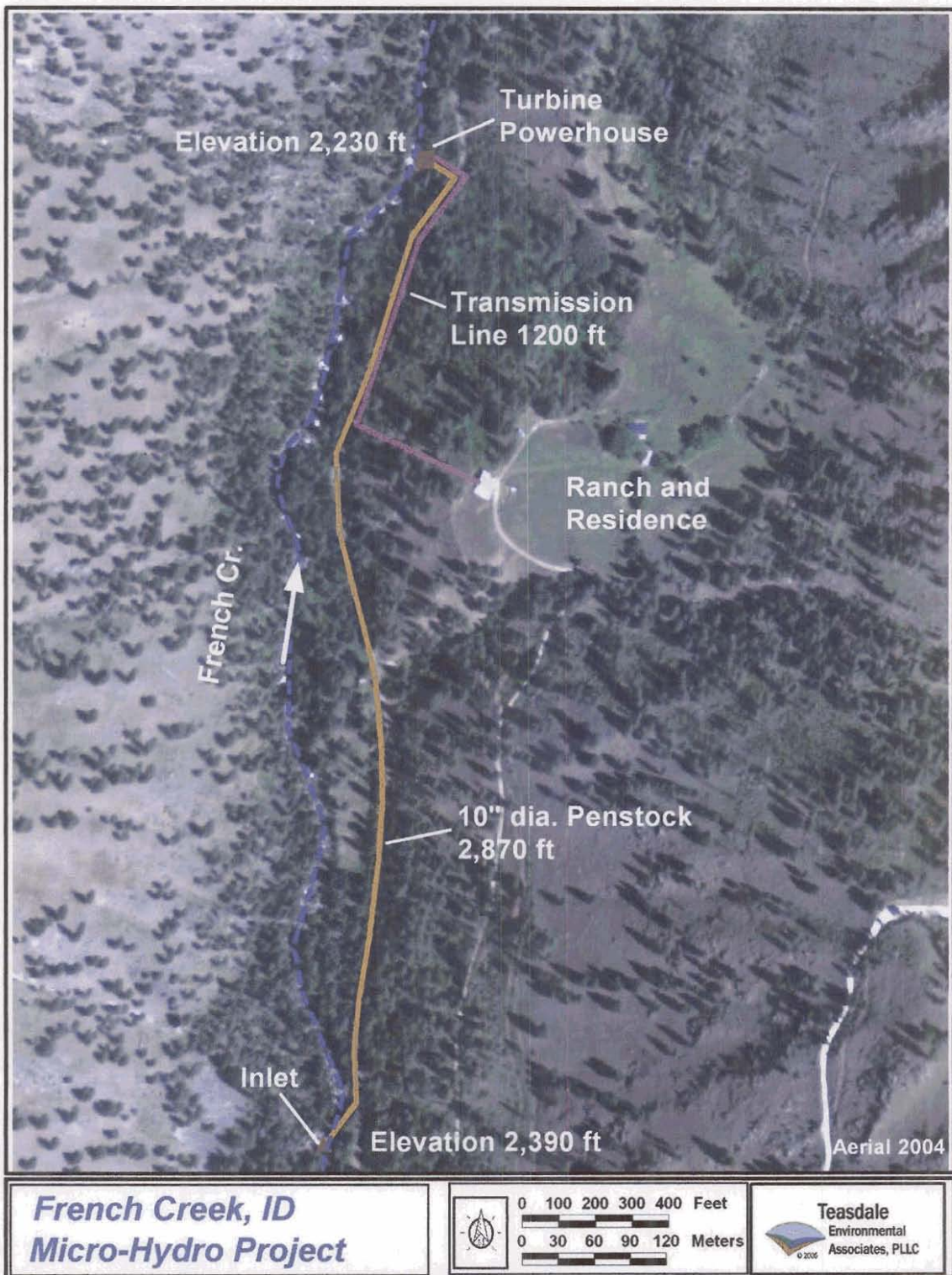


Figure 2 Conceptual layout of the French Creek micro-hydropower project.