



IDAHO FISH & GAME

SALMON REGION
99 Highway 93 North
P.O. Box 1336
Salmon, Idaho 83467

Dirk Kempthorne / Governor
Steve Huffaker / Director

March 9, 2005

RECEIVED

MAR 11 2005

Department of Water Resources
Salmon Region

Mary A. Baldwin
Idaho Department of Water Resources
1341 Fillmore St, Suite 200
Twin Falls, ID 83301-3380

Re: Transfer No. 71446 – High Mountain Ranches Ltd. Ptn.

Dear Mary,

The Department supports this project on the merits of its fisheries benefits. This proposed change in the point of diversion from a pump station in the Salmon River to a well is significant for several reasons. This existing diversion and pump were inadequately screened for protecting federally endangered and threatened salmonid species including: Snake River spring/summer Chinook salmon, Snake River sockeye salmon, Snake River steelhead, and bull trout. The removal of the intake and pump from the river will eliminate entrainment and risk of potential take of these species. Additionally, the diversion dam created a migration delay for downstream migrating smolts, and the removal of the diversion structure will eliminate the need for further instream work. Our review of the project indicates the new well is influenced by sub-water from the Salmon River, thus there is no effect expected on the water table. The project as a whole has an overall positive benefit for fish conservation.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this proposal.

Sincerely,

James R. Lukens
Regional Supervisor

cc: Tom Curet
Paddy Murphy
Mark Armbruster
Natural Resources Policy Bureau

Keeping Idaho's Wildlife Heritage