



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Highway
Administration**

Washington Division

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<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/wadiv>

December 15, 2022

HFO-WA

Mr. Michael Tehan
National Marine Fisheries Service
West Coast Region, Interior Columbia Basin Office
1201 Northeast Lloyd Boulevard, Suite 1100
Portland, OR 97232

**Yakima County East-West Corridor
Request for ESA Section 7 Formal Consultation**

Dear Mr. Kratz:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is providing the attached biological assessment (BA) in support of section 7 formal consultation for Yakima County's East-West Corridor project. This project requires an air space lease from FHWA and may include funding from FHWA and is therefore subject to the requirements of section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Yakima County proposes to construct a new arterial roadway connecting Terrace Heights to the City of Yakima. This project is roughly 2 miles long and will build a 5-lane road on the Yakima County segment, and a 3-lane arterial on the City of Yakima segment. In addition to roadway construction, this project requires a new bridge over the Yakima River, a new bridge over the Roza Canal Wasteway, and an underpass below I-82. Other project elements include Yakima River floodplain restoration downstream of the new bridge site.

The overall project is expected to take five years to construct, with three consecutive years of in-water work. All work below the ordinary high water mark (OHWM) will be done during the approved work window, likely July 15 – February 1. Only vibratory pile driving will occur below OHWM past October 1.

Potential adverse effects to ESA-listed salmonids may occur to one species and their critical habitat (Table 1).

Table 1: Listed Species/Critical Habitat Potentially Occurring in the Action Area

Species/Critical Habitat	DPS/ESU	ESA Effect Determination
Steelhead (<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>)	Middle Columbia River ESU	Likely to Adversely Affect
Steelhead Critical Habitat	Middle Columbia River ESU	Likely to Adversely Affect

In compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, essential fish habitat (EFH) was assessed for the project. It was determined that this project *may adversely affect* Pacific salmon EFH.

FHWA is requesting formal consultation under section 7 of the ESA. FHWA also requests the opportunity to review the draft Biological Opinion prior to its finalization. Please contact Gary Martindale at gary.martindale@dot.gov or 360-534-9344, if you require additional information or have any questions about this project.

Sincerely,

RALPH J. RIZZO
Division Administrator

By: Gary Martindale, Jr.
Area Engineer

Enclosure

cc:

Mike Tehan, NMFS
Melanie Vance, WSDOT
Randy Giles, WSDOT
Gary Martindale, Jr., FHWA
Cindy Callahan, FHWA



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Brad Thompson
State Supervisor
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Washington Fish and Wildlife Office
510 Desmond Drive SE, Suite 102
Lacey, Washington 98503-1263

**Yakima County East-West Corridor
Request for ESA Section 7 Formal Consultation**

Dear Mr. Thompson:

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FHWA has concluded our analysis with the following effect determinations (Table 1):

Table 1: Listed Species/Critical Habitat Potentially Occurring in the Action Area

Species/Critical Habitat	DPS/ESU	ESA Effect Determination
Bull trout (<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>)	Coterminous USA	Likely to Adversely Affect
Bull Trout Designated Critical Habitat		Likely to Adversely Affect
Yellow-billed Cuckoo (<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>)	Western U.S. DPS	Not Likely to Adversely Affect

FHWA is requesting formal consultation under section 7 of the ESA. FHWA also requests the opportunity to review the draft Biological Opinion prior to its finalization. Please contact Gary Martindale at gary.martindale@dot.gov or 360-534-9344, if you require additional information or have any questions about this project.

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RALPH J. RIZZO
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