

## 2005 Skyline Ditch Company Operating Plan

Special Use Permit (ID 4104-01) issued on 4/15/98 hereby incorporates this Operating Plan. The permit holder agrees to operate and maintain irrigation ditch facilities located on National Forest System lands in accordance with the following stipulations:

- 1) Operate in accordance with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Fisheries (NOAA Fisheries) and/or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) published Biological Opinions (BOs) [NOAA Fisheries reference # WSB-98-061 as modified by tracking # 2003/00123, and USFWS ref# 1-3-99-F-1321 through 1323, updated BO reference #1-9-2003-F-W0225]. The irrigation ditch diversion shall limit diversions to improve stream flow, to minimize take, and to meet the biological needs of listed fish species during all life stages.

Diversion quantities will be determined based on Chewuch River flow at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) gauge # 12448000 at RM 0.2 in Winthrop, Washington. Irrigation diversions shall be measured at the flow-measuring device located immediately down-ditch of the fish screen facility. Operating flow levels shown in the table below are established by the NOAA Fisheries BO.

Period	Action	Date	Flow Trigger	Diversion Amount
1	Turn on	April 1	Minimum 100 cfs	9 cfs maximum
2	Ramp up		Minimum 200 cfs	17.8 cfs maximum
3	Adjustment		If flow drops below 200 cfs	9 cfs maximum
4	Adjustment		When flow exceeds 200 cfs	17.8 cfs maximum
5	Ramp down		When flow drops below 200 cfs	9 cfs maximum
6	Ramp down		When flow drops below USGS 80 cfs	Up to 5 cfs maximum, provided: total Skyline diversion is offset ** 1:1 by actions above RM 7.
7	Shut Down Diversion	October 16		0 cfs

\*\* A 2 cfs credit is established as an offset for ground water conversion at Eightmile Ranch. This credit shall be measured at the flow device down-ditch of the fish screen; Skyline shall be entitled to divert this amount the entire irrigation season regardless of other actions.

- 2) Inspect all irrigation ditch facilities annually and make needed repairs prior to use.



- 3) Control and measure water flow to the irrigation ditch and by-pass channel with an operable headgate and water flow-measuring device.
- a) Flow at the USGS gauge on the Chewuch River in Winthrop shall be measured on a regular basis until stream flow drops to within 100 cfs of the 200 cfs descending limb target flow and then 10 cfs of the 80 cfs required target flow. Flow shall be read daily once flows approach 200 cfs, and as stream flow approaches 80 cfs on the descending limb of the hydrograph. For the purposes of compliance the interim gauge readings published on the USGS web site shall be used unless flow measurements made by qualified Forest Service personnel with a flow meter show that the USGS gage is inaccurate, in which case the Forest Service measurement shall be used.
  - b) Diversion offsets obtained by Skyline that allow a diversion rate between 2 and 5 cfs below USGS 80 cfs shall be recorded weekly. Diversion offsets may include flow forbearance by irrigators above R.M. 7.8 or return of stored water above R.M. 7.8. Diversion offsets shall be measured at the point of forbearance or return.
  - c) On seasonal closure the diversion shall be secured to prevent water flow beyond the old screen location in the ditch and to maintain up to 4 cfs in the by-pass channel (see item 4, below). Flow between the old screen bypass and the new screen shall be ramped down to minimize fish stranding.
  - d) Readings and records from the flow-measuring devices shall be taken on a regular basis, with records kept. Notify the Forest Service annually in writing by November 1 of dates the irrigation ditch was turned on and off and provide the annual stream flow record. The records shall include documentation of actions taken to offset diversion rates over 2 cfs but not to exceed 5 cfs when Chewuch River flow is at or below USGS 80 cfs.

In addition, water flow into the irrigation ditch shall:

- a) provide safe fish passage back to the stream from the vicinity of the screen including operating fish return pipe at 1 to 2 cfs;
- b) prevent and control soil erosion, gullyng, or washouts from irrigation ditch operation and maintenance;
- c) prevent downcutting or bank failure caused by operating the irrigation ditch.

4) The fish screen shall:

- a) meet standards of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), and NOAA Fisheries;
- b) not exceed design criteria of the fish screen which is 17.8 cfs;
- c) prevent fish from straying into the irrigation ditch;
- d) be inspected and/or cleaned daily during periods of high spring stream flow and following intense summer thunderstorms to prevent debris collection that impairs screen function;
- e) be inspected on an "as needed basis" the remainder of the water use season but not less than once per week.

NOTE: A long-term maintenance contract may be signed separately with the WDFW fish screen shop.

5) Flow in the irrigation ditch return channel shall be maintained at 2-4 cfs on a year around basis to provide habitat for listed fish species. During the irrigation season, no more than 2 cfs of this flow shall be spilled down the fish by-pass at the screen with the remaining flow spilled at the old fish screen site. To protect listed fish that reside in the return channel, all of the flow shall be spilled at the old fish screen site when the irrigation season closes.

6) Use established routes of access to the irrigation ditch for routine operation, maintenance, or minor repairs. Obtain authorized Forest Service approval if new access routes are required. Areas where soil is exposed from operation or maintenance of the ditch shall be stabilized, seeded, planted, or otherwise repaired.

7) Contact the authorized Forest Service officer before proceeding with work on irrigation ditch facilities that is other than routine operation, maintenance, or minor repair. The work shall be agreeable with the Forest Service officer and completed by an agreeable date. Non-routine situations include, but are not limited to:

- a) transport and use of heavy equipment (*i.e.*, tractor, bulldozer, backhoe);
- b) any in-stream work, including the removal of large woody debris (LWD), or substantial amounts of vegetation and/or silt;
- c) vegetation control measures such as burning or chemical application;
- d) re-routing or re-constructing any portion of the irrigation ditch.

Areas where soil is exposed from operation or maintenance of the ditch shall be stabilized, seeded, planted, or otherwise repaired.

8) Construct no other diversion structure or “pushup” dam to alter the flow of water to the irrigation ditch during low water without Forest Service authorization.

The permit holder and the Forest Service shall jointly review this Operating Plan annually prior to the start of the irrigation season.

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Special Use Permit holder

Date\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Forest Supervisor  
Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests

Date\_\_\_\_\_