



AGENDA

IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD

Wednesday, September 9, 2020

Water Center

Conference Room 602 C / Online GoTo Meeting

322 E. Front St.

BOISE

(This meeting will be conducted using guidance in accordance with Governor Little's Stay Healthy Order issued May 30, 2020 in response to the public health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Masks are required & in person attendance is limited. Call or email if you have questions: jennifer.strange@idwr.idaho.gov)

Board Members & the Public may participate via Go-To Meeting
Please join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://www.gotomeet.me/IWRB>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: [+1 \(571\) 317-3122](tel:+15713173122)

Access Code: 673-626-773

Brad Little
Governor

Roger W. Chase
Chairman
Pocatello
District 4

Jeff Raybould
Vice-Chairman
St. Anthony
At Large

Vince Alberdi
Secretary
Kimberly
At Large

Peter Van Der Meulen
Hailey
At Large

Albert Barker
Boise
District 2

John "Bert" Stevenson
Rupert
District 3

Dale Van Stone
Hope
District 1

Jo Ann Cole-Hansen
Lewiston
At Large

Streamflow Enhancement & Minimum Streamflow Committee Meeting No. 1-20 11:00 a.m. (MST)

1. Introductions and Attendance
2. CBWTP Program Updates
3. Upper Salmon Transactions
4. Other Items
5. Adjourn

Committee Members: Chair Pete Van Der Meulen, Vince Alberdi, Roger Chase, and Dale Van Stone.

Water Storage Projects Committee Meeting No. 2-20 1:30 p.m. (MST)

1. Introductions and Attendance
2. Boise River Feasibility Study DEIS Comments*
3. Anderson Ranch Dam Raise Contracting*
4. Other Items
5. Adjourn

Committee Members: Chair Jeff Raybould, Jo Ann Cole-Hansen, Pete Van Der Meulen, and Bert Stevenson

* Action Item: A vote regarding this item may be made this meeting. Identifying an item as an action item on the agenda does not require a vote to be taken on the item.

Americans with Disabilities

The meeting will be held telephonically. If you require special accommodations to attend, participate in, or understand the meeting, please make advance arrangements by contacting Department staff by email jennifer.strange@idwr.idaho.gov or by phone at (208) 287-4800.

Memorandum

To: IWRB – Streamflow Enhancement and Minimum Streamflow Committee
From: Amy Cassel
Date: August 25, 2020
Re: Water Transaction Program – Panther Creek Acquisition



REQUIRED ACTION: No action required at this time. This proposed transaction is for informational purposes only.

Background:

Panther Creek is tributary to the Salmon River's Wild and Scenic River section near the historic town of Shoup, Idaho. Panther Creek and its tributaries historically provided an abundance of spawning and rearing habitats for ESA-listed Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout. Mining for heavy metals during the 1940–1960s had so degraded water quality in the lower 24 miles of Panther Creek that no aquatic animal life was present in the early 1990's. In 1995, concerted mine waste clean-up began and by 2002, copper levels had been reduced enough to allow for the initial recolonization of resident fish species. Since 2010, Panther Creek has seen consistent returns of Chinook salmon and steelhead, while bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout populations have expanded their habitat to previously inaccessible reaches.

WR No. 75-14927 out of Panther Creek is appurtenant to 52 acres of irrigated pasture, includes 0.75 miles of stream frontage, and the property is 100 acres in total. The point of diversion is located approximately 33 river miles upstream of the confluence with the Salmon River. Western Rivers Conservancy currently has the property under contract. Their intent to purchase the property, including the water right, and convey the property to the United States Forest Service – Salmon Challis National Forest (SCNF) and convey the water right to the Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB). Funding for the acquisition of the property will come from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

The IWRB holds Minimum Stream Flow Water Right No. 75-14186 on Panther Creek and historic gage data indicates that the MSF is not always met. Staff proposes to rent the acquired water right to help meet the MSF on Panther Creek in perpetuity. The 100 acres of land would be managed in perpetuity by the SCNF and a list of physical habitat actions are planned. Panther Creek and its tributaries are considered a high priority area for habitat restoration by the SCNF and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, both of which have collaborated and developed a watershed/landscape scale restoration plan that identifies and prioritizes actions within the watershed to improve or enhance habitats, restore fish passage, and reconnect floodplains.

The appraised value of the WR. No. 75-14927 is \$75,000 or approximately \$1,442.00 per acre. The valuation analysis was based on the land value with and without water. The property has no encumbrances and can be subdivided.

Although the water right is not a significant contributor to the overall target flows, the most beneficial outcome of this acquisition is the permanent protection of the 100 acres and the physical stream habitat improvements that would occur as a result of the SCNF ownership and permanent management. Directly

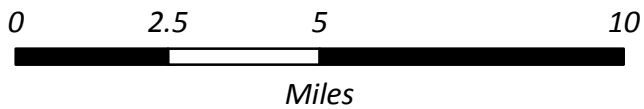
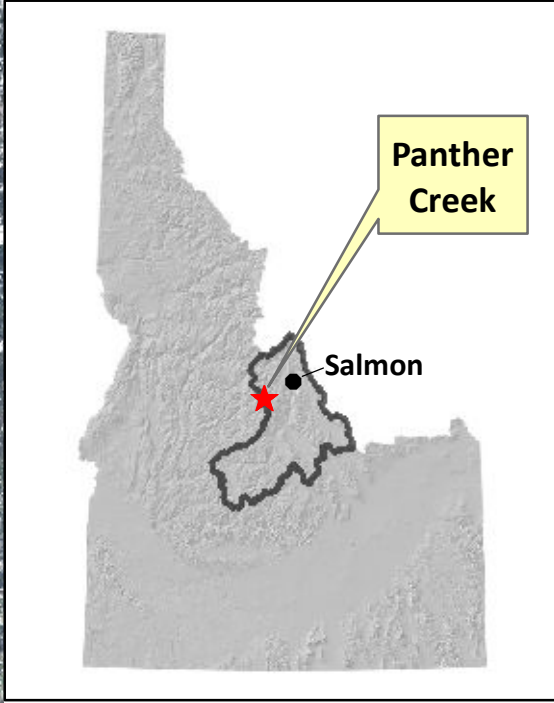
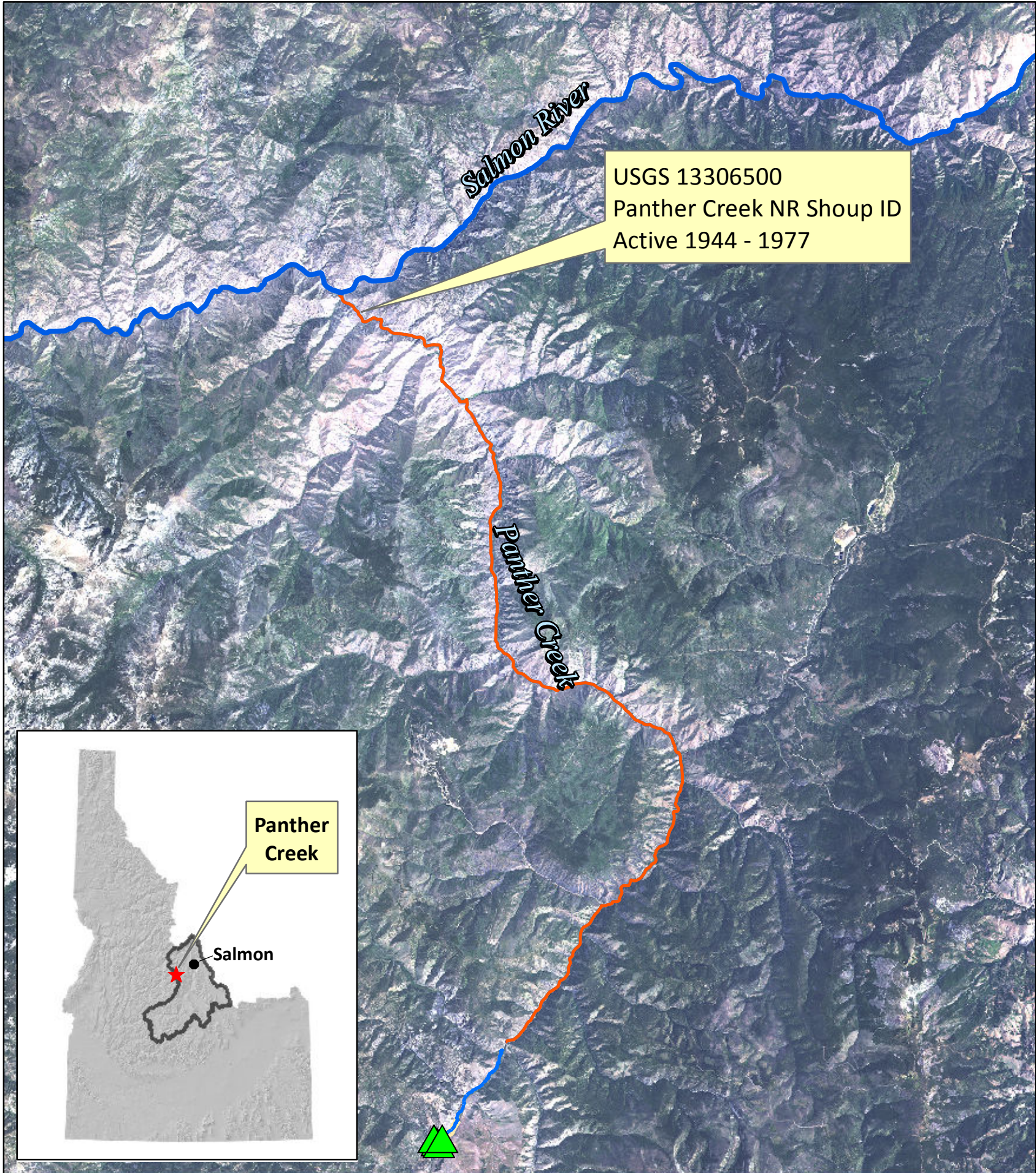
upstream of the 100 acre parcel Panther Creek is home to significant natural beaver activity: ponds, dams, and woody debris strike a marked contrast to the heavily grazed and scarce willow complexes found on the proposed acquisition. It is believed that the beaver have not moved into the 100 acre parcel because of lack of food. However, once the cattle are removed and the willows reestablish it is likely the beaver will move downstream and the natural beaver processes will occur.

The proposal for funding of the transaction from CBWTP was submitted in August 2020 and the Technical Advisory Committee will review the proposal in late September or early October.

Request for Committee Recommendation:

Staff requests comments from the Committee regarding the transaction.

Panther Creek Acquisition



 POD 75-14927

 SalmonRiver

 Panther_MSF_reach

Memorandum

To: IWRB – Streamflow Enhancement and Minimum Streamflow Committee
From: Amy Cassel
Date: August 25, 2020
Re: Water Transaction Program – USFS water rights permanent rental



REQUIRED ACTION: Comments and direction from the Committee are requested.

Background:

The United States Forest Service (USFS) currently holds water supply bank lease contracts for 19 separate water rights in Basin 71 (Sawtooth Valley). The combined lease total for these water rights is 123.9 cfs and 2,490 acres. The 5-year lease term ends December 31, 2021.

IWRB staff has approached the USFS about the possibility of a permanent rental of these water rights to be delivered to meet Salmon River Minimum Stream Flow 72-16668 (attached). There would be no change of ownership on the water rights. The USFS would continue to own the water rights and the IWRB would rent them indefinitely to meet the Salmon River MSF. There would be no payment for this rental to the USFS.

The reach between the associated water rights' points of diversion and the Salmon River MSF is a migration corridor utilized by Snake River Spring Chinook Salmon and Snake River Steelhead, both listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). This reach of the Salmon River is also utilized by Snake River Sockeye Salmon, which are listed as endangered under ESA.

There is currently only one active stream gage on the Salmon River located near MSF 72-16668. It is operated by USGS and is located approximately 25 miles upstream from the quantification point for MSF 72-16668. The period of record for this gage is 1921 – 2019, with a data gap from 1992 – 1999 (reason unknown). The USGS operates two additional gages upstream of the MSF, one on Thompson Creek and one on Squaw Creek.

The water supply bank will use all available gage data to determine if the MSF 72-16668 is being met. Upon a quick analysis of the monthly mean flow recorded at these three gage locations between 1980 and 2019, the minimum stream flow from May 1 through September 30 is MET as follows:

- May 56%
- June 44%
- July 40%
- August 69%
- September 75%

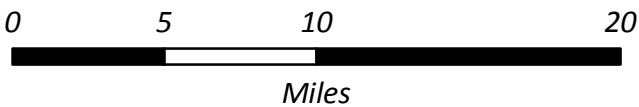
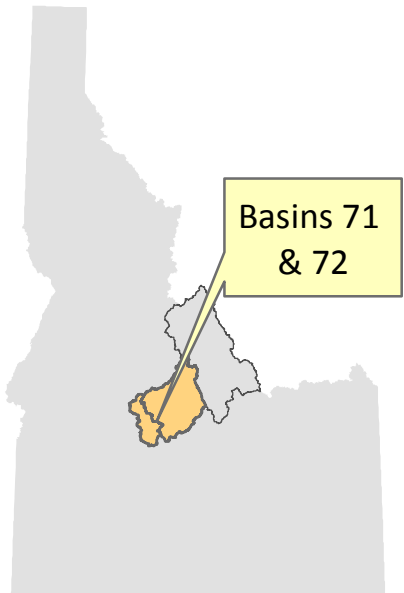
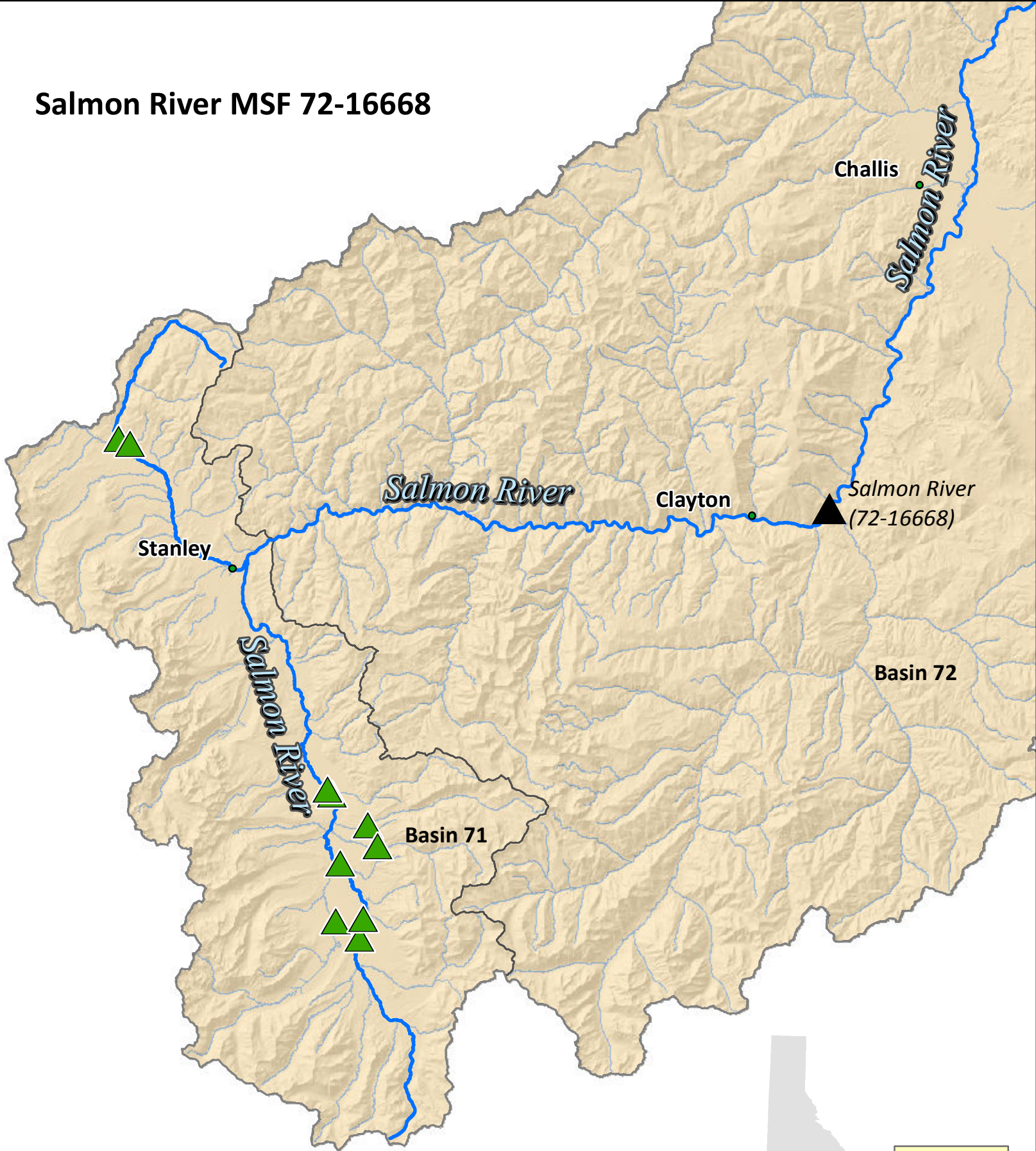
While further analysis of the gage data is needed to refine those numbers, preliminary results conclude that the Salmon River MSF 72-16668 is not being met during much of the irrigation season, and the contribution of the USFS water rights will contribute to the flows necessary to meet the MSF.





All fees associated with this permanent rental, including rental fees to be paid to the water supply bank and any potential water administration fee, will be proposed to the Columbia Basin Water Transaction Program.

Request for Committee Recommendation:

Staff requests comments from the Committee regarding the transaction.

Salmon River MSF 72-16668



-  Minimum Stream Flow
-  USFS Water Rights
-  Salmon River
-  UpperSalAdBasins