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October 4, 2006

TO: Mark Walker
Director of Public Affairs
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2006010049

Dear Council Members:

The Nature Conservancy would like to extent our full support for continued funding for two very worthwhile soil and water conservation projects in Idaho. We are commenting on two specific projects: Lapwai Creek 2002-070-00 and Big Canyon Creek 1999-015-00 which are not included on the Council's draft recommendation list. Both projects are sponsored by the Nez Perce Soil and Water Conservation District (District).

These projects are excellent examples where community based conservation work is resulting in significant soil and water conservation. Certainly they are benefiting steelhead and other fisheries; but they also benefit many more wildlife species by extending to the uplands. The long range economic and environmental benefit to the communities in and near these watersheds are significant.

We are requesting the Council to include these projects on your final recommendation list to BPA. We have witnessed the success of similar District project efforts and strongly support the restoration activities proposed through these projects. Without projects such as the above mentioned, steelhead habitat will continue to decline. In addition, the restoration activities have other benefits such as water quality improvements and maintaining a healthy riparian plant community.

We are strong supporters of community based cooperative conservation projects and would greatly appreciate your full funding of these projects in the future.

Sincerely,

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FY 07-09 Project Funding Review: Comment on Council's Draft Funding Recommendations - 060

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