



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

December 24, 2014

In reply refer to: KEC-4

To Parties interested in the Eightmile Ranch Coho Acclimation Site

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the USDA Forest Service have jointly prepared a draft environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed **Eightmile Ranch Coho Acclimation Site**. This letter requests your comments on the draft EA and outlines the next steps for the project.

Proposal

BPA is considering whether to fund the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation's proposal to construct and operate an acclimation pond for coho salmon. The acclimation pond would be located on Eightmile Ranch, an area that is owned and operated by the Forest Service and is located approximately 8 miles north of the town of Winthrop in Okanogan County, Washington. The purpose of the pond is to allow coho to acclimate in a semi-natural setting before entering the wild so that they are better prepared to survive in the natural environment. This pond is one of about twenty four ponds proposed as part of the Mid-Columbia Coho Restoration Program.

The Forest Service is considering whether to issue a Special Use Permit to the Yakama Nation for the construction and operation of the acclimation pond. Before issuing the Special Use Permit, the Forest Service must first amend the Okanogan Forest Plan Standard and Guideline 9-4 to allow for the construction of an intake structure to supply water to the proposed facility from the Chewuch River.

Draft EA

The draft EA describes the project and why it is needed, discusses the environmental impacts the project would create, and lists the mitigation measures that would lessen or eliminate those impacts.

How to Comment

The EA is available for review and comment at the project webpage: www.bpa.gov/goto/Eightmile. If you would like a hard copy (about 200 pages), please call our toll-free document request line 800-622-4520. Please leave a message with the full project name, your name and complete mailing address.

There are several ways that you can comment:

Mail:	Bonneville Power Administration Public Affairs – DKE-7 P.O. Box 14428 Portland, OR 97291-4428	Toll-free:	800-622-4519
		FAX:	503-230-4019
		E-mail:	www.bpa.gov/comment

The USFS Responsible Official, Forest Supervisor Mike Balboni, has identified BPA as the designee to receive comments on this project. On March 27, 2013, a final rule revising 36 CFR Part 218 was published in the Federal Register Volume 78, No. 59. The new rule replaces the previous USFS appeal rules defined in 36 CFR 215, and expands the use of the pre-decisional objection process. The new rule provides the public an opportunity to comment and express concerns on projects before decisions are

made, rather than after. This project is subject to USFS specific pre-decisional objection regulations. Only those who submit timely and specific comments regarding the proposed project or activity during a formal public comment period, such as this one, established by the Responsible Official, are eligible to file an objection. For objection eligibility, each individual or representative from each entity submitting timely and specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity comments must either sign the comments or verify their identity upon request. All comments will be posted in their entirety on the project website.

Comments on the environmental assessment must be postmarked no later than 30 days after the date on this letter or the date of publication of the legal notice in the *Wenatchee World* newspaper, the paper of record.

Next Steps

We will consider all comments submitted during the comment period and provide responses to substantive comments in the final EA. The final EA, and, if appropriate, a finding of no significant impact will likely be available in Spring 2015.

For More Information

If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact me at 503-230-3796 or dlrose@bpa.gov or Michelle Guay, Contract Environmental Protection Specialist, Act 1 Group, at mxguay@bpa.gov or 503-230-3459. You can also reach us toll free at 1-800-282-3713.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

/s/ Donald L. Rose

Donald L. Rose
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Enclosures (if requested):

Draft EA
Comment Form
Return Envelope