

Supplement Analysis
for the
**NPTH Hatchery Operations and
Snake River Steelhead Kelt Reconditioning
Environmental Assessment**
(DOE/EA 2078/SA-01)

Little Goose Kelt Collection Infrastructure Additions
Bonneville project number 2007-401-00
Bonneville contract number CR-347525

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Introduction

In January 2019, Bonneville Power Administration (Bonneville) completed the *NPTH Hatchery Operations and Snake River Steelhead Kelt Reconditioning Environmental Assessment* (DOE/EA 2078) (NPTH EA). The NPTH EA analyzed the potential environmental impacts of funding a program of capture, reconditioning, and release of post-spawn female steelhead in the Snake River and its tributaries and construction of a kelt reconditioning facility at the Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery on the Clearwater River in Nez Perce County, Idaho. It also analyzed the impacts of ongoing production and release of Snake River fall and spring/summer Chinook salmon, including changes to juvenile fall Chinook release practices and operations of a temporary weir on the South Fork Clearwater River.

Consistent with the NPTH EA, this Supplement Analysis (SA) analyzes the effects of the *Little Goose Kelt Collection Infrastructure Additions* project, which proposes for Bonneville to fund the addition of a holding/sorting tank and associated pipelines to aid in kelt collections at the existing juvenile bypass facility at Little Goose Dam on the Snake River, in Columbia County, Washington.

This SA analyzes the site-specific impacts of the *Little Goose Kelt Collection Infrastructure Additions* project to determine if the project is within the scope of the analysis considered in the NPTH EA. It also evaluates whether the proposed project presents significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns that were not addressed by the NPTH EA. The findings of this SA determine whether additional National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis is needed pursuant to 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 1502.9(d).

Proposed Action

As described in the NPTH EA, kelt are currently collected at Little Goose Lock and Dam for reconditioning at the Dworshak facility and in the future at the Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery. Kelts are collected using the juvenile bypass facilities at the dam, where they are separated from other fish in the bypass system, placed in a holding tank, examined for fitness, and then either returned to the river or moved to a transport truck for the trip to the reconditioning facility. The existing infrastructure for holding these fish for examination and sorting is insufficient for the need, so construction of a new holding/sorting tank has been proposed.

The following discusses the additional infrastructure that is being proposed for Bonneville funding and is considered in this SA. A pre-fabricated, permanent 8' x 16' holding/sorting tank would be installed on the artificial peninsula on which the existing juvenile bypass and collection facility currently stands. A 5' x 5' x 3' hopper would be installed inside the collection facility building into which kelts collected in the bypass system would be placed for funneling into a new overland, 10-inch diameter, PVC pipe with running water to convey them 300' to the new holding/sorting tank. The tank would be located adjacent to the base of a large electric tower near an existing parking area and barge loading site. A 40'-long, large-diameter hose would be installed overland from the

holding/sorting tank to the river to convey kelts not selected for reconditioning back to the Snake River. These actions would support conservation of Endangered Species Act-listed species considered in the 2020 Endangered Species Act consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service on the operation and maintenance of the Columbia River System.

Environmental Effects

The implementation of these actions requires the following modifications of infrastructure currently inside the juvenile bypass/collection buildings at Little Goose Dam: the installation of a hopper, installing one end of the new kelt conveyance pipeline, and plumbing to supply that conveyance pipeline with running water. West of the building, the prefabricated above-ground holding/sorting tank would be placed on level ground using a truck mounted crane. Electrical power would be installed at the tank. The conveyance pipeline would be installed overland from the buildings to the new holding/sorting tank, and another large diameter hose would be laid above ground from the tank to the Columbia River.

No native ground surface exists on this peninsula, and this action would require no leveling, excavation or other such ground disturbance. A minor amount of surface gravel may be disturbed by the movement of truck tires and the positioning of the tank. Approximately two weeks are estimated for construction.

These actions and the typical effects associated with the environmental disturbances created by them are consistent with those described in Chapter 3 of the NPTH EA. The only ground disturbance from the proposed actions in the NPTH EA were those at NPTH for construction of the new reconditioning facility. No ground disturbance was anticipated nor evaluated at any of the collection sites, including Little Goose Dam. The *Little Goose Kelt Collection Infrastructure Additions* project likewise requires no ground disturbance at the Little Goose collection site.

With no ground disturbance, there would be no effects on geology and soils; vegetation; wetland or floodplains; fish or wildlife habitat; or land use or recreation. This is consistent with the “no disturbance – no effect” conclusions in section 3.1.2, “*Effects of the Proposed Action on Geology and Soils*”, section 3.3.2, “*Effects of the Proposed Action on Vegetation*”, section 3.4.2, “*Effects of the Proposed Action on Wetlands and Floodplains*”, 3.5.2, “*Effects of the Proposed Action on Fish*”, section 3.6.2, “*Effects of the Proposed Action on Wildlife*”, and section 3.8.2 “*Effects of the Proposed Action on Land Use and Recreation*” in the NPTH EA.

Similarly, there would be no effect to water quality or quantity because water use with the new piping and holding/sorting tank would not change (a temporary holding tank is currently used, and fish are transferred to and from it); and the amount of water being used would not change. This is consistent with the effects discussed in section 3.2.2 “*Effects of the Proposed Action on Water Resources*” where there would be no change in water use at collection facilities.

For cultural resources, while the Little Goose Dam is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the proposed action would have no potential to cause effects to cultural resources or impact this structure’s eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places since no changes would be made to the original Little Goose Lock and Dam, but rather only within and on modern structures (memorandum from US Army Corps of Engineers, April 20, 2021). The external sorting tank, piping, and hose would be temporary or removable, and consistent in appearance with existing facilities/infrastructure and not permanently affect the integrity or appearance of the dam and lock. This is consistent with Section 3.11.2 in the EA. “*Effects of the Proposed Action on Cultural Resources*”.

The effects of the proposed modifications at the Little Goose collection facility would be from human and machine activity; the effects to steelhead kelts being collected; and the change of appearance from the addition of pipelines and the holding tank at the juvenile collection facility. These could have some minimal effects on fish, socioeconomics and environmental justice; land use and recreation; visual resources; air quality, noise, and public safety; and climate change. For each of these resources, the NPTH EA describes low effects for activities at the collection facilities, which is consistent with the minimal effects to these resources that placement of a 300’ pipe and an 8’x16’ holding/sorting tank would have at the existing Little Goose juvenile bypass facility as proposed in this action.

There would be different, but likely no additional effect on fish being handled at the Little Goose collection site. The number of kelt that would be collected at the Little Goose collection site would be the same as what was analyzed in the NPTH EA, so there would be no changes in numbers of kelt collected. In the NPTH EA, effects to fish at collection facilities were recognized to be from manually removing kelts from a collection screen, transferring them

to a bucket, then carrying them to a holding tank. Under this proposed action, kelts would be manually removed from the collection screen, placed in a hopper where they would slide down the 300' collection pipe into the holding/sorting tank. The effect of sliding down a hopper then through 300' of a pipe with flowing water would be quicker than transportation overland in a bucket, but likely stressful. That both methods would be stressful is consistent with what was disclosed in the NPTHEA in section 2.1.3.3. "*Kelt Selection and Handling*", and section 3.5.2.2. "*Effects on Fish from implementing the Proposed Kelt Reconditioning Program*".

Findings

The types of actions and the potential impacts related to the proposed *Little Goose Kelt Collection Infrastructure Additions* project have been examined, reviewed, and consulted upon and are similar to those analyzed in the *NPTH Hatchery Operations and Snake River Steelhead Kelt Reconditioning Environmental Assessment* (DOE/EA 2078) and Finding of No Significant Impact. There are no substantial changes in the proposed action and no significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns bearing on the proposed action or its impacts within the meaning of 10 CFR § 1021.314(c)(1) and 40 CFR § 1502.9(d). Therefore, no further NEPA analysis or documentation is required.

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