



Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH & WILDLIFE

October 2, 2023

In reply refer to: EC-4

To: People interested in the Umatilla Hatchery Programs Environmental Assessment

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to continue funding the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), and Westland Irrigation District (WID) to implement the ongoing Umatilla River Spring Chinook, the Umatilla River Fall Chinook, and the Umatilla River Coho hatchery programs. The Umatilla Summer Steelhead Program was previously assessed in an environmental assessment completed in 2022, and no changes are proposed as part of this environmental review.

This letter explains the proposal, outlines our anticipated environmental review process and schedule, and requests your comments.

Proposal: BPA proposes to continue funding implementation of ongoing operations and maintenance of Umatilla River Spring Chinook, Fall Chinook, and Coho fish-production programs by CTUIR, ODFW, and WID. BPA has provided funding to these fish production programs since the Umatilla Hatchery began operations in 1991 and proposes to continue funding of fish-production goals within current production limits. Specifically, BPA would fund activities such as broodstock collection, egg incubation, juvenile rearing, and release to support the three programs. These hatchery programs and associated facilities target producing up to 810,000 Spring Chinook smolts and 600,000 sub-yearling Umatilla Fall Chinook for release at satellite facilities in the upper Umatilla River basin. In addition, under this proposal, BPA funding would continue the acclimation and release of up to 1 million Umatilla Coho salmon.

Other elements under consideration for BPA funding related to the ongoing operations of these hatchery programs include development of new long-term hatchery water sources at the Umatilla Hatchery; routine facility maintenance; equipment upgrades; and research, monitoring, and evaluation activities. Because the Umatilla Hatchery and most of its associated facilities have operated for over 30 years, hatchery infrastructure is currently outdated or deteriorating. For this reason, the hatchery and some satellite facilities need non-recurring maintenance actions to maintain, repair, or replace equipment. Equipment identified for replacement includes a water-chilling system, water-intake system, components of adult holding and sorting facilities, upgrades to support buildings and electrical systems, and other similar components. In addition, the Umatilla Hatchery uses a water-supply system originally designed and constructed to produce 15,000 gallons per minute, which has declined in volume over time. This has limited the ability to meet fish-production goals. Therefore, this proposal for continued BPA funding also considers additional options to remedy the declining water supply, including potential

development of new wells, hatchery water-reuse systems, or improvements at acclimation sites to reduce water use.

Environmental Review: To understand the potential environmental impacts of this proposal, BPA may prepare an environmental assessment (EA). If BPA determines that the proposal warrants preparation of an EA, then that EA will describe anticipated impacts to natural and human resources and include mitigation measures that would help avoid or minimize impacts. We request your comments to help determine the issues to address in the environmental review. During this process, BPA will work with Federal, state, and local agencies, Tribes, potentially affected landowners, and other interest groups. The proposed schedule for the environmental review process is as follows:

Scoping comment period	October 2 through Nov. 1, 2023
EA determination	Fall, 2023
Draft EA available for public comment (if warranted)	Fall, 2023
Final EA (if warranted)	Winter, 2023
Finding of No Significant Impact (if warranted)	Spring, 2024
If decision to build, construction start	Spring, 2024

How to Comment: Please send your comments by **November 1** and reference the *Umatilla Hatchery Programs EA*. All comments will be available on the project website at www.bpa.gov/nepa/umatilla-hatchery. There are several ways to 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 Online: www.bpa.gov/comment
---	---

For More Information: If you have questions regarding the environmental review process, please contact me at 503-230-3928, or by e-mail at jjmaslow@bpa.gov. You can also reach us toll free at 1-800-622-4519.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jeff Maslow
Jeff Maslow
Senior Environmental Protection Specialist

Enclosures:
Project Map
Comment Form
Return Envelope