MEDIA ADVISORY:
Dedication of the Cle Elum Supplementation and Research Facility
One-time opportunity for the public to tour the facility

Bonneville Power Administation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: FRIDAY, Sept. 5, 1997

PR 41 97

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Who:

Representatives from Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), Yakama Nation, Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife and the Northwest Power Planning Council.

What:

A public event to dedicate the opening of the Cle Elum Supplementation and Research Facility, including Tribal ceremonies and barbeque, speakers and tours of the facility. The facility includes the first large-scale test of a new salmon restoration approach called supplementation. The goal of supplementation is to rebuild healthy runs of salmon in their natural ecosystem.

When:

Thursday, Sept. 11, at 11 a.m.

Where:

The Cle Elum Supplementation and Research Facility, near the city of Cle Elum, Wash.
Directions from Interstate-90:
From the east: take exit 84, follow Oakes Avenue to First Street. Turn left (west) onto First Street and follow to South Cle Elum Way (about four blocks).
From the west: Follow the exit 84 off-ramp onto First Street and continue east past the Safeway grocery store. Turn right onto South Cle Elum Way. Continue on South Cle Elum Way toward the Yakima River. Turn right on Charter Road before the bridge over the Yakima River. Follow Charter Road along the railroad tracks for eight-tenths of a mile to the "T." At the "T," turn left onto Spring Chinook Way and follow the signs to the dedication site.

Visuals:

This will be a one-time opportunity for media and the public to tour the facility and gain first-hand knowledge about the unique aspects that distinguish this facility from other production hatcheries. After the dedication, the operations of the facility will not be open to the public.

Significance: This is a research facility of the future that will increase the region's knowledge of how to help supplement Columbia River salmon runs by reinforcing the river's natural salmon rearing habitat. The Cle Elum Supplementation and Research Facility is a key part of the Yakima-Klickitat Fisheries Project. Monitoring and evaluation efforts are critical components.

Ongoing operation of the Cle Elum facility will be managed by the Yakama Nation in cooperation with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

FACT SHEET:
Cle Elum Supplementation and Research Facility Is the Centerpiece of the Yakima-Klickitat Fisheries Project

The Cle Elum Supplementation and Research Facility in Cle Elum, Wash., is the result of many years of hard work and cooperation by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), Yakama Nation, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, the Northwest Power Planning Council (NWPPC), local citizens and countless others.

The innovative Cle Elum Supplementation and Research Facility will serve many functions: These include holding and spawning upper Yakima spring chinook adults, incubating eggs, and rearing of young fish. The facility uses about 15 acres of land, and includes holding ponds, raceways, groundwater wells, a pump station on the river, a settling pond for waste treatment, a storage building, offices, research facilities, interpretive areas, parking and residences. A visitor's center also will be built, and it may be expanded in future years.

Why BPA funded this project: This project is part of the NWPPC's Columbia River Basin Fish & Wildlife Program and will help mitigate for the decline of anadromous which have been attributed to the development and operation of hydroelectric projects in the Columbia River Basin. BPA-sponsored fish projects in the Yakima River system mitigate for stock losses which have occurred elsewhere in the Columbia River Basin. Other factors contributing to the decline of these fisheries include irrigation, mining, harvest and forestry.

BPA also expects to gain valuable knowledge from the Cle Elum facility specifically on how to best raise the fish and successfully introduce them to the natural environment. The research could help provide new models for rebuilding endangered stocks throughout the world.

The Cle Elum Facility is part of an extensive effort to increase and strengthen anadromous fish runs throughout the Columbia River Basin. Since 1982, the NWPPC has encouraged BPA to fund projects that mitigate the effects hydropower has had on fisheries, wildlife and water resources within the Columbia River Basin. BPA is instituting cutting-edge programs that produce results which will make future projects even better.

The number of fish - then, now and in the future: Historically, the numbers of anadromous fish in the Yakima River were estimated to have ranged from 600,000 to as many as 960,000. Current runs have been reduced to fewer than 7,000 adults. If adequate numbers of adults are available for broodstock, BPA anticipates the Cle Elum facility will begin to produce a strong return of adult salmon by the year 2003.

The region is making an effort to approach these mitigation efforts in a holistic fashion, rather than on a piecemeal basis. Project sponsors realize the importance of making decisions that will result

in successes throughout the Columbia River Basin. The Yakima-Klickitat Fisheries Project is an example of this system-wide thinking: the facility and acclimation ponds will have positive impacts on the Yakima and Columbia river basins, and what is learned through the testing of supplementation can be shared across the region.

A New Era for Hatcheries

The Cle Elum Facility will be the first large-scale test of "supplementation" methods over conventional hatchery practices. The facility is designed to test a salmon restoration approach called supplementation. The goal of supplementation is to rebuild healthy runs of spring chinook salmon in their natural ecosystem using the most advanced fish culture techniques, while minimizing human impacts. The purpose of the Cle Elum facility is to work in harmony with the ecosystem and to supplement or strengthen existing wild runs of spring chinook salmon. It is not a production hatchery intended to produce fish for harvest.

Here's how it will work: Broodstock (fish collected for egg production) will be selected at Roza Dam and brought to the Cle Elum facility in specially equipped trucks. Care is taken in the selection process to preserve the genetic makeup of the stock native to the Upper Yakima River. When spawning is completed, the eggs are incubated under carefully controlled conditions until they hatch. Rearing of half the fish population will include methods to encourage adaptation to the natural environment. For example, juvenile salmonids will be taught to forage for food. The other half of the fish will be reared using conventional methods, and survival under the two methods will be compared.

Part II - the acclimation sites: At the proper time, the young fry are transferred to specially designed raceways where they continue to grow until they pass through the fingerling phase and approach the smolt stage of the salmon's lifecycle. They are then transferred to one of three specially designed acclimation ponds where they can adjust to the natural river environment prior to being released. The use of acclimation ponds is intended to reduce stress associated with transportation of the juvenile fish and allow them to imprint on the water in which they will be released. Imprinting is a biological and behaviorial process by which fish assimilate environmental cues that help them to return to their stream of origin. When sufficiently mature, the young smolts will leave the acclimation facilities for out-migration to the ocean. Adult fish will be expected to return one to four years later to spawn.

The central goal of supplementation: The process is designed to increase the fish population being supplemented while minimizing adverse genetic and ecological interactions with other species or stocks. Ultimately, it is hoped that enough naturally-spawning fish will return with a high enough survival rate that artificial propagation can be phased out.

Monitoring and evaluation are critical to the project: The supplementation research program will monitor post-release survival of fish, reproductive success, long-term fitness, ecological interactions, stock status, and other variables. This research will be used to evaluate whether supplementation can increase the natural population of spring chinook without causing adverse genetic and ecological interactions. The success of supplementation has not been proven. Research conducted at this facility will tell how well supplementation can work and help scientists develop the best fish culture approaches to rebuild wild salmon runs. As the effects of supplementation are monitored and evaluated, the project managers may modify programs, procedures, and facilities in response to findings. This process is otherwise known as "adaptive management."

The Cle Elum Facility builds on a solid foundation of other fisheries and water resource projects

in the Yakima River Basin. Supplementation is a positive addition to the on-going habitat improvement projects in the Basin. Passage improvements, such as fish screening and adult ladders, have been authorized at numerous irrigation facilities. Measures to enhance Yakima River Basin water resources also are expected to benefit anadromous fish production. The measures include improvements to irrigation water delivery systems, habitat enhancement, and a basin-wide water conservation program.