



## Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

March 30, 2016

In reply refer to: ECF-4

### **To Parties interested in the Eightmile Ranch Coho Acclimation Site**

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) have finalized the environmental assessment (EA) for the Eightmile Ranch Coho Acclimation Site. This letter briefly describes the proposed action, where to find a copy of the final EA, and next steps in the process.

**Background:** Under the proposed action, BPA would fund the construction and operation of a coho acclimation site at Eightmile Ranch, located adjacent to the Chewuch River on the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, about 8 miles north of Winthrop, in Okanogan County, Washington. The Forest Service would issue a project-specific amendment to Okanogan Forest Plan for placing the acclimation pond within the potential scenic corridor of the Chewuch River. The amendment would allow the Forest Service to issue a Special Use Permit to the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation to construct and operate the acclimation site at Eightmile Ranch for a period not to exceed 20 years.

The pond would allow hatchery-raised coho salmon to acclimate in a semi-natural setting before entering the wild, so that they are better prepared to survive in the natural environment. This site would replace sites on the Chewuch River that were evaluated in the Mid-Columbia Coho Restoration Program Final Environmental Impact Statement (March, 2012) and later became unavailable.

BPA and the Forest Service prepared an EA to help the agencies determine if the proposed action would cause significant impacts that would warrant preparing an environmental impact statement. The draft EA was released for public review and comment in December 2014, and four comments were received. This final EA responds to those comments. BPA and the Forest Service plan to make decisions on the proposed action and publish respective decision documents in early 2016.

The Forest Service has an objection process for people who have previously submitted comments. If you have standing to object, the Forest Service will send you a separate letter with instructions about the objection process.

**For More Information:** The final EA is enclosed if you previously requested a hard copy. If you did not receive a copy and would like one, please call BPA's toll-free document request line at 1-800-622-4520. When making a request, please provide your name, your complete mailing address, and the name of the project. The documents are also available at BPA's project webpage: [www.bpa.gov/goto/Eightmile](http://www.bpa.gov/goto/Eightmile) and at the Forest Service's webpage: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=41617>.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Donald L. Rose*

Donald L. Rose  
Supervisor, Environmental Compliance, Fish and Wildlife

**Enclosure (if requested):**  
Final EA