



Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

October 12, 2018

In reply refer to: EC-4

To: People interested in the Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery (NPTH) Operations and Snake River Steelhead Kelt Reconditioning Project

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) has prepared a draft environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed NPTH Operations and Snake River Steelhead Kelt Reconditioning Project. The 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 those impacts. This letter requests your comments on the EA, and outlines the next steps for the project.

BPA is proposing to fund the Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission to implement a Snake River Steelhead Kelt Reconditioning Program for the capture, reconditioning, and release of post-spawn Snake River steelhead. BPA is also proposing to fund construction of a reconditioning facility within the NPTH near Lewiston, Idaho.

Kelt reconditioning, as proposed here, consists of the capture of post-spawned steelhead and the administration of disease-preventative medications and feed for the purpose of improving survival over what would be expected in the wild. Upon release, these fish are expected to return again to their spawning areas, successfully spawn, and thereby increase spawner returns and productivity. This program would expand an on-going, and successful, research program to production levels. It also includes the construction of a kelt reconditioning facility at the NPTH.

BPA also proposes on-going funding to the Nez Perce Tribe for hatchery operations for the production of spring/summer and fall Chinook salmon at NPTH; and to change the release locations of some of the reared fall Chinook salmon smolts.

How to Comment: The EA can be viewed at the project website at <http://www.bpa.gov/goto/NezPerceHatchery>. If you requested a hard copy, it is enclosed. If you would like to request a hard copy (about 105 pages), please call our toll-free document request line at 1-800-622-4520. Please leave a message with the project name, your name, and complete mailing address.

Please send your comments on the EA by **November 12, 2018**, and reference the Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery project. We will consider all comments submitted during the comment period and provide responses to substantive comments in the final EA. In addition, comments will be available on the project website. 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
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Schedule: The schedule for the EA process is as follows:

Comment scoping period	December 29, 2017 thru January 29, 2018
Draft EA available for public comment	October 12 thru November 12, 2018
Final EA	Winter 2018/2019
Finding of No Significant Impact (if warranted)	Winter 2018/2019
If decision to build, construction start	Summer 2019

For More Information: If you have any questions regarding the environmental process, please contact me at 503-230-3018, or by e-mail at cjhamel@bpa.gov, or Rob Shull, Contract Environmental Protection Specialist, First Tek Professional Staffing, at rwshull@bpa.gov, or 503-230-3962.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

/s/ Chad J. Hamel

Chad J. Hamel
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Enclosures:

Draft EA (if requested)
Comment Form
Return Envelope