



Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

May 5, 2006

In reply refer to: KEC-4

Mr. Mark G. Miller, Project Leader
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Central Washington Field Office
215 Melody Lane, Suite 119
Wenatchee, Washington 98801

Re: Request for Formal Consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and Essential Fish Habitat Consultation for the Chief Joseph Hatchery Program, Okanogan, Washington

Dear Mr. Miller:

In complying with its responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, BPA is submitting a biological assessment (BA) for the Chief Joseph Hatchery Program (copy enclosed) and requesting your review of the BA and initiation of formal consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

The Northwest Power and Conservation Council has recommended that BPA fund a program sponsored by the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation that would assist in the conservation and recovery of summer/fall Chinook salmon in the Okanogan subbasin and the Columbia River between the Okanogan River and Chief Joseph Dam. The Chief Joseph Hatchery Program (CJHP) would include construction, operation, and maintenance of a hatchery adjacent to the base of the Chief Joseph Dam and a few acclimation ponds throughout the Okanogan River subbasin. Adult fish broodstock collection for gathering eggs would occur throughout the project area by various means. Egg incubation and early rearing would occur at the new hatchery. Final rearing and release of juvenile fish would occur at new and existing acclimation ponds. While the focus of the CJHP is on the propagation of summer/fall Chinook salmon, the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will also consider the use of the proposed facilities to reintroduce extirpated spring Chinook salmon to their historical habitats in the Okanogan subbasin.

The BA analysis was conducted by S.H. Smith Fisheries Consulting, Inc., of Canby, OR. Steve Smith, Fisheries Biologist, is BPA's designated Federal representative for this project. If you have questions or require additional information, please contact Steve directly at 503.263.1253 or huntersmith@canby.com.

Based on the information in the BA, BPA has determined that the proposed project “may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect” the gray wolf, bald eagle, Ute ladies’-tresses, yellow-billed cuckoo, and Columbia River bull trout or their designated/proposed critical habitat. Your concurrence with this finding is requested.

If you have any other questions or concerns, please contact me at (503) 230-5885 or macarter@bpa.gov. Thank you for your assistance with this project.

Sincerely,

/s/ Mickey A. Carter May 5, 2006

Mickey A. Carter
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Enclosure:
CJH BA

cc: (w/o enclosure)
Mr. Steve Smith, 8462 S. Heinz Road, Canby, Oregon 97013
Mr. Dan Warren, P.O. Box 1511, Philomath, Oregon 97370
Mr. Joe Peone, PO Box 150, Nespelem, WA 99155