



Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

January 30, 2019

In reply refer to: EC-4

To: People Interested in the Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery Operations and Snake River Steelhead Kelt Reconditioning Project

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) finalized the environmental assessment (EA) for the Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery (NPTH) Operations and Snake River Steelhead Kelt Reconditioning Project. Based on the final EA, BPA is issuing a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) and made a decision to proceed with the project. This letter describes BPA's decision, the construction schedule, and how to obtain additional information.

Background: BPA will 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. This would include construction of a reconditioning facility within NPTH near Lewiston, Idaho. 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. The project will support ongoing efforts to mitigate for effects of the development and operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) on fish and wildlife in the mainstem Columbia River and its tributaries under the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act of 1980 (Northwest Power Act) (16 U.S.C. § 839n(h)(10)(A)).

BPA prepared an EA to help the agency determine if the project would cause significant impacts that would warrant preparing an environmental impact statement. BPA released the draft EA for public review and comment on October 12, 2018, and received comments from one person. The final EA provides a response to that comment and minor revisions to the EA. Based on the EA analysis and mitigation measures to help lessen impacts, BPA has found that the project will not cause any significant impacts and, therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

Decision: BPA has decided to implement the Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery Operations and Snake River Steelhead Kelt Reconditioning Project. Project implementation is expected to begin in 2020, with construction of the reconditioning facility beginning in late spring and continuing into 2021.

Copies Available: The final EA, FONSI, and mitigation action plan are available on BPA's website at <http://www.bpa.gov/goto/NezPerceHatchery>. If you previously requested a copy of the documents, they are enclosed. If you would like to obtain paper copies of these documents, please call our toll-free document request line at 1-800-622-4520; leave a request naming this project and giving your name and complete mailing address.

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 (if requested):

Final EA

FONSI and Mitigation Action Plan