



# United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

*Ecological Services*

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June 19, 2002

Stacy L. Mason  
Environmental Coordinator  
Department of Energy  
Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3621  
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

RE: McNary-John Day Transmission Line Project  
DOE Reference: KEC-4  
FWS Reference: 02-I-E0219

Dear Ms. Mason:

Thank you for your letter received August 12, 2002, which included a request to reinitiate informal consultation regarding proposed modifications to the McNary-John Day Transmission Line. A letter of concurrence was issued to the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) on June 19, 2001 for this project. Since that time, BPA has proposed to reconstruct two existing steel lattice towers on the south bank of the Columbia River. All other proposed activities are the same as those described in the original Biological Assessment (BA).

BPA proposes to replace the existing Benton County Public Utilities District 115 kilovolt (kV) steel lattice tower and the existing BPA 345-kV steel lattice tower with new 500-kV towers. The reconstructed towers will be placed on the inside of the existing access road/spit that extends into the Columbia River. The tower legs will be reconstructed and placed on a permeable rock pad extending from the existing access road and into the riparian wetland on the leeward side of the spit. In total, less than 1.0-acre of wetland will be permanently filled for the reconstruction of the two towers.

As in the original BA, BPA has determined that the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentis*). The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) again concurs with the BPA determination that the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect bull trout.

This concludes informal consultation for species under the purview of the Service pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act). This project should be

re-analyzed if new information reveals effects of the action that may affect listed species or critical habitat in a manner or to an extent not considered in this consultation; if the action is subsequently modified in a manner that causes an effect to the listed species or critical habitat that was not considered in this consultation; and/or, if a new species is listed or critical habitat is designated that may be affected by this project.

Your efforts to protect endangered species are appreciated. If you have further questions about this letter or your responsibilities under the Act, please contact Gregg Kurz at (509) 754-8580.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark G. Miller". The signature is written in black ink and is centered on the page.

Supervisor