



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
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ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

April 9, 2004

To: People Interested in the South Fork Flathead Watershed/Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation Project

Proposal and Background

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) has initiated a plan to remove the hybrid trout from approximately 21 lakes and designated portions of streams in the South Fork Flathead drainage and replace them with native westslope cutthroat trout. MFWP, along with the U.S. Forest Service, Flathead National Forest (USFS), and Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), is proposing to remove these hybrid trout using fish toxin. BPA will be funding this project through the Hungry Horse dam fisheries mitigation program. These activities would occur on lands administered by USFS. Westslope cutthroat trout have been greatly reduced throughout their range. The hybrid trout in the South Fork threaten continued and expanded hybridization with genetically pure westslope cutthroat trout in the drainage.

In April 2003, BPA notified the public of our intentions to fund this project and to develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as required by our National Environmental Policy Act regulations. We invited the public to comment on the proposed action, held a public meeting on May 22, 2003, and accepted public comments until June 23, 2003.

Upcoming Review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The purpose of this letter is to let you know that we are planning to have the Draft EIS available for public review in May or June with a 45-day public comment period. You will be notified of a public meeting being planned for mid-June in Kalispell, Montana, regarding the Draft EIS proposal.

If you would like to receive either a hard copy or CD of the Draft EIS when it is available, please return the enclosed postcard and check the appropriate box. If you don't return the postcard, we will send you a notice when the document is available for public review. NOTE: The document will also be available on our website.

For More Information

In the meantime if you have questions, call me toll-free at 1-800-282-3713 or at my direct number 503-230-5756, or send me an e-mail at caspiering@bpa.gov. Additional information about this project, including maps, is available on the BPA website: <http://www.efw.bpa.gov/cgi-bin/efw/E/Welcome.cgi>. Click on the link to South Fork Flathead Watershed/Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation Project.

Please save your specific comments about this project for the comment period that will begin when the Draft EIS is released for public review.

Thank you for your interest.

/s/ Colleen Spiering

Colleen Spiering
Environmental Project Manager

Enclosure:
Postcard for reply