



Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

December 13, 2011

In reply refer to: KEC-4

To: Parties Interested in the Idaho Department of Fish and Game – Springfield Sockeye Hatchery

In May of 2011, the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) started the process of assessing potential environmental impacts from the proposed Springfield Sockeye Hatchery Project located in the upper Snake River subbasin in Bingham County, Idaho. BPA would like to take this opportunity to update you on the progress that has been made and what will happen next. This letter briefly explains the proposed project, outlines the remaining environmental review process and schedule, and invites you to comment on the Environmental Analysis (EA) that has been prepared for the proposed Springfield Sockeye Hatchery project.

Proposal – The purpose of the proposed Springfield Sockeye Hatchery upgrade project would be to increase the hatchery's capacity to produce up to one million juvenile sockeye salmon annually. This project is part of a larger effort to restore endangered Snake River sockeye salmon to the Stanley Basin in central Idaho using information and techniques developed as part of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game's (IDFG) Snake River Sockeye Salmon Captive Broodstock Program. The IDFG has prepared a Master Plan to guide the development of the production project. One of the goals of this project is to develop a locally adapted, self-sustaining population of sockeye salmon in the upper Salmon River basin over the next 20-25 years.

Update – On May 27, 2011 BPA sent a letter notifying interested parties that it would analyze the effects of constructing new facilities and increasing juvenile sockeye salmon production as described in the Springfield Sockeye Hatchery project proposal. The results of this study would be explained in a Supplement Analysis (SA) that would tie to the existing regional environmental analysis called the Fish and Wildlife Implementation Plan Environmental Impact Statement (FWIP EIS, DOE/EIS-0312, April 2003).

While preparing the SA, BPA and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) agreed to become cooperating agencies on this effort, and determined that the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) would be a more appropriate course of action because it would allow both agencies to simultaneously fulfill their obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The EPA will also use the results of this analysis to issue a water quality permit for the operation of the proposed hatchery facility.

The federal and state agencies involved in this effort include BPA, who is proposing to fund this project; the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), who would manage the production program; and The EPA, who would issue the permit as mentioned above.

Comment Opportunity – BPA has prepared a Preliminary EA to analyze the potential environmental consequences of this proposed action and we would like to hear what you think about this. To find out more about the project and to submit your comments please go to BPA's Web site http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/nepadocs.aspx and click on "Project Reviews – Active," "Springfield Sockeye Hatchery EA."

Please refer to “Idaho Department of Fish and Game – Springfield Sockeye Hatchery” in your comments and submit them by **January 16, 2012**. All comments will be posted on BPA’s web site at www.bpa.gov/comment. If you have other questions or comments do not hesitate to call BPA toll free at (800) 622-4519.

Should you prefer to receive a hard copy of the Preliminary EA, please contact the environmental project lead, Jenna Peterson; toll free at (800) 282-3713 or (503) 230-3018; or by e-mail jepeterson@bpa.gov.

To submit your comments electronically please visit www.bpa.gov/comment.

Mail comments to:
Bonneville Power Administration
Public Affairs – DKC – 7
P.O Box 14428
Portland, OR 97293-4428

Comments can also be faxed to (503) 230-4019.

Process and Schedule - After receiving and reviewing your comments, the EA will be revised if necessary and finalized, with a decision on whether and how to proceed expected in winter 2012.

For More Information - To find out more about the project please go to BPA’s Web site http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/nepadocs.aspx and click on “Project Reviews – Active,” “Springfield Sockeye Hatchery EA.” If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact the environmental project lead, Jenna Peterson; toll free at (800) 282-3713 or at (503) 230-3018; or by e-mail jepeterson@bpa.gov.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jenna Peterson

Jenna Peterson
Environmental Protection Specialist