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**BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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BPA seeks comment on proposed Walla Walla hatchery

Portland, Ore. – The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation have a plan to construct and operate a hatchery that would be a key step in attempts to bring naturally spawning spring chinook back to the Walla Walla River Basin—a place they have not been for more than 75 years.

The Bonneville Power Administration as the funding partner is seeking public input on the plan.

The proposed Walla Walla Basin Spring Chinook Hatchery Program would expand the existing adult holding and spawning facility on the South Fork Walla Walla River near Milton-Freewater in Umatilla County, Ore. This is the latest project in an ongoing restoration program in the basin that addresses habitat, fish passage and flow improvements.

Up to 500,000 yearling spring chinook smolts would be produced annually at the facility from brood stock collected downstream at the Nursery Bridge Dam. The hatchery would be used to hatch and rear juvenile spring chinook with releases of smolts and adults planned for Walla Walla River tributaries in both Oregon and Washington.

BPA will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act that considers two options: funding the Tribes' proposal; or a no-action alternative of not funding. The EIS will describe anticipated impacts to natural and human resources, including steps to avoid or minimize those impacts.

As the initial scope of the EIS is developed to produce a draft document, input from the public helps BPA make well-informed decisions and ensures a thorough analysis of the project.

“We want to know what people are concerned about,” said Jay Marcotte, a fish and wildlife project manager for BPA. “Do they have questions about the project? Do they

know something about a particular stretch of river or other species that this proposal might impact? We want to be able to address that in the EIS.”

Public comments will be accepted through April 29, 2013. Additionally, public scoping meetings will be held on April 16 and April 17.

• **MILTON-FREEWATER**

Tuesday, April 16, 6-8 p.m.

Milton-Freewater Community Building
109 N.E. 5th Ave., Milton-Freewater, Ore.

• **DAYTON**

Wednesday, April 17, 6-8 p.m.

Dayton Elementary School
302 E. Park St., Dayton, Wash.

Each meeting will include a brief overview of the proposal from 6:30-7 p.m. Members of the project team will be on hand with maps and information. They will answer questions as well as accept oral and written comments.

Comments will be accepted through April 29 and can also be submitted online at www.bpa.gov/comment, by fax at 503-230-4019, by voice at 800-622-4519 or via mail to Bonneville Power Administration, Public Affairs Office – DKE-7, P.O. Box 14428, Portland, OR 97293-4428. Be sure to reference the “Walla Walla Basin Spring Chinook Hatchery Program” when submitting comments.

If constructed, the project would be funded as part of the 2008 Columbia Basin Fish Accords and BPA’s responsibilities under the Northwest Power Act. To find out more about the proposed hatchery program, please visit www.bpa.gov/goto/WallaWallaHatchery.

BPA is a nonprofit federal agency that markets renewable hydropower from federal Columbia River dams, operates three-quarters of high-voltage transmission lines in the Northwest and funds one of the largest wildlife protection and restoration programs in the world. BPA and its partners have also saved enough electricity through energy efficiency projects to power four large American cities. For more information, contact us at 503-230-5131 or visit www.bpa.gov.

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