

## Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

February 18, 2000

In reply refer to: KECN-4

### **To: People Interested in the Coeur d'Alene (CDA) Trout Production Facility**

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to fund the construction and management of a supplementation hatchery facility for the CDA to help meet the need for off-site mitigation of anadromous fish losses on the mainstem Columbia River. Upon completion of the facility construction, the hatchery facilities would provide the capacity for both trout production and trout rearing.

### **Background**

The annual runs of anadromous salmon and steelhead are now extinct from traditional Coeur d'Alene Tribal fishing areas. This forced the Tribe to rely solely on the resident fish resources of Coeur d'Alene Lake. Subsequent declines in native salmonid fish stocks; in particular, westslope cutthroat trout in the Coeur d'Alene Basin caused the elimination of traditional subsistence fisheries by Coeur d'Alene Tribal members.

### **Goal**

Action is needed to mitigate for losses of anadromous fisheries caused by the construction and operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System by restoring native resident fisheries. Specific goals that will be considered are:

- Cost and administrative efficiency;
- Consistency with the Northwest Power Planning Council's Program;
- Complements activities of fish and wildlife agencies and appropriate Tribes;
- Consistency with the legal rights of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe and appropriate Tribes in the region;
- Avoids or minimizes environmental impacts;
- Results in sufficient returns of native westslope cutthroat trout adults to begin limited harvest by the year 2012;
- Increases native westslope cutthroat trout populations to sustainable and harvestable population levels by the year 2016; and
- Provides an alternative rainbow trout resource for harvest, to protect weak native fish stocks.

## **Proposal**

BPA is proposing to fund the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the CDA's trout production facility. The facility will include a hatchery building, rearing ponds, four satellite acclimation facilities, as well as four groundwater wells, one stream water intake, and associated pipelines. The CDA Tribe is also proposing that the BPA fund the annual production of up to 10,000 rainbow trout for release into four isolated catch-out ponds for a 'put and take' sport fishery on the reservation. In addition, the CDA also proposes that the BPA fund a monitoring and evaluation program to evaluate the effectiveness of the Trout Production Facility in meeting its goals and objectives. Construction of the approved trout production facilities and management practices of the CDA would be planned and coordinated consistent with the 3-step process of the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program.

## **Environmental Analysis**

As a federal agency, BPA must study the environmental impacts, both adverse and beneficial of a proposed project before it can proceed. This requirement is set out in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

We plan to complete a preliminary Environmental Assessment of this program by mid-April. You will receive a copy of this study when it is available. Comments received on the document will be addressed in a final Environmental Assessment.

## **To Comment or For More Information**

In the meantime, if you have questions or comments, please call or write. You can call me toll-free at 1-800-282-3713 or send an e-mail to, [enpowers@bpa.gov](mailto:enpowers@bpa.gov). You can also mail comments to BPA's Communications Office, KAC-7, P.O. Box 12999, Portland, OR 97212. Comments received by June 1, will be addressed in the environmental study.

Sincerely,

Eric Powers  
Project Environmental Lead