



## Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH & WILDLIFE

March 1, 2002

In reply refer to: KEC-4

**To: People Interested in the Northeast Oregon Hatchery/Grande Ronde and Imnaha Spring Chinook Program**

In October 2001, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) wrote to tell you about a proposed spring chinook hatchery program that could affect you. We asked for your comments on the program and held three public meetings. Response was good; we received over 250 comments on the proposal. Thank you for taking the time to tell us your ideas.

This letter briefly summarizes those comments, outlines our next steps, and tells where to call if you have questions.

**The proposal is the same.** BPA proposes to modify the existing Lookingglass Fish Hatchery and Imnaha satellite facility and build new facilities on the Lostine and Imnaha rivers. A new incubation, rearing, and trapping facility is proposed for the Lostine River, a Grande Ronde Basin tributary, and a new rearing facility is proposed for the Imnaha River. This project does not involve program issues or increases in the number of fish to be produced, but rather new and upgraded facilities that support an existing approved program and level of fish production.

The existing facilities and production programs are part of the ongoing Lower Snake River Compensation Plan and the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. These additional facilities would help these ongoing programs meet their conservation, compensation, and recovery goals for spring chinook salmon. Spring chinook salmon are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

### Public Comments

In January, BPA received 252 comments on this proposed project. Many of the comments (56 percent) were from the public meetings. Meetings were held in Imnaha, Lostine, and LaGrande. We also received comments in a briefing with Oregon Trout, Native Fish Society, and Trout Unlimited, as well as by mail and e-mail.

Many of the comments focused on measuring the success of the program, including:

- Importance of counting returning adults and monitoring the project
- Impacts on naturally spawning fish and their genetic integrity
- Controlling bull trout, which are predators to spring chinook

Other comments focused on potential site-specific impacts to local wells, roads, riparian areas, and scenic areas. In addition, some people commented on the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS),

suggested an economic evaluation of money spent to produce fish, and noted a need for water quality permits.

This is just a summary of the comments we received. If you would like to see all comments formatted by issue, please visit our web site at [www.efw.bpa.gov/cgi-bin/PSA/NEPA/SUMMARIES/Granderonde](http://www.efw.bpa.gov/cgi-bin/PSA/NEPA/SUMMARIES/Granderonde). If you would like to receive a copy of the comments, please call our toll-free document request line at 1-800-622-4520, and leave a message (please include the name of this project and your complete mailing address).

### **Next Steps**

We are analyzing the possible environmental impacts of the project. Your comments are helping us know where to focus our efforts. The information that we gather will be published in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement that will be available for review and comment this fall.

In addition, many of you expressed a desire to keep informed of the project's status. We will be conducting informal project workshops in Lostine on a regular basis to discuss concerns and keep people notified of the EIS progress. In Lostine, two local people volunteered to help coordinate community involvement on this project. If you would like to participate in the Lostine workshops or in a meeting in your area, please let us know.

Once we have completed the environmental review, BPA will decide whether and how to proceed with the project. If BPA decides to proceed, construction would likely begin in 2003.

### **For More Information**

If you have questions, call me toll-free at 1-800-282-3713, at my direct number 503-230-7349, or send me an e-mail at [prsmith@bpa.gov](mailto:prsmith@bpa.gov). You can also call Becky Ashe, Project Leader for the Nez Perce Tribe, at 208-843-7320, ext. 2433. Her e-mail address is [beckya@nezperce.org](mailto:beckya@nezperce.org).

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

/s/ Patricia R. Smith 2-27-2002

Patricia R. Smith  
Environmental Project Lead