



Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH & WILDLIFE

September 3, 2004

To: Persons Interested in the Salmon Creek Project

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed Salmon Creek Project has been released for public review. The proposed project is a joint proposal of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Indian Reservation (CCT) and the Okanogan Irrigation District (OID).

Background

This project proposes to enhance fish habitat, fish passage, and increase instream flows in lower Salmon Creek, a tributary to the Okanogan River. The Northwest Power and Conservation Council (Council) has recommended this project to Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) for funding, in order to mitigate for the loss of anadromous fish and fish habitat due to the operation of the Federal Columbia River dams. The goal of the project is to re-establish self-sustaining anadromous fish populations in the creek while maintaining the economic viability of the community.

Components of the proposed project considered in the DEIS include rehabilitating the Salmon Creek stream channel, revegetating stream banks, and increasing stream flows in the lower 4.3 miles of Salmon Creek between the OID's diversion dam and the Okanogan River. Options for increasing water flows include improving the Salmon Lake feeder canal, upgrading the existing Shellrock pump station on the Okanogan River, building a new river pump station on the Okanogan River, or purchasing water from irrigators. These actions would allow the passage of summer steelhead, and potentially spring chinook, to 13 miles of suitable habitat below Conconully Reservoir.

BPA has completed this DEIS under contract with the CCT and its consultant, Entrix, Inc. The analysis was undertaken to meet the direction of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal laws and regulations as they pertain to project proposals connected to Federal funding. The Bureau of Reclamation and Washington Department of Ecology will consider whether they will have a decision for some portion of this project and whether they will adopt this DEIS for their own NEPA and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requirements.

DEIS Comment Period

The scoping phase of this project analysis identified several issues which are addressed in the DEIS. A No Action alternative and three alternatives containing potential action components, including mitigation measures, are discussed in detail in the DEIS. If you would like to review this document, you can visit your local library at Omak, Okanogan, or Tonasket to view a copy. You can also contact me toll-free at 1-800-282-3713 to request a copy. You may also access it on the Internet at <http://www.efw.bpa.gov/cgi-bin/PSA/NEPA/SalmonCreek>.

If you are interested in finding out more about this project, you could attend a public meeting to discuss the findings in the DEIS. This meeting is intended to provide an opportunity for you to comment on the DEIS. The public meeting will be held as an open house at the following time:

5:00 to 9:00 pm, September 28, 2004
The Okanogan Inn (formerly The Cedars Inn)
1 Apple Way Road
Okanogan, Washington

There will be short presentations to describe the project alternatives at 5:00 and 7:00 pm. You can write your comments on provided forms during the meeting, or give your verbal comment to one of the staff at the public meeting. You can also mail your comments to:

Salmon Creek Project Comments
BPA Communications Office – DM-7
P.O. Box 14428
Portland, OR 97293-4428

Please reference the Salmon Creek Project in all communications. You can also comment by:

- Sending a FAX to 503-230-3285;
- Sending an e-mail to www.bpa.gov/comment.

Comments on this document must be postmarked by October 19, 2004. BPA will review and respond to all comments and intends to publish a Final EIS sometime in the fall of 2005.

For More Information

For further information regarding this proposal, you may contact me toll-free at 1-800-282-3713, or at my direct number 503-230-3796, or send me an email at dlrose@bpa.gov. You can also contact Hilary Lyman, project manager, at 509-996-2486 or via email at hilary@methow.com.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

Don Rose
Environmental Lead