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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

STATE OF MONTANA



JUDY MARTZ
GOVERNOR

RECEIVED BY BPA ADMINISTRATOR'S OFC-LOG #: 04.0073
RECEIPT DATE: 4.8.4
DUE DATE: STATE CAPITOL 4.22.4 PO Box 200801 HELENA, MONTANA 59620-0801

April 5, 2004

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Regional Director
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Mr. Stephen Wright
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ASSIGN: **DR-7C**
cc: FO3, DC/Wash, DR-7, L-7, P-6, PL-6, PG-5,
KE-4, KEW-4, Cooper-PG-5, Bodi-A/Seattle,
McNary-A-7, Kuntz-DR/MSGL

Gentlemen:

On March 30, 2004, the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) released a preliminary proposal for Federal Columbia River Power System Summer Juvenile Bypass Spill Operations. I fully support this proposal for spill reduction that would bring a much-needed \$47 million dollars in savings to the region each of the next three years, while ensuring listed salmon are not adversely affected. That is a significant savings to the region considering the state of the economy, high unemployment, and high electricity rates in the Northwest.

I thank BPA and the Corps for including a section in the proposal related to Libby and Hungry Horse summer operations. The changes Montana has requested for Libby and Hungry Horse not only benefit resident fish in Montana, but also provide further annual savings of about \$5 million dollars to the ratepayers of the region. However, the brief mention of Libby and Hungry Horse summer operations has heightened my concern that these operations are at risk of not being implemented this summer. Now that you have a proposal for summer spill reduction, I ask that you focus on developing a plan to implement Libby and Hungry Horse summer operations. The operations should be

consistent with the Northwest Power and Conservation Council's (Council) Mainstem Amendments.

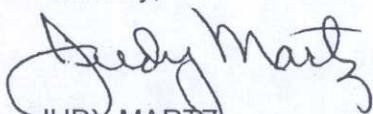
It is my understanding you will be meeting on April 16 with federal, state, and tribal executives to review the input you receive regarding the summer spill proposal and then will be making a decision sometime the following week. Simultaneously with your spill decision, I request that you issue a decision on the implementation of summer 2004 Libby and Hungry Horse operations. I request that you work with my representatives on the Council, John Hines and Ed Bartlett, in the period leading up to the April 16 meeting to ensure that this will be accomplished. A decision not to implement these changes would be unacceptable considering the efforts that have been made and justifications presented beginning last summer to make sure these operations could be implemented for the summer of 2004.

There is ample scientific evidence showing that the proposed operational changes at Libby and Hungry Horse dams (stabilizing and extending summer flows and reduced drawdowns) would benefit listed and unlisted fish in Montana. There is widespread regional support for these changes, beginning with the unanimous adoption of the Council's Mainstem Amendments that occurred last year and most recently the unanimous support by the fifty-four member Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians. Furthermore, in a letter from the four Northwest Governors dated March 29, we stated our continued support for the implementation of the Council's Mainstem Amendments, including dam and reservoir operations.

Your decisions on whether to implement a modified flow regime at Libby and Hungry Horse and a reduced spill experiment at several dams have significant ramifications for the region, including millions of dollars in savings for ratepayers in the four Northwest states, a more efficient and effective fish recovery program, and benefits to resident fish in Montana. The expected effects on listed salmon and steelhead from either operation are negligible, and with a variety of offsetting measures, these operations could have a positive effect on endangered salmon.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of these issues.

Sincerely,



JUDY MARTZ
Governor

cc: Governor Dirk Kempthorne
Governor Gary Locke
Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski
Senator Conrad Burns
Senator Max Baucus
Congressman Denny Rehberg