

June 10, 2004

Dear Interested Parties:

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) have completed their Amended Proposal for Reduced Summer Spill (see June 8 announcement).

A discussion with regional Federal executives about the Amended Proposal will be held on June 14, 2004, at the Embassy Suites Airport in Portland, Oregon, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

This amended proposal is the result of many months of conducting analyses and working with regional partners to find a more cost-effective means of providing fish protection called for in the NOAA Fisheries 2000 Biological Opinion. We appreciate the efforts of all who provided information and helped with the analyses. We also appreciate your patience as we have worked to build a package that we believe is complete and will continue to provide effective protection.

This proposal would reduce summer spill in 2004 from that called for in the NOAA Fisheries 2000 Biological Opinion for operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System and provide a set of actions to mitigate the effects on salmon and steelhead. The current spill program would have Ice Harbor Dam on the Snake River and John Day, The Dalles and Bonneville Dams on the lower Columbia spilling through August 31, 2004. Under this proposal, spill at Bonneville and The Dalles Dams would continue through July, and spill at Ice Harbor and John Day Dams would continue through August 21, 2004.

Additionally, under this proposal, BPA would take actions to make up for losses of Endangered Species Act-listed fall chinook and non-listed summer and fall chinook expected from the proposed reduction of summer spill. Offsetting actions to assure no net biological impact on fish include:

- Enhancing the existing northern pikeminnow predator control program.
- Enhancing July flow in the lower Snake River through Idaho Power Company release of an additional 100,000 acre-feet of water from Brownlee reservoir.
- Limiting flow fluctuations at Hanford Reach to enhance rearing conditions for fall chinook.
- Funding additional actions to rear 200,000-hatchery sub-yearling fall chinook to the yearling stage at the Lyons Ferry National Fish Hatchery in Idaho.
- Additional funding for habitat and hatchery projects to provide long-term benefits to affected stocks.

If this proposal is adopted and implemented, BPA ratepayer savings after offset expenses are expected to be about \$20 to \$31 million dollars.

We will be accepting comments on this proposal until close of business on June 14, 2004. When sending written comments, please refer to the following title: Amended Summer Spill Proposal. There are a number of ways to comment on the project. You can mail the enclosed form to BPA, Communications - DM-7, P.O. Box 14428, Portland, OR 97293-4428; fax it to 503-230-3285; or submit your comment on-line at: <http://www.bpa.gov/comment>. For more information, please contact Michael Coffey at 503-230-3419.