

PR 19-24

BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 23, 2024
CONTACT: Kevin Wingert, BPA, 971-207-8390 or 503-230-5131
Michael-David Bushman, Yakama Nation Fisheries, 509-865-5121 ext. 6345

Upgrades to Klickitat Hatchery to increase spring Chinook salmon

*Work will shift hatchery production to incorporate natural-origin broodstock
and boost smolts from 600,000 to 800,000 annually*

Glenwood, Wash. – Members of the Yakama Nation, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, NOAA Fisheries, and the Bonneville Power Administration gathered at a hatchery nestled in the 42-river mile of the Klickitat River on Friday, October 11, to celebrate the construction, now underway, of upgrades intended to boost the population and resilience of spring Chinook salmon in the river basin.

The Klickitat Hatchery was originally constructed in 1949 and is operated by the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation to rear spring and fall Chinook as well as late-run coho salmon. BPA is spending roughly \$35 million to upgrade several components of the hatchery still operating with 75-year-old equipment. That work is focused on improving the spring Chinook population, with plans to increase juvenile production from 600,000 to 800,000 annually.

“BPA is funding the upgrades to enable the Yakama to move from exclusively using hatchery-raised fish for broodstock to incorporate natural-origin broodstock,” said Jason Sweet, executive manager of BPA’s fish and wildlife program. “By integrating natural-origin broodstock, we expect to see greater fitness, production and survival of these salmonids.”

These capital improvements help to fulfill commitments BPA made in the 2008 Columbia Basin Fish Accords Memorandum of Agreement and its subsequent extensions. The project is part of BPA’s ongoing efforts to mitigate the effects of the Federal Columbia River Power System on fish and wildlife in the mainstem Columbia River and its tributaries.

The importance of the event was not lost on the chairman of the Yakama Nation, Gerald Lewis.

"A wonderful day – the sun bearing witness, birds singing, as everyone was there to celebrate with the tribe for 20 years of holding the hatchery together," Lewis said. "The words spoken by BPA, NOAA, WDFW, BIA, Klickitat County and by YN helped preserve all the work done by the entities coming together as one. The tribe never gave up on our resource of Spring Salmon, Steelhead, Coho and Lamprey. Now with the Fish Accord Agreement, BPA and the Yakama Nation have come together to rebuild the aging hatchery to better support fisheries across the Northwest.

“It is only through prayer and song that Yakama can keep the resources going forward as Elders have been saying since the demise of Celilo. With the help of other entities, we are making progress on our natural resources.”



Other key supporters of the Yakama/Klickitat Fisheries Project were on hand for the celebration as well, including Klickitat County, Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Northwest Power and Conservation Council.

Construction on the upgrades at Klickitat Hatchery began in September and include:

- Improving spring water intakes, discharge piping, and a river pumping station
- Rebuilding the pollution abatement system
- Adding circular rearing tanks and a chemical storage building
- Updating the existing fish ladder and spawning and adult holding infrastructure

Work on the upgrades is expected to be completed in June of 2026 with the first yearlings released from the upgraded facilities in May of 2027.

About BPA: BPA is a federal non-profit power marketing administration that delivers reliable, affordable and carbon-free hydropower produced in the Columbia River Basin to communities across the Northwest. BPA also owns and operates more than 15,000 circuit miles of high-voltage transmission lines and administers one of the largest, most comprehensive fish and wildlife conservation programs in the United States. More information about these and other activities is available on our [Media Relations page](#).

###