



Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

August 5, 2008

In reply refer to: KEC-4

Mr. D. Robert Lohn, Regional Administrator
NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service
Northwest Region
7600 Sand Point Way N. E., Bldg. 1
Seattle, WA 98115

Re: MSA Essential Fish Habitat consultation for the Chief Joseph Hatchery Project,
Columbia and Okanogan rivers, Okanogan County, WA (NMFS No.
F/NWR/2006/07534)

Dear Mr. Lohn:

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) received a biological opinion (Opinion) dated July 28, 2008, from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for a suite of proposed actions comprising the Chief Joseph Hatchery Project. The Opinion included five (5) MSA Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) conservation recommendations (Opinion section 8.5, page 108) to help address potential adverse effects of competition between hatchery-origin and natural-origin Chinook salmon in the project area. The BPA in cooperation with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation will adopt and follow these five (5) EFH conservation recommendations.

- 1) The artificial propagation programs will be operated consistent with the conservation measures and best management practices described in the biological assessment and the biological opinion.
- 2) Artificially propagated salmon will be released at a uniform size and state of smoltification reflecting readiness to actively migrate to the ocean with minimal delay.
- 3) The artificial propagation programs will be monitored and evaluated annually for each salmon run, including the distribution and composition of hatchery program spawning adults in native waters.
- 4) To increase habitat resources in the Okanogan basin, the potential use of surplus hatchery adults for nutrient enhancement in local streams will be investigated.
- 5) All hatchery-propagated Chinook salmon shall be externally marked with an adipose fin clipped prior to release. A portion of each hatchery release group will be internally

tagged (e.g., coded-wire tag or passive integrated transponder tag) for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

These five conservation recommendations would generally be satisfied by complying with non-discretionary terms and conditions of the ESA Section 7 consultation and incidental take permit as included in section 6 of the Opinion (pages 96-102) for the proposed actions.

If plans for the proposed actions are revised substantially, or if vital new information becomes available relative to EFH recommendations or potential adverse effects, then the BPA will reinstate EFH consultation.

If you have any questions, please contact me at macarter@bpa.gov 503-230-5885.

Sincerely,

/s/ Mickey Carter 08/05/2008

Mickey A. Carter

Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4

cc:

Mr. Joe Peone, Colville Tribes Fish and Wildlife Department, P. O. Box 150, Nespelem, WA 99155

Mr. Stephen Smith, S.H. Smith Fisheries Consulting, Inc., 8462 S. Heinz Road, Canby, Oregon 97013