



Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

April 16, 2025

In reply refer to: ECF-4

To: People interested in the Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge Floodplain Reconnection Project

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) has finalized the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge Floodplain Reconnection Project (Project). Based on the final EA, BPA is issuing a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and has made a decision to proceed with the project. This letter describes BPA's decision, the construction schedule, and how to obtain additional information.

Background: BPA proposes to provide funding to the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI) to restore floodplain connectivity to the Kootenai River historic floodplains within the Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge (KNWR) in Boundary County, Idaho near Bonners Ferry, Idaho. The KNWR is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The USFWS and the KTOI are the project sponsors. The project's reconnection activities would include breaching levees, raising roads, replacing water control structures, enhancing wetlands, and re-establishing wetland connections.

BPA prepared an EA to help the agency determine if the project would cause significant impacts that would warrant preparing an environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act. BPA released the draft EA for public review and comment in September 2024 and received comments from five individuals and three entities. The final EA provides responses to those comments and minor revisions to the EA. Based on the EA analysis and mitigation measures included in the EA and Mitigation Action Plan to help lessen impacts, BPA has found that the project will not cause any significant impacts and, therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

Decision: BPA has decided to fund KTOI for construction of the Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge Floodplain Reconnection Project. Project construction is expected to begin in Summer 2025 and continue for two calendar years, with breaks in construction during seasonal restrictions.

Copies Available: The final EA, FONSI, and Mitigation Action Plan are available on BPA's website at <http://www.bpa.gov/nepa/kootenai-natl-wildlife-refuge>. If you previously requested a copy of the documents, they are enclosed. If you would like to obtain paper copies of these documents, please call our toll-free document request line at 1-800-622-4520; leave a request naming this Project and giving your name and complete mailing address.

For More Information: If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact me at 503-230-57587, or by e-mail at egresh@bpa.gov. You can also reach me toll free at 1-800-622-4519.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

Ted Gresh
Senior Environmental Protection Specialist

Enclosures:
Final EA (if requested)
FONSI and Mitigation Action Plan (if EA was requested)