



Department of Energy

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



U.S. Forest Service

Salmon-Challis National Forest
1206 S. Challis St.
Salmon, ID 83467

May 23, 2014

In reply refer to: KEC-4

To: People Interested in the Crystal Springs Hatchery Program

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) will be preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) to analyze the effects of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation's (Tribes) proposed Crystal Springs Hatchery Program. The U. S. Forest Service (USFS) Salmon-Challis National Forest will be a cooperating agency on the EIS. This letter briefly explains what is being proposed, outlines BPA and Forest Service's environmental review process, and invites you to public meetings, and to comment on the proposal.

Proposal - BPA is proposing to fund the Tribes' Crystal Springs Hatchery Program. The program would involve the construction and operation of a hatchery to rear Snake River spring/summer Chinook salmon and Yellowstone cutthroat trout and construction of two fish trapping (weir) facilities (*please see the enclosed map*). The hatchery would be constructed at the site of an obsolete trout hatchery on Crystal Springs in Bingham County, Idaho. The weirs would be located on USFS land in Idaho; one on the Yankee Fork of the Salmon River at the Pole Flat Campground in Custer County, and one on Panther Creek in Lemhi County. The USFS would decide whether to grant a special-use permit for construction and operation of the weirs, relocation of a USFS road, and construction of support facilities (RV pads).

Program operations at the hatchery would include incubation and rearing of up to 1,000,000 juvenile spring/summer Chinook for release in the Upper Salmon River subbasin to enhance fish populations available for harvest and to aid in establishing a naturally spawning spring/summer Chinook population. The weirs would be used to collect adult Chinook for broodstock. In addition, the hatchery would produce up to 5,000 Yellowstone cutthroat trout for release and harvest in an oxbow lake on the Ft. Hall Reservation.

The proposal has been recommended for funding by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council and would help BPA meet responsibilities under the Northwest Power Act and the 2008 Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' Fish Accord Memorandum of Agreement.

Environmental Review - BPA, in cooperation with the USFS, will prepare an EIS pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act to assess the potential impacts of the proposed action and identify ways to reduce those impacts. The EIS will analyze the proposed action, an alternative to fund the hatchery only, a no-action alternative, and any additional viable alternatives brought forward during the scoping process. During this process, BPA and the USFS will work with federal, state and local agencies, tribes, landowners, and interest groups.

Public Meetings - We have scheduled three open-house style public meetings where representatives from BPA, USFS, and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes will be available to answer questions and take comments about the scope of the EIS.

Tuesday, June 10, 2014
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
 Shoshone-Bannock Hotel and
 Events Center
 I-15 Exit 80, Simplot Rd
 Fort Hall, Idaho 83203

Wednesday, June 11, 2014
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
 US Forest Service Office
 1206 S. Challis Street
 Salmon, Idaho 83467

Thursday, June 12, 2014
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
 US Forest Service Office
 311 N. US HWY 93
 Challis, Idaho 97487

How to comment - Please send your comments on the proposal and its potential impacts by **July 7, 2014**. When commenting, refer to the Crystal Springs Hatchery Program. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered, but will limit the ability to provide the respondent with subsequent environmental documents. Comments will be available in their entirety on the project website at www.bpa.gov/comment. Choose the way you would like to comment:

Mail:	Bonneville Power Administration Public Affairs – DKC-7 P.O. Box 14428 Portland, OR 97293-4428	FAX:	503-230-4019
		On-Line:	www.bpa.gov/comment
		E-mail:	comment@bpa.gov

Schedule - The proposed schedule for the EIS process is as follows:

Comment scoping period	May 23 thru July 7, 2014
Draft EIS available for public comment	Spring 2015
Final EIS (and USFS draft Record of Decision)	Winter 2015/2016
USFS Objection process (if objections received)	Following release of final EIS
Record of Decision	Spring 2016
If decision to build, construction start	Summer 2016

Please indicate on the enclosed postcard whether/how you would like to receive the EIS. If you do not return the form, you will still receive notice when the draft EIS is available.

Forest Service Objection process – The USFS’s decision will be subject to the objection process (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 218)—the proposed project implements land management plans, is not authorized under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, and is subject to 36 CFR 218.7 parts (a) and (b). The objection process will occur after the release of the final EIS, which will include a draft Forest Service Record of Decision (see Schedule above).

In order to be eligible to file an objection, specific written comments related to the project must be submitted during scoping, during the draft EIS comment period, or during any other comment period that could be provided on this EIS (36 CFR 218.5). Individual members of organizations must submit their own comments to meet the requirements of eligibility as an individual. Objections received on behalf of an organization are considered as those of the organization only. Names and addresses of those who comment and/or file objections will become part of the public record.

For more information on how the objection process works for projects and activities implementing land and resource management plans and the requirements, please see contact information below or see the 36 CFR 218 federal register notice at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-03-27/pdf/2013-06857.pdf>

For More Information - To find out more about the project please go to BPA’s project web site at www.bpa.gov/goto/CrystalSprings. If you have questions regarding the project or the environmental process, please contact me toll-free at 800-282-3713, directly at 503-230-3796, or e-mail dlrose@bpa.gov. You may also contact the project environmental lead, Israel Duran at 503-230-3967, or email induran@bpa.gov.

If you have questions specifically for the USFS or about the objection process, contact Mary Hammer at 208-756-5109, or email at marylhammer@fs.fed.us. Please refer to Crystal Springs Hatchery Program on all comments and correspondence.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

/s/ Donald Rose

Donald Rose
Supervisory Environmental Compliance Specialist
Bonneville Power Administration

Enclosures:
Project Map
Comment Form
Return Envelope