



## Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

June 26, 2020

In reply refer to: EC-4

### **To: People Interested in the 2020 Lemhi Valley River and Floodplain Restoration Projects**

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) has finalized the environmental assessment (EA) for the Lemhi Valley River and Floodplain Restoration Projects, which includes seven mainstem and tributary river/stream restoration actions; three irrigation diversion modifications; and one culvert replacement on Idaho State Highway 28. Based on the final EA, BPA is issuing a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) and has made a decision to proceed with eight of the eleven projects analyzed in the EA. This letter describes BPA's decision, the construction schedule, and how to obtain additional information.

**Background:** BPA will provide funding for five mainstem and tributary river/stream restoration actions; two irrigation diversion modifications; and one culvert replacement on Idaho State Highway 28 as listed below:

- Lemhi Headwaters (river restoration)
- Narrows Reach (river restoration)
- Eagle Valley (river restoration)
- Lemhi/Big Springs (river restoration)
- L-58C (irrigation diversion relocation)
- Canyon Creek Boundary (irrigation diversion relocation)
- Hayden Creek (stream restoration)
- Little Sawmill Culvert (culvert replacement)

The projects will benefit Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout, and help meet BPA's mitigation obligations under the Northwest Power Act, and its commitments under the 2019 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Columbia River System Biological Opinion.

BPA prepared an EA to help the agency determine if the projects would cause significant impacts that would warrant preparing an environmental impact statement. BPA released the draft EA for public review and comment in May 2020 and received comments from three entities. The final EA provides responses to those comments and minor revisions to the EA. Based on the EA analysis and mitigation measures to help lessen impacts, BPA has found that the eight projects will not cause any significant impacts and, therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

**Decision:** BPA has decided to fund the eight 2020 Lemhi Valley River and Floodplain Restoration Projects. Project construction is expected to begin in summer 2020 and continue, for some projects, through 2023, with breaks in construction to accommodate seasonal restrictions.

**Copies Available:** The final EA, FONSI, and mitigation action plan are available on BPA's website at [www.bpa.gov/goto/LemhiRestoration](http://www.bpa.gov/goto/LemhiRestoration). 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 503-230-5564, or by e-mail at [cjhamel@bpa.gov](mailto:cjhamel@bpa.gov), or Rob Shull, Contract Environmental Protection Specialist, CorSource Technology Group, at 503-230-3962, or by e-mail at [rwhull@bpa.gov](mailto:rwhull@bpa.gov).

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Chad J. Hamel*

Chad J. Hamel

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

**Enclosures (if requested):**

Final EA

FONSI

Mitigation Action Plan

Official File – KEC (EQ-13)

Rob Shull:RWS:3962:June 5, 2020