



Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH & WILDLIFE

August 12, 2022

In reply refer to: ECF-4

To: People interested in the Klickitat Hatchery Spring Chinook Upgrades

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to fund capital improvements to facilities at the existing Klickitat Fish Hatchery in Klickitat County within the Yakama Nation Reservation in Washington. This letter explains what is being proposed, outlines our anticipated environmental review process and schedule, and requests your comments.

Proposal: BPA is proposing to fund capital improvements to existing facilities at the Klickitat Hatchery that would support an increase in spring Chinook salmon production and allow the Yakama Nation to transition from a segregated to an integrated spring Chinook production program. The hatchery was built in 1954 and most of the facilities have not been renovated. It is operated jointly by the Yakama Nation and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). The upgrades would support Bonneville's commitments to the Yakama Nation under the 2020 Columbia River Fish Accord Extension agreement, while also supporting ongoing efforts to mitigate for effects of the FCRPS on fish and wildlife in the mainstem Columbia River and its tributaries pursuant to the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act of 1980 (Northwest Power Act) (16 U.S.C. (USC) 839 *et seq.*).

On October 6, 2017, BPA published a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register (Vol. 82, No. 193) to begin preparing an EIS for improvements to the Klickitat Hatchery. Since that time, BPA has further developed designs and conducted extensive coordination with permitting agencies to confirm that existing permits would address the proposed changes. This coordination, in combination with efforts to minimize effects to resources, indicate that an Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact may be more appropriate for this project, but BPA will make this determination after the public scoping process concludes.

The proposed upgrades would include improving the spring water intakes, discharge piping, and river pump station; rebuilding the pollution abatement system; adding circular rearing tanks, adding a chemical storage building, updating the existing fish ladder and spawning and adult holding infrastructure, and possibly adding two staff residences, predator control netting over the raceways, and updates to hatchery building administrative space.

The proposed upgrades are designed to improve rearing conditions for spring Chinook, which would provide the capacity to increase production from 600,000 spring Chinook yearling smolts to 800,000 smolts. Upgrades would help the spring Chinook program transition from using only hatchery-raised fish for broodstock (a "segregated" or "isolated" program) to a program that incorporates natural-origin fish in the broodstock (an "integrated" program). Incorporating natural-origin fish into the broodstock is expected to increase the fitness, productivity, survival, and harvest of this species.

All fish production (spring and fall Chinook and coho salmon) operations and facility maintenance at the hatchery has been funded through the National Marine Fisheries Service under the Mitchell Act (16 U.S.C. 755-757) since the hatchery was built in 1954. BPA is not proposing to fund fish production or to assume responsibility for any Mitchell Act funding for the Klickitat Hatchery. BPA funds would be limited to the proposed capital improvements to support spring Chinook production.

Environmental Review: To understand the potential environmental impacts of this proposal, BPA may prepare an environmental assessment (EA). If BPA determines that an EA should be prepared, the EA will describe anticipated impacts to natural and human resources and include mitigation measures that would help avoid or minimize impacts. We are asking for your comments to help determine the issues that should be addressed in the environmental review. During this process, BPA will work with Federal, state, and local agencies, Tribes, potentially affected landowners, and other interest groups. The proposed schedule for the environmental review process is as follows:

Scoping comment period	August 12 – Sept 12, 2022
Draft EA available for public comment (if warranted)	December 2022
Virtual Public Meeting for Draft EA (if warranted)	December 2022
Final EA (if warranted)	February/March 2023
Finding of No Significant Impact (if warranted)	February/March 2023
If decision to build, construction would start	Spring/Summer 2023

How to Comment: Please send your comments by **September 12, 2022** and reference the *Klickitat Hatchery Upgrades*. All comments will be available on the project website at www.bpa.gov/nepa/klickitat-hatchery-upgrades. There are several ways to comment:

Mail: Bonneville Power Administration Public Affairs – DKE-7 P.O. Box 14428 Portland, OR 97291-4428	Toll-free: 800-622-4519 FAX: 503-230-4019 Online: www.bpa.gov/comment
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For More Information: If you have questions regarding the environmental review process, please contact me at 503-230-5206, or by e-mail at casharp@bpa.gov. You can also reach us toll free at 1-800-622-4519.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

/s/ Carolyn A. Sharp
Carolyn A. Sharp
Environmental Protection Specialist

Enclosures:
Comment Form
Return Envelope