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United States Government **Department of Energy**

Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: May 16, 2005

REPLY TO ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Hood River Fisheries Project Environmental Impact Statement (DOE/EIS-0241/SA-01)

TO: P. Lofy – KEWL-4
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Proposed Action: Hood River Production Program Activities

Project No: 19880530x

Location: Hood River County, Oregon

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), and Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon (CTWSRO).

Description of the Proposed Action: The Hood River Fisheries Project EIS discussed the components of and activities undertaken by the ODFW and CTWSRO to implement the Hood River Production Program. In the 1996 EIS, we anticipated that Phase II of the project, which is covered by the EIS, would be completed in 2002. The EIS states that an independent review of the program was to occur at the end of Phase II and that additional NEPA review is required for Phase III if the level of production is increased over Phase II levels. The Hood River Production Program Review 1991-2001 [Underwood et al, 2003] was completed in November 2003.

ODFW and CTWSRO are currently working on a proposal for Phase III based on the recommendations of the review. The planning and step review process with the Northwest Power and Conservation Council will take almost a year to complete. Therefore, ODFW and CTWSRO propose to continue the same program and level of production as covered under the EIS until Phase III can be initiated. The only change proposed to the program for FY2005 is to transport some of the excess returning steelhead adults trapped at the Powerdale Dam to selected lakes/ponds in the Hood River basin – Taylor Lake, Lost Lake, and Kingsley Reservoir. Also, if residual or non-migratory steelhead remain in acclimation ponds beyond the normal acclimation period, ODFW may collect them and also place them in the same lakes and ponds.

Analysis: The program review revealed that the impacts of the Hood River Production Program are in line with those predicted in the EIS. The findings included:

- Hatchery spring chinook residualism (fish not migrating out of the acclimation facilities) was higher than expected.
- Attempts to limit competition between released spring chinook hatchery smolts and natural parr were successful.

- Stray rates of Hood River hatchery spring chinook were high, which reduced the number of fish available for harvest and natural spawning.
- Disease rates for spring chinook were high; rates for steelhead were low.
- The shift in the summer steelhead program from out-of-basin Skamania stock to Hood River stock occurred in 1999, one year later than planned. Initial release goals were met in 2000 and 2001, but residualism in the acclimation facility was high, ranging from 14 to 23%.
- The winter steelhead program met its release goals and had low residualism.
- Competition between summer and winter steelhead wild parr and hatchery smolts appeared to be limited because the hatchery smolts appeared to migrate out of the system quickly, once they left the acclimation facility.
- Competition between hatchery and wild summer and winter steelhead smolts, however, may have occurred throughout the migration because the hatchery smolts were significantly larger than the wild smolts migrating at the same time.
- The summer, and to a lesser extent, the winter steelhead "recycle" program increased harvest but apparently resulted a large number of fish straying, dying, or spawning in the lower Hood River (as evidenced by them not turning up in the trap a second time or in the harvest records).
- Irrigation withdrawal screening and improvements and stream flow restoration projects were successful. Fencing projects were less successful.

The EIS and Record of Decision stated that the program could result in negative effects on existing fish populations through ecological interactions, predation, and straying. Some of the predicted negative effects of residualism in the spring chinook and summer steelhead, high disease rates for spring chinook, competition between hatchery and wild origin steelhead, and straying are occurring; measures to further reduce these impacts will be taken into consideration in the shaping of the Phase III program. However, the ODFW proposes this year to address the steelhead straying impacts (while still providing harvest opportunities) by transporting the excess returning hatchery origin adults and residual steelhead smolts to isolated lakes and ponds instead of "recycling" them to the mouth of the Hood River (adults) or forcing them out of acclimation ponds (smolts). They will also consider placing residual steelhead smolts into the ponds to reduce steelhead residualism and competition in the river.

The three lakes that have been identified to receive the excess hatchery origin steelhead have no or extremely limited natural production opportunity, no listed fish species present, and few or no native fish species present.

- Taylor Lake is a shallow manmade lake located just west of The Dalles. It is managed by ODFW by stocking with adult rainbow trout for a consumptive fishery. A wide variety of warmwater and nongame fish have also been illegally introduced. The lake has no natural production of salmonids, and the outlet to the Columbia River is screened.
- Lost Lake is a natural lake in the Hood River subbasin that is isolated by a barrier falls. It has also been managed as a consumptive rainbow trout fishery as well, and also has remnant populations of introduced brown trout and kokanee salmon. There is extremely limited opportunity for natural production of steelhead and downstream passage out of the lake would be unlikely.

- Kingsley Reservoir is formed by a piped diversion from Ditch Creek in the Hood River subbasin. It is managed primarily for irrigation, although it is also stocked with legal sized rainbow trout for a fishery. There is no natural fish production in the reservoir, as the inlet and outlet are both piped.

Therefore, overall impacts to the native fish stocks in the Hood River would be slightly reduced from those disclosed in the EIS by these interim actions.

Since the EIS was completed, bull trout and Middle Columbia River steelhead, both found in the Hood River basin, have been listed as threatened. ODFW has a Section 6 agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to cover effects of this project on bull trout. For effects on anadromous fish, ODFW holds a Section 4(d) scientific research permit for the Powerdale adult trap, and they have submitted Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans for summer and winter steelhead and spring chinook to NOAA Fisheries.

The proposed changes will not affect cultural resources.

Findings: The project is consistent with the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program, as well as BPA's Hood River Fisheries Project EIS (DOE/EIS-0241) and ROD. This Supplement Analysis finds that: 1) implementing the proposed action will not result in any substantial changes to the Hood River Fish Production Program that are relevant to environmental concerns; and 2) there are no significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the Hood River Production Program or its impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Nancy Weintraub 5-16-05
Nancy H. Weintraub
Environmental Specialist – KEC-4

CONCUR:

/s/ Kathy Pierce DATE: *5-17-05*
Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer – KEC-4

cc:
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