



## Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

February 23, 2023

In reply refer to: ECF-4

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DETERMINATION**

**Proposed Action:** Klickitat Hatchery Spring Chinook Upgrades

**Environmental Project Manager:** Carolyn Sharp, ECF-4, 503-230-5206, and casharp@bpa.gov

**Location:** Klickitat County, Washington

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation (Yakama Nation), and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to fund upgrades to the Klickitat Hatchery in the Klickitat River Basin in Klickitat County, Washington in partnership with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation (Yakama Nation). The proposal includes funding capital improvements to the Klickitat Hatchery facilities to support an increase in spring Chinook salmon production and a transition from a segregated to an integrated spring Chinook program. The hatchery is located at River Mile 42 of the Klickitat River within the bounds of the Yakama Nation Reservation and is operated jointly by the Yakama Nation and WDFW. The hatchery was built in 1954 and most of the facilities have not been renovated since then. The upgrades would support Bonneville's commitments to the Yakama Nation under the Columbia River Fish Accords Memorandum of Agreement and subsequent amendments, while also supporting ongoing efforts to mitigate for effects of the Federal Columbia River Power System 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.*).

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 annual 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 of 1938 (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.

**Class of Action to be Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** C8: Protection of Cultural Resources and Fish and Wildlife Habitat

We have determined that the proposed action is within the class of actions normally requiring an environmental assessment (EA), but not necessarily requiring an environmental impact statement (EIS) as listed in Subpart D of 10 C.F.R. Part 1021. A Notice of Intent (NOI) was published in the *Federal Register* on October 6, 2017 (82 FR 46804), to begin preparing an EIS for the Klickitat Hatchery Upgrades. On February 24, 2023, BPA published another notice in the *Federal Register* stating the intent to terminate the preparation of that EIS. The change in National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis is due to a refinement of project scope and design that would minimize resource effects and extensive agency coordination that has shown existing permits are sufficient to address the proposed changes. Therefore, we have determined that an EA will be prepared to assess the impacts of the proposed action. The Yakama Nation and WDFW agreed to be cooperating agencies for this EA. On the basis of the analysis in the EA, BPA will prepare a finding of no significant impact and proceed with the action, or will prepare an EIS if the EA reveals the potential for significant environmental impacts.

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: February 23, 2023