

Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

October 25, 2005

In reply refer to: KEC-4

To: People Interested in the South Fork Flathead Watershed Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation Program

Public Comments: The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) released the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the South Fork Flathead Watershed Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation Program on July 25, 2005 (see Proposal below). Subsequently, some parties interested in this program informed us that the Final EIS did not include comments they submitted to BPA during the Draft EIS comment period, which ran from July 12 through August 20, 2004. We would like to remedy this before we make a decision about the program. If, after checking the Final EIS, you believe your comments were left out, we request that you resubmit your comments. In addition, we will also accept comments that raise new information or identify changed circumstances from those discussed in the Final EIS. BPA will therefore reopen the wait period before acting on the final EIS. BPA will accept comments for 45 days, until **December 12, 2005**.

The Final EIS, Chapter 1, includes copies of all comments on the Draft EIS that BPA received, as well as responses to those comments. Pages 1-2 and 1-3 of the Final EIS contain a table that lists, by log number and author, all the comment letters we included in the Final EIS. If you commented on the Draft EIS between July 12 and August 20, 2004, please check these pages to be sure BPA included your comment. **If the Final EIS includes your comments, please do not resubmit them.** BPA has already considered and responded to them.

Some interested parties have also expressed concern that their comments during the scoping period held from May 22 to June 23, 2003, were not referenced in the EIS. BPA incorporates comments received during the scoping period directly into the Draft and Final EISs. Scoping comments help shape the alternatives considered, the impacts analyzed, and the decision factors in the EIS. **Comments submitted during the scoping period have already been considered and do not need to be resubmitted.**

Next Steps: After the close of this additional comment period, BPA will evaluate whether to address additional comments by reissuing the Final EIS, supplementing it, or discussing the additional comments in the record of decision.

Final EIS Copies: If you would like a copy of the Final EIS, please call our toll-free document request line: 1-800-622-4520. Leave a message naming this project and give your complete mailing address. Please specify which format you would like, either a paper copy of the Final

EIS or a Summary of the Final EIS with a CD of the entire document. Both the Final and Draft EISs may also be viewed on our web site at http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/South_Fork_Flathead/

Documents are also available for review at several libraries in Montana. A list of those libraries is at the end of this letter.

How to Comment: Choose the way you would like to comment: Write a letter to Bonneville Power Administration - Communications DKP-7, P.O. Box 14428, Portland, OR 97293-4428. Call toll-free at 1-800-622-4519 and record your comments. E-mail us at comment@bpa.gov, or send a FAX to 503-230-3285. In your communication please reference this project. *Comments will be accepted until December 12, 2005.*

Proposal: BPA is proposing to fund a conservation program, proposed by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP), to preserve the genetic purity of the westslope cutthroat trout populations in the South Fork of the Flathead drainage. This program is part of the effort to mitigate for the construction and operation of Hungry Horse Dam. MFWP is proposing to remove hybrid trout from 21 identified lakes and 2 streams in the South Fork Flathead drainage and replace them with genetically pure native westslope cutthroat trout over the next 10-12 years. All activities would occur on lands administered by the U.S. Forest Service. Some of the lakes are in the Bob Marshall Wilderness and the Jewel Basin Hiking Area. Other lakes may also be included as additional information is discovered.

For More Information: If you need more information or have any questions, please call me toll-free at 1-800-282-3713, or e-mail me at caspiring@bpa.gov. (*Please do not use this e-mail address to submit official comments.*)

Thank you for your interest in our work. We apologize for any inconvenience or concern this may have caused.

Sincerely,

/s/ Colleen A. Spiering 10-25-05
Colleen A. Spiering
Environmental Project Manager

A copy of the EIS can be reviewed at these libraries:

<p>Carroll College Corette Library 1601 North Benton Avenue Helena, MT 59625</p>	<p>Flathead County Library 247 First Avenue East Kalispell, Montana 59901</p>
<p>Montana State University-Billings Library 1500 University Drive Billings, MT 59101</p>	<p>Montana State University-Bozeman Roland R. Renne Library 100 Paisley Court Bozeman, MT 59717</p>
<p>Montana State University-Northern Vande Bogart Library 300 West 13th Street Havre, MT 59501</p>	<p>State of Montana Natural Resource Information System Library 1515 East Sixth Avenue Helena, Montana 59601-8206</p>
<p>State Law Library of Montana 215 North Sanders Street Helena, MT 59620</p>	<p>University of Montana-Butte Montana Tech Library 1300 West Park Street Butte, MT 59701</p>
<p>University of Montana-Missoula Mansfield Library 32 Campus Drive Missoula, MT 59812</p>	