



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10

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FEB 18 2010

OFFICE OF
ECOSYSTEMS, TRIBAL AND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Mickey Carter, Environmental Protection Specialist
Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621, KEC-4
Portland, OR 97208-3621

Re: Chief Joseph Hatchery Project
EPA Project Number 05-039-BPA

Dear Mr. Carter:

Thank you for your letter responding to our comments on the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Chief Joseph Hatchery Program (CJHP) and follow up from our phone conversation. We greatly appreciate your efforts in resolving our outstanding concerns on the final EIS related to potential impacts to water quality and clarifying information regarding hatchery facilities and permit authority.

Your letter provided additional detail regarding potential impacts to beneficial uses; NPDES permit authorities, and EPA's authority under Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 401 certification on the Confederated Colville Tribal lands. We expressed concern regarding impacts to aquatic habitat in the Okanogan River. The additional information in your letter indicated that impacts to water quality from reduced flows currently occur only during certain drought years and that this impact would occur naturally with or without the CJHP. As mentioned in a recent telephone conversation, we remain concerned that CJHP's water withdrawal may contribute to high temperature and low flow problems at certain times of the year. However, we believe that the list of terms and conditions disclosed in the EIS, required by the USFWS and NOAA to mitigate effects to ESA listed species, and robust monitoring should be protective of fish species. We also support continued coordination with the Washington Department of Ecology and EPA for certification of discharges to Waters of the U.S. and compliance with the CWA.

Thank you again for your continued coordination on this project. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Lynne McWhorter at 206-553-0205 or via email at mcwhorter.lynne@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Christine Reichgott".

Christine Reichgott, Unit Manager
Environmental Review and Sediment Management Unit