



Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

June 15, 2005

To: People Interested in the Kootenai River Ecosystem Project

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) has completed the Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Kootenai River Ecosystem Project in the Kootenai River. Based on that assessment, BPA made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), which is included in the Final EA. Comments were invited on the Preliminary EA in April 2005, and the EA was modified following a review of all comments received.

Documents Available: If you would like a copy of the EA and FONSI, please call our toll-free document request line: 1-800-622-4520. Leave a message naming this project and giving your complete mailing address. You can also view them on the Internet at:
http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/Kootenai/.

Proposal: The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI) and Idaho Fish and Game (IDFG) propose to add liquid nitrogen and phosphorus to the Kootenai River from late June through September each year starting in 2005. The liquid nutrients will be added through a gravity-fed steel pipe from holding tanks. The location for adding the nutrients to the river is near the Montana/Idaho border upstream of Bonners Ferry, Idaho. Researchers and river managers will regularly evaluate the effects of the nutrient additions to determine if the project should continue permanently. BPA is funding this project.

Background: The Kootenai River is currently nutrient poor and has been so for about 25 years. Low nutrient levels are, in part, responsible for the decline in fish populations in the river. Just as a farmer uses nutrients to grow crops, the river uses nutrients to grow algae, insects, and ultimately fish. Nutrients that once flowed downriver from Canada are now being trapped in the reservoir behind Libby Dam.

The separation of the Kootenai River from its historic floodplain also has resulted in fewer available nutrients for river productivity.

BPA is funding this proposal because BPA is responsible for protecting, mitigating and enhancing fish and wildlife affected by the development and operation of federal hydroelectric facilities on the Columbia River and its tributaries.

For More Information: If you need more information or have any questions, please call me at toll-free at 1-800-282-3713, or e-mail me at caspierring@bpa.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/ Colleen Spiering June 15, 2005
Colleen Spiering
Environmental Project Manager