



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
Portland District

# PUBLIC NOTICE

## REVISED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

### **Hatchery Facilities Improvements for the John Day Mitigation Project Franklin and Benton counties, Washington**

#### **15-day notice**

Public Notice # - CENWP-PM-E-14-04

Issue Date: Feb. 14, 2014

Closing Date: March 1, 2014

Interested parties are hereby notified that the Portland District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is proposing to construct hatchery facilities in order to increase the production of fall Chinook salmon for the John Day Mitigation Project. Current production levels of fall Chinook upriver brights and downriver stocks (known as tules) do not meet the goals of the John Day Mitigation Program.

Construction of The Dalles Dam in 1957 and John Day Dam in 1967 inundated spawning and rearing areas for fall Chinook. In 1978, Congress authorized the JDM program to mitigate for the losses in salmonid spawning and rearing habitat caused by construction of the dams.

Currently, mitigation is provided by a combination of adult egg take, incubation, and juvenile rearing at Priest Rapids Hatchery, Ringold Springs Hatchery, Little White Salmon National Fish Hatchery, Spring Creek National Fish Hatchery, Bonneville Hatchery, and Prosser Tribal Hatchery, along with acclimation at the Pendleton and Thornhollow sites. About half of the mitigation fish are upriver bright fall Chinook that are released above or just below McNary Dam. The remaining production is comprised of both downriver stocks of fall Chinook and URB fall Chinook that are released in the Bonneville pool and just below Bonneville Dam.

To meet mitigation goals, the Corps is proposing a combination of actions which include an expansion of facilities at the RSH to allow for production and release of additional juvenile URB fall Chinook, the use of existing facilities at the Little White Salmon Hatchery and Umatilla for rearing and acclimation of additional egg production from RSH, and construction of a facility at the I-182 site in Benton County, Washington for smolt rearing, acclimation, and release. Construction is currently scheduled to begin in 2016.

Facility improvements at RSH include:

1. Replacing existing fish ladder at RSH with a structure meeting current design criteria of NMFS;
2. Installation of pre-engineered metal buildings to be used as a sorting facility, spawning shelter, and incubation building;
3. Construction of six rectangular concrete dual-use ponds in the southern end of the existing 9-acre rearing pond;
4. Construction of 30 concrete rearing ponds will be constructed north of the dual-use ponds;
5. Replacement of the existing above-grade supply line from the main (spring);
6. Construction of a new water intake structure in the Columbia River to supply additional river water to the system;
7. Installation of a new groundwater well;
8. Road improvements to the new rearing ponds;
9. Installation of 4 bio-infiltration swales for stormwater runoff collection and treatment;
10. Construction of a new wastewater treatment pond;
11. Installation of a new on-site septic system to treat sewage from the new facilities.

For additional upriver bright rearing and acclimation, acclimation facilities will be constructed near the Yakima River at the I-182 site. New facilities will include:

1. Concrete dual-use ponds;
2. A tee-screen water intake constructed in the Yakima River;
3. A pump station on shore;
4. A concrete fish ladder;
5. Gravel road surfacing of an existing dirt road; and
6. A 2-cell settling pond designed to meet the water quality standards for effluent discharge.

Existing facilities at the Little White Salmon National Fish Hatchery will also be used for acclimation and release of upriver brights. In addition, there will be a reduction of tule production and release as upriver bright production increases.

A 10-year research, monitoring and evaluation program will be implemented to determine if production goal are being met and to monitor the effects of implementation of the proposed JDM program modifications on ESA-listed species.

In accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act regulations [Federal Register 40 CFR 1508.9(a)], a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared and release for public review in March 2013. Subsequent to that review, changes were made to the water in-take structure at the RSH and more details of the I-182 design were made available. For that reason the original Draft EA was updated and the revised version is being made available for an additional 15-day public review period. At the end of the 15-day public comment period, the Corps will consider all comments received and make a determination of the significance of impacts resulting from the proposed action.

**Environmental Document:** A revised draft Environmental Assessment addressing the impacts associated with the activity is available on the Corps' Web site:

<http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/Media/Announcements.aspx>

**Additional Information and Comments:** Direct questions or comments regarding the draft EA to Carolyn Schneider, [Carolyn.B.Schneider@usace.army.mil](mailto:Carolyn.B.Schneider@usace.army.mil), by telephone: 541-298-6699, or to the address below. Mailed comments must be postmarked on or before the above closing date.

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In your response, please refer to the above public notice number, title, and date. A "no comment" response will be assumed if no response is received prior to or postmarked by the above closing date.