



Environmental Impact Statement P.O. Box 2870, Portland, OR 97208-2870 1-800-290-5033

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

IN REPLY REFER TO: CRSO-EIS

30 SEP 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Northwestern Division, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) (collectively, the Agencies), are serving as co-leads in preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) on Columbia River System operations and configurations for 14 federal projects in the interior Columbia basin. The Agencies are requesting your assistance in gathering information that will help define the issues, concerns, and the scope of alternatives to be addressed in the EIS. Information will be gathered from interested parties during the scoping period beginning September 30, 2016 and ending January 17, 2016.

The EIS will evaluate and update the Agencies' approach for long-term system operations and configuration through the analysis of different alternatives to current operations and maintenance; including changes to flood risk management, navigation, hydropower, irrigation, fish and wildlife conservation, recreation and municipal and industrial water supply. The Agencies will also analyze potential effects on species, including those listed under the Endangered Species Act, cultural resources, tribal resources, and other social and natural resources. This EIS will be used to select a preferred alternative, which will be adopted by the Agencies in order to operate and maintain the Columbia River System.

The EIS evaluation area under consideration includes 14 federal multiple purpose dams and related facilities, operated as a coordinated system in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. Congress authorized the Corps to construct, operate, and maintain 12 of these projects for flood risk management, navigation, power generation, fish and wildlife conservation, recreation, and municipal and industrial water supply purposes. The Corps' projects that will be addressed in this EIS include Libby, Albeni Falls, Dworshak, Chief Joseph, Lower Granite, Little Goose, Lower Monumental, Ice Harbor, McNary, John Day, The Dalles, and Bonneville. Congress authorized Reclamation to construct, operate, and maintain two of these projects for purposes of irrigation, flood risk management, power generation, and navigation. Reclamation projects include Hungry Horse and Grand Coulee. BPA is responsible for marketing and transmitting the power generated by these dams. Together, the Agencies are responsible for managing the system for all of these various purposes.

During the preparation of the EIS, the Agencies will be identifying potential alternatives that best meet our responsibilities for providing for authorized purposes while minimizing or eliminating environmental impacts and meeting all federal statutory and regulatory requirements. The Agencies plan to identify a preferred alternative in the draft EIS. The Agencies will evaluate a range of alternatives in the EIS, including a no-action alternative

(current system operations and configuration). Other alternatives will be developed through the scoping period based on public input and the Agencies' expertise, and will likely include an array of alternatives for different system operations and additional structural modifications to existing projects to improve fish passage, including breaching one or more dams.

The EIS will also identify measures to avoid, offset, or minimize impacts to resources affected by system operations and configuration, where feasible. For instance, non-operational mitigation measures to address impacts to the fish resources, such as habitat actions in the tributaries and estuary, avian predation management actions, and conservation and safety net hatcheries, may be proposed.

The Agencies welcome your comments, suggestions and information that may inform the scope of issues, potential effects, and range of alternatives that should be evaluated in the EIS. Letters of comment or inquiry can be submitted to comment@crso.info, or addressed to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Northwestern Division, Attn: CRSO EIS, P.O. Box 2870, Portland, Ore. 97208-2870. Comments may also be submitted at public scoping meetings to be conducted by the Agencies as follows:

Week of October 24th

- Monday, October 24, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Wenatchee Community Center, 504 S. Chelan Ave., Wenatchee, WA.
- Tuesday, October 25, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., The Town of Coulee Dam, City Hall, 300 Lincoln Ave., Coulee Dam, WA.
- Wednesday, October 26, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Priest River Community Center, 5399 Hwy 2, Priest River, ID.
- Thursday, October 27, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Kootenai River Inn Casino & Spa, 7169 Plaza St., Bonners Ferry, ID.

Week of October 30th

- Tuesday, November 1, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Red Lion Hotel Kalispell, 20 North Main St., Kalispell, MT.
- Wednesday, November 2, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., City of Libby City Hall, 952 E. Spruce St., Libby, MT.
- Thursday, November 3, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Hilton Garden Inn Missoula, 3720 N. Reserve St., Missoula, MT.

Week of November 14th

- Monday, November 14, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., The Historic Davenport Hotel, 10 South Post Street, Spokane, WA.
- Wednesday, November 16, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Red Lion Hotel Lewiston, Seaport Room, 621 21st St., Lewiston, ID.
- Thursday, November 17, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Courtyard Walla Walla, The Blues Room, 550 West Rose St., Walla Walla, WA.

Week of November 28th

- Tuesday, November 29, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., The Grove Hotel, 245 S. Capital Blvd., Boise, ID.
- Thursday, December 1, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Town Hall, Great Room, 1119 8th Ave., Seattle, WA.

Week of December 5th

- Tuesday, December 6, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., The Columbia Gorge Discovery Center, River Gallery Room, 5000 Discovery Drive, The Dalles, OR.
- Wednesday, December 7, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, 777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Portland, OR.
- Thursday, December 8, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., The Loft at the Red Building, 20 Basin St., Astoria, OR.

Week of December 12th

- Tuesday, December 13, 2016, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., and 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., PST, webinar. For those that cannot participate in person, an online webinar will be provided to interested parties. The webinar will cover the material discussed in the in-person public scoping meetings. Detailed instructions on how to participate in the webinar may be found on the project website at www.crso.info.

All comments need to be submitted by January 17, 2017. Should you need additional information, do not hesitate to contact www.crso.info or call: 1-800-290-5033. Thank you for your participation. We look forward to working with you on this important effort.

On behalf of the Action Agencies,
Sincerely,



David J. Ponganis, SES
Director, Programs