



Department of Energy

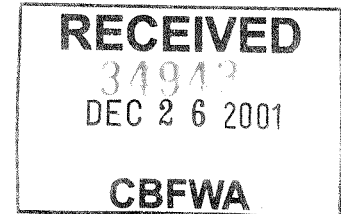
Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

November 20, 2001

In reply refer to: KEW-4

Mr. Frank L. Cassidy, Chairman
Northwest Power Planning Council
851 SW Sixth Avenue, Suite 1020
Portland, OR 97204



Dear Chairman ~~Cassidy~~:

This is to advise you that Bonneville Power Administration (Bonneville) is suspending implementation of the Arrowleaf/Methow River Conservation Project pending additional review. The Northwest Power Planning Council (Council) recommended funding this project in the High Priority solicitation on March 7, 2001, at a level of \$2.5 million. The proposal would secure a conservation easement for protection of two listed anadromous Evolutionary Significant Unit (ESU's) for Upper Columbia River Spring-Run Chinook and Upper Columbia River Steelhead habitat. As we discussed by telephone a few days ago, recent information has become available from the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP) members that would indicate that the project requires further review with respect to the biological benefits likely to be derived from the project for the above mentioned species.

Bonneville requests that the Council ask the ISRP to review their recommendation on the Arrowleaf project in light of new information about the lack of water in the Methow River. While we are aware that many streams and rivers are experiencing record low water flows this year because of the severe drought and we do not expect to see water shortages of this severity very often in the future, it is important to gain a better understanding of the specific role that protection of this habitat would play in the listed ESUs' lifecycle. We would like to ensure that the absence of water flows in the Methow River that occurred this fall are not so frequent that they will limit the benefits that the Council anticipated from the project. We will also request a review by the National Marine Fisheries Service in light of this new information.

Bonneville asks for an expeditious review of this project by the ISRP and the Council and will be happy to assist with any information that we possess that may be helpful to the review. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about this request.

Sincerely,



Sarah R. McNary
Director for Fish and Wildlife

cc:

- Mr. Brian Brown, National Marine Fisheries Service
- ✓ Dr. Brian Allee, Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority
- Mr. Doug Marker, Northwest Power Planning Council
- Mr. Dennis Beich, Director, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Mr. Tracy Lloyd, , Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Mr. Dan Budd, , Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Mr. Craig Lee, Vice President, The Trust for Public Lands
- Mr. Travis Thornton, The Trust for Public Lands