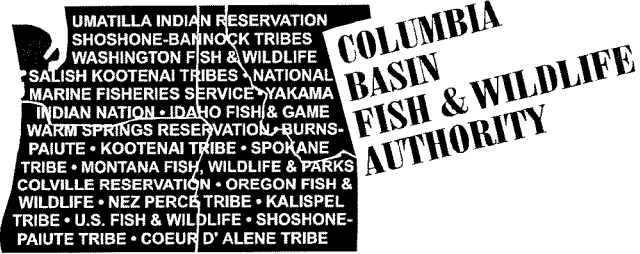


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Oct #18



October 12, 2001

Mr. Frank L. Cassidy Jr., Chair
Northwest Power Planning Council
851 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 1100
Portland, OR 97204-1348

Dear Chairman Cassidy:

This is an emergency request due to drought conditions and low water impacting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Methow Hatchery by reducing the available water to rear fish. Therefore, the fish and wildlife managers of the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (CBFWA) request that the Northwest Power Planning Council (NWPPC) recommend that the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) fund temporary acclimation ponds on the Okanagan River for the Confederated Colville Tribes (CCT). The CCT are requesting \$199, 862 to convert and operate two Oroville/Tonasket Irrigation District (OTID) sediment settling ponds for this purpose. Longer term use of these facilities will be reviewed under the Columbia Cascade Province rolling review.

Due to the drought conditions and the resulting low water year in the Methow Subbasin, the USFWS Methow Hatchery has indicated they will not be able to continue rearing the 300,000 spring and summer chinook fingerlings past the first of November, which were originally scheduled to be planted in the Okanagan River in March 2002. The fish will have to be prematurely released into the Okanagan River in November if other holding areas are not secured, which will result in extremely low survival. Two ponds have been identified that are located very close to the river. With minor engineering modifications, the two sites would provide excellent holding facilities for these fish.

The CBFWA Members recommend approval of this request by the NWPPC. The Anadromous Fish Committee and the Members Management Group reviewed this request and the CBFWA Members support the need for developing temporary acclimation ponds for the Okanagan River. Available funding for this request was identified in the anadromous fish placeholder at the Quarterly Review meeting on September 7. This request is a very urgent, time sensitive issue. CBFWA really needs your support in expediting this funding need. If you have any questions, please call CBFWA Executive Director, Brian Allee (503) 229-0191. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rodney W. Sando, Chair
Columbia Basin Fish & Wildlife Authority

cc: Doug Marker, NWPPC
Bob Austin, BPA
Fish and Wildlife Managers, Members Management Group

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