

Columbia Snake River FCRPS* BiOp



The region has shown that it can increase salmon survival and maintain the benefits of the federal dams



Supplemental BiOp issued in May 2010

The federal agencies submitted a supplemental salmon BiOp May 20, 2010. The Supplemental BiOp incorporates the Adaptive Management Implementation Plan (AMIP) and state and Tribal fish accords into the original May 2008 BiOp. It also updates the scientific basis for the BiOp. The BiOp and related documents are available at www.salmonrecovery.gov.

Court decision expected late in 2010 or early in 2011

The parties in the BiOp lawsuit have agreed to a briefing schedule that should allow Judge Redden to rule on the validity of the BiOp late in 2010 or early in 2011:

August 20: Plaintiffs file complaints.

August 27: Federal agencies file documents to complete administrative record.

October 11: Plaintiffs file motions and briefs.

November 25: Federal agencies and defendant intervenors reply.

To be announced: Oral arguments and ruling by the Court.

2010 river operations set

Judge Redden accepted the federal agencies' proposed fish operations plan for 2010. The agencies' plan differed from the BiOp in that it included a combination of spill and fish transport as recommended by the ISAB. This being a low water year, the BiOp called for eliminating summer spill and maximizing fish transport. Increasing spill in the spring could be harmful to fall chinook and steelhead. Shifting to more spring and summer spill will reduce power production and increase power rates. 2010 operations are not expected to affect navigation.

Obama Administration supports the BiOp

The May 2010 Supplemental BiOp included a review of new science by the Obama Administration. In 2009, the Obama Administration conducted an exhaustive review of the BiOp, led by NOAA Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco. The Obama Administration concluded that the BiOp exceeds the requirements of the Endangered Species Act.

PNWA supports the BiOp

PNWA is managing the Inland Ports and Navigation Group, a subset of PNWA members. IPNG is intervening in support of the federal government and urges the Court to rule in favor of this BiOp. It is the product of the best available science as determined in an unprecedented collaboration among the scientists and fish managers from the federal government, Northwest Tribes and the Northwest states, with two reviews by the Obama Administration. It is time to end the debate and get to work on fish recovery.

Environmental benefits of the dams

Hydropower is clean and renewable. Hydro produces no greenhouse gasses; it does not contribute to climate change; and it is necessary for integrating wind and solar power into the regional energy system. Coal and natural gas make up 83% of the region's non-hydro power. Removing dams will shift power production to these fossil fuels and dramatically increase carbon emissions.

Dams also provide for navigation along the 365-mile inland waterway. Barging is the cleanest and most fuel efficient mode of transportation, four times better than trucking. Breaching dams would end barge navigation and put up to 700,000 more trucks on the highway every year.

* Federal Columbia River Power System

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7/14/2010