



Nor'wester Newsletter

Issue # 592 September 30, 2016

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New FCRPS BiOp Process Begins

In May 2016, Judge Michael Simon of the United States District Court issued his [ruling](#) on the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) Biological Opinion (BiOp) lawsuit. While Judge Simon left the [current BiOp](#) in place, he found that federal agencies must produce an updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and deliver a new Biological Opinion by September 2021.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bonneville Power Administration, referred to as the Action Agencies, have issued their "[Notice of Intent](#)" (NOI) to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) on the Columbia River System operations and configurations for 14 federal projects in the interior Columbia Basin.

In this Columbia River System Operations EIS, the three agencies will present a reasonable range of alternatives for long-term system operations and evaluate the potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts on flood risk management, irrigation, power generation, navigation, fish and wildlife, cultural resources and recreation. The Action Agencies will serve as joint-lead agencies in developing the EIS.

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The public scoping period (September 30, 2016-January 17, 2017) provides anyone who is interested an opportunity to help the agencies identify issues and concerns that could be analyzed in the EIS. The agencies will host fifteen public scoping meetings throughout the Northwest, as well as two webinars.

PNWA looks forward to supporting the efforts of our federal partners as they work to update the scientific analysis and deliver a new plan to the Court. We will be coordinating with our membership to ensure the navigation community is heard during the public scoping period. Interested PNWA members should contact [Kristin Meira](#). Additional information will be provided at the upcoming [Inland Ports & Navigation Group \(IPNG\) meeting](#) on Thursday, October 13th at PNWA's [Annual Convention](#). All PNWA members are invited to attend this meeting.

For more information on this important new effort in the region, visit <http://www.crsi.info/>.

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