



Public Utility District No. 1 of Douglas County

1151 Valley Mall Parkway • East Wenatchee, Washington 98802-4497 • 509/884-7191 • FAX 509/884-0553 • www.douglaspud.org



Washington
Department of
**FISH and
WILDLIFE**

**State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife**

600 Capital Way North
Olympia, Washington 98501-1091
(360) 902-2200, TDD (800) 833-3688
Main Office Location: Natural Resources Building
1111 Washington Street Southeast
Olympia Washington 98501

Rob Jones
NMFS Recovery Division
National Marine Fisheries Service
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd., Suite 1100
Portland, OR 97232

June 12, 2013

Regarding: Wells Hatchery Summer Chinook HGMP

Dear Rob:

Public Utility District No. 1 of Douglas County (Douglas PUD) and the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) are pleased to submit to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) the attached final Hatchery and Genetic Management Plan (HGMP) for the Wells Hatchery Summer Chinook Program. Douglas PUD is the owner and funding entity of the program. The WDFW is the current operator of the hatchery and associated monitoring and evaluation program.

Since October 22, 2003, Douglas PUD and WDFW have been operating the Wells Hatchery summer Chinook program as co-permittees under permit No. 1347. The ten-year term of permit No. 1347 expires on October 22, 2013. In May 2013, Douglas PUD received a formal request from NMFS to submit a new HGMP for the Wells Hatchery summer Chinook program. Since late 2012 Douglas PUD, as the lead entity for this HGMP, has been working closely with the Wells HCP Hatchery Committee (HCP HC) to develop a Wells summer Chinook hatchery program that will adhere to the guidance provided by the Hatchery Scientific Review Group and meet the mitigation obligations for inundation losses at the Wells Hydroelectric Project.

In response to NMFS's recent request to submit an updated HGMP and pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act and 50 C.F.R. Parts 222-226, Douglas PUD and WDFW hereby submit this letter and the enclosed HGMP to NMFS as an application for a new or amended Section 10 permit to span a new 10-year period starting in October 2013. It is requested that NMFS issue the permit to Douglas PUD and WDFW as co-permittees to the extent of their respective roles as explained in detail within the HGMP.

The Wells Hatchery Summer Chinook HGMP was developed and approved by members of the Wells HCP HC. Members of the HCP HC include the NMFS, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, WDFW, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, and Douglas PUD.

The goal of the program is to mitigate for the loss of summer Chinook salmon adults and fishing opportunity (harvest) that would have been available absent the inundation of the Columbia River upstream of the Wells Project. The Wells Hatchery summer Chinook program is a segregated program: juveniles are released downstream of Wells Dam through the outfall channel and the returning adults are collected via the hatchery outfall channel trap and ladder traps at Wells Dam to minimize the number of adult Wells Hatchery summer Chinook that have an opportunity to interact with naturally produced Chinook upstream of Wells Dam. To facilitate the return of adults to the hatchery outfall, fish are spawned, incubated, reared, acclimated and released from Wells Hatchery directly into the Columbia River downstream of Wells Dam. The current production level for the program is 320,000 yearling summer Chinook and 484,000 subyearling summer Chinook. This segregated hatchery strategy has been successfully implemented for several decades at the Wells Hatchery, resulting in minimal contact between Wells Hatchery Chinook and natural spawning populations of anadromous Chinook and steelhead. Stray rates of Wells Hatchery summer Chinook into tributaries are below the thresholds established by the Hatchery Scientific Review Group (HSRG) and below the levels established by the ESA section 10 permit issued by the NMFS for this program.

Roles and responsibilities for the program are as follows: The HCP HC is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the hatchery program and associated monitoring and evaluation studies. Douglas PUD funds facility improvements, operation of and changes to the artificial production programs, and the monitoring and evaluation program. WDFW, Douglas PUD's current designated agent, is charged with implementing the monitoring and evaluation studies and operating the hatchery facilities at the direction of Douglas PUD.

If you have any questions regarding the Wells Hatchery Summer Chinook HGMP or the operation of the Wells Hatchery, please feel free to contact Greg Mackey at (509) 881-2489.

Sincerely,



Shane Bickford
Natural Resources Supervisor
Douglas PUD



Kelly Cunningham
Deputy Assistant Director
Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

Enclosures: (1) Hatchery and Genetic Management Plan (HGMP) – Wells Hatchery Summer Chinook Program.

Copy: Bob Turner – NMFS
Mike Schiewe – HCP Hatchery Committee Chairman
HCP Hatchery Committee Members
Jeff Korth – WDFW
Jason Wahls - WDFW