



The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

P.O. Box 150, Nespelem, WA 99155

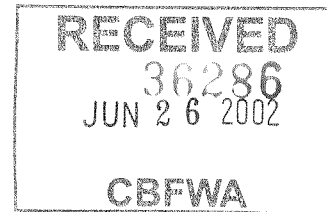
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June 20, 2002

Mr. Larry Cassidy, Jr., Chair
Northwest Power Planning Council
851 S.W. 6th Avenue, Suite 1100
Portland, Oregon 97204



Dear Mr. Cassidy,

The Confederated Colville Tribes submitted a number of proposals in the Columbia Cascade Provincial Review to restore habitat and rebuild fish and wildlife resources and tribal trust fisheries in the Okanogan subbasin. Two of those proposals, #29042 – Selective Fish Collection and Harvesting Gear and #29050 – Phase I Okanogan River Spring Chinook Production, recently received “Not Fundable” recommendations from the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP). The Tribes request that the Council maintain these two proposals in its priority list for the Columbia Cascade Province and consider a favorable recommendation for funding to the Bonneville Power Administration.

The ISRP’s “Not Fundable” recommendations for these two projects were based on their finding that neither project had a sufficiently detailed plan upon which to base technical and scientific comments. The Tribes agree with this conclusion. However, an early task in each proposal was to develop the necessary detailed plans upon which scientific review could be conducted. The Colville Tribes do not have the monetary resources and staffing to prepare such detailed research plans and hatchery master plans prior to receiving Fish & Wildlife Program funds. These two proposals, describing reintroduction of spring Chinook into the Okanogan River and testing of live-capture, selective fishing gear, contain the steps necessary to promptly formulate the needed plans.

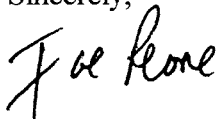
The development of selective fishing gear is critical to the entire future of anadromous fisheries management in the Columbia Cascade Province. Without selective fishing capability, the Colville Tribes will be unable to rebuild even minimal ceremonial and subsistence fisheries, and unable to adequately manage the existing and proposed artificial production programs in the province consistent with recovery of endangered species. We also expect that the knowledge gained from our research would have potential for application elsewhere in the Columbia Basin. The Tribes have requested funding through proposal #29042 to develop a detailed research plan that would undergo scientific and regulatory review and approval prior to implementation. We are confident the concerns of the ISRP will be addressed with formulation and review of the research plan.

The Colville Tribes have established reintroduction of spring Chinook into the Okanogan River as a high management priority. These Chinook are of paramount importance to the Tribes’ future ceremonial and subsistence fisheries as they were historically to our culture. The Tribes also believe that eventually a spring Chinook program in the Okanogan River could contribute

significantly to the recovery of the endangered stock. Proposal #29050 describes a modest, very cost-effective production program based on using existing, unused hatchery and acclimation facilities. With Fish & Wildlife Program funding, the Tribes proposed to follow the Council's planning process in developing a detailed Master Plan, the document we believe should be the basis for scientific review. Development of a master plan for this program is also consistent with the Council's approval of \$118,676 to acclimate and release 300,000 spring Chinook in the Okanogan River in 2002 (Doug Marker letter of October 22, 2001 to Sarah McNary). We are currently drafting a comprehensive Okanogan River Spring Chinook Hatchery & Genetic Management Plan that will facilitate program review and master plan development.

The Colville Tribes are seeking the opportunity to prepare the plans deemed necessary by the ISRP and Council processes. We are confident the legal, policy, and scientific basis for these plans will be fully evident and justified upon completion of the proposals' initial tasks. Your attention to our request would be appreciated. If I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to call me at (509)-634-2113.

Sincerely,



Joe Peone, Director
Fish and Wildlife Department
Confederated Colville Tribes

Cc:

Bob Lohn, John Palensky, Rob Jones, Larry Rutter – NMFS
Jeff Koenings, Bill Tweit, Joe Foster, Heather Bartlett – WDFW
Anne Badgely, Bill Shake, Tim Roth – USFWS
Tom Karier, Doug Marker, Mark Fritsch – NWPPC
Ron Sando – CBFWA
Alex Smith, Sarah McNary, Bob Austin - BPA