



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

Federal Support for the Phase 2 Implementation Plan: Testing Feasibility of Salmon Reintroduction in the Upper Columbia River Basin Programmatic Environmental Assessment

Finding of No Significant Impact

Upper Columbia River Basin in Washington and Idaho

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Columbia-Pacific Northwest Region
CPN-EA-2024-02**

Introduction

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has prepared this Finding of No Significant Impact to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, 42 U.S. Code 4321 *et seq.*) and the Department of the Interior’s regulations and procedures implementing NEPA at 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 46 and Part 516 of the Departmental Manual. Reclamation has also complied with the regulations codified at 40 CFR 1500–1508. This document briefly describes the Proposed Action, other alternatives considered, the public involvement processes, consultation and coordination activities, and Reclamation’s findings. The Final Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for Federal Support for the Phase 2 Implementation Plan (P2IP): Testing Feasibility of Salmon Reintroduction in the Upper Columbia River Basin fully documents the analyses of the potential environmental effects of implementing the Proposed Action.

Background

Reclamation, Bonneville Power Administration (Bonneville), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, collectively the “Co-lead Agencies,” prepared a PEA to analyze the effects of proposed

federal actions to support the P2IP: Testing Feasibility of Reintroducing Salmon in the Upper Columbia River Basin. The P2IP proposal was brought forward by the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CTCR), Spokane Tribe of Indians (STOI), and Coeur d'Alene Tribe (CDAT), through and with the assistance of the Upper Columbia United Tribes, collectively the "Project Proponents." The federal support for the P2IP activities analyzed in the PEA includes federal funding, permitting actions, and supplying non-listed stocks of salmon for study purposes. The P2IP includes three categories of activities that the federal actions would support:

- Juvenile and adult salmon research studies¹.
- Development of fish-holding, rearing, and acclimation facilities.
- Development and testing of interim upstream and downstream fish passage facilities.

The Project Proponents are currently implementing P2IP components already approved or permitted by the appropriate agency or agencies. These activities are expected to continue under the previous environmental compliance unless changes are identified in the PEA.

Location

The geographic scope of P2IP study activities covers the historical range of anadromy² in the Upper Columbia River Basin within the United States, defined as the Columbia River upstream of Beebe Bridge (about 12 miles downstream of Wells Dam) and all major tributaries upstream of Chief Joseph Dam in the United States. The juvenile and adult salmon studies would also use already permitted programs at existing facilities (for example, hatcheries and fishways at downstream dams), passive integrated transponder antennae, and telemetry systems (acoustic or radio tag receivers).

Purpose and Need

The Co-lead Agencies developed the PEA to evaluate the prospective environmental effects of federal actions to support the P2IP in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and authorities.

The P2IP entails testing the feasibility of restoring salmon in the Upper Columbia River Basin upstream of Chief Joseph Dam, Grand Coulee Dam, and Spokane River dams. In September 2023, the CTCR, STOI, CDAT, and federal government signed a P2IP Agreement to resolve pending litigation and pursue a proactive, collaborative, and science-based approach to implementing the P2IP. The P2IP Agreement outlines funding and implementation commitments through the year 2043, including the following:

¹ References to salmon in descriptions of P2IP activities that are funded under the September 20, 2023, Memorandum of Understanding and Mediated Settlement Agreement (P2IP Agreement) are limited to salmon that are neither federally listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as threatened or endangered nor a proposed species for listing under the ESA, whether or not specifically stated.

² Anadromous fish are those that spawn in fresh water, migrate to the ocean to forage and mature, and return to the fresh water to spawn, and begin the cycle again. Historically, the Upper Columbia River Basin supported a range of anadromous fish species, including Chinook, coho, sockeye, and pink salmon; pacific lamprey; and steelhead. Access to the habitats in the Upper Columbia River Basin for these anadromous fish was eliminated by dam construction over the last century.

- Bonneville will provide certain funding for the implementation of the P2IP studies for reintroducing specific non-federally protected salmonid stocks above Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee dams in the Upper Columbia River Basin consistent with the Administrator’s settlement authority described under 16 U.S. Code 832a(f).
- Consistent with the P2IP Agreement, Reclamation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will work with the Project Proponents and Bonneville to identify additional funding needs for the implementation of the P2IP and seek additional funding, as necessary and appropriate, to ensure full funding of P2IP activities during the 20-year implementation period.
- The Project Proponents may use existing hatchery facilities for activities related to P2IP implementation.
- The Co-lead Agencies will use all appropriate legal authorities to fund, support, and implement the agreement.
- The USFWS may provide surplus fertilized eggs and juvenile and adult salmon of non-listed stocks from federal hatchery facilities to support the study and testing of reintroduction.

The P2IP Agreement further establishes a mutual understanding that the parties to the agreement do not intend for P2IP implementation to require any material changes in the operation and maintenance of any Columbia River System (CRS) dams or reservoirs. If material operations and maintenance changes were proposed, they could be subject to the completion of requisite compliance. The P2IP Agreement also “does not alter the Federal agencies’ obligations under the court-approved management agreements or other court orders entered in *United States v. Oregon*, 68-cv-513-MO (D. Or.).”

In meeting the need for action, the federal government seeks to achieve the following purposes:

- Support efforts to study and test the feasibility of reintroducing specific non-federally protected salmonid stocks above Chief Joseph Dam, Grand Coulee Dam, and Avista Corporation’s Spokane River dams in the Upper Columbia River Basin consistent with the P2IP Agreement.
- Continue to provide adequate, efficient, economical, and reliable power supply.
- Continue to deliver reliable water supplies, manage flood risk, provide reliable navigation, and support recreational opportunities.
- Minimize environmental impacts.

Alternatives

The PEA evaluated the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action. The alternatives were developed based on the purpose and need, the P2IP study plan, and the issues raised during internal and external scoping efforts. The PEA did not consider other alternatives, such as more federal support than the No Action Alternative but less than the Proposed Action. This is because such alternatives would not yield meaningfully different effects to inform decision-making.

No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative represents the continuation of ongoing P2IP activities by the Project Proponents; these activities have been partially funded by the Co-lead Agencies. Where required, the Co-lead Agencies have already completed environmental compliance for the various study activities associated with the P2IP, including issuing the required permits. The No Action Alternative provided the basis for comparison with the Proposed Action. The ongoing P2IP activities include collecting and transporting eggs and juvenile and adult salmon from existing hatcheries; fish rearing at existing hatcheries, net pens, and acclimation sites; tagging and releasing juvenile and adult salmon; operating and maintaining previously installed P2IP receivers; and monitoring released salmon. Under the No Action Alternative, the federal actions to support the P2IP as described in the Proposed Action would not occur. Current P2IP activities would continue only on an ad hoc basis.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would provide federal funding and authorizations to support a 20-year study to test the feasibility of reintroducing salmon in the blocked area³ through juvenile and adult salmon research studies; the development and operation of fish-holding, rearing, and acclimation facilities; and the development, testing, and operation of interim fish passage systems.

Federal actions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Providing federal funding to support P2IP activities, within respective agency authorities, throughout the Study Area⁴.
- Reviewing, approving, and issuing permits for actions including, but not limited to, data collection, installation of equipment, or construction of facilities (for example, interim passage and/or rearing facilities) on federally managed lands and facilities.
- Providing eggs and juvenile and adult salmon from existing hatcheries and non-hatchery collection actions.
- Participating in the planning, design, development, implementation, feasibility assessments, and operation of interim passage facilities and guidance structures.

The federal actions would support the implementation of the P2IP to test key biological assumptions from the Phase 1 report that are considered to critically influence the success of the reintroduction effort. The three categories of P2IP activities—research studies, salmon-rearing facilities, and interim fish passage—are summarized in the Final PEA, Section 2.3.3, and fully described in the Final PEA, Appendices A, B, and C. Additionally, environmental protection

³ With the construction of Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee dams on the Upper Columbia River, and Little Falls, Long Lake, and Nine Mile dams on the Spokane River, anadromous salmon passage was halted, creating what is referred to as the “blocked area.”

⁴ The geographic scope of P2IP study activities covers the historical range of anadromy in the Upper Columbia River Basin within the United States, defined as the Columbia River upstream of Beebe Bridge (about 12 miles downstream of Wells Dam) and all major tributaries upstream of Chief Joseph Dam in the United States.

measures (EPMs) have been incorporated into the Proposed Action to minimize the environmental effects of study activities (Final PEA, Appendix F).

The Final PEA considered a suite of similar activities that share a common purpose of testing the feasibility of the reintroduction of salmon in the Upper Columbia River Basin over the next 20 years. The PEA evaluated actions including, but not limited to, distribution of federal funding, operation and maintenance of P2IP equipment and facilities, and site-specific P2IP activities, where the details are currently available. The Co-lead Agency with jurisdiction will evaluate P2IP activities that require site-specific engineering design in future environmental compliance documentation. Programmatically addressing these activities establishes the broad-based analysis of environmental characteristics and impacts, constraints, requirements, and processes for activities located on federally managed lands or at federal facilities, or that use federal funds.

Table 1 briefly describes the P2IP activities by category and identifies whether the activity has been fully evaluated in the PEA or would need additional environmental compliance evaluation.

Table 1. P2IP Activities and Environmental Compliance Process

P2IP Activities	PEA	Future Environmental Compliance
Research Activities		
Acquisition and collection of eggs, juveniles, and adult salmon	X	
Salmon marking (tagging)	X	
Salmon release	X	
Spawning and carcass surveys	X	
Telemetry receiver installation/operations and maintenance	X	
Rearing Activities		
Salmon incubation, early rearing, and acclimation	X	
Data collection for proposed acclimation facility design	X	
Tributary streamside incubation boxes	X	
Acclimation facility construction		X
Interim Passage		
Adult trap and transport from existing facilities	X	
Data collection for proposed interim passage design	X	
Construction and testing of interim upstream and downstream passage		X

Summary of Environmental Effects

The following discussion summarizes the effects the Proposed Action would have on each resource category analyzed in the Final PEA. For a full analysis and explanation of how each resource was evaluated, readers may reference Chapter 3 – *Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences* in the Final EA.

Resource Topic	Summary of Effects
Air Quality	<p>Under the Proposed Action, P2IP activities, including research, facility updates, and interim fish passage, would increase air pollutant emissions. Emission sources would include gasoline-fueled vehicles, trucks, motorboats, and non-road heavy equipment used for transportation, facility installation, and maintenance. Estimated annual emissions are based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100,000 miles traveled by passenger vehicles• 66,250 miles traveled by hatchery trucks• 3,120 gallons of fuel used by motorboats <p>Total emissions from these activities would remain minimal, contributing less than 1 percent of highway and off-highway vehicle emissions in the Study Area counties. While emissions would be higher than under the No Action Alternative, they would be temporary, minor, and dispersed, resulting in localized, short-term impacts. The Proposed Action would not lead to nonattainment status for any portion of the analysis area (Final PEA, Section 3.4).</p>
Water Quality	<p>While the Proposed Action would introduce localized and temporary changes to water quality, existing local, state, and federal regulations and EPMs would ensure that impacts remain minor. Research studies, including trap and transport activities, would be expected to increase salmon populations in the blocked area over time. However, introducing additional fish over 20 years would not have significant positive or negative effects on water quality due to the relatively low numbers of salmon released.</p> <p>Salmon production at existing hatcheries would be expected to have minor long-term impacts on water quality; however, these impacts would be regulated under existing permits. Expanding existing net pen sites and adding a new site would have minor effects on water quality due to implementation of the EPMs to minimize impacts, including efficient feeding, regular maintenance, and frequent carcass removal. Ground-disturbing activities to inform siting and design of land-based acclimation and interim passage, such as geotechnical boreholes, trenches, and groundwater monitoring wells, could temporarily impact water quality by increasing sediment runoff and nutrient input into adjacent waterbodies. Implementing EPMs, including the development of stormwater pollution prevention plans, if required; silt fencing; straw mulch; spill containment; and designated refueling areas, would minimize impacts from runoff (Final PEA, Section 3.5).</p>

Resource Topic	Summary of Effects
Water Resources	Under the Proposed Action, P2IP activities to support salmon rearing and trap and transport operations could result in unmeasurable to small increases in groundwater and surface water use. However, the impacts on resources reliant on this water supply would be unmeasurable relative to overall water supplies within the Upper Columbia River Basin. The remaining P2IP activities, including operation and maintenance of research equipment, salmon releases, and net pen operations, do not propose changes to water uses or availability within the Study Area; therefore, they would not impact water supplies or availability (Final PEA, Table 3-1).
Upper Columbia River Dam Operations	The P2IP proposal would not result in material changes to CRS operations and maintenance activities. The proposed P2IP activities would be implemented within the operational limitations of management plans for the Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph dams and their associated facilities. No effects on dam operations or irrigation water deliveries would be expected to result from the implementation of P2IP activities (Final PEA, Table 3-1).
Spokane River Dam Operations	The Proposed Action does not include operational changes to the Avista facilities within the Study Area. P2IP activities are anticipated to be implemented within the current operational bounds described within Federal Energy Regulatory Commission licensing or the current operations of Little Falls Dam. Implementing the Proposed Action would not affect the Avista dam operations and maintenance. In coordination with Avista, additional site-specific proposals at the Spokane River Dams would be addressed through future environmental compliance processes, if necessary (Final PEA, Table 3-1).
Geology and Soils	Under the Proposed Action, impacts on geology or soil resources would be minor and temporary because there would be limited ground-disturbing activities, and EPMs VW-1 and WQ-1 would be implemented. Non-ground-disturbing activities would include acquiring, transporting, and releasing salmon; marking fish; monitoring salmon movements; using existing facilities and in-water equipment; adult salmon trapping and transport; and surveying carcasses. Ground-disturbing activities would include the installation of land-based research equipment and data collection to inform the engineering design of acclimation facilities and interim passage. Geotechnical testing and studies could occur in defined areas at each land-based acclimation site and dam. The Project Proponents and contractors would apply the appropriate standards to geotechnical investigations that the land management agency requires when collecting geotechnical data on federally managed lands. Minor beneficial effects on soils would be expected over the long term with the addition of marine-derived nutrients from the adult salmon released (Final PEA, Table 3-1).

Resource Topic	Summary of Effects
Biological Resources	<p>The Proposed Action would outplant salmon into the blocked area, with short-term localized impacts on resident fish populations and habitat. EPMs would minimize the effects on biological resources. There would be increased competition for food and habitat between resident fish and released salmon at release sites, but this would diminish as fish disperse. Increased salmon populations would provide additional prey for predatory fish. Over time, increased salmon numbers would enhance the ecosystem, providing marine-derived nutrients and supporting resident fish populations (Final PEA, Section 3.6).</p>
Transportation	<p>The Proposed Action does not propose changes to the transportation system, land access, service level, or uses. Though study activities could increase road use during short periods and at low frequencies for trap and transport activities and general study-related travel each year, the overall effect on transportation would be unmeasurable through the study timeline (Final PEA, Table 3-1).</p>
Cultural Resources	<p>The Proposed Action would have minimal to no long-term impacts on sacred sites, traditional cultural places, archaeological resources, and built-environment structures. Compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act and consultation with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Office and Tribal and preservation agencies would ensure any potential impacts from P2IP activities are identified, minimized, or mitigated while promoting the cultural and ecological benefits of salmon reintroduction studies (Final PEA, Section 3.7).</p>
Tribal Interests	<p>The Proposed Action would support Tribal economic, cultural, and spiritual activities by studying the feasibility of salmon reintroduction in the blocked area. Salmon reintroduction would have long-term beneficial effects on Tribal traditions and practices. Minor impacts could occur when P2IP activities occur near areas of Tribal importance, but these impacts are expected to be minimal and temporary (Final PEA, Section 3.8).</p>
Socioeconomics	<p>The Proposed Action would have regional economic benefits through job creation and indirect spending through 2043. Direct project spending would support additional local, county, and state tax contributions. The Proposed Action would enhance the nonmarket value of salmon by reintroducing salmon to the blocked area through research studies, which would benefit local and Tribal communities over the long term (Final PEA, Section 3.9).</p>

Resource Topic	Summary of Effects
Visual Resources	<p>The Proposed Action would result in minor visual impacts, with short-term disturbances from data collection and temporary structures. Long-term changes, such as net pens and telemetry receivers, would introduce small, low-contrast structures that blend into existing developed areas, ensuring minimal impact on visual resources. Telemetry receivers and screw traps would create a minor, long-term visual contrast by adding small structures along shorelines and waterbodies. Installation of research equipment, including posts, job boxes, solar panels, and buoys, would be dispersed throughout the Study Area and visible only at short distances. Data collection activities to inform the design of land-based acclimation and interim passage facilities could create short-term, minor visual changes at short distances (Final PEA, Section 3.10).</p>
Indian Trust Assets	<p>Potential impacts on Indian trust assets are most likely where lands are owned by Tribes or managed by federal agencies, including 19 P2IP locations. Of these 19 locations, Tribes own or manage 12, and 7 are owned and managed by federal agencies. The Proposed Action is not expected to have long-term impacts on Indian trust assets since P2IP activities align with existing uses and would be coordinated with and implemented by the Tribes (Final PEA, Section 3.11).</p>
Land Use and Realty	<p>The Proposed Action would not change land use designations in the P2IP Study Area over the long term. Activities such as salmon acquisition, rearing, marking, release, and interim passage would have no impact on existing land uses. During the 20-year research effort, any land use authorizations needed for salmon reintroduction studies would be evaluated and issued by the appropriate federal agencies, as required (Final PEA, Table 3-1).</p>
Floodplains and Wetlands	<p>The Proposed Action would have minor, short-term effects on wetlands and floodplains, with no material changes to CRS operations. Activities such as salmon collection, rearing, transport, and release would not involve ground disturbance or flow alterations, resulting in no impact on wetlands or floodplains. Ground-disturbing activities, including the installation of telemetry receivers, passive integrated transponder tag arrays, and streamside incubation boxes, could occur near streams and rivers, placing them within floodplains. However, these facilities would have small footprints, retain pervious surfaces, and involve non-consumptive water use, ensuring little to no impact on local hydrology. To minimize impacts, EPMs VW-1 and VW-2 and permitting requirements would be followed (Final PEA, Table 3-1).</p>
Utilities	<p>The proposed P2IP activities would not interfere with existing water and wastewater pipelines, natural gas pipelines, or fiber-optic cables; therefore, no impacts on utility systems through the long-term time frame would be expected under the Proposed Action (Final PEA, Table 3-1).</p>

Consultation, Coordination, and Public Involvement

Tribal Consultation and Coordination

Executive Order 13175 requires federal agencies to coordinate and consult on a government-to-government basis with sovereign Native American Tribal governments whose interests may be directly and substantially affected by activities on federally-administered lands. Coordination and consultation with Native American Tribes are important components of the NEPA scoping process.

The Co-lead Agencies have worked closely with the Project Proponents on development of the PEA. P2IP coordination meetings took place with the entire project team, including the Project Proponents and Co-lead Agencies. As needed, weekly meetings were hosted to work on specific components of the PEA. The Co-lead Agencies will continue to coordinate with the Project Proponents through the future environmental compliance processes.

On February 9, 2024, Reclamation sent letters to notify the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Nez Perce Tribe, Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, CTCR, STOI, and CDAT of the scoping period for the PEA and the opportunity to provide comments on the P2IP to aid the Co-lead Agencies in identifying potential issues and concerns to refine the proposal.

On November 12, 2024, Reclamation sent letters on behalf of the Co-lead Agencies to notify the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Nez Perce Tribe, Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), CTCR, STOI, and CDAT of the release of the draft PEA and the opportunity to provide comments during the 30-day comment period. The Co-lead agencies held a staff-to-staff meeting with the CTUIR on April 11, 2025, as requested in their comment letter during the Draft PEA comment period. The Co-lead agencies will engage in formal government-to-government consultation as requested by the Tribes.

Regulatory Consultation

Endangered Species Act of 1973

The Co-lead Agencies initiated formal consultation with the USFWS and NMFS under Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA on November 22, 2024, with transmittal of the final biological assessment. A biological assessment amendment to clarify the Proposed Action was transmitted to the USFWS and NMFS on January 24, 2025. Pursuant to Section 7 of the ESA, as amended, the USFWS and NMFS issued biological opinions, dated February 20, 2025, which determined that the Proposed Action would not jeopardize the continued existence of the following federally listed species or adversely modify designated critical habitat: bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*), sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*), Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), and Ute ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes diluvialis*).

National Historic Preservation Act

In support of the PEA analysis, the Co-lead Agencies completed a cultural resources overview report, which details the historic properties located within 1 mile of each P2IP location, to support

the PEA analysis (Haney et al. 2024)⁵. The Co-lead Agencies will complete project-by-project National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 compliance for site-specific P2IP activities as they occur over the 20-year implementation time frame. The Co-lead Agencies also have agreed to criteria for determining the lead agency for Section 106 consultation for future projects.

For those projects that would not result in adverse effects on historic properties, even if historic properties are present, the Co-lead Agencies will fulfill their Section 106 responsibilities by preparing the documentation needed for a Finding of No Potential to Cause Effects, as described in 36 CFR 800.3(a)(1). The Co-lead Agencies anticipate applying a Finding of No Potential to Cause Effects to the following seven classes of actions: acquisition and collection of eggs, juvenile salmon, or adult salmon; interim passage as provided by trap and transport; marking (tagging) salmon; rearing salmon (not to include construction of new rearing facilities); salmon release; spawning and carcass surveys; and operation and maintenance of existing telemetry receivers.

For the other P2IP activities, if the Co-lead Agencies determine that the activities could have the potential to result in adverse effects on historic properties, then the Co-lead Agencies will consult with the appropriate state or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer and Tribes, as described in 36 CFR 800.3–800.6. This would include consultation about the area of potential effects, the level of effort to be used to identify historic properties, and the findings of effect. In some cases, the Co-lead Agencies will request to expedite consultation as described in 36 CFR 800.3(g), especially for activities that have little potential to result in adverse effects.

Public Involvement

In February 2024, the Co-lead Agencies sent letters with project information to interested parties, including Indian Tribes; members of Congress; organizations; federal, state, and local government agencies; and individuals. The letter announced two public meetings and invited comment to help in identifying any issues and concerns related to the Proposed Action. Additionally, a notice was published in the *Spokesman Review* newspaper on February 9, 2024, announcing the outreach effort and public meetings. A public meeting was held on February 27, 2024, in Grand Coulee, Washington, and on February 28, 2024, in Airway Heights, Washington. The public meetings provided opportunities for the public to interact with representatives from the Co-lead Agencies and the Project Proponents through informational stations and discussions. Reclamation has also maintained a P2IP project web page⁶ and a virtual public meeting room⁷ to share P2IP information with interested parties and stakeholders.

The public scoping comment period was scheduled for 30 days between February 9, 2024, and March 11, 2024. In response to a public request for a comment period extension, the Co-lead Agencies extended the period an additional week, to March 18, 2024. The Co-lead Agencies documented the results of the public scoping effort in a scoping report published to the Reclamation P2IP project web page.⁸ Comments received and issues identified informed the Co-

⁵ Haney, F., K. Burk-Hise, M. McKenna, S. Thiel, and K.M. Derr. 2024. Cultural Resources Overview Report for the Bureau of Reclamation P2IP EA Support Project. Prepared by Historical Research Associates with input from Westland. Portland, OR.

⁶ <https://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/p2ip/index.html>

⁷ <https://www.virtualpublicmeeting.com/p2ip-salmon-reintroduction-programmatic-ea>

⁸ https://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/p2ip/docs/2024_1022_P2IP_FinalScopingReport_508.pdf

lead Agencies' decision to prepare the PEA and were used to refine the alternatives analyzed in the PEA.

The Co-lead Agencies held a public comment period on the draft PEA for 30 days from November 14, 2024, to December 13, 2024. The Co-lead Agencies posted notifications of the draft PEA availability and 30-day comment period on the project web pages and sent notifications to interested parties and cooperating agencies. In response to a public request for a comment period extension, the Co-lead Agencies extended the period for an additional week, to December 20, 2024. Twelve parties provided comments during the comment period. Appendix G contains comments received and the Co-lead Agencies' responses.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based on the analysis of the environmental effects presented in the Final PEA and consultation with potentially affected agencies, Tribes, organizations, and the public, Reclamation concludes that implementation of the Proposed Action would not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment or natural and cultural resources. The effects of the Proposed Action would be minor, localized, and temporally limited throughout the 20-year study period. The Co-lead Agencies evaluated the impacts of the P2IP activities with consideration of EPMs (Final PEA, Appendix F) developed to minimize potential effects. The cumulative effects analyses of reasonably foreseeable actions combined with the Proposed Action concluded no significant cumulative effects would result (Final PEA, Chapter 3). The Proposed Action is consistent with all applicable federal, state, and local laws or regulations (Final PEA, Appendix D). Therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required.

After considering the environmental effects described in the Final PEA and supporting documentation, it is my decision to select the Proposed Action for implementation. The Proposed Action would best meet the purpose and need identified in the Final PEA.


Recommended:

Sarah Fesenmyer
Acting Environmental Services Manager
Columbia-Pacific Northwest Region
Bureau of Reclamation

**SARAH
FESENMAYER**
Digitally signed by
SARAH FESENMAYER
Date: 2025.04.23
09:32:10 -06'00'

Approved:

Roland Springer
Acting Regional Director
Columbia-Pacific Northwest Region
Bureau of Reclamation


Digitally signed by Roland
Springer
Date: 2025.04.24
09:36:25 -06'00'