



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Washington Fish and Wildlife Office

Central Washington Field Office

215 Melody Lane, Suite 119

Wenatchee, WA 98801

IN RESPONSE REPLY TO:

USFWS Reference: 13260-2011-I-0067

Hydrologic Unit Code: 17-02-00-18-07

Re: Formal Consultation under the Endangered Species Act,
Wells Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2149)

September 8, 2011

Kimberly D. Bose
Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, D.C. 20426

Dear Ms. Bose:

On August 5, 2011, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) notified the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) and Public Utility District No. 1 of Douglas County (Douglas PUD) that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Draft Biological Assessment (BA) for the relicensing of the Wells Hydroelectric Project (Project) did not contain the most recent information on the effects of the Project on the bull trout and its critical habitat. We also discussed how the Commission's draft BA requires a thorough analysis of the effects of the Project on bull trout critical habitat, and that this analysis must be included in the final BA.

Douglas PUD completed this requested analysis by examining the effects of the Project on the primary constituent elements (PCEs) of bull trout critical habitat in a supplemental BA filed with the Commission on August 29, 2011. The Service provided Douglas PUD with comments regarding their analysis of the PCEs through a teleconference on August 25, 2011. We have reviewed the supplemental BA and conclude it is adequate regarding the effects of the Project on the bull trout and its critical habitat.

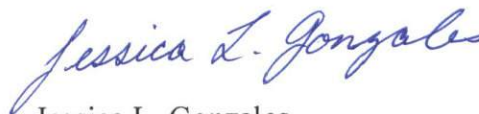
Section 7 allows the Service up to 90 calendar days to conclude formal consultation with the Commission and an additional 45 calendar days to prepare our biological opinion. We expect no undue delays regarding the issuance of our biological opinion for this relicensing and will work with Douglas PUD to ensure the timely issuance of the new license for this Project. We have assigned a log number (13410-2011-F-0090) to this consultation. Please refer to that number in future correspondences on this consultation.

Bose

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If you have questions or concerns about this consultation or the consultation process in general, please feel free to contact Steve Lewis of my staff via telephone (509/665-3508 ext. 14) or email (Stephen_Lewis@fws.gov).

Sincerely,



Jessica L. Gonzales
Assistant Project Leader

cc:

Bill Dobbins, Douglas County Public Utility District, East Wenatchee, WA
Dennis Beich, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Ephrata, WA
Bryan Nordlund, National Marine Fisheries Service, Portland, OR
Bob Rose, Yakama Nation, Yakima, WA
Bob Heinith, Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission, Portland, OR

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