

# FEDERAL COLUMBIA RIVER POWER SYSTEM BIOP



In the midst of record returns for many of the Northwest's salmon runs, NOAA Fisheries released the Supplemental Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) Biological Opinion (BiOp) in January 2014. The 2014 BiOp was the product of the best available science, as well as significant collaboration between the federal agencies, four states and sovereign Northwest tribes. The BiOp received unprecedented support in the region, was deemed scientifically sound by the Obama Administration, and helped produce record fish runs.

In May 2016, Judge Michael Simon of the United States District Court issued his ruling. 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.

## Share your views as the process begins

The federal agencies are required to explore a range of reasonable 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. As part of this process, they have scheduled fifteen meetings and two webinars to help determine the scope of the analysis. These meetings are open to the public and will be held in cities across Washington, Idaho, Montana and Oregon. River system stakeholders are strongly encouraged to attend these meetings, and to submit comment letters online. Visit <http://www.crso.info/> for the list of meetings, and submit your comment letter via email to [comment@crso.info](mailto:comment@crso.info) or by U.S. postal service to CRSO EIS, P.O. Box 2870, Portland, OR 97208-2870. Comments must be received by January 17, 2017.

## Good to know!

- River system ports, terminals, growers, and operators have strongly supported robust, balanced salmon recovery efforts that preserve the multiple uses of the river system.
- The dramatic increase in fish returns over the last ten years demonstrates the success of regional investments in fish passage, habitat, and other river improvements.
- Juvenile fish survival rates past the eight federal dams were between 95% and 98% in 2014.
- Extreme measures like dam breaching have been studied and rejected numerous times over the last twenty years. Risky approaches like reservoir pool drawdown were tested, did not yield benefits for fish, and hurt local economies.
- Navigation and hydropower are clean, efficient and economical.
- Hydropower produces no greenhouse gasses, does not contribute to climate change, and is necessary for integrating wind and solar power into the regional energy portfolio.
- The Columbia Snake River System is a 465-mile river highway that provides farmers and other producers as far as the Midwest access to international markets. 49 million tons moved on the deep draft Lower Columbia River in 2014.
- Barging along the 365-mile inland Columbia Snake River System is the cleanest and most fuel efficient mode of transportation. Breaching dams would end barging and significantly increase greenhouse gas emissions due to freight transportation.
- Over 9 million tons of cargo moved by barge in 2014. Nearly all of this cargo were U.S. products for export.
- It would have taken over 96,000 rail cars or over 370,000 semi-trucks to move the cargo that was barged in 2014.
- The Columbia Snake River System is the top wheat export gateway in the nation.
- River stakeholders will expect a full evaluation of direct, indirect and induced economic and social impacts. This includes impacted activities of ports, carriers, elevator operators, growers, and others.

