

OWNED BY THOSE WE SERVE

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Mission Statement

"The mission of Douglas Electric Cooperative, a member-owned and operated cooperative, is to provide affordable, reliable electric and other compatible services that enhance the quality of life for its members, using progressive marketing in conjunction with sound financial and management principles."

DOUGLAS
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

PNGC Power
Smart. Local. Connected.

Hydropower BiOp Approach Offers Real Hope

The current draft salmon plan from the federal action agencies was first delivered to Judge James Redden's court in late October. It is due in final form, May 5. Even before the ink was dry on this draft of the hydropower Biological Opinion (BiOp), opponents of the federal hydro system called the latest salmon plan "more of the same."

This is disingenuous, disturbing and inconsistent with the facts. The new draft BiOp significantly advances our efforts—funded by ratepayers like you—to meet the needs of wild Northwest salmon and steelhead. However, some voices from the periphery seem unable—or unwilling—to acknowledge that progress is being made.

One key difference and an important legacy of the Redden court is the fact the federal judge required the new salmon plan to be developed with much greater input from key regional shareholders: the four Northwest states, seven Indian tribes and the four responsible federal agencies.

Another important improvement is that this plan takes detailed scientific information gathered at the watershed level and applies it to the problems facing fish as they migrate to and from the Pacific Ocean. This has resulted in a new scientific road map to address the critical bottlenecks in their recovery.

This plan also guarantees that substantial project funds will be spent where needed. More than \$1.5 billion will be invested in improving already successful fish passage at dams, with survival rates expected to be in the 96 percent to 98 percent range, and in operational changes made to assist fish. Significant habitat restoration funds are provided for key tributaries, the critical Lower Columbia estuary and for new predation controls.

Current science identifies harvest levels and some hatchery practices as key barriers to recovery—in addition to hydro operations and habitat degradation.

The hydro system is critical in keeping the Northwest's carbon footprint small. It is the only clean (and renewable) backup for wind and solar energy resources. We hope the current draft hydro BiOp marks the beginning of a new regionwide discussion, where this new and independent salmon science is applied to all areas of concern uniformly, and we hope it will include decisions regarding harvest levels and hatchery practices—two critical parts of any successful salmon solution.

Best regards,

Dave Sabala
General Manager

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