



May 20, 2009

Dr. Jane Lubchenco
Undersecretary for Oceans and Atmosphere
Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Dr. Lubchenco:

PNGC Power respectfully urges the Administration to support the 2008 Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) Biological Opinion (2008 BiOp).

PNGC Power is a cooperative utility owned by its 16 member utilities. Our members are located largely in rural communities throughout Oregon, Idaho, Washington and Montana. We serve customers in seven western states. PNGC Power and its members depend heavily on the reliable and affordable power system that the FCRPS provides. As a large customer of the Bonneville Power Administration, we understand that a significant portion of our ratepayer dollars will contribute to the implementation and future success of the 2008 BiOp. It provides for extraordinary and unprecedented investment across the region to continue the path to recovery of the Northwest's 13 species of salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act.

PNGC Power is part of a broad coalition of those dependent on the FCRPS that has been deeply involved in the region-wide collaborative process that created the 2008 BiOp. It represents a new era of cooperation and collaboration across the region. Our coalition includes states, tribes, river users, power supply interests, and other stakeholders in the management of the FCRPS. We have spent nearly four years working together to create, support, and defend the 2008 BiOp.

The 2008 BiOp represents more consensus on the question of Northwest salmon and steelhead recovery than has ever existed. It uses the best available science to create its recovery plan. It includes an analysis of all the factors impeding salmon and steelhead recovery throughout their lifecycles and incorporates measures specific to each listed species. It provides for ongoing collaboration and adaptive management, ensuring incorporation of the latest scientific information and monitoring. It contains provisions to ensure that river operators meet rigorous performance standards. The 2008 BiOp is legally and scientifically sound.

Thank you for your attention to this critically important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Dan James'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Dan' being more prominent than the last name 'James'.

Dan James
Vice President of Public Affairs & Marketing
PNGC Power