

STATE OF ALASKA

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI
GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

P.O. BOX 25526
JUNEAU, AK 99802-5526
PHONE: (907) 465-4100
FAX: (907) 465-2332

April 18, 2003

Steven Wright
Administrator
Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621, R-A
Portland, OR 97208

J. William McDonald
Regional Director
Bureau of Reclamation
1150 N. Curtis Road
Boise, Idaho 83706

Brig. General David Fastabend
North Pacific Division
Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 2870
Portland, OR 97208

Don Goddard
Public Utility District No. 2 of Grant County
P.O. Box 878
Ephrata, WA 98823

Sirs:

I am writing to express the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's (ADF&G) support of System Operational Request #2003-7 and #2003-8. The ADF&G has been working cooperatively with several agencies and tribes in the Pacific Northwest with respect to research on the Columbia River Summers (Summers) and Upriver Fall Bright (Brights) chinook salmon populations. Specifically, we've funded research through the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) on the life history of the Summers, the factors affecting the stranding, and estimates of the number of stranded juvenile chinook salmon (both Summers and Brights) on the Hanford Reach. The ADF&G believes that the request to provide flows equivalent to the Biological Flow Objective (135 Kcfs from April 24 through the end of June) is justified. Further, we believe that the request to your agencies to limit flow fluctuations to those described in the SOR is reasonable to protect migrating juveniles.

The stocks affected by these operations are important to the Pacific Salmon Treaty and the ocean fisheries of Alaska, Canada and the West Coast, as well as those on the Columbia River. The recent studies of stranding in the Hanford Reach demonstrate the potential magnitude of the problem. Implementation of System Operational Requests #2003-7 and #2003-8 should reduce that magnitude. We also intend to work within the relicensing process to find other sensible means to address the problem.

Sincerely,


Kevin C. Duffy
Commissioner