UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PROGRAM PLANNING AND INTEGRATION
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

JUN 11 2014

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental review has been performed on the following action.

TITLE: Final Environmental Assessment for the Designation and Release of a Nonessential Experimental Population of Upper Columbia Spring-run Chinook Salmon in the Okanogan River Subbasin under Endangered Species Act Section 10(j)

LOCATION: The United States Portion of the Okanogan River Subbasin in Central Washington.

SUMMARY: Upper Columbia River (UCR) spring-run Chinook salmon (*Onchorhynchus tshawytscha)* is listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). National Marine Fisheries Service is proposing to designate and authorize the release of a nonessential experimental population of UCR spring-run Chinook salmon under ESA section 10(j) in the Okanogan River subbasin, and to establish a limited set of take prohibitions for the nonessential experimental population.

The Proposed Action supports the reintroduction and reestablishment of a self-sustaining population of UCR spring-run Chinook salmon in the Okanogan River subbasin, and would contribute to the recovery of UCR spring-run Chinook salmon and to the overall recovery goals provided in Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board's 2007 recovery plan for UCR spring-run Chinook salmon. The Proposed Action only modifies the ESA status of the experimental UCR spring-run Chinook salmon while in the United States portion of the Okanogan River subbasin; it has no direct relationship to any activities in the ocean, coastal habitat, or Essential Fish Habitat in inland waterways.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL:

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The environmental review process led us to conclude that this action will not have a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement was not prepared. A copy of the finding of no significant impact (FONSI), including the environmental assessment (EA), is enclosed for your information.

Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed EA/FONSI we will consider any comments submitted that would assist us in preparing future NEPA documents. Please submit any written comments to the Responsible Official named above.

Sincerely,

for Patricia A. Montanio
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure