



Department of Energy

Official File

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

Environment, Fish and Wildlife

September 4, 2012

In reply refer to: KEC-4

In reply refer to: Dave Roberts, KEWU-4

To: People Interested in the Proposed Similkameen River Land Acquisition under the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) Wildlife Mitigation Program

The Bonneville Power Administration is proposing to fund the purchase of two parcels of land by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) that are currently owned by the Trust for Public Land (TPL) totaling approximately 787 acres in Okanogan County, Washington. BPA will receive habitat unit credit from these parcels against our FCRPS wildlife mitigation responsibilities. WDFW would continue to manage these properties for fish and wildlife conservation similar to TPL's current management. BPA is sending this letter to inform nearby residents and other interested parties about these proposed land purchases and explain the purposes for them.

The funding will be provided as part of BPA's ongoing efforts to protect, mitigate, and enhance wildlife habitat as partial mitigation for the construction and operation of the Chief Joseph Dam and the Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River. Focal wildlife species that will benefit from these acquisitions include a variety of waterfowl and songbirds, upland game birds, and raptors, as well as coyote, cougar, and black bear that are also common in the area. The project also benefits bull trout.

Enclosed are maps detailing the property boundaries. BPA has prepared a memo and environmental checklist documenting that funding these purchases will be categorically excluded under the National Environmental Policy Act, and that further environmental review of this funding action is not required. This categorical exclusion was approved on September 4, 2012 and has been posted on BPA's website at:

http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/categorical_exclusions.aspx

Before funding additional management activities on the Similkameen River properties, BPA will complete further environmental review. When the transactions are complete, the WDFW will own and manage the properties to maintain important fish and wildlife habitat. Conservation easements will be placed on the properties and held by BPA to ensure that the habitat values for wildlife are protected in perpetuity. The WDFW will provide long-term stewardship for the land and will develop a new section in the Scotch Creek Management Plan to guide the protection and enhancement of habitat resources on the property.

Pending BPA's approval of the management plan, any activities that could damage habitat (such as harvesting of wood products, grazing or livestock or construction of buildings) will be prohibited from occurring on the property. There will be some interim management activities on the properties, such as fence maintenance.

If you have any questions regarding these land purchases, or would like to find out more about the pending management plan, please contact Dave Roberts, BPA Project Manager, at 503-230-4511 or daroberts@bpa.gov. You can also call toll free 800-622-4519, please refer to the Similkameen River land acquisitions.

Sincerely,

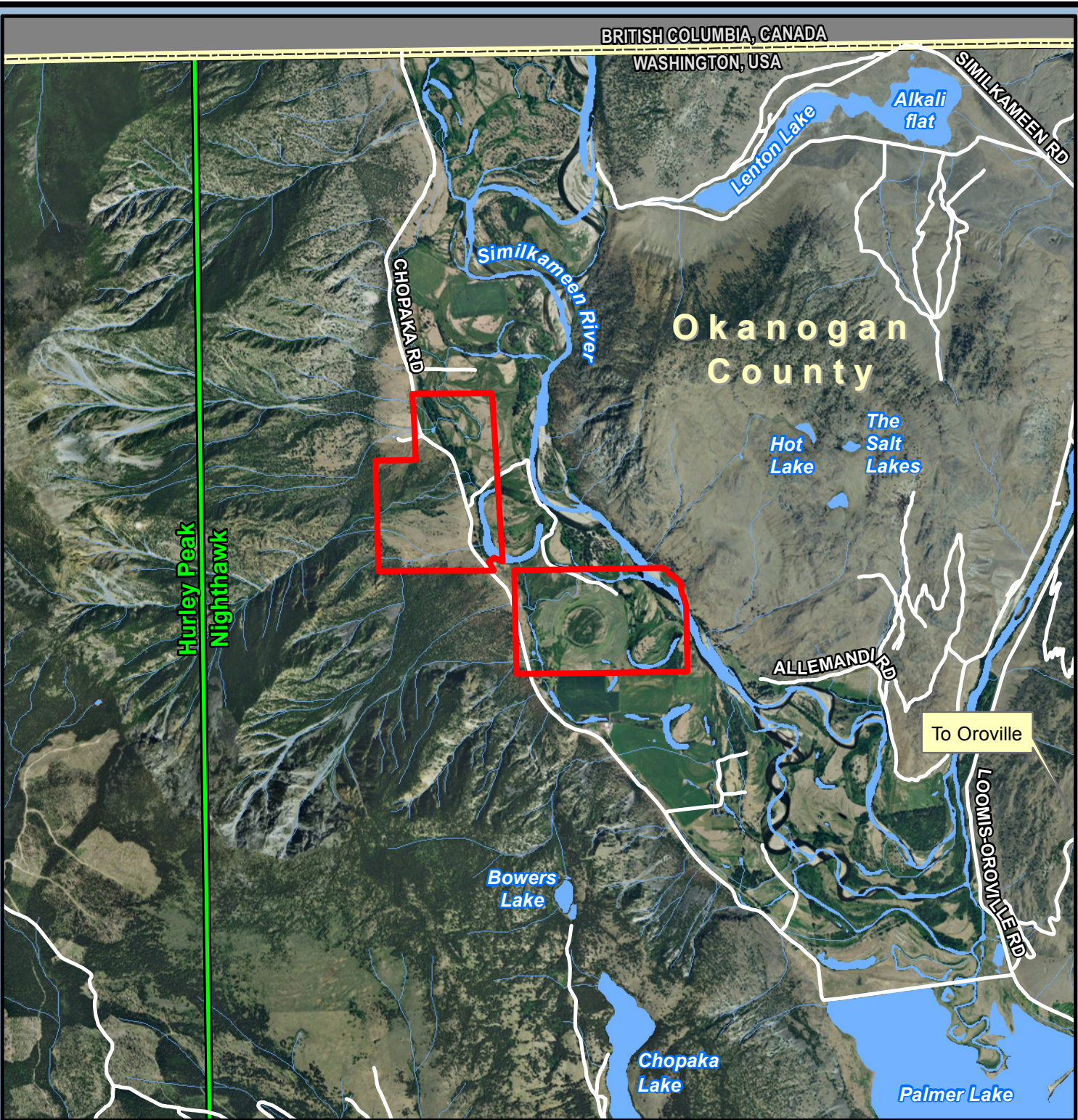
/s/ Jenna Peterson, September 4, 2012

Jenna Peterson

Environmental Protection Specialist – KEC-4




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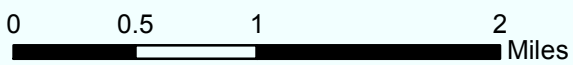
Project location map



Public Notification Similkameen River Acquisition

**Nighthawk Quadrangle
(787.22 Acres)**

-  Subject Property
-  Quad Name and Boundary
-  County Boundary



WASHINGTON