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Northwest Power and Conservation Council

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November 6, 2025

Dear Project Sponsor,

The Northwest Power and Conservation Council (Council) is initiating the 2026 Lands Project Review process. Pursuant to Section 4(h)(10)(D) of the Northwest Power Act, the Council and Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP) conduct reviews of projects directly funded by Bonneville under the Council's Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program (Program) that are implemented to mitigate, protect and enhance fish and wildlife affected by the hydropower system as called for under the Northwest Power Act.

There are currently 35 projects¹ funded through the Program that protect and restore habitat through land acquisitions. Of those, 29 will need to complete the review process. The 6 projects that provide administrative support to relevant projects will be considered contextually. (see below for project details).

As previously noted, staff have updated the review process for projects that have already completed an initial review(s). The projects in this Lands review have had their basic premise and scientific soundness accepted by the Council. This review will focus on project actions and accomplishments, with questions tailored to individual projects. Recommendations will include suggestions to improve project implementation. We will also use this review to better understand the implementation of Lands projects and collect valuable information related to our efforts to

¹ Note that there are 4 new Lands projects that are currently in development - no project proposal received to date. They will be categorized to a project type designation and reviewed, if needed, when submitted: #2024-003-00, #2024-005-00, #2027-003-00, #2028-002-00. Developing project information is located on [CBFish.org](https://www.nwccouncil.org/CBFish.org).

track [Program performance](#), and in particular, [details related to land acquisitions](#) (e.g., individual parcel polygon data, associated land management plans, number of acres, etc., if appropriate and available).

This Lands review was originally scheduled to begin in Fall 2024. Based on concerns expressed by fish and wildlife managers and further discussions with project sponsors, it was deferred to Fall 2025. This later launch date accommodated challenges associated with the timing of the current Program Amendment process overlapping with this review.

All general information contained in this email can also be found on the [Council's website](#) and will be updated periodically as the review process proceeds.

Review Materials – Due February 13, 2026

Each of the 29 projects slated for review will receive a set of individually tailored questions. Most projects will also receive an Excel table showing acquired parcels and associated information to confirm and/or correct our records. Project sponsors will be emailed Box links containing two files:

1. Questions to address in a Microsoft Word document form
2. Excel table to review the information we currently have on each project's parcels – please confirm and/or correct information, or respond to parcel-specific questions.

Instructions

- Download and save these two documents to your computer, and work within each to address questions and confirm parcel information.
- Email completed Word and Excel files, and supporting documents (e.g., management plans, polygon/shape file information) to [Kendra Coles](#), and 'cc [Mark Fritsch](#), [Maureen Hess](#), and [Heather Hendrixson](#).

Schedule

Review Steps	Date
Review process starts	November 6, 2025
Review materials due	February 13, 2026
Coordination meeting(s) between project sponsor and Council staff and/or ISRP, if needed	March - June 2026
ISRP recommendations report	June 26, 2026
Public comment	June 26 - July 24, 2026
Council recommendations to Bonneville	August 2026

What happens after I submit my review materials? (Due date: February 13, 2026)

Council staff will review the information submitted, and among other things, identify any questions or other project information which the staff believes would be useful to have the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP) consider. The Council staff will send these questions to the ISRP at the same time it makes the project information available to the ISRP. The ISRP will be free, of course, to provide comments and recommendations back to the Council on any aspect of the project information. However, the Council expects that, with regard to particular projects, the review and recommendations of the ISRP will focus on and respond to the questions asked by the staff.

Coordination meetings between project sponsor and Council staff and/or ISRP (March – June 2026)

In lieu of project presentations, coordination meetings between the project sponsor and Council staff and/or the ISRP may occur on an as needed basis. If the review materials submitted do not contain enough information or if issues need to be clarified to complete the review, Council staff will facilitate a meeting(s) with project sponsors to discuss remaining questions or issues.

ISRP recommendations report (June 26, 2026)

The ISRP report will include science-based comments and recommendations on reviewed projects and on Program-level issues.

Public Comment (June 26 – July 24, 2026)

The Council will make the ISRP's report available to the public and will accept public comments on the ISRP's report. The public comment period will open on June 26, 2026, and close on July 24, 2026.

Council Recommendations (August 2026)

The Council considers ISRP and public review comments in making final recommendations on projects to Bonneville and must explain in writing wherever the Council's recommendations differ from the ISRP's. The Council considers the impact of ocean conditions on fish and wildlife populations and determines whether the projects employ cost-effective measures to achieve program objectives. Section 4(h)(6)(C) of the Northwest Power Act requires the Council to adopt program measures that "utilize, where equally effective alternative means of achieving the same sound biological objective exist, the alternative with the minimum economic cost."

Recommendations will come in the form of specific project implementation recommendations and programmatic recommendations. Programmatic recommendations are issues that may apply to all projects or a subset of projects, depending on the nature of the issue (science, administrative, or policy). Once a Council recommendation is made, project templates will be posted on the Council website.

Contacts

For help on any aspect of the review process and/or materials, please contact us.

Name / email link	Org / Role	Phone	Questions related to
Mark Fritsch	Council staff	503.820.2337	Projects/process
Maureen Hess	Council staff	503.820.2339	Projects/process
Heather Hendrixson	Council staff	503.820.2313	Projects/process
Erik Merrill	ISRP coordinator	503.820.2356	ISRP process
Eric Schrepel	Council technical/web data specialist	503.820.2328	Technical

Table of 29 Lands Projects – To be reviewed

Project Number	Proponent Orgs	Project Title	Project Focus – wildlife or fish lands
1990-092-00	CTUIR	Wanaket Wildlife Area	Wildlife Lands
1991-061-00	WDFW	Swanson Lake Wildlife Mitigation	Wildlife Lands
1992-048-00	CCT	Hellsgate Big Game Winter Range	Wildlife Lands
1992-061-02	KT	Albeni Falls Wildlife Mitigation-Kalispel Tribe	Wildlife Lands
1992-061-03	IDFG	Albeni Falls Wildlife Mitigation-Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG)	Wildlife Lands
1992-061-05	KTOI	Albeni Falls Wildlife Mitigation-Kootenai Tribe	Wildlife Lands
1992-061-06	CDT	Albeni Falls Wildlife Mitigation-Coeur D'Alene Tribe	Wildlife Lands
1994-044-00	WDFW	Sagebrush Flat Wildlife Mitigation	Wildlife Lands
1995-057-02	SBT	Shoshone-Bannock Wildlife Mitigation Projects	Wildlife Lands
1995-057-03	SPT	Southern Idaho Wildlife Mitigation--Shoshone-Paiute Tribes	Wildlife Lands
1995-060-01	CTUIR	Isq'ulktpe Watershed Project	Wildlife Lands
1996-080-00	NPT	Northeast Oregon Wildlife Project	Wildlife Lands
1996-094-01	WDFW	Scotch Creek Wildlife Mitigation	Wildlife Lands
1998-003-00	STOI	Wildlife Mitigation/Operations and Maintenance (O&M) for Spokane Tribe Land Acquisitions	Wildlife Lands
1998-022-00	CTWSO	Pine Creek Conservation Area	Wildlife Lands
2000-015-00	CTWSO	Upper John Day Conservation Lands Program	Fish Lands
2000-026-00	CTUIR	Tat'win Wildlife Area Operations	Wildlife Lands
2002-003-00	CSKT	Secure and Restore Fish and Wildlife Habitat in Montana	Fish Lands
2002-014-00	WDFW	Sunnyside Wildlife Mitigation	Wildlife Lands
2003-012-00	WDFW	Shillapoo Wildlife Mitigation	Wildlife Lands
2006-003-00	WDFW	Desert Wildlife Mitigation	Wildlife Lands
2006-004-00	WDFW	Wenas Wildlife Mitigation	Wildlife Lands

2006-005-00	WDFW	Asotin Creek Wildlife Mitigation	Wildlife Lands
2008-007-00	UCUT	Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Program	Wildlife Lands
2008-102-00	CCT	Upper Columbia Land Operation and Maintenance	Fish Lands
2008-104-00	CCT	Upper Columbia Land & Water Acquisition	Fish Lands
2011-004-00	ODFW	ODFW Operation & Maintenance (O&M)	Wildlife Lands
2024-004-00*	STOI	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	Wildlife Lands
2026-003-00	BPT	Burns Paiute Wildlife Areas O&M	Wildlife Lands

* New project 2024-004-00 initially reviewed in spring 2025. The Council supported the continued implementation of the project conditioned that the STOI address the points raised by the ISRP as part of this Lands review.

Lands projects – Contextual role (not reviewed)

The following 6 projects administratively support the Lands category of projects and receive direct funding from Bonneville associated with the Northwest Power Act. These projects are not part of the review. For regional transparency, this informational table outlines how these projects contribute to Fish and Wildlife Program Lands.

Project Number	Sponsor Org.	Project Title	Project Description of Work Implemented	Project Focus – Wildlife or fish lands
2008-303-00	CTWSO	Columbia and Willamette Rivers Operations Administration	Provides the necessary support to the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs to coordinate with and participate in the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program (WWMP).	Wildlife Lands
2008-800-00	MFWP	Montana Resident Fish Habitat Acquisition	Implements the Montana Fish Accord MOA.	Fish Lands
2010-088-00	OSC	Upper and Lower Lemhi Acquisition/Easements	Assists in acquiring interests in land and water in the Lemhi Watershed. In	Fish Lands

			conjunction with OSC's Lemhi River Restoration Project, 2010-072-00	
2011-003-00	ODFW	Willamette Wildlife Fund	Provides the funding necessary for ODFW to implement the Willamette Wildlife MOA	Wildlife Lands
2013-002-00	BPA	Land Acquisition Monitoring	Funds the annual monitoring work completed by BPA's GIS staff for baseline surveys for lands secured through the Program. On the Transmission side of BPA.	Fish Lands
2018-001-00	BPA	BPA Pre-Acquisition	Funds the BPA realty group to do the pre-acquisition activities needed to acquire an acquisition such as title review, site visits, etc. On the Transmission side of BPA.	Fish Lands