



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
INTERIOR COLUMBIA BASIN AREA
Columbia Basin Branch
304 South Water, Suite 201
Ellensburg, Washington 98926

July 10, 2015

Mr. Scott Vejraska
Okanogan Public Utility District
P.O. Box 912
Okanogan, Washington 98840

Dear Mr. Vejraska:

We appreciated your time in meeting with us on June 30th, 2015 at the Okanogan Public Utility District (PUD) to discuss the possibility of NOAA playing the role of lead agency in the potential decommissioning and removal of the Enloe Dam.

We understand that the Okanogan PUD is faced with both the option to upgrade the Enloe Dam to have hydroelectric capability, as well as the option to remove the dam for fish passage and environmental benefits. We also understand that you are faced with an imminent decision on the hydroelectric option related to FERC relicensing. This truncated timeline for the hydroelectric option makes coming up with a viable dam removal option challenging, and our discussion was very helpful in highlighting the outstanding issues regarding the removal.

The most challenging issue identified in the removal option had to do with the lead agency role that NOAA could assume versus the role the PUD is hoping that a lead agency can provide. Unfortunately, despite the PUD's requests, NOAA would not be able to reimburse the \$13M in costs incurred on the dam. **NOAA also would not be able to assume liability for the dam, nor would our agency be able to take ownership of the dam or its license.** If NOAA did engage as lead agency, its role would involve technical support, coordination of efforts among agencies and stakeholders, and potentially helping to initiate a sediment study to determine potential contamination behind the dam.

Given that we heard from you that the Commissioners may sign an agreement as early as July 13 of this year to pursue the hydroelectric option, and given that a sediment study to initiate dam removal would likely take a year to generate a report, **we unfortunately do not foresee the ability to pursue the lead agency role further at this time.** If in the future the PUD decides against the hydroelectric option or chooses to reduce any of its requirements for lead agency reimbursement or liability, we hope you would contact us to discuss the options further.

From our recent research, dam removal would result in substantial benefits to NOAA trust fish species. We remain serious about the consideration of the lead agency role as we have defined it.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if conditions change and we might be able to find a common ground in removing the Enloe Dam.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Dale Bambrick', written over a faint, larger version of the same signature.

F. Dale Bambrick, Branch Chief
Columbia Basin Branch Office
Interior Columbia Basin Office
NOAA Fisheries, West Coast Region

cc: Jennifer Steger (NMFS)
John Floberg (NMFS)
Jim Wright (NMFS)
Dan Boettger (OK PUD)
John Grubich (OK PUD)
Mick Howe