



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, NORTHWESTERN DIVISION  
PO BOX 2870  
PORTLAND, OR 97208-2870

April 6, 2020

SUBJECT: Letter requesting an extended CRSO DEIS public comment period

Mr. Charles A. Tracy, Executive Director  
Pacific Fishery Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101  
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Dear Mr. Tracy,

This letter responds on behalf of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation and Bonneville Power Administration (collectively the "co-lead agencies"), to your March 23, 2020 request to extend the public comment period to at least 19 June 2020 on the Columbia River System Operations Draft Environmental Impact Statement (CRSO DEIS). The co-lead agencies initiated this National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process in response to the need to review and update management of the Columbia River System, including evaluating impacts to resources in the context of new information and changed conditions. Information from the final CRSO EIS will inform future decisions and allow for a flexible approach to meeting multiple responsibilities and complying with all applicable laws and regulations.

The co-lead agencies initiated the DEIS comment period on February 28, 2020, and in accordance with the NEPA regulations, the comment period runs 45 days through April 13, 2020. We will continue evaluating the need to extend the public comment period, but we encourage you to submit your comments within the original time frame.

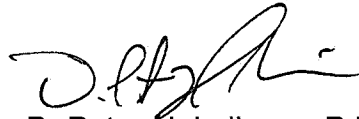
The agencies provided meaningful opportunities for the involvement of interested parties through the scoping process and DEIS development, as well as by inviting comments on the DEIS. The public and federal, tribal, state and local governments provided input during the extensive NEPA scoping period on the Columbia River System operations, maintenance and configuration of 14 federal projects in the interior Columbia Basin. During development of the DEIS, more than 30 entities from across the region participated as cooperating agencies, providing critical contributions to, and review of, the DEIS. These entities included tribes, federal agencies, and state and local governments. Through regular public updates and outreach, interested stakeholders also had opportunities for further engagement, education, and awareness.

To ensure adequate opportunity for the public to provide comments on the DEIS, the agencies are hosting an online comment platform, providing mailing addresses for written comments, and hosted a series of public comment meetings by telephone. We offered these public comment meetings by telephone to maintain our commitment to

accepting verbal comments in accordance with current public health guidelines. As a reminder, the DEIS and a description of the ways to provide comments are available online at [www.crsso.info](http://www.crsso.info).

The agencies believe the Pacific Fishery Management Council's input during this comment period is valuable and will contribute to the quality of the final EIS and the co-lead agencies' decisions. The agencies will respond to comments received during the DEIS comment period in the final EIS, which is expected to be released this summer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Peter Helmlinger', written in a cursive style.

D. Peter Helmlinger, P.E.  
Brigadier General, US Army  
Division Commander