

October 31, 2001

Reply To
Attn of: OW-135

Dear Stakeholder,

Please find enclosed a public review draft of "EPA Region 10 Guidance for State and Tribal Temperature Water Quality Standards." The purpose of this guidance is to describe how States and Tribes in the Pacific Northwest may establish water quality standards for temperature that supports sustainable populations of native salmonids and meets the requirements of the Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act.

This past spring, we had public workshops to discuss the technical issues related to salmonids and water temperature and to outline several approaches to the design of a water temperature standard. We thank you for your participation in these past workshops and are now requesting your review and comment on this draft guidance.

As indicated in the enclosed public notice, we are accepting written comments on the draft guidance until December 21, 2001. We will also be holding public workshops in Lacey and Kennewick, Washington; Salem, Oregon; and Boise, Idaho to discuss the draft guidance and gather feedback from the interested public (see public notice for details). We hope that you can attend one of these workshops and that you can provide oral and/or written comments on the draft guidance.

To assist in the development of this guidance, EPA Region 10 established a policy workgroup with representatives from the National Marine Fisheries Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, Washington Department of Ecology, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, and the Nez Perce Tribe. It is important to note that the above organizations are not endorsing this draft guidance. In fact, there continues to be discussion, debate and dissent on specific aspects of the draft guidance. It is time, however, to broaden the discussion. So we are releasing the draft guidance for public review and stakeholder input to aid us in our decisions.

We look forward to your comments regarding this draft guidance.

Sincerely,

(Signed 10/31/01)
Randy Smith, Director
Office of Water