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Reykjavik March 15, 2014

Dear dr. Margaret

The Master Plan Steering Committee established a Specialist Group to evaluate the existing information on the impact to salmonids that would result from the proposed hydroelectric development in the lower Thjorsa River. The Specialist Group recommended that the Hvammur Project be moved from the “on hold” category top the “utilization” category based on the following justification; “Revised formal proposals for mitigation measures (LV letter Oct. 31 2013, p. 12) make provision for a juvenile fish bypass system and fish ladder by the hydroelectric plant, based on extensive preparation work and recent research. It is readily apparent that the experience of mitigation measures at the Hvammur hydroelectric plant, inter alia with regard to the operation of a juvenile fish bypass system, the efficacy of a fish ladder, the effects of reduced water flow on the habitat and the necessity of enhancing the habitat, would considerably reduce uncertainty about the efficacy of mitigation measures for possible plants further down the Þjórsá river, and elsewhere in Iceland. In this context one should point out that this would be the first use of a juvenile fish bypass at a hydroelectric plant in Iceland.”

To help us understand the impact of this recommendation we would ask that you review the recommendation and justification in the context of the following questions and your experience on the Columbia River with regards to these subjects.

Is the juvenile passage structure proposed for installation at Hvammur likely to meet the passage and survival estimates proposed by the Power Company?

Has adequate pre-development baseline data been collected to allow accurate monitoring of the impacts of development to all species at risk?

Are the countermeasures and emergency plan described in the Oct 31, 2013 letter from the Power Company likely to protect anadromous species in the Thjorsa and mitigate for the hydropower development?

Are there any additional concerns that you would like to indicate at this time?

To facilitate your review we are providing you with an English Translation of the following documents:

Skulason, S and H.R. Ingvarsson. Evaluation of Available research on salmonids in the river Thjorsa in S-Iceland and proposed countermeasures and mitigation efforts in relation to three proposed hydroelectric power plants in the lower part of the river. October, 2013.

Specialist evaluation of uncertainty of existing information on the impact of salmonids in the Thjorsa River, stemming from the proposed Hvammur, Holt and Urridafoss hydro-electric plants in the lower reaches of the river. Report to the Master Plan Steering Committee, November 4, 2013.

Response from the National Power Company regarding the October 22, 2013 request. Letter Dated October 31, 2013.

With kind regards from Iceland,

Orri Vigfússon, Chairman
North Atlantic Salmon Fund