COLLABORATIVE SYSTEMWIDE MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROJECT (FY 2004-06)

FY 2005 ANNUAL REPORT

Executive Summary

The Collaborative Systemwide Monitoring and Evaluation Project (CSMEP) is a coordinated effort to improve the quality, consistency, and focus of fish population and habitat data to answer key monitoring and evaluation questions relevant to major decisions in the Columbia River Basin. CSMEP was initiated in 2003 and is administered by the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority, with the participation of several federal, state and tribal fish and wildlife agencies[1]. CSMEP is a major commitment of the Council towards regionally integrated M &E across the Columbia Basin, and is a critical element of the Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership (PNAMP). CSMEP's specific goals are to: 1) interact with federal, state and tribal programmatic and technical entities responsible for monitoring and evaluation of fish and wildlife, to ensure that work plans developed and executed under this project are well integrated with ongoing work by these entities, 2) document, integrate, and make available existing monitoring data on listed salmon, steelhead, bull trout and other fish species of concern, 3) critically assess strengths and weaknesses of these data for answering key monitoring questions, and 4) collaboratively design and implement improved monitoring and evaluation methods with other programmatic entities in the Pacific Northwest to fill information gaps and provide better input to key decisions in the Columbia River Basin.

Progress in FY05

During FY2005 CSMEP made considerable progress on its inventory and assessment goals. CSMEP and StreamNet jointly completed inventories of fish data for the first set of selected pilot subbasins in Washington (Lewis and Yakima), Oregon (Imnaha and Lower Columbia) and Idaho (Clearwater – Selway; Salmon – South Fork Salmon River), as well as for a second set of selected subbasins (Washington - Okanagan, Methow, Kalama; Oregon – Deschutes, Grande Ronde; Idaho – Upper Fork Salmon, Middle Fork Salmon). CSMEP biologists continued with their reviews of the strengths and weaknesses of these subbasin data for addressing a structured set of monitoring questions about fish population status and trends at different spatial and temporal scales. The CSMEP web database developed in FY04 to store inventory metadata in a readily accessible format and location was further developed and populated with metadata from the pilot

[1] **Agencies**: NOAA Fisheries, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission, Bonneville Power Administration , Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Fish Passage Center, StreamNet, Nez Perce Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Yakama Indian Nation

Consultants: ESSA Technologies Ltd. (Facilitators), Eco Logical Research, Quantitative Consultants, Paulsen Environmental Research, KWA Ecological Sciences

watersheds. The public website developed in FY04 for communication and coordination amongst CSMEP members and interested parties was restructured for greater ease of use.

Significant progress was also made on CSMEP's goals of collaborative design of improved M&E methods. Three multi-agency monitoring design workshops were held to explore how best to integrate the most robust features of existing monitoring programs with new approaches (e.g., Federal RME pilot studies, EPA EMAP). CSMEP began to build on this information and develop general 'design templates' for monitoring the status and trends of fish populations and the effectiveness of habitat, harvest, hatchery and hydrosystem recovery actions within the Columbia River Basin. As a pilot exercise, information from the CSMEP metadata inventories as well as from ongoing regional RME studies were used to develop design templates at the spatial scale of the Snake Basin ESUs. CSMEP's work on the Snake Basin pilot has fed into the NOAA-F /BPA Salmon River Basin pilot study, as well as the Lemhi Basin HCP. The draft design templates were discussed at the July 2005 CSMEP workshop with a subset of regional policy staff for initial feedback on whether the designs will be appropriate for addressing the information needs of decision-makers. Further information on CSMEP metadata inventories, strengths and weaknesses assessments and monitoring design products for FY05 are presented in the main text of this Draft Annual Report and its appendices as well as on the CSMEP public website (www.cbfwa.org/Committees/ CSMEP).

Plan for FY06

During FY2006, CSMEP will first complete an integrated M&E design for the Snake River Basin, evaluating the multiple tradeoffs associated with different M&E designs. We will then build on lessons learned from the Snake River Pilot Project exercise to develop general M&E 'design templates' for application to other parts of the Columbia River Basin. CSMEP will also identify situations where general "design templates" are not appropriate, and instead develop the consistent "design processes" that will lead to better monitoring designs (e.g., for watershed specific evaluations of habitat restoration action effectiveness). CSMEP will continue the metadata inventory process and strengths and weaknesses assessments for additional subbasins in the Columbia River Basin and use these results to help test the applicability of monitoring design templates and processes developed from the Snake River Basin Pilot Project. CSMEP design templates will be presented at relevant forums to decision-making entities for continuing feedback on whether they address regional information needs. CSMEP will increase its integration with PNAMP and other regional RME bodies to ensure that CSMEP analytical expertise is most efficiently utilized within the broader context of Columbia River Basin monitoring programs.