

Issue:
Science Policy Conference
Briefing Request for Direction on Agency and Tribe
Participation

Background:

Conference Preparations

- Starting at the January Council meeting the NPCC has been developing an agenda for a Science/Policy Conference (draft attached)
- Four topic areas have been selected by the NPCC Staff and concurred on by the Council: 1. Habitat; 2. Mainstem; 3. Estuary; and, 4. Ocean
- In March the NPCC fish and Wildlife committee directed staff to include CBFWA on the steering committee for the conference.
- The full steering committee met on 3/29 and assigned subcommittees to meet on each topic.
- At the April 4 CBFWA Members Meeting Rhonda Whiting, Chair of the NPCC F&W Committee & Lynn Palensky updated the members on the conference and invited CBFWA to participate in the steering committee. CBFWA Members assigned Brian Lipscomb and Tom Iverson to participate in the steering committee for the development of the Science Policy Workshop. And, requested that a weight of evidence approach be explored for the conference topics.
- Between April and June subcommittees for each of the four topic areas developed synopsis for each of the topic areas. The development of the Mainstem synopsis included a meeting with the FPAC.
- The FPAC has provided a memo responding to Jim Ruff and Lynn Palensky describing in detail a weighted evidence approach (attached).
- The steering committee reconvened on 6/27 to discuss the synopsis from the subcommittees and feedback from FPAC. Input was provided by CBFWA at this steering committee meeting.

Science as it pertains to Program Amendment

- This paragraph from Joe Mentor's White Paper summarizes this best: "The Council is required to develop its program on the basis of recommendations received from the fish and wildlife agencies, appropriate Indian tribes, the region's water management and power producing agencies and their customers and the public generally.¹ The Council is then required to include the program measures that will "complement the existing and future activities of the Federal and the regions State fish and wildlife agencies and appropriate Indian tribes;" *be based on best available science*; consider cost where "equally effective

¹ Northwest Power Act, Section 4(h)(5), 16 U.S.C. § 839b(h)(5).

alternative means of achieving the same sound biological objective exist;" insure consistency with the legal rights of Indian tribes; improve survival and provide flows of sufficient quality and quantity for anadromous fish.² The Act requires the Council to resolve inconsistencies between program recommendations by "giving due weight to the recommendations, expertise, and legal rights and responsibilities of the Federal and the region's State fish and wildlife agencies and appropriate Indian tribes."³ The Council may choose not to accept a recommendation of a fish and wildlife agency or tribe only if the recommendation is inconsistent with the statutory requirements or is "less effective than the adopted recommendations for the protection, mitigation, and enhancement of fish and wildlife."⁴

Discussion(s)/Action(s):

- **A "weighted evidence" approach for the mainstem topic would be time intensive and would take a significant commitment from the agencies' and tribes' technical experts to conduct. Are the CBFWA members willing to make this commitment?**
- **The steering committee would also like to discuss the agencies and tribes participation at the conference itself. Given the objectives of the conference;**
 - **Understand how science has evolved in the last ten years and how that should/will affect our management actions**
 - **Sharpen the issues within each topic area and discuss among Council members, scientists and managers to reach a common understanding of new science, methodologies and assumptions**
 - **Frame issues for possible targeted comments within the Request for Recommendations for Amendments to the Program -- Guidance Document**
- **And the conference organization (see attached draft agenda). What would participation from the agencies and tribes look like? Are the agencies and tribes committed to this type of participation?**

² Northwest Power Act, Section 4(h)(6), 16 U.S.C. § 839b(h)(6).

³ Northwest Power Act, Section 4(h)(7), 16 U.S.C. § 839b(h)(7).

⁴ Id.