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May 27, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fish and Wildlife Committee

FROM: Nancy Leonard, Fish, Wildlife, Ecosystem Monitoring and Evaluation Manager

SUBJECT: Summary of Public and ISAB/ISRP Comments Received on the Draft MERR Plan

Comments were submitted by 21 entities:

1. Bonneville Power Administration
2. Charles Pace
3. Coeur D'Alene Tribe
4. Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
5. Colville Tribes
6. Confederate Tribes of the Grande Ronde Community of Oregon
7. FCRPS Biological Opinion Habitat, Fish, Hatchery and Harvest RME Workgroups
8. Independent Scientific Review Panel and Independent Scientific Advisory Board
9. Kalispel Tribe of Indians
10. Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
11. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest Region
12. Native Fish Society
13. Nez Perce Tribe
14. Northwest RiverPartners
15. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
16. Public Power Council
17. Upper Columbia United Tribes - Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Spokane Tribe of Indians
18. Washington Columbia Basin Regional Salmon Recovery Boards
19. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
20. Washington Forum on Monitoring Salmon Recovery and Watershed Health
21. Yakama Nation

Staff have extracted, sorted, and summarized the comments into categories. For each category, staff have provided a general response on how the comments will be addressed and identified whether a comment requires Council Members' input to provide staff with guidance on how to address this comment. Staff will have the summary and general staff response for the comment categories available at the meeting to discuss as needed.

Below are 9 suggestions from the public and ISAB/ISRP comments that staff would like to receive guidance from Council Members. These 9 suggestions are:

1. Are Council Members supportive of:
 - a. Integrating the Council's Research Plan within the MERR Plan so that there is one main document?
 - b. Having the MERR Plan be a stand-alone guidance document and not integrating with the Program during the next amendment.

2. Are Council Members interested in:
 - a. Keeping the Council's management questions as currently formatted in the 'yes/no' style or revising them to 'How' style question to reflect the need for more descriptive answers?
 - b. Expanding the topics covered by the Council's management questions to include more resident fish (e.g., resident fish substitution), wildlife, habitat/ecosystem questions thereby balancing the currently predominant anadromous salmonid focus?
 - c. Having staff compare and align Council's management questions, as feasible, with the questions in the salmonid recovery plans and FCRPS BiOp.

3. Do Council Members want to include a process in the MERR Plan to have the data used for reporting on the Council's HLIs reviewed by the ISAB for data quality and appropriateness of use in the HLIs?

4. Are Council Members supportive of having the MERR Plan:

'Explicitly identify that primary input for anadromous fish monitoring and research priorities, approaches and guidelines will necessarily come via planning and implementation of BiOp RPA and associated recommendations of the AA-NOAA-NPCC- BiOp RME Workgroups'

5. Do Council members agree that the ‘coordination’ criteria should be elevated to first or second tier versus in the fourth tier? The four tiers are currently:

<p>First Tier Criteria - Contribution to Program Progress <i>Informs Policy and programmatic Decisions</i> <i>Addresses a Critical Research Uncertainty</i> <i>Has Broad Application</i></p> <p>Second Tier Criteria - Feasibility <i>Reasonable Timeframe to Produce Results.</i> <i>Feasible</i> <i>Causes No Harm</i></p>	<p>Third Tier Criteria - Efficiency <i>Coordinated RME Effort.</i> <i>Related to Other RME</i></p> <p>Fourth Tier Criteria - Cost Savings <i>Cost share</i> <i>Cost</i></p>
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6. Are Council Members supportive of deferring the identification of priority species and habitat to a later process that will be described in the MERR Plan and include ISAB?
7. Do Council Members want to investigate developing policy guidance on ‘*what is the desired size of the effect to be detected and at what level of confidence*’ that monitoring actions/projects should aim to detect to determine effectiveness of the action/project. For example, a 20% change with an 80% confidence level may be the target for monitoring some action types.
8. Are Council Members supportive of staff investigating the potential for creating through a partnership with existing journal publication institutions (e.g., American Fisheries Society, The Wildlife Society) an online peer- reviewed journal for publication of project proponent results to contribute to program accountability, project performance evaluation, and making results accessible.
9. Are Council Members supportive of having a collaborative process prior to the next Program amendment to prioritize all of the Council Fish and Wildlife Program’s strategies and actions (i.e., on-the-ground actions) with the intent that this would aid in prioritizing the Program’s RME.

Staff are prepared to discuss details and make recommendations for each of the above 9 suggestions extracted from the public and ISAB/ISRP comments.