

Kalispell Hearing Notes
October 14th, 2008

Members present:

Bruce Measure, Joan Dukes

Staff present:

Patty O'Toole, Kerry Berg, Karl Weist

John Hossack (Lincoln Electric Cooperative)

- Primary concern by people most impacted by the 60% increase in direct program funding is that this money is not accomplishing anything to help the salmon.
- Is a need to use common sense in fish recovery. Continuing to throw billions of dollars at it makes no sense.
- Changes in harvest should be of highest priority.
- ISAB is vital to success of program.
- Annual audit should be done to ensure that money goes to saving fish and not going to jobs programs and other things.
- Money from ratepayers is not infinite.

Ken Sugden (Flathead Electric Cooperative)

- Current program costs are \$143 million and will be going to \$243 million.
- Our estimates show rates are going up post 2011.
- Needs to be rigorous scientific review of projects.
- Direct program costs are increasing over 60%. This means at least 15% of rates go to fish and wildlife.
- Flathead Electric understands the need to balance electricity generation with fish and wildlife recovery.
- Flathead Electric is looking everywhere they can for resources but are still anticipating a rate increase.
- Appreciate the draft program as a high level document and that it recognizes that ratepayer money should go to mitigate for hydroelectric issues only.
- Concerned about the amount of M & E and want to see more work on the ground.
- The Fish Passage Center should not be named in the program. It is already funded through other means. Plan should identify functions but not specifically mention the entity.

Doug Grob (Flathead Electric Cooperative)

- Money should go toward mitigation for the hydrosystem, not every issue.
- Focus should be on what we do to get the best bang for the buck.
- 60% is a huge increase in the direct program. Wholesale wise, this means \$1 of every \$5 ratepayer dollars go to fish and wildlife.

- More money should go to on the ground work.
- Other issues like harvest and hydro operations should be addressed.