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September 6, 2023

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Patty O'Toole

SUBJECT: Authorization for contract with Leslie Bach, for Fiscal Year 2024

PROPOSED ACTION: Council staff recommends authorization to contract with Leslie Bach, for fiscal year 2024 in an amount not to exceed \$32,200 to assist staff with numerous tasks including work on assessing fish and wildlife program performance and the redesign of the project review process.

SIGNIFICANCE: Two priority areas of the fish and wildlife division work plan include developing assessments of performance in key areas of the Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program and also redesigning the project review process. Leslie's experience in these two areas will help the staff during the period of transition after her retirement.

BUDGETARY/ ECONOMIC IMPACTS: Total contract budget is not to exceed \$32,200 for fiscal year 2024.

BACKGROUND: The staff continues its work on better understanding program implementation and performance with a near term focus on assessing key program areas such as hydrosystem operations, habitat and adaptive management – all strategies in the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. Leslie retired from the Council staff in July and worked on these Program strategies as a Council staff member. Her experience with understanding the technical and procedural operation of the hydrosystem is invaluable, as is her experience working on tributary and mainstem habitat topics for the Council in recent years. Leslie has also assisted the project review redesign team.

Specifically, Leslie will assist with several category performance assessments (related to the hydrosystem, fish and wildlife habitat, Program adaptive management), participate in presentations to Council members, assist with the development and refinement of several assessments, and document information for reports and the website. The contract will also assist with writing, reviewing, and editing documents related to program performance. Other tasks include assisting staff with the redesign of the project review process, in particular preparing for the review of program habitat and habitat focused research and monitoring projects.

This contract will also include other division support tasks such as technical support for the Columbia River Water Transactions Program Technical Advisory Committee, strategic planning for upcoming division tasks and miscellaneous tasks as assigned.

ALTERNATIVES:

If the contract were not supported, the Fish and Wildlife Division would have to complete these tasks with only the existing staff. This would reduce the depth of experience and skills available to work on these tasks and increase the time it takes to complete them.