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May 7, 2024

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Patty O'Toole, Stacy Horton, Windy Schoby

SUBJECT: Discussion of the Agreement on the Phase 2 Implementation Plan with Upper Columbia Tribes and the US Government

BACKGROUND:

Presenters:

Jarred-Michael Erickson-Chairman, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
Greg Abrahamson- Chairman, Spokane Tribes of Indians
Caj Matheson, Council Member and Natural Resources Director, Coeur d'Alene Tribe
Roland Springer- Deputy Regional Director, Columbia-Pacific Northwest Region,
Bureau of Reclamation
Ben Zelinsky-Senior Policy Advisor, Bonneville Power Administration
Tim Dykstra-Senior Fish Program Manager, US Army Corps of Engineers
Michael Garrity- Special Assistant for Columbia River Policy, State of Washington
Casey Baldwin- Salmon Reintroduction Division Manager, Confederated Tribes of the
Colville Reservation
Conor Giorgi- Anadromous Program Manager, Spokane Tribe of Indians,
Tom Biladeau- Anadromous Division Lead, Coeur d'Alene Tribe

Summary: The Council will welcome representatives from the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Spokane Tribe of Indians and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, several federal agencies, and the State of Washington to discuss the

agreement regarding the Phase 2 Implementation Plan: Testing Feasibility of Reintroduced Salmon in the Upper Columbia River Basin.

Relevance: The Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program (Fish and Wildlife Program) contains a measure calling for a science-based, phased approach to investigate the feasibility of reintroducing anadromous fish above Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee dams. Upper Columbia Tribes and the United States Government entered into an agreement in late 2023 which involves scientifically based research over the next 20 years to establish sources of donor and brood stocks for reintroduction, test key biological assumptions, guide management actions, develop interim hatchery and passage facilities, and evaluate success.

Background:

The Council is honored to welcome representatives from the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Spokane Tribe of Indians, the Coeur d' Alene Tribe, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Bonneville Power Administration, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the State of Washington to discuss the recent agreement on the tribes' Phase 2 Implementation Plan (P2IP) to investigate the feasibility of reintroducing salmon in the upper Columbia River Basin.

Chinook and sockeye salmon, steelhead, and other migratory fish species were once abundant in the stream reaches above Grand Coulee but have been blocked from accessing thousands of miles of habitat since the building of the dam in 1938. The Council's Fish and Wildlife Program has contained measures related to mitigation in blocked areas since 1987, and measures related to restoration of anadromous fish into blocked areas where feasible since 2000. In 2014, based on recommendations from the tribes, the Council adopted language into the Program calling for Bonneville and other federal agencies to fund and implement a science-based, phased approach to investigate the feasibility of reintroduction of anadromous fish above Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee dams. The Council reinforced this measure in the 2020 Addendum.

The Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) completed several studies and released their [*Phase 1 Report on Fish Passage and Reintroduction Investigations Upstream of Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee Dams*](#) in 2019. The Independent Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB) [reviewed the Phase 1 report](#) and recommended the development of a strategic plan for advancing reintroduction. This became the basis for the [*Phase 2 Implementation Plan: Testing Feasibility of Reintroduced Salmon in the Upper Columbia River Basin*](#). Referred to as P2IP, it was finalized in 2022 after considerable outreach and input from agencies, tribes, and local officials and communities. [The ISAB also reviewed the P2IP](#) and confirmed its scientific merit, remarking that while many uncertainties remain, "... efforts are consistent with the objective of the Fish and Wildlife Program to mitigate for the complete loss of anadromous fish and the losses to other fish and wildlife species in areas above Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph dams. The UCUT's reintroduction efforts also generate

important contributions to the science of salmon ecology and of fish passage at high head dams.”

Following completion of the P2IP planning phase, the upper Columbia tribes secured nearly \$20 million for implementation from sources such as the State of Washington, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - Fisheries, the US Bureau of Reclamation, the Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund, the US Geological Survey and Washington Department of Ecology’s Office of the Columbia River.

In September of 2023 the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Coeur d’Alene Tribe, and the Spokane Tribe of Indians entered into a [20-year agreement](#) with the United States government to further fund and implement the P2IP efforts to test the feasibility of reintroducing salmon in blocked habitats in the Upper Basin. The centerpiece of the agreement was a commitment of \$200 million over 20 years from the Bonneville Power Administration. The other federal agencies committed to acquiring at least another \$100 million over the lifetime of the agreement and to support the efforts through additional actions. The Bureau of Reclamation has already committed \$8 million over the next two years.

The Council will hear from policy representatives from the upper Columbia tribes, federal agencies and the State of Washington and the tribe’s technical representatives on current and next steps.