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September 1, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: **Fish and Wildlife Committee Members**

FROM: **Patty O'Toole, Fish and Wildlife Division Director, and Kate Self, Program Scientist**

SUBJECT: **Discuss 2026 Fish and Wildlife Program next steps, implementation**

BACKGROUND:

Presenter: Fish and Wildlife Division Staff

Summary: Following the adoption of an amended Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program in June, staff began working with the Council's Fish and Wildlife Committee in July to discuss next steps and implementation. Council members requested staff identify appropriate tools for each of the implementation tasks and to propose which of these tasks may be ready for near-term implementation.

Relevance: The 2026 Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program was adopted by the Council on June 16, 2026.

Background: The Council adopted its final 2026 Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program in June. A prepublication version is available on the Council's website pending completion and adoption of the Findings and Response to Recommendations, anticipated in late fall 2026.

Turning to the implementation of the 2026 Fish and Wildlife Program, first, a reminder that the Council does not implement much of the Program on its own. We rely on federal agencies such as Bonneville, the Corps, and the Bureau of

Reclamation implementing the Program through the standards of the Northwest Power Act. This requires working with many federal, tribal and state entities and others. We look for and create opportunities to bring the influence of the Fish and Wildlife Program into federal decision-making, also advancing policy discussions and supporting best available science.

From prior discussions regarding the Fish and Wildlife Division Work Plan, you will recall there are ongoing tasks the staff does on behalf of the Council and the Northwest Power Act. These include:

- Project Review and Recommendation (including follow-up and Step reviews, tracking project implementation and description of ongoing activities in Part Six of the 2026 Program)
- Assessing and reporting on Program Performance (including reporting on goals, objectives, indicators, and implementation, and description of activities in Part Seven of the 2026 Program)
- Coordination and collaboration with external entities (tracking and participating in various meetings, etc.) about the Fish and Wildlife Program, the Council and the Northwest Power Act.

To these basic responsibilities we add tasks associated with the implementation of the 2026 Fish and Wildlife Program. In July, staff reviewed a few fundamental elements for developing a work plan for Program implementation. First, we summarized the tasks included in the final Program decision, including directives noted at the time of decision, Program measures, and Program priorities for near-term implementation. Second, we reviewed the "tools" or ways the Council works to help get the Program implemented. Council members requested that staff identify potential tools that would be appropriate for making progress on the set of tasks, considering available resources, priorities, timeframes, etc.

For the September Committee Meeting, staff have 1) identified which tools are appropriate for which tasks and 2) suggested first and future steps for the tools, timing, and likely participants. Staff also proposed a set of tasks that are ripe for near-term implementation along with identifying implementation tools and steps for the remaining tasks. Any of those remaining tasks could be prioritized for near-term implementation based on discussion in September.

The objective for this committee meeting is to discuss whether this is the appropriate set of tasks for near-term implementation, review the tools we have identified for these and other tasks, and discuss the State of the Science review on summer hydro operations and concepts around Whole of Government as a tool for implementing tasks at various scales and scopes.

In identifying a set of tasks ready for near-term implementation, staff considered the following: specific language in the Program, the level of interest around the

topics, current status of implementation, whether a due date had been identified, and staff capacity and expertise across tasks (aiming to spread the work across multiple staff). The identified tasks are not more important than any of the others but represent a reasonable starting place. This is an ambitious discussion agenda for the September meeting, but we suggest getting as far as we can and continuing in October as necessary.

Suggested list ready for near-term implementation

1. 2026 Program Priority- Program integrity - Corps infrastructure list and funding; ongoing coordination with Bonneville on asset management
2. 2026 Program Priority- Program integrity - ongoing coordination with Bonneville on annual project funding and long-term O&M; improved communication; emphasis on inflation adjustments
3. 2026 Program Priority- predator management- workgroup, etc.
4. Wildlife settlement agreement progress- annual report
5. Update critical uncertainties/ research plan- ISAB assignment
6. Objective S2 (SAR targets)- status update on data needs- by 2027

Additional topics to discuss:

1. State of the Science review on summer hydro operations
2. Whole of Government as a tool

Attached to this memo are two documents for Fish and Wildlife Committee member consideration. Attachment A is a proposed list of tasks suggested for near-term implementation, along with associated tools, timelines, participants, and initial steps, originating from the Program decision and document itself. This attachment also includes information on the two discussion topics. Attachment B contains the remaining 20 tasks in the order they appear in the 2026 Fish and Wildlife Program, along with proposed implementation tools. As a reminder, the tasks in attachment B are no less important than those in A but reflect a proposed place to start.

More info: July 2026 Council meeting, Fish and Wildlife Committee Memo (includes the list of tasks, detail on the available tools, and information on workgroup structures)

2026 Fish and Wildlife Program tasks and tools

In July, we reviewed a menu of tasks from the 2026 Program and identified a set of tools at our disposal. For the September Committee Meeting, we have 1) identified which tools are appropriate for which tasks and 2) suggested first and future steps for the tools, timing, and likely participants. The Council intends to have regular coordination on these and other implementation tasks with the fish and wildlife managers through the RCF or other channels. Therefore, it is considered a blanket expectation and may not always be listed under individual tasks. Staff also identified a set of tasks that are ripe for near-term implementation (this attachment), along with identifying implementation tools and steps for the remaining tasks (Attachment B). Any of those remaining tasks could be prioritized for near-term implementation based on discussion in the September Committee Meeting.

The objective of this committee meeting is to discuss whether this is the appropriate set of tasks for near-term implementation, review the tools we have identified for these and other tasks, review timing and next steps, and discuss the State of the Science review on summer hydro operations and concepts around Whole of Government as a tool for implementing tasks at various scales and scopes.

In identifying a set of tasks ready for near-term implementation, staff considered the following: specific language in the Program, the level of interest around the topics, current status of implementation, whether a due date had been identified, and staff capacity and expertise across tasks (aiming to spread the work across multiple staff). The identified tasks are not more important than any of the others but represent a reasonable starting place.

Suggested list ready for near-term implementation

1. 2026 Program Priority- Program integrity - ongoing coordination with Bonneville on annual project funding and long-term O&M/ Asset Management; improved communication; emphasis on inflation adjustments (includes tasks in Part Six: Implementation)
2. 2026 Program Priority- Program integrity - Corps infrastructure list and funding
3. 2026 Program Priority- predator management- workgroup, etc.
4. Wildlife settlement agreement progress- annual report
5. Update critical uncertainties/ research plan- ISAB assignment
6. Objective S2 (SAR targets)- status update on data needs- by 2027

Additional topics to discuss:

1. State of the Science review on summer hydro operations
2. Whole of Government as a tool

Short list of tools

1. Staff work with federal agencies and others – calls, emails, other communication paired with internal strategizing
2. Funding recommendations to Bonneville for direct program funding of specific measures and priorities
3. Staff/Council member/Council participation in implementation forums and decisions - encourage implementation of Program priorities
4. Letters and coordination
5. Council meeting - report or panel discussion
6. Council studies or development of information resources
7. ISAB reviews and reports
8. Forum or workgroup - less formal but chaired, facilitated - can be ongoing or ad hoc
9. Advisory Committee - formal charter
10. One-time forum, science–policy exchange
11. Support and contribute to conferences and workshops addressing key Program topics

Detail of implementation tasks and potential tools

1. **2026 Program Priority: Preserving Program integrity**
    a. Bonneville should provide funding sufficient to implement the Program's ongoing work, including adequate and dependable funding for the annual and long-term operation and maintenance of the direct Program's assets.
        i. **Part six- investments**- The Council expects a cooperative process [with BPA] that allows for improved communication and transparency regarding funding (e.g., start-of-year budget, placeholders, unspent funds, priorities) to track implementation of the Program. … Bonneville shall provide timely notice to the Council when Bonneville implementation decisions result in a material change in the scope, desired outcomes or budget of a project. …The Council will review this information and assess whether further recommendations are warranted, including further ISRP review.
        ii. **Part Six- asset management**- The Council and Bonneville should continue to coordinate and support the Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) and its implementation for the Program's hatcheries, fish screens, and land acquisitions through a transparent and dependable annual process.

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • Staff and Council review strengths and challenges of current processes (listed below) Recurring (annual): • PCCF/ BOG • Regular coordination between Council and Bonneville staff on annual funding and improving communication around project decisions and annual budgets Non-recurring maintenance: • The Council has worked in various ways with Bonneville and the region to maintain existing assets and to prepare a plan for long-term needs. • Joint strategy for asset management- we maintain lists of assets • Annual coordination on priorities and funding • Staff work with Bonneville to address non-recurring maintenance • Council presentations on progress • Coordination on priorities when RDC funds appear	Ongoing, additional emphasis	Council staff Bonneville When needed, Council members

Additional emphasis for both: • Council presentations/ regular updates- potentially every 6 months • Council members write letters, when appropriate		

b. This includes providing inflation adjustment factors for direct-funded projects.

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • Reach out to RCF to assess current needs regarding inflation adjustment Future steps: • Set up agenda item(s) on this topic • Staff work- how has Program dealt with inflation over the years • Schedule FW Committee discussions with Bonneville representatives on options for dealing with inflation	Somewhat ongoing, additional emphasis; First step at next RCF meeting	Council staff Bonneville staff RCF

2. 2026 Program Priority: Preserving Program integrity

The Council similarly expects the Corps of Engineers to increase its efforts to protect and rehabilitate the dam infrastructure important for effective juvenile and adult passage. The Council will work with others to help the Corps obtain the necessary funds from Congress

i. See also page 141: The Council will also work with regional governments and others to help the Corps of Engineers obtain from Congress the needed appropriations to maintain and rehabilitate the dam infrastructure vital to effective dam operations and fish passage.

ii. See also H 50: Maintenance and rehabilitation of dam infrastructure

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • Council members delegation to D.C. • Staff to assess what information on infrastructure needs is currently available Future steps: • Staff-to-staff work with Corps on infrastructure needs and opportunities where we can assist • Council presentation on status of infrastructure and where there are immediate needs - could be from staff, Corps, and/or regional managers, depending on availability	Now	Council members Council staff Corps staff Managers Congressional delegation

• Comprehensive report from Corps on status of their assets • Once list is available, establish ongoing process to prioritize or identify funding sources, etc. • Potential to combine infrastructure maintenance (spillway weirs) with PIT antennae installation • Council selects priorities and develops letters of support, makes phone calls, or visits D.C. • Council members sign on to regional requests or priorities • See section below on “whole of government”		

3. 2026 Program Priority: Predation (PM 2, 6, 7)

a. Effectively assess and manage predation in the areas most likely to increase salmon and steelhead survival. Additional, possibly substantial investments in predator management by the federal agencies are needed. The Council commits to helping convene a work group for this ongoing assessment and to facilitate coordination efforts

i. See also Predator management PM 2- The Council will convene a workgroup comprised of individuals from federal and state agencies and tribes to develop both a short-term and long-term plan to address significant predators of salmon and steelhead and other native fish.

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • Staff currently identifying current predation topics and scheduling Council presentations Future steps: • Staff work with region to identify what existing workgroups cover on predator management, where the gaps are, and look for opportunities or needs for a system-wide, multi-taxa assimilation of these efforts (the biggest benefit may be in facilitating communication among taxa-level workgroups) • Identify the right structure, function, and membership of any workgroup, or alternatively if Council would be supporting an existing workgroup in some capacity • State of the science review through ISAB • Science-policy forum with potential annual discussion • Council presentations/ updates on existing predator management efforts and emerging needs and outputs from workgroup discussions	This is a high priority and is ready for implementation	Council staff Council members Federal agencies F&W managers Researchers RCF Others TBD

4. **Strategy: Wildlife Mitigation, Measure: W 6**- The Council will work with Bonneville and relevant fish and wildlife agencies and tribes to receive annual reports on progress toward completing settlement agreements for remaining construction and inundation losses.

Tools	Timing	Participants
• Council staff already track any wildlife settlements that occur, along with property acquisitions or enhancement. • Measures in the 2026 Program strongly encourage Bonneville to settle remaining C&I losses. Doing so requires (1) knowing where the losses exist and who the relevant settlement parties are, (2) negotiating a settlement that includes all relevant parties and sufficient funding for long-term O&M, and (3) identifying the financial pace at which these settlements could occur. First step: • Staff conversations with Bonneville and managers to figure out what the challenges are and a path forward Future steps: • Bonneville annual presentation on wildlife mitigation and any progress toward developing new agreements • Presentation from different wildlife managers if they are attempting to settle and wish to engage the Council in their efforts and get Council support. • If progress is not evident, the Council can write letters to Bonneville or potentially help Bonneville secure treasury funds to back settlement agreements…	Somewhat ongoing; somewhat new	Council staff Bonneville staff RCF Managers (need to identify which) Council members BPA leadership?

5. **Program Part Five: Concepts Guiding Adaptive Management, Section: Research**- The Council will, with federal and state fish and wildlife agencies and tribes, review and update its research plan every five years. The Independent Scientific Review Panel and the Independent Scientific Advisory Board will assist with updating the critical uncertainties…

Tools	Timing	Participants
• The research plan was most recently updated in 2017, following the 2016 update on the critical uncertainties. First Step: • Need to define how research plan will be useful to Council in the future as part of scoping update Future steps: • Identify status of progress toward RM&E in research plan • This topic is on the workplan for the ISAB for near-term implementation	Next year or two	Council staff Council members ISAB

6. **Program Part Two: Goals and Objectives, Objective: S2**- By the end of 2027, the Council requests a status update on the data needs and process to evaluate existing targets or develop new targets for other species and runs.

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • Need to define "who" is providing a status update, "who" is responsible for developing new targets or a sample design, "who" would review the validity of any proposed targets Future steps: • Potential ISAB assignment- state of the science, data needs, sample design? Any products to review? Compare life cycle models? • Council presentations on multiple mortality sources, life cycle models and what contributes to SAR- environments, mortality sources, etc. • Need a rigorous process to define any survival goal- especially as it relates to the hydrosystem • Needs to be independent from people who make management or harvest decisions • Could be independent science report, panel discussion, published peer-reviewed report, science/policy forum, council presentation, • Last step is Council vote to adopt objective	New Timing TBD Defining "who" is a high priority	Council staff; regional or science representatives TBD; Council members

Additional topics to discuss:

State of the Science Review Related to Summer Hydro Operations

7. **Examine summer hydro operations**, taking into account and determining the relative importance of variables including but not limited to predation, water flow and temperatures, fish passage routes, stocks of anadromous and native fish, hatchery releases, biological benefits and power system impacts.

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • State of the science (ISAB review) or staff working with experts in the region to assemble information Future options: • Council presentation on recommendations from ISAB and/or staff work with region • Council presentations or panel discussions from experts • Workgroup or science-policy forum	Work may progress when possible, given current legal and policy factors	Depends on selected tool

Whole of government as a tool

The Program includes onsite and offsite actions, and we expect them to continue to be funded as they already are. The Program also identifies additional actions that could be taken or recognizes that the work under the Program is part of the tapestry of mitigation, restoration, conservation, and enhancement actions in the basin. As such, there are funding or implementation responsibilities that are broader than the ratepayer responsibilities.

Whole of government is about applying funding and authorities to specific issues associated with particular scales…this means that for every issue, we have to define the appropriate "whole" of government.

Examples:

- Issue could be maintenance of hydro infrastructure (i.e., infrastructure important for fish passage). The scale could be all federal dams, and the "whole" could be federal agencies and Congress…
- Issue could be invasive zebra, quagga, or other species of invasive mussel. The scale is calling on BPA and other relevant federal agencies to continue to assist the state-led prevention efforts, call on federal agencies to conduct commercial vessel

inspections at federal projects, and in the case of establishment, calling on Bonneville and other federal agencies along with FERC-licensed utilities to support rapid region-response and monitoring.

Whole of government is also about recognizing that if other government entities in the Basin don't do their part to fully mitigate issues within their purview, it negatively impacts outcomes from the F&W Program.

This is a high priority for the Council. It is somewhat new and also somewhat ongoing, as we have worked with Congress in the past to increase funding for certain activities- like the Corps watercraft inspection stations.

8. **Specific language from the Program on Whole of Government:**

Message from the Council (pg 5)- Encourage a whole-of-government approach in which funding, research, and monitoring are coordinated amongst entities including Bonneville, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation and others…

Part one: Legal and Social Context (pg 16)- The Council considers whole-of-government in this context to mean that 1) the Council expects substantial contributions from the federal agencies with responsibilities under the Power Act to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife impacted by the hydropower system, and 2) the Council encourages additional substantial contributions from Congress and other federal agencies and non-federal entities to address impacts to Columbia River Basin fish and wildlife from sources other than hydropower. The Council commits to working with other government entities in the basin to seek authorizations and funding from Congress to the federal agencies to complement and help make more effective the efforts funded by the ratepayers.

Page 141- The Council expects all the relevant federal agencies to increase their efforts to help implement the Programs near-term priorities to the benefit of Columbia River salmon and steelhead and other fish and wildlife…. The Council agrees with and embraces the recent emphasis on a "whole of government" approach to salmon and steelhead protection, mitigation and improvement, recognizing the shared responsibility of all the levels of government for the impacts to and solutions for Columbia River salmon, steelhead and other native fish and wildlife.

Page 141: The Council is further interested in seeing that all the federal agencies - the Corps, the Bureau, NOAA, Fish and Wildlife Service, and the land management agencies – obtain appropriations and use their authorities to implement much of the

needed increase in habitat and predator management activities with non-ratepayer, non-reimbursed funds.

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • For an issue, define existing federal authorities; define scope and scale of issue; define the need and appropriate "whole" of government to apply to the issue Future steps: • There are annual opportunities to coordinate with the congressional delegation and their staff on specific issues • Members can write letters • We can request presentations • Other tools are TBD as we continue to apply this concept to specific issues…	Somewhat new/ somewhat ongoing High priority	Issue-specific Council staff Federal agencies Managers TBD

Remaining implementation tasks

The task list presented in July contained 30 individual items. Many of these were related and shared the same tools. In the list below, some have been combined. The tasks are numbered for ease of reference and presented in the order they appear in the Program- beginning with strategies in Part Four, then Program Priorities (not already covered), then Part Five- adaptive management, Part Six- Program implementation, and Part Seven- Program Performance.

In identifying a set of tasks potentially ready for near-term implementation- Attachment A, staff considered the following: specific language in the Program, the level of interest around the topics, current status of implementation, whether a due date had been identified, and staff capacity and expertise across tasks (aiming to spread the work across multiple staff). The proposed tasks in Attachment A are not more important than any of the others (here in Attachment B) but represent a reasonable starting place. Any of the following remaining tasks could be prioritized for near-term implementation based on discussion in September.

Detail of implementation tasks and potential tools, in Program order

1. **Strategy: Mainstem Hydrosystem Flow and Passage, Measure: H 12**- Power system considerations:
    a. The Council will work with … operating agencies, federal and state fish and wildlife agencies and tribes to review, update, and implement procedures that accommodate power system and dam operation emergencies with the least impact on … fish …
    b. The Council will continue to investigate cost-effective power system strategies that improve ecosystem conditions for fish and wildlife, relax operational constraints adverse to fish and wildlife, and ensure the regional power system remains adequate, efficient, economical, and reliable.

Tools	Timing	Participants
• This is regularly implemented through annual planning and in-season management, and the Council participates in and tracks these groups. • The Council analyzes the questions outlined in 1b., above, as it develops both the F&W Program and the Power Plan. When additional issues arise, tools include presentations, letters on behalf of the Council, and Council	Ongoing	Council staff participation and Council member participation In existing forums

participation in regional management forums (e.g., RIOG).		

2. **Strategy: Mainstem Hydrosystem Flow and Passage, Measure: H 24**- The Council … supports continued investigations to refine operations at Libby and Hungry Horse dams that improve conditions for fish in or near those reservoirs and do not adversely affect fish in the lower river… The Council will assist in these discussions as necessary. Any significant findings or proposed changes should be reported to the Council.

Tools	Timing	Participants
• Staff discussions to identify any needed changes. • Reporting would occur at Council meetings and also be included in staff performance assessments	No near-term actions needed at this time. Track through time.	Montana project operators, FWP, CSKT, etc.

3. **Strategy: Mainstem Hydrosystem Flow and Passage, Measure: H 32**- The Council will review the outcome of the [HCC] FERC proceeding and, as appropriate, include in the Program relevant provisions recognizing the operations to benefit fish below the Hells Canyon Complex as part of the baseline flow measures of the Program.

Tools	Timing	Participants
• Council staff already track FERC proceedings, and the Council's Program is taken into consideration by FERC as they go through all stages of decision-making. • As the plan becomes available, staff will review and identify any potential flow measures that the Council should discuss. • The staff Could write these up in a memo and present to the Council.	Ongoing	Council staff

4. **Strategy: Habitat Restoration and Protection, Measure: HAB 46**- Engage an independent third party …to develop a standardized approach to calculate resident fish losses due to C&I…"

Tools	Timing	Participants
• This measure requires some further definitions. What information is available already? Who engages the third party, and	New	Council staff Resident fish managers

which areas of the basin are interested in pursuing resident fish loss assessments? Which resident fish are the focus? • Assessments should begin with developing a standardized, rigorous approach acceptable to all parties and the Council, and reviewable by independent science groups. • Managers from certain areas of the basin might initiate contact with staff on this issue • Staff would have to identify where resources exist to contract with a third party and what the specific expectations for that work would be. • Bonneville would have to fund the contractor. • The contractor would prepare a report and presentation to the Council. Loss assessment methods- particularly if desktop based- would likely differ throughout the basin because of varying data availability and different ability to use satellite imagery or other remotely sensed data sources.		ISAB Third party consultant Bonneville

5. **Strategy: Habitat Restoration and Protection, Measure: HAB 49**- develop… lists of habitat measures for other subbasins

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • Needs discussion before initiating. • Should lists be developed for other subbasins, the Council would accept them as measures Future steps: • Unclear whether we need a formal workgroup for this process at this time or whether the managers would initiate the process and we would respond.	New	Council staff Managers

6. **Strategy: Habitat Restoration and Protection, Measure: HAB 65**- The Council shall urge Congress to continue to provide funding… to protect and restore water quality in the Columbia River Basin…

Tools	Timing	Participants

• In some ways this is ongoing because it relates to preserving Program integrity. It is also new because it emphasizes a role for the Council and Congress • Letters • Coordination with delegation • Possible presentations by proponents to scope the issue	Somewhat ongoing/ somewhat new	Council staff Council members Project sponsors

7. **Strategy: Non-native and Invasive Species, Measure: NNIS 21**- Assist regional entities with legislative efforts to prevent the invasion and control the spread of non-native invasive species in the Columbia Basin.

Tools	Timing	Participants
• This has been an area of recent increased engagement, particularly regarding zebra/ quagga mussels. • Tracking through presentations • Council could support rapid response efforts when an invasive species is detected, and there is an immediate response requiring regional coordination • Council could write letters of support to state legislatures to increase prevention efforts, prioritize funding for control actions, and fund post-control monitoring….	Ongoing	Council staff Council members Project sponsors

8. **Strategy: Plume and Nearshore Ocean, Measure: PNO 12**- Ocean and Plume Science and Management Forum and science/policy exchanges

Tools	Timing	Participants
• Science-policy forum • We hold these meetings approximately every other year	Ongoing, periodic Targeting early 2027	Staff work with NWFSC to set up; Broad participation (100+ attendees)

9. **Strategy: Artificial Production, Rationale**- The Council will ensure that research, data collection, and reporting methods allow for meaningful evaluation of hatcheries and

fish propagation measures at both the local and landscape level, to ensure consistency with Program goals and objectives.

Tools	Timing	Participants
• Council uses the hatchery tracker and also reports on goals and objectives. • There is a standing informal hatchery workgroup that meets periorically • ISRP has reviewed hatchery practices. • New facilities undergo three-step review and new Programs undergo scientific review. • Staff bring presentations to the Council- e.g., on LSRCP- and review results of their efforts and discuss challenges.	Ongoing	Council staff Managers ISRP Council members

10. **Strategy: Artificial Production, Measure: AP 13**- develop … lists of hatchery measures for other subbasins

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • Needs discussion before initiating. • Should lists be developed for other subbasins, the Council would accept them as measures Future steps: • Unclear whether we need a formal workgroup for this process at this time or whether the managers would initiate the process and we would respond.	New	Council staff Managers

11. **Strategy: Subbasin Plans** - Where warranted, the Council will receive these updated plans and identify a path for scientific review and adoption into the Program.

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • Managers contact Council on need to update subbasin management plans Future steps: • Any updates to subbasin management plans can go through Council and independent science review and be adopted. We are not soliciting updates at this time but would accept them any time.	As needed	Council staff ISRP Council members F&W managers

12. **2026 Program Priority: Hydro operations**
    a. The Council is emphasizing mainstem operations in this Program. In particular, the Council recognizes the importance of consistent, stable operations over the long term, including prioritizing operations that keep water flowing, increase velocities, and minimize fluctuations during peak juvenile migration.
    b. The Council is also committing to help establish one or more work groups to investigate further changes in operations, including updating flood risk management for reservoir operations, evaluating the specific parameters of limiting or allowing system flexibility to alter flow regimes, considering additional changes to increase velocities, and planning for preserving and rehabilitating passage infrastructure
        i. See also Mainstem Hydrosystem Flow and Passage H 17, H 33, H 44- fish travel time

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • Council solicits input from RCF Future steps: • Staff-to-staff conversations about which storage projects have potential for updated rule curves and who should participate in workgroup • Staff-to-staff conversations about other potential workgroup topics (e.g., travel time) and who the appropriate stakeholders would be to participate in a group. • Need to assemble technical information, identify appropriate workgroup structure and leadership, and other associated tasks. • Review and consult with the Council	TBD	Council staff Council member to chair Federal project operators RCF/ Managers Others TBD (e.g., stakeholders)

13. **2026 Program Priority: Habitat protection and restoration**
    a. Bonneville should continue the habitat restoration and protection efforts under the Program in the tributaries, mainstem reaches, and estuary at the same pace and scale as over the last decade at a minimum.
        i. See also Hab 49 (The Council expects that Bonneville will continue to implement habitat actions at the same pace and scale, with funding adjusted for inflation to maintain capacity.)

Tools	Timing	Participants

First step: • Council staff need to define what pace and scale mean in this context- could track using datasets in tracker or from expenditures report Future steps: • Annual presentation [1]from Bonneville • Data provided to staff for Program Tracker • Track and report on pace and scale	2027 and on	Council staff Bonneville staff Council members

b. The Council also supports work in the ocean to understand this critical environment and its influence on program effectiveness.

Tools	Timing	Participants
Continue implementing these tools: • Track project implementation and progress. • Annual presentation from NWFSC on results and implementation status • Continue coordination with Bonneville on project scope and F&W Program strategy • Continue Ocean and Plume Science and Management Forum • Ocean data in Program Tracker	Ongoing	Council staff NWFSC staff Bonneville Forum attendees Fisheries managers

c. The Council and others will also support efforts to obtain additional non-ratepayer funding for the Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, and other federal agencies to implement their existing and additional habitat protection and restoration activities, including significant mainstem habitat restoration.
    i. See also Hab 49 (To the extent the agencies and tribes seek to increase the amount, pace and scale of habitat restoration under the Program, at least a significant portion of the funding should come from the other federal agencies and non-ratepayer funding. Additional increases in Bonneville funding should be coupled with a clear understanding of the

[1]Topics include habitat restoration activities, potentially summarized geographically, by sponsor, and in relation to priorities, trends in funding for restoration, challenges and opportunities, and include relevant connections to the Tributary Habitat RM&E Strategy.

priority for this additional funding and the additional benefits to fish and wildlife expected to result.)

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • Staff work to define the need, including what is conceived of in the mainstem Future steps: • Council member letters or coordination • See Whole of Government discussion	Begin in 2027	Council staff F&W managers RCF Relevant federal agencies Council members

d. The Council will convene and facilitate discussion to identify an order of new habitat actions to implement that have the best potential to effectively increase juvenile abundance and productivity
    i. See also task 18- developing list of additional habitat actions

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • Convene RFC/ F&W managers and ISAB to scope topic Future steps: • ISAB development of criteria to identify and prioritize (1) appropriate restoration actions in different tributaries to improve productivity; (2) where juveniles are the life stage limiting increases in population abundance. Criteria should take into account factors such as climate change and geographic and species-based differences in habitat needs, or other relevant factors • ISAB presentation to Council on criteria • Potential staff work	TBD	Council staff RCF/ F&W managers ISAB

14. **Program Part Five: Concepts Guiding Adaptive Management, Section: Planning and Prioritization**- establish and convene science and policy workshops on topics relevant to contemporary decision-making, implementation, or identified critical uncertainties, …Near-term topics might include hydrosystem operations, predator management, invasive species, climate change and climate adaptation, or other Program topics.
    c. See also: Non-native and invasive species NNIS 18- facilitate … science/policy forums on non-native and invasive species issues, as appropriate.

Tools	Timing	Participants
• Any forum or workgroup would happen on an as-needed basis. • We bring in presentations regularly to elevate issues to the Council and region • We can also convene workgroups, panels, a science policy forum or a scientific review if there is a development that requires rapid response.	New- as needed	Council staff Council member to chair Relevant F&W managers Scientists Other attendees TBD

15. **Program Part Five: Concepts Guiding Adaptive Management, Section: Reporting**- Bonneville should continue implementing a concise, useful template for annual reports for research and monitoring projects …. The Council will continue to work with Bonneville and the ISRP to identify and assemble the information needed to produce an annual summary of results for Council review.

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • Staff discussion with Bonneville on whether the existing template is satisfactory or if updates are needed. Future steps: • Staff discussion with the ISRP on what info is needed • Follow up with Bonneville on any ISRP suggestions for reporting	Ongoing	Council staff Bonneville staff ISRP

16. **Program Part Six: Provisions for Program Implementation, Section: Coordination**- …as needed, the Council will convene a forum of … regional coordination representatives to discuss Program-related issues…

Tools	Timing	Participants
• The RCF is a long-standing forum of entities that receive regional coordination funds. It can be called as needed or on a regular basis but typically meets at least once per year. • At times the coordinators are asked to bring their topical experts to certain meetings to help advance specific issues related to topics such as white sturgeon, Pacific lamprey, monitoring, fish management, wildlife, etc.	Ongoing; We anticipate an RCF meeting within the next 6 months.	Managers receiving coordination funding; Council staff; Council Fish and Wildlife chair usually chairs the meeting

17. **Program Part Seven: Provisions for Tracking and Reporting on Program Performance, Section: Performance indicators**- the Council will convene the workgroup to discuss the feasibility of adding these candidate indicators to the Program Tracker. In addition, the workgroup may be convened to identify, evaluate, and refine other indicators in the future.

Tools	Timing	Participants
First step: • Staff and PA are refining the website and updating datasets for existing indicators Future steps: • Staff will convene the existing indicators workgroup (overlaps with RCF) to review the website and existing indicators • Workgroup will identify any needed new indicators, subject to the same criteria[2] used in the past	Ongoing; In late 2027, staff will convene the existing indicators workgroup	Standing workgroup (overlaps with RCF), with experts invited as appropriate

[2] Data must exist and be readily accessible, indicators are relevant at Program scale- not just at individual project scale