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January 3, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Peter Paquet, Manager, Wildlife and Resident Fish

SUBJECT: Subbasin Regional Coordination Issues (Level 3)

Proposed Action

This item does not require a formal decision by the Council. Based on the Fish and Wildlife Committee discussions, the Council may choose to direct the staff to implement actions consistent with current Council policies.

Background

At its last two meetings the Fish and Wildlife Committee discussed several concerns with the Subbasin Planning "Level 3" process. Specifically, there was a concern with what was characterized as "a lack of direction or organization" associated with RCG meetings and confusion over the origin some products of regional significance such as the paper on modeling assumptions for "out of basin" effects. This paper looks at some of the causes of these problems and offers some solutions for discussion.

To provide context for this discussion, the language below, excerpted from the Master Contract, summarizes the three-tiered infrastructure for subbasin planning:

"The Council, after consulting with state, tribal and federal entities, has developed an infrastructure for subbasin planning that will provide the framework for developing local subbasin plans, and coordination and oversight for the of the entire process. The infrastructure is comprised of three administrative levels: 1) subbasin, 2) statewide/provincial/tribal, and 3) regional). Subbasin plans will be developed at the subbasin level by a lead entity(s) that works on behalf of broad interests in the subbasin including fish and wildlife managers, local interests and stakeholders, and that is contractually responsible for producing the subbasin plan. A group at the state /provincial/tribal level provides coordination and project management function, a policy forum and technical support for the subbasin leads. In some cases, the body at this level may be at a smaller scale, such as an ecological province or the geographic areas covered by Washington state's regional salmon recovery boards. The regional coordination group functions in an advisory role to the Council on basin -wide policy and coordination issues as well as issues raised at the statewide/provincial/tribal level."

Regional Level 3

Regional functions occur at two levels. The first, regional coordination, deals with subbasin planning issues that have basin-wide implications. The second deals with regional technical issues such as mainstem survival assumptions to be used for anadromous fish populations, as an example. The specific tasks for each of these elements are described in the Master Contract and are attached for your reference (Attachment 1). Regional coordination tasks include the creation of a Regional Coordination Group with specific membership and functions outlined in the Master Contract::

"Regional Coordination Group: This group will be chaired by the Council Chair, and comprised of representatives from USFWS, NMFS, tribes, Bonneville, and statewide/provincial/tribal coordination group representatives to provide advice and recommendations to the Council on subbasin planning policy issues that arise during the course of subbasin planning. Issues may, for example, include interstate and transboundary issues, overall schedule, budget issues and ESA consistency. This group provides a forum for advising the Council and is not a decision making body."

"The RCG will provide advice and recommendations to the Council on region-wide issues such as federal and tribal coordination, interstate coordination, overall schedule and budget allocation issues. The RCG will be chaired by the Council and be represented by the 13 basin tribes, NMFS and USFWS, Bonneville, and representatives from the four-statewide/provincial/tribal coordination groups. The RCG will consider both regional coordination and regional technical support issues."

The following information outlines issues of concern regarding specific tasks associated with Level 3. Following each issue are possible solutions.

Issue 1: Group Definition

As described above, the Regional Coordinating Group (RCG) is a policy level committee with responsibility for making recommendations on Subbasin planning efforts that are regional in nature and coordinating and directing regional technical efforts associated with Subbasin Planning. Membership in the RCG is intended to represent the regions highest-level decision makers or their designated substitutes and the membership is defined in the Master Contract. The Master Contract defines the specific regional tasks that are to be coordinated by the RCG. The role of the RCG is to deal with policy related issues related to these tasks, and make recommendations to the Council on regional level technical contracts and policy issues. At this point, there appears to be some confusion among subbasin planning participants as to their particular roles and responsibilities at "Level 3". Staff believes that this has led to some confusion about both membership and expected level of participation.

Possible Solution: Designate Participants

The Council could develop a letter of invitation to all RCG members, which spells out the expected roles and responsibilities of the RCG. In doing so, the Council should reiterate that the RCG is intended to be a high-level policy group representing the regions highest level policy makers from tribal, state and governments and their is an expectation that policy makers or their policy level designees will attend.

Issue 2: Regional Assessment Tools - Prior Efforts

Subbasin Planning, as described by the Council's 2000 Fish and Wildlife Program and the Master

Contract for implementation with BPA, calls for the development of several regional products for use by subbasin planners. These include several components of regional assessment tools (IBIS) and (EDT). A number of these products have been under development for several years and in many cases, their genesis predates the formal initiation of Subbasin Planning through the execution of the Master Contract with Bonneville. In several cases, these projects were being funded under earlier Council contracts associated with the Subbasin Assessment Process and the Data Needs Assessment. For the most part, these efforts were never formally brought under the purview of the RCG and this was the likely cause of much of the confusion with regard to their relationship to the Level 3 process. For example, there was uncertainty to the origin of draft "Out of subbasin effects" document. Some of this confusion is likely related to the expiration of most of the contracts that were addressing these issues. Most expired at the end of September 2002. In several cases work directly related to subbasin planning was picked up by new contracts under the Master Contract (Mobrand Biometric, Northwest Habitat Institute, USDS Forest Service, etc.) and in other cases it was not. Several products got lost in the shuffle between processes.

Possible Solution: Bring Ongoing Regional Efforts under purview of RCG.

The Council should assess all ongoing regional efforts that are intended to produce products for use in subbasin planning. All such efforts should be coordinated through the RCG and the Council to ensure regional consistency with the Program and the Biological Opinion as well as constancy with contractual obligations for Subbasin Planning. This should ensure that regional Subbasin Planning products will be produced in a manner that is transparent and regionally acceptable and that all such efforts will be coordinated through the RCG and the Council.

Issue 3: No Regional Technical Forum

Observations from recent RCG meetings indicate that many of the issues discussed had not been developed to the extent that they were ready review by RCG. The majority of the meeting attendants were technical and mid-level policy staff from tribal, state and federal agencies and it was clear from the conversations that this was the first time that most of the issues had been discussed at the regional level. Because of the lack of previous regional discussion, it was difficult to reach consensus on many topics.

Possible Solution: Provide for Regional Technical Forum

There is no regional forum for discussing regional level issues. Such a forum needs to be established so that subbasin Level 2 designees and their federal recovery planning counterparts can meet on a regular basis to ensure that technical issues (models and assessments) can be addressed in a manner that will be mutually beneficial to Technical Recovery Teams and Subbasin Planners. The RCG could authorize such a subcommittee or the Council could direct staff to convene such meetings. This type a meeting was held last December, when Council staff brought together the statewide project managers in each of the four states to talk with members of the Federal Caucus. The project managers had the opportunity to present a status report to the federal agencies on the approach and progress within their state. Also, they were able to discuss

points where federal participation is appropriate and desired and also issues of concern for the states. Staff believes that if these types of meetings were held in advance of the RCG meetings, it would ensure that the issues brought before RCG would be presented in concise and defined manner.

Attachment 1

Statement of Work - Regional Coordination

Work Element	Task	Deliverable	Start	Finish	Cost	Detail (Attachment)
1. Regional Coordination	Council will create and support a Regional Group to advise Council on subbasin planning issues with regional implications. Such issues may, for example, include overall schedule, budget, federal and tribal coordination, and interstate coordination. Council review and tracking of subbasin planning regionwide.	Advisory Group	03/02	12/04	\$200,000 (2 yr)	
	1.1. Council will assemble a group of representatives to advise the Council on subbasin planning issues with regional implications.	Create Regional Group	03/02	04/02	N/A	
	1.2. Council will provide support to Regional Group by staffing and conducting meetings with regional coordination group; make reimbursements for necessary expenses for Regional Group meetings.	Staff Support	04/02	12/04	\$10,088.65 (1 yr)	See Attachment A
	1.3. Council will establish a mechanism by which NMFS and the USFWS will review and endorse subbasin plans. Council will coordinate ESA recovery efforts and subbasin planning.	Coordination	Ongoing		N/A	
	1.4. Council will coordinate/consult with the region's Indian Tribes.	Coordination	Ongoing		N/A	

Work Element	Task	Deliverable	Start	Finish	Cost	Detail (Attachment)
	1.5. Council will coordinate with resource management agencies regarding the relationship between subbasin planning and resource management planning	Coordination	Ongoing		N/A	
	1.6. Council will coordinate with statewide/provincial/tribal coordination groups to establish appropriate coordination group(s) within each state. Conduct progress reviews; monitor funding allocations, and schedule progress on a statewide level.	Coordination and staff support	05/02	04/04	\$26,903.08 (1 yr)	See Attachment A
	1.7. Council will review and track progress of subbasin level work region-wide. Review statements of work, budgets and schedules for subbasin lead entities. Review subbasin allocation funding, progress reports and draft subbasin plans. Meet quarterly with statewide/provincial/tribal Coordination groups to review overall statewide progress.	Review and track subbasin level work			\$22,331.54 (1 yr)	See Attachment A
	1.8. Council will review the award of contracts with secondary entities within subbasins (co-leads or supporting organization)	Contracts	04/02	12/02	N/A	
	1.9. Council will manage all subbasin and statewide/provincial/tribal level contracts. Prepare contracts and proposed amendments. Pay contractor invoices and prepare expenditure reports. Prepare and execute amendments to the master contract to reflect subcontract activities.	Contract administration of level 1 & 2 contracts			\$27,057.69 (1 yr)	See Attachment A
	1.11. Council will initiate ISRP review and	Review and			N/A	

Work Element	Task	Deliverable	Start	Finish	Cost	Detail (Attachment)
	incorporate results into issue paper.	document issues				
	1.12. Council will initiate public review and incorporate results into issue paper.	Review and document issues			N/A	
	1.13. Council will coordinate/consult with region's Indian Tribes for consistency with legal rights.	Coordinate and document consistency			N/A	
	1.14. Council will coordinate with NMFS and USFWS for review and endorsement of subbasin plans for ESA use, where applicable. Incorporate results into issue paper.	Coordinate review and document issues			N/A	
	1.15. Council will prepare final report and recommendation to Council for adoption of each subbasin plan.	Final report and recommendation			N/A	
	1.16. Council will adopt subbasin plans into Fish and Wildlife Program, applying substantive and procedural requirements of the NW Power Act.	Adopted subbasin plans	12/03	12/04	N/A	

2. Regional Technical Support	Council will provide regional-level technical support basin-wide (assessment, coordination and information management) and provide out-of-subbasin assumptions.	Verify data sets and update model runs	03/02	12/03	\$1,193,500	
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	2.1. Council will establish a regional technical group that will meet regularly to coordinate technical products associated for subbasin planning.	Written reports from meetings	Ongoing		N/A	See Attach B
	2.2. Council will prepare a report on out-of-subbasin effects.	Out-of-subbasin effects reports	04/02	06/02	\$29,886 (1 yr)	B
	2.3. Council will provide staff support for regional and subbasin-level technical support.	Monthly status reports	04/02	12/04	\$71,246.40 (1 yr)	B
	2.4. Council will establish and maintain a liaison to coordinate subbasin planning with NMFS's Technical Review Teams and USFWS's bull trout recovery teams.	Monthly status reports	04/02	12/04	\$44,811.84 (1 yr)	B
	2.5. Council will provide written guidance to statewide/provincial/tribal technical support teams regarding procedures for implementing subbasin and province-level biological assessments, including sample products and descriptions of information sources and available analytical tools.	Report to provide technical details for subbasin assessment tasks contained in <u>Technical Guide for Subbasin Planners</u> , Doc 2001-20.	04/02	06/02	\$9,988.68 (One-time)	B
	2.6. Council will establish and maintain an Ecosystem Diagnosis and Treatment (EDT) support function, including providing appropriate training for technical support team members in the scientific concepts and analytical tools that will be applied to subbasin assessment.	Educational workshops and other specified products	04/02	12/04	\$112,344 (1 yr)	B

	2.7. Council will establish and maintain a wildlife technical support function.	Educational workshops and other specified products	04/02	12/04	\$74,492.16 (1 yr)	B
	2.8. Council will refine resident salmonid species/habitat rules and information on resident salmonid population dynamics.	Resident Salmonid Rules	04/02	07/02	\$29,850.46 (One-time)	B
	2.9. Council will maintain and enhance the Internet version of the EDT model, including EDT databases and online tools.	A server administration log that tracks use, backups, system errors, corrections, enhancements.	04/02	12/04	\$28,387.38 (1 yr)	B
	2.10. Council will establish and maintain a web-based system for accessing and transferring subbasin planning information.	Web-based info system	04/02	12/04	N/A	B
	2.11. Council will, through Bonneville, establish and maintain a system for managing and accessing spatial data over the Internet using Internet Mapping System (IMS) software.	IMS	04/02	12/04	\$59,928.92 (1 yr)	B
	2.12. Council will, through Bonneville, produce and provide basic geographic information system (GIS) products and services for subbasin planning.	Maps	04/02	12/04	\$59,928.92 (1 yr)	B
	2.13. Council will provide fish productivity and related species data to planners.	Data	04/02	12/04	\$59,928.92 (1 yr)	B
	2.14. Council will provide library services to subbasin planning including dissemination of literature and storage of subbasin plan products.	Bibliography info and other library services	04/02	12/04	\$49,940 (1 yr)	B

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