

FRANK L. CASSIDY JR.
"Larry"
CHAIR
Washington

Tom Karier
Washington

Gene Derfler
Oregon

Melinda Eden
Oregon

NORTHWEST POWER PLANNING COUNCIL

851 S.W. SIXTH AVENUE, SUITE 1100
PORTLAND, OREGON 97204-1348

JUDI DANIELSON
VICE CHAIR
Idaho

Jim Kempton
Idaho

Fax:
503-820-2370

Phone:
503-222-5161
1-800-452-5161

Internet:
www.nwccouncil.org

Ed Bartlett
Montana

John Hines
Montana

January 7, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Lynn Palensky and Brian Allee

SUBJECT: Imnaha Subbasin Planning Contract

Proposed Action

Staff recommends that the Council authorize the Executive Director to negotiate a contract with ecovista for development of the Imnaha Subbasin Plan, as approved by the Oregon Subbasin Planning Coordination Group (Group) (see attached letter). The total projected cost of completing this work is not to exceed \$118,279.

Background

Ecovista is a consulting firm working under the direction of the Nez Perce Tribe (NPT), which is the lead entity designated by the Oregon Group. Ecovista and the Nez Perce tribe will be working with a planning team formed largely from members of the Wallowa County Natural Resource Advisory Committee and the grand Ronde Model Watershed Council. A technical team consisting of local scientific experts will complete the assessment with assistance from the Oregon Level II Technical Team. The proposed workplan for the Imnaha follows the Oregon Specific Guidance, which incorporates the criteria in the Council's Technical Guide for Subbasin Planners. *The proposed workplan and budget which have been sent to you electronically, are available on the Council's website at www.council.org/news/agenda.htm.*

Proposed Schedule and Budget

The Imnaha workplan proposes to submit a subbasin plan to the Council in May 2004. The Group has approved the funding allocation for the Imnaha workplan, which will not exceed \$118,279 for FY03/04.

January 7, 2002

Lynn Palensky
Subbasin Planning Coordinator, NWPPC
851 SW Sixth Avenue, Suite 1100
Portland, OR 97204-1348

The Nez Perce Tribe, the lead entity for the Imnaha River Subbasin, submitted a work plan for subbasin planning in the Imnaha Subbasin to the Oregon Subbasin Planning Coordination Group (OSPCG) for review before forwarding it to the Northwest Power Planning Council.

The work plan has been reviewed and approved by both the Oregon Subbasin Planning Project Manager and the OSPCG. The Project Manager and the OSPCG join the Nez Perce Tribe in requesting Northwest Power Planning Council approval of this work plan.

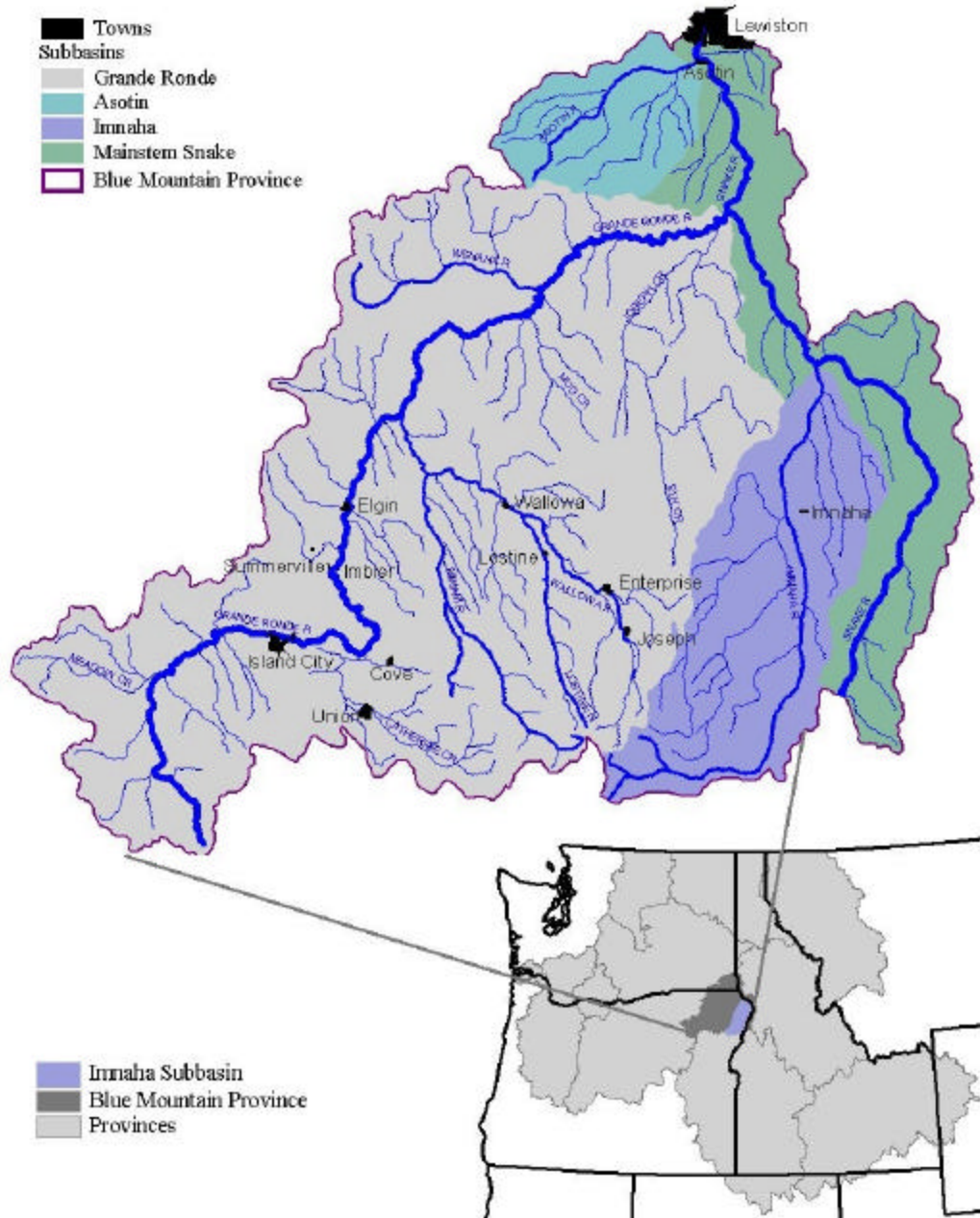
We appreciate the prompt attention by the Council and look forward to working together to complete the subbasin planning process in the Imnaha Subbasin.

Sincerely,

Gene Derfler
Oregon Member
Northwest Power Planning Council

Melinda S. Eden
Oregon Member
Northwest Power Planning Council

Attachments



Submitted by the
Nez Perce Tribe
January 6, 2003

Workplan for Completion of a Imnaha River Subbasin Plan

Purpose

The subbasin planning process aims to conduct a thorough scientific assessment to identify and evaluate the importance of factors affecting achievement of fish and wildlife goals and objectives, to define a vision and goals for fish, wildlife, and habitat in the Imnaha River subbasin, to define objectives that measure progress toward those goals, and to establish strategies to meet those objectives. This work plan outlines a plan of action to guide the development of the Imnaha Subbasin Plan. The subbasin plan will be used by federal agencies to aid recovery for species listed under the Endangered Species Act and will be evaluated for consistency with the Clean Water Act, federal treaty and trust responsibilities with the basin Native American Tribes, and the Council's 2000 Fish and Wildlife Program. This subbasin plan is intended to serve as a building block in developing an ESA recovery plan and will incorporate the elements in NOAA Fisheries' Local Recovery Plan Guidelines insofar as they are provided to the Lead Entity by NOAA Fisheries and/or do not impose work on the Lead Entity beyond what is in the Oregon Specific Guidance. The plan will be submitted to the Northwest Power Planning Council (Council) as a recommendation for possible adoption into the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. The Imnaha River Subbasin Plan will follow the subbasin planning guidance adopted by the Council and the Oregon Specific Guidance adopted by the Oregon Coordinating Group.

Project Schedule and Deliverables

The planning process is expected to begin in February 2003 and will conclude May 2004. The final subbasin plan will be submitted to the Council for review for adoption into the program in May of 2004. The project will continue for another six months after submission to respond to comments by the ISRP, the Council and the public. We expect the following schedule:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| At end of 9 months | Complete subbasin assessment, including species characterization and status, environmental conditions, ecological relationships, and limiting factors. The management plan work will be well underway by this time. (November 2003) |
| At end of 9 months | Complete inventory of existing activities. (November 2003) |
| At end of 11 months | Complete a public review draft of the plan. Since the plan will be a work in progress, members of the planning and technical committees will be seeing drafts throughout the process. (January 2004) |
| At end of 15 months | Completed the final version of the plan for submission to the Council in May 2004. |

Organization

Lead Entity

Nez Perce Tribe (NPT) will serve as the lead entity and fiscal agent, managing the contract with the Council and contracting for other services, as required, to prepare the subbasin plan. The NPT will oversee the contractor in implementing the project, will keep the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee and Oregon Coordinating Group informed of progress on the project, and will interact with the Council and state policy teams to represent the project. In addition, the NPT has considerable technical and information resources for this subbasin, which will be integrated into the effort as required.

Contractor

The NPT will subcontract with ecovista for services to carry out the project. The subbasin coordinator (from ecovista) will be Darin Saul, who will work in coordination with Dave Johnson and Ira Jones from the NPT. The coordinator's responsibility is to provide leadership through the process, to serve as a contact point, and to coordinate communication between the various players. Ecovista staff will work closely with the Planning Team and the technical teams to compile, edit and write the draft assessment, inventory, management plan and subbasin plan. Ecovista was chosen as the contractor for several reasons. These include expertise in planning (over 20 similar projects completed in the Snake River Basin), continuity through the process (ecovista wrote the subbasin summary and an aquatic assessment of the Imnaha), expertise in modeling and analysis (ecovista runs numerous digital and GIS based aquatic models and analyses, and has experience in wildlife, population and physical environment modeling), and a long-standing relationship working for the NPT within the natural resources and diverse stakeholders. Ecovista's experience and capabilities are further described on its website at www.ecovista.ws.

Ecovista will coordinate the development of the assessment, inventory and management plan for this project. This will include supplying technical expertise, technical writing, coordinating outreach and public involvement for the project. Ecovista will work closely with Ira Jones and Dave Johnson from the NPT in the coordination and implementation of all project activities.

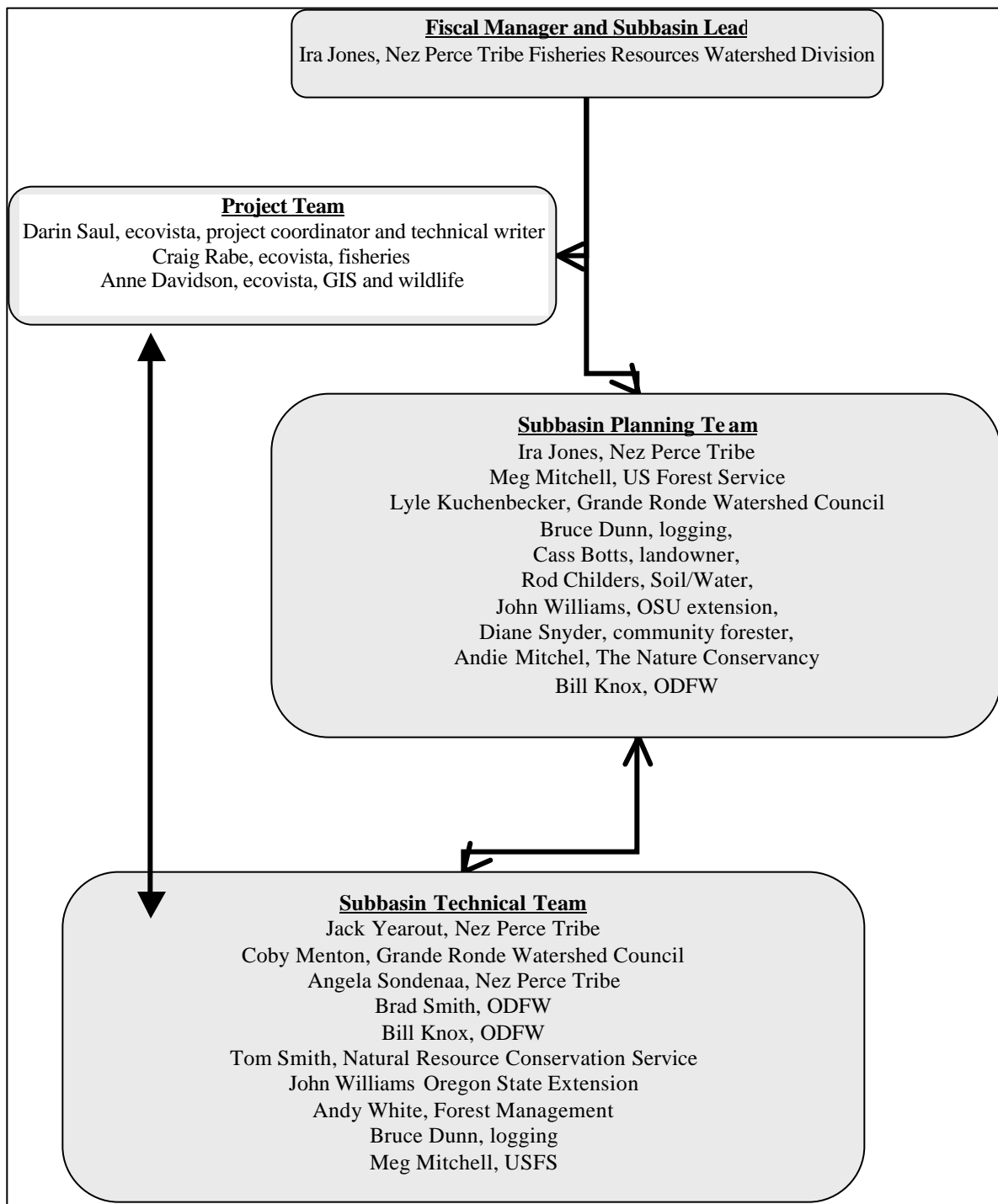
Planning Team

A Planning Team has been organized for the subbasin. This Planning Team has members drawn from the Wallowa County Natural Resource Advisory Committee (NRAC) and the Grande Ronde Watershed Council. Both groups have committed to participating in the planning and technical committees for this project on their own time. These two groups are composed of representatives from government agencies with jurisdictional authority in the subbasin, fish and

wildlife managers, and private landowners. The team's primary responsibility will be to help guide the public involvement process, participate in developing the vision and the biological objectives, and prioritize subbasin strategies. Regular communication and input among these team members at the inception of and throughout the planning process is critical. Planning Team members will be responsible for coordinating information, communication and acceptance of the subbasin plan by their respective organizations. Planning Team meetings will be held on a monthly basis. All planning meetings will be open to the public. The method of arriving at agreement/consensus for the management plan portion of the project will be decided at the first official planning meeting. It is anticipated that a "can live with" form of consensus decision making will be adopted that seeks consensus if possible and in most cases, but that allows for following majority decisions if the minority can "live with" it. In cases of severe, irreconcilable disagreement about an issue, multiple positions will be noted in the plan. The planning team listed in the following figure includes individuals recruited to date through the NRAC, Grande Ronde Watershed Council and other venues. This list will be expanded during the project.

Technical Team

The Technical Team will be comprised of scientific experts as well as key members of the Planning Team. Their primary responsibility will be to analyze scientific data as part of the subbasin assessment, and they will have the biological, physical, and management expertise to refine, validate, and analyze data that will inform the planners as they develop the management plan. The Technical Team will meet regularly during the development of the plan. The NRAC technical committee, the Grande Ronde Watershed Council, and numerous state and federal agency staff have committed to participating on the Technical Team on their own time. The specific individuals who have currently committed are included in the organizational chart. All Technical Team meetings will be open to the public. This team consists largely of the members of the technical committee of the Wallowa County NRAC, as well as additional fish and wildlife biologists familiar with the area. Key individuals at Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest are participating. The Technical Team listed in the following figure includes individuals recruited to date through the NRAC, Grande Ronde Watershed Council and other venues. This list will be expanded during the project.



Related Planning Efforts

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has recently initiated a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) process for the Imnaha. We have initiated discussions of collaboration between the subbasin planning process and DEQ's TMDL process. Although timing and focus are different for the two efforts, considerable possibility for collaboration exists. We anticipate integrating DEQ's work on temperature, in particular, into our planning effort, while our work on fish and wildlife will add definition to their delineation of affected beneficial uses. We will continue to coordinate with DEQ's effort to ensure minimum overlap and maximum shared benefit for both projects. Endangered Species Act (ESA) recovery planning is also occurring and the subbasin plan will incorporate the ESA recovery goals if they are available. We will coordinate with the NOAA Technical Review Teams (TRT) working on recovery plans.

The Wallow County Natural Resource Advisory Committee is in the process of updating their countywide plan. They have a longer timeframe than subbasin planning in the Imnaha, but it is anticipated that products of subbasin planning will be useful for their effort. Several of the products that they have been developing for their revised plan will be used in the planning effort, such as improved GIS layers.

Public Involvement

The subbasin coordinator will design and manage the public involvement component of the project under the direction of the Planning Team. The primary public involvement tools will include individual interviews, focus groups, public presentations and meetings, a newsletter and a website.

- A public kick-off meeting will be held to introduce the public to the project, to outline expected project goals and milestones, and participation process.
- Interviews of individuals recognized as leaders in public opinion will be conducted to scope out issues and to prepare participant lists and activities for the focus groups. The Planning and Technical Teams will provide the initial list of people to be interviewed.
- Focus group meetings will be held to identify stakeholder perceptions of issues and possible solutions in the subbasin. The focus groups will be composed of individuals identified by the Planning Team and through a chain referral process during individual interviews. In the chain referral process, during each interview names of individual people or groups who would be important participants in public involvement are solicited. The list of names is considered complete when, after talking to a number of people, the group of people identified is repeated frequently and no or very few new names are given.

- Public meetings targeting the public or specific public groups (organizations, service clubs) will enable individuals to hear and see information, talk to Planning and Technical Team members, ask questions and provide input into the planning process. The public will be invited to comment on the vision statement and objectives in particular, and on all components of the assessment and plan in general. These will serve as both public outreach informing the public about project results and what has been learned-and as public involvement-as a forum for receiving input directly from public participants through verbal and written comments.
- Two public meetings will be held to gather public comments on the draft plan, once the final review draft has been released. The meetings will be more formal than the focus groups and presentations, and their primary purpose will be to solicit public input and comments on the public review draft of the subbasin plan.
- Mailers and the project website will offer opportunities to those who want to be informed of project progress and who want access to project drafts. The primary means of dissemination will be electronic, through the website and email. But a hard copy version of project information and updates will be mailed to those who do not have access to electronic media. Final project products will be maintained on the ecovista (www.ecovista.ws) website until they can be incorporated into a regional website, whether that be at Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority, Streamnet or another organization.

Planning Tasks

Ecovista will prepare the subbasin plan using the NWPPC Technical Guide for Subbasin Planners and the Oregon Specific Guidance and the 2000 Fish and Wildlife Program. This work plan is designed to fulfill the requirements described in the Oregon Specific Guidance, and will follow the outline in Appendix C. The basic approach will be for ecovista to prepare chapters of the plan for review by the Technical and Planning Teams. Materials provided by the Oregon Subbasin Coordinating Group will be integrated into appropriate chapters. If the Planning and Technical Teams conclude that additional technical work is needed in order to prepare particular chapters, a technical committee appropriate to the issue will be formed and additional technical assistance will be obtained. State agencies will provide additional technical assistance as appropriate. The assessment will be based on existing data and plans. Public outreach and involvement will be built in at every stage of the planning process. The plan will be submitted to the Oregon Coordinating Group for review prior to finalizing the entire plan. The plan will be submitted for review at 75% completion.

Startup

The planning process has already begun in the Imnaha subbasin through the identification of Planning and Technical Team members and through the initial meeting of the Technical Team. The process will proceed upon signing of a contract with the Council. At startup the Project Coordinator will set up detailed project management tracking and accounting systems.

Ecovista will develop appropriate project management systems to track and manage the planning process. The project coordinator will announce the planning in local media. Technical and Planning Team meetings are already ongoing. Signing a contract will enable the contractor to begin fulfilling tasks necessary to follow the guidance of these teams. Ecovista will meet with others who may be interested in the planning process and discuss how they can participate. This will include key public officials and editorial boards important to the subbasin (i.e. in Wallowa County) to make them aware of the planning process and solicit their issues and concerns. A website has been established for use during the planning process, at www.ecovista.ws, and it will be publicized during the startup period.

Subbasin Assessment

An assessment is a key component of the plan. The subbasin coordinator will work to ensure that the Technical Team develops information required in the subbasin assessment, incorporates, where appropriate, public comment, and will help the team members write up the results of their work. Ecovista will gather up and send easily gathered and copied data not readily available on Streamnet or other regional data repositories and send to the Technical Outreach Assessment and Support Team (TOAST) for archiving. Other data and documents will be made available to TOAST staff to copy for regional archiving and accessibility.

Subbasin Overview. Ecovista will work with the Planning and Technical Teams to identify and gather existing plans, watershed assessments and reports on the Imnaha subbasin. Working with these documents, the Subbasin Summary, and the Imnaha Subbasin Aquatic Assessment, ecovista will prepare the subbasin description for review by the Technical Team. The overview will describe the geography, land ownership, biological and environmental situation in the subbasin. Information needed on how the Imnaha fits into the overall regional context will be provided by the TOAST and included in the overview. A draft overview will be reviewed in sections by the Technical Team.

Species Characterization and Status. The Technical Team will identify the focal species based upon ESA status, state-sensitive species lists, cultural importance and other factors. Based upon the list of focal species, ecovista will work with Technical Team members to delineate and characterize each species and the conditions needed to ensure their long-term sustainability in the subbasin. This work will utilize input from the TOAST to ensure consistency. The Technical Team will coordinate with the TOAST, NWPPC, and NOAA Fisheries on appropriate “out-of-subbasin” effects to apply to all anadromous fish populations. The USFWS and NOAA Fisheries will be contacted to obtain information on focal species.

Environmental Conditions. Ecovista will develop the description of existing conditions based upon the Subbasin Summary, existing plans, watershed assessments and existing data. This description will be reviewed by the Technical Team to ensure that it accurately provides a benchmark of the present situation.

Ecological Relationships. Ecovista will work with the TOAST and the Technical Team to prepare a written assessment of habitat population interactions for the focal species. This section will address key functional relationships, processes and functions of the focal species.

Limiting Factors and Conditions. Based upon the analysis of environmental conditions and analysis of ecological relationships, the Technical Team will identify the limiting factors and conditions that inhibit the ecological processes needed for sustainable populations of the focal species. The description and discussion of limiting factors and conditions will be reviewed by the Technical Team and documented, including data sources. The analysis of limiting factors and conditions will be integrated with work on the ecological relationships.

Interpretation and Synthesis. Key assumptions will be stated and the key factors that impede optimal ecological function and biological performance for the focal species will be identified. Near term opportunities will be identified based upon areas that are high priorities for protection, needed reference sites and high priority areas for restoration. Prudent interim strategies and actions will be described and prioritized. This work will be done by ecovista and the Technical Team with assistance from the TOAST.

Inventory

While the assessment is being done, ecovista will work with the Planning and Technical Teams to prepare the inventory of existing activities as outlined in the Oregon Specific Guidance. Current management strategies and restoration projects that are complete or on going will be briefly summarized. All Planning and Technical Team members and other organizations that may be involved in restoration work will be interviewed or surveyed. The inventory will be reviewed by both the Planning and Technical Teams.

Management Plan

Vision. The vision will be developed and written by Planning and Technical Teams in a process facilitated by ecovista. The vision will describe the desired future condition of the subbasin. The vision statement will be completed and available for public review by the eighth month of the project.

Biological Objectives and Strategies. The biological objectives and strategies will be developed based on the hypotheses generated in the assessment. They will explain how the limiting factors will be addressed and describe and quantify the resulting changes in biological performance of the focal species. The biological objectives will be developed by ecovista and the Technical Team with support from the Planning Team,

TOAST and, at a minimum, will incorporate the ESA recovery goals for salmon and steelhead. Economic and social objectives, as appropriate, will be developed by the Planning Team. Strategies will provide the basis for which actions can be developed in the future. Ecovista and the Technical Team will develop the initial proposed strategies, and the Planning Team will review them for necessary adjustments. The strategies will be directly linked to achieving the biological objectives. A data gap strategy will be included to ensure that any data gaps identified in the planning process are filled.

Consistency with ESA and Clean Water Act Requirements. Ecovista will work with the USFWS and NOAA Fisheries to evaluate consistency with ESA requirements and with DEQ to determine consistency with Clean Water Act requirements. The plan will explain how the objectives and strategies are integrated with recovery goals for listed species and TMDL implementation plans.

Research, Monitoring and Evaluation. Research needs will be identified to ensure that the critical assumptions in the analysis are addressed and data gaps filled. Additional monitoring and research studies needed for improved decision-making will be identified. This portion of the plan will be developed by ecovista with the guidance and review of the Technical Team, and will be reviewed by the Planning Team to ensure that it meets decision-making needs and priorities. The TOAST will assist with preparation of the monitoring and evaluation component.

Budget

The budget for the project is included in Table 1. This budget will serve as the budget for the subcontract to ecovista.

Table 1. Clearwater Budget

Personal Services			
	hourly rate	est. hours	TOTAL
Assessment			
Project coordinator	67	72	4824
Fish biologist	67	240	16080
Wildlife biologist	67	190	12730
GIS staff	67	230	15410
Writer/editor	67	200	13400
Subtotal			62,444
Inventory			
Project coordinator	67	18	1206
Fish biologist	67	20	1340
Wildlife biologist	67	20	1340
GIS staff	67	8	536
Writer/editor	67	40	2680
Subtotal			7,102
Management Plan			
Project coordinator	67	70	4690
Fish biologist	67	80	5360
Wildlife biologist	67	80	5360
GIS staff	67	24	1608
Writer/editor	67	400	26800
Subtotal			43818
Salary subtotal			113,364
Travel			
	days	rate	TOTAL
Assessment			
Per diem	14	40	560
Lodging	7	60	420
Mileage from Pullman to Enterprise (7 trips)	2100	0.365	766.5
Subtotal			1,746.5
Inventory			
Per diem	4	40	160
Lodging	2	60	120
Mileage from Pullman to Enterprise (2 trips)	600	0.365	219
Subtotal			499
Management			
Per diem	14	40	560
Lodging	7	60	420
Mileage from Pullman to Enterprise (8 trips)	2100	0.365	766.5
Subtotal			1,746.5
Travel subtotal			3,992
Services and Supplies			
Postage (\$14.29 per month for 14 months)			200
Printing, copying (10000 copies/.05 each)			500
Telephone (long distance charges)			223
Subtotal			923
Total costs			118,279

Assumptions:

1. The Imnaha Planning Team will meet monthly during the project.
2. Technical Team members will contribute their time without compensation from this project budget.
3. The Project Coordinator will submit monthly written progress and financial reports to the Oregon Coordinating Group and the Council. The Project Coordinator will coordinate with the Oregon Coordinating Group and the TOAST liaison throughout the process on all deliverables. The Project Coordinator will also convene technical teams, as needed. TOAST and the OCG will respond with support and communication in a timely fashion.
4. Approximately 5% (\$5,900) of the overall budget will be reserved for work necessary after submission to the Council.
5. TOAST will provide assistance to the Imnaha Planning Team as per the Oregon Specific Guidance, including providing timely guidance on preparation of the wildlife section of the Assessment.
6. The OCG and TOAST will review drafts of the Imnaha subbasin plan.

w:\lp\ww\packet materials\january 03\imnaha.doc