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April 30, 2003

### **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Fish and Wildlife Committee

**FROM:** Steve Waste, Manager, Program Analysis and Evaluation

**SUBJECT:** BPA Request for Expedited Funding of Proposal

#### **Action**

Bonneville Power Administration has requested a decision from Council to approve expedited funding for Proposal 35019, a Mainstem/Systemwide project addressing status and trend monitoring, and effectiveness monitoring.

#### **Recommendations**

We recommend that the Council approve expedited funding for Proposal 35019, subject to a three-phase approval process. The first phase is to finish the study design and undergo ISRP review of the completed plan. (Further funding should be dependent on the outcome of that review and a positive decision by the Council.) The second phase consists of implementing the monitoring pilot projects. The third phase is to expand the pilot efforts, but only as necessary and appropriate, to ensure a fair test of the effectiveness monitoring protocol.

#### **Background**

In its letter of April 16, 2003, Bonneville requested an expedited funding decision for three monitoring and evaluation proposals from the Mainstem/Systemwide project selection process. On April 21, a Council meeting was held to consider this request, at which Council members asked Bonneville for more information prior to making a decision. Council members posed questions addressing out-year costs, coordination with the states and Tribes, and the appearance of conflict of interest. On April 28, 2003 the Council convened a working session with Bonneville to discuss Bonneville's responses to the questions previously posed on April 21.

At the April 28 meeting, Bonneville explained that it had decided to narrow its previous request by withdrawing two of the proposals, 35007 and 35047. Proposal 35007 would evaluate the restoration potential of Snake River Fall Chinook salmon spawning habitat. Bonneville will await the Council decision in June on the Mainstem/Systemwide, allowing for consideration of

this proposal in relation to other fall chinook research projects. Proposal 35047 would evaluate delayed (extra) mortality associated with passage of yearling Chinook salmon smolts through Snake River dams. Bonneville stated that it is too late in the year to initiate this project and will await the Council decision in June on the Mainstem/Systemwide.

Bonneville also stated that at the May meeting it would brief the Council on a number of new proposals for which they will seek expedited funding decisions at the June Council meeting. Bonneville described implementation of these projects as critical to meeting the three-year check-in of the Biological Opinion for the Federal Columbia River Power System.

**ISRP Review of Proposal 35019** - In its "Review of Revised Mainstem/Systemwide Proposals for Research, Monitoring and Evaluation" the ISRP provided the following evaluation of proposal 35019:

Fundable. This is an excellent, well-organized proposal for Status and Trend monitoring and it addresses the question of monitoring the combined effects of multiple habitat actions over time. This version is expanded from the earlier version to include additional monitoring and evaluation components. The proposals would not only evaluate status and trend monitoring and include action-effectiveness monitoring but would also advance knowledge about the effectiveness of monitoring methods. Detailed objectives, tasks, and methods are provided. Extensive coordination with ongoing proposals is described. The ISRP strongly recommends funding of this proposal.

### **Analysis**

**General Rationale for Proposal 35019** - This proposal will develop two novel monitoring and evaluation programs. The first consists of subbasin-scale pilot status and trend monitoring efforts for anadromous salmonids and their habitat in the Wenatchee, John Day and Upper Salmon River basins. The second consists of effectiveness monitoring for suites of habitat restoration projects in selected watersheds within these subbasins. This work builds on current status and trend monitoring programs within each of these basins. However, the proposed work differs structurally from much of the ongoing status and trend monitoring work. Specifically, this project focuses on the explicit development and testing of the sampling protocols and methodologies required for generating habitat and population monitoring data of known spatio-temporal resolution, accuracy and precision. In addition, the proposed work expands on the utility of status monitoring data to explicitly address watershed-scale questions of habitat restoration action effectiveness.

**A Phased Approach to Project Implementation** - This project will be implemented in three phases. Phase I consists of the design and development of the status and effectiveness monitoring pilot program. Phase II consists of pilot scale implementation of the project in three Columbia River Basin subbasins, the John Day, Wenatchee and Upper Salmon Rivers. (Phase II cannot be initiated until the successful completion, assessment and evaluation of Phase I. The process by which Phase I tasks are evaluated will involve the subbasin co-manager groups participating in the design processes, but will also involve regional entities, as the goal is to develop a Columbia River Basinwide monitoring and evaluation program.) Phase III will

involve the expansion of the pilot projects to additional Columbia River Basin subbasins. (For more detail on objectives and tasks under each Phase, please see Attachment 1. Memo to Bonneville from NOAA Fisheries.)

**Cost of 35019** - The initial funding request for FY03 will cover Phase I and some work under Phase II. The estimated cost of accrual in FY03 is \$452,500. The FY03 annual budget is \$905,000.

**Implications to Budget for Mainstem/Systemwide Project Selection** - Out-year funding approval for 35019 beyond FY03 would be considered in the ongoing Mainstem/Systemwide review. In addition, Bonneville will seek Council concurrence before proceeding with Phase II of the project following the ISRP review of Phase I. Bonneville is also proposing to fund Phase III of this project with a separate placeholder for the expansion of this work to other Subbasins. Funding allocation to a placeholder for Phase III expansion would also be considered in the ongoing Mainstem/Systemwide review process. Implementation of Phase III work, if approved, would only proceed in the out-years after achieving the concurrence of the Council. The estimated cost for each of FY04, FY05, and FY06 is \$1,765,000 (For more detail, please see Attachment 2. Memo from Bonneville to Council Staff).

## **Attachment 1. Memo to Bonneville from NOAA Fisheries**

**Project ID:** 35019

**Title:** Develop and Implement An Integrated Subbasin-scale Status and Watershed-scale Effectiveness Monitoring Program for Salmonid Populations and Habitat as called for in the NMFS 2000 FCRPS Biological Opinion (Revised Proposal – resubmitted March 10, 2003 – Initial proposal title: Develop and Implement a Pilot Status and Trend Monitoring Program for Salmonids and their Habitat in the Wenatchee and Grande Ronde River Basins).

This proposal seeks to develop two novel monitoring and evaluation programs: (i) subbasin-scale pilot status and trend monitoring efforts for anadromous salmonids and their habitat in the Wenatchee, John Day and upper Salmon River basins, and (ii) effectiveness monitoring for suites of habitat restoration projects in selected watersheds within the three target subbasins. This work builds on current status and trend monitoring programs within each of these basins; however, the proposed work differs structurally from much of the ongoing status and trend monitoring work as it focuses on the explicit development and testing of the sampling protocols and methodologies required for generating habitat and population monitoring data of known spatio-temporal resolution, accuracy and precision. In addition, the proposed work expands on the utility of status monitoring data to explicitly address watershed-scale questions of habitat restoration action effectiveness.

(i) The status and trend monitoring program for anadromous salmonids and habitat in the Wenatchee, John Day and upper Salmon River basins will serve three major data collection efforts:

- At the scale of the subbasin, assess on an annual basis the status of adult populations of anadromous salmonids.
- At the scale of the subbasin, assess on an annual basis the population status or productivity of juvenile anadromous salmonids.
- At the scale of the subbasin, assess on an annual basis the status of salmonid habitat.

Data from the status and trend monitoring program will be used for a variety of resource management purposes. The primary utility of the information will be the annual assessment of status and resulting trend over time for these fishes and their habitat. However, this program will also support restoration action planning and assessment by serving as the baseline information used for action siting, and the baseline against which actions' biological impact could be measured.

(ii) The effectiveness monitoring program for assessing the watershed-scale impact of restoration actions in selected portion of the Wenatchee, John Day and upper Salmon River basins will explicitly address questions of action efficacy:

- At the scale of a watershed, what is the biological benefit to anadromous salmonid populations of the implementation of ongoing habitat restoration actions?

--Within and between target watershed in a single subbasin, what is the distribution of physical/environmental habitat condition as a function of ongoing habitat restoration actions?

Implementation of this project can proceed in a phased manner. Phase I will involve the design and development of the status and effectiveness monitoring pilot program; Phase II will involve pilot scale implementation of the project in three CRB subbasins (John Day, Wenatchee and upper Salmon Rivers); Phase III will involve the expansion of the pilot projects to additional CRB subbasins. At this time, the proposed scope of the project is to undertake Phase I and Phase II only.

Phase I involves the implementation of the following proposal objectives/tasks:

*Objective 1.*

Define cooperative agreements under which the salmonid and habitat status, trend and effectiveness monitoring program design, development and implementation will occur. Detailed cooperative agreements to partition the implementation of particular tasks during monitoring program development are needed. The development of the cooperative agreement will occur in parallel to the initial phases of monitoring program development (*Tasks* associated with *Objective 2*), but must be finalized prior to initiating *Tasks* associated with *Objective 3* and *Objective 4*.

*Objective 2.*

Develop a salmonid population and habitat status and trend monitoring approach with known accuracy and precision through field-testing of protocols and sampling design.

Phase II involves the implementation of the following proposal objectives/tasks:

*Objective 3.*

Implement the salmonid and habitat status and trend monitoring program developed in *Objective 2* through the cooperative agreement developed in *Objective 1*.

*Objective 4.*

Implement a watershed scale habitat restoration action effectiveness monitoring approach with known accuracy and precision through field-testing of protocols and sampling design.

The stated above, Phase II cannot be initiated until the successful completion, assessment and evaluation of Phase I objectives and tasks. The process by which Phase I tasks are assessed and evaluated will involve the subbasin co-manager groups participating in the design processes, but should also involve regional entities as the goal is to develop a CRB-wide monitoring and evaluation program.

## Attachment 2. Memo from Bonneville to Council Staff

To: Steve Waste, NWPPC

From: Jim Geiselman, BPA

Date: April 30, 2003

RE: Information for the May Walla Walla Council Meeting

This information is being sent to you for the Council decision on expedited funding of proposal 35019 (Develop and Implement an Integrated Subbasin-scale Status and Watershed-scale Effectiveness Monitoring Program for Salmonid Populations and Habitat), which is scheduled for action at the May 7 Council meeting in Walla Walla. Based on the ISRP review of this proposal and discussions with Council members on April 28, we are proposing to implement this BiOp critical work in a three-phased approach and limit the expedited funding approval to the FY03 annual budget estimate.

The phases of this work are:

Phase I - planning and design within 3 pilot subbasins

Phase II – monitoring and evaluation

Phase III - expansion to other subbasins.

Out-year funding approval beyond FY03 would be considered in the ongoing Mainstem/Systemwide review. In addition, we will seek Council concurrence before proceeding with Phase II of the project after ISRP review of Phase I. We are proposing to also separate out Phase III of the project as a separate placeholder for the expansion of this work to other Subbasins. Funding allocation to this Placeholder for Phase III expansion would also be considered in the ongoing Mainstem/Systemwide review process. Implementation of Phase III work if approved would only proceed in the out-years after seeking additional concurrence with the Council.

A more detailed description of the Phased approach to 35019 is attached (2.). The budget for these phases is as follows.

Phase I and II Budget:

Proposal 35019 - Develop and Implement An Integrated Subbasin-scale Status and Watershed-scale Effectiveness Monitoring Program for Salmonid Populations and Habitat	FY03 Cost Accrual \$ 452,500	FY03 12 mo cost \$ 905,000  Expedited Approval in Walla Walla	FY04  \$ 1,765,000  Mainstem and Systemwide Approval	FY05  \$ 1,765,000  Mainstem and Systemwide Approval	FY06  \$ 1,765,000  Mainstem and Systemwide Approval
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Phase III Budget:

Placeholder for 35019 Status and Effectiveness Monitoring Program expansion to other Subbasins	FY03 \$ 0	FY04 \$ 1,765,000 Mainstem and Systemwide Approval	FY05 \$ 2,265,000 Mainstem and Systemwide Approval	FY06 \$ 3,265,000 Mainstem and Systemwide Approval
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The Mainstem/Systemwide Province has a number of new BiOp critical proposals necessary for implementation to meet the BiOp three-year check-in and provide information needed for the 2005 and 20007 BiOp evaluations. BPA briefed the Council on these needs and cost estimates at the January Council meeting. We plan to provide an update to the Council about these proposals and estimated costs at the May meeting in Walla Walla.