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August 29, 2003

To: Council Members

From: Doug Marker, Director
Fish and Wildlife Division

Subject: Status review of fish and wildlife recommendations of the four Governors

Attached is an updated status summary of work towards the four Governors' recommendations for Columbia River fish and wildlife actions. I will review these with you at the Spokane meeting to determine if any additional information or action is needed.

In general, work to meet the recommendations is on schedule. Most recently, Bonneville and the Council's fish and wildlife committee met on August 26 to review budget management protocols that restore stability to the Fish and Wildlife Program's funding. We plan to move on to work on funding requirements and provisions for an agreement for the Bonneville rate case period of 2007-2012.

The Regional Coordinating Group chaired by Council Chair Danielson which meets to review subbasin planning is continuing to review progress on the recommendations involving ESA coordination and the use of subbasin plans for ESA requirements. That group met on August 27 and was attended by three of the Governors' staff. NOAA is scheduling a workshop on September 23 to develop definitions of assurances available under ESA that can result from completed subbasin plans.

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Current work on the specific fish and wildlife recommendations of the four Pacific Northwest Governors of June 5, 2003

Status as of August 29, 2003

Recommendation	Status
1. Biological Opinions should look to subbasin plans to guide habitat, hatchery and harvest actions in Columbia watersheds	NOAA and USFWS regularly review the progress and scope of subbasin plans in the Regional Coordinating Group. Most recently this was discussed at the RCG meeting of August 27. The next such meeting is in Portland on September 24. The two agencies have faithfully reiterated their reliance on subbasin plans. Specific expectations and questions for policy discussion are raised first within each state's subbasin coordination group and then as needed in the Regional Coordinating Group. This structure of communication is currently effective and can be monitored through reports to the Governors
2. State guidelines for population and ESU-scale recovery plans should be endorsed by NOAA and USFWS. State points of contact for this to be named by NOAA and USFWS by 9/1/03	Guidelines for ESU scale recovery plans need to be proposed by states and confirmed by NOAA. NOAA has designated staff to work with state organizations. NOAA's assistant regional administrator for recovery planning works directly with each state, the Council and represents NOAA at the Regional Coordinating Group.
3. Technical Recovery Team (TRT) process and products must be coordinated with subbasin planning and regional processes	NOAA has provided interim rebuilding targets for the Interior Columbia ESUs for use by subbasin planners for this round of subbasin plans. In the Willamette/Lower Columbia targets are available and recovery goals are being developed with in coordination with the states. The NOAA regional administrator offers that eventual TRT products for the Interior Columbia will be offered to subbasin planners for incorporation if desired but not required as a standard for any NOAA review.

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4. NOAA and USFWS should resolve with the Council and appropriate State organizations what legal assurances will be provided for approved subbasin plans and necessary procedural or review requirements by 12/21/03	NOAA staff are drafting approaches to possible incentives and regulatory assurances. NOAA is scheduling a workshop on the scope and requirements for legal assurances in Portland on September 23.
5. By fall, the Council should convene state, federal and tribal managers to integrate a monitoring system. The Council with the same partners should complete a draft systemwide research plan by 12/31/03. Establish an equitable plan for funding.	A federally drafted integrated monitoring plan is under final review by the NOAA Northwest Science Center. The Council staff is coordinating planned review by states and tribes through appropriate state organizations and through the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority for acceptance or proposed revision. Confirm that the draft plan has budgets and priorities. Council staff have convened regional independent scientific and economic reviewers for guidance on a regional research plan and are organizing measures of the Council's mainstem program amendments for inclusion. The research plan will be drafted on this schedule.

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6. Governors, Council and regional partners will seek congressional support for appropriations to meet federal commitments	The Administration has improved the coordination of budget presentations for Columbia River salmon recovery towards the desired "cross-cut" budgets but more geographical specificity and coordination mechanisms for implementation of subbasin plans is desirable.
7. Implement the Council Program including the Mainstem Plan as soon as is practicable. Develop a new funding agreement to be in place beginning in October, 2003	<p>Council staff have organized a meeting for September 5 with federal, state and tribal staff to schedule incorporation of the Council's mainstem amendments for the 2004 operation season</p> <p>Bonneville is developing its response to the Council's mainstem/systemwide project recommendations</p> <p>Bonneville and the Council are completing an agreement for stable program funding for 2004-2006. Work on a funding agreement for the 2007-2012 rate case will follow.</p>
8. Set clear goals, schedule and assignments	Continued collaboration among Governors and regional entities