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November 8, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Bruce Suzumoto

SUBJECT: Approval of planning and organizational funds to initiate APRE/subbasin plan integration process.

Proposed Action: Approve the attached budget to provide funding for the initial planning and organization of the APRE/subbasin planning integration process. This action will allow Bonneville to negotiate the necessary contracts for project implementation. The costs of these activities should not exceed \$68,500 and would be charged against the \$900,000 APRE placeholder in the FY05 budget.

Background: Staff and outside review indicated that many of the subbasin plans failed adequately to account for artificial production in their subbasins. Many plans that included artificial production strategies did not fully describe how that strategy was integrated with habitat related strategies to meet subbasin goals. Similarly, often plans did not clearly describe the artificial production strategy within the ecological context of the subbasin.

The Council staff proposes that the primary treatment for this problem come from the Artificial Production Review and Evaluation (APRE) and related initiatives as described below. Improvements and additional information will be incorporated back into the subbasin plans at a later date. For artificial production activities to be adequately addressed in subbasin plans:

- Hatchery production must be aligned with natural fish production, existing subbasin habitat and future habitat restoration efforts.
- Hatchery production should be integrated with natural fish production with the aim of lessening negative ecological interactions and mixed-stock harvest impacts.
- Subbasin plans should clearly articulate measurable objectives for hatchery escapement, natural returns and harvest needs.

The Council staff believes that the APRE process may be the best opportunity to make advancements on these questions. Future APRE work will assist subbasin planning by better integrating artificial production with local conditions. As part of a process to clarify basinwide artificial production objectives, we anticipate that the APRE process will include a series of meetings with hatchery operators and harvest managers to clarify harvest and production objectives. In those meetings, we will work with the assessment information from subbasin plans and production, harvest and recovery goals described in other plans, to attempt to ensure that hatchery production, habitat conditions and restoration efforts, and natural population status is accounted for and integrated. As a final product of these meetings we will attempt to articulate numeric objectives for hatchery returns, natural escapement and harvest needs in and out of the subbasin. These numeric subbasin objectives can then be aggregated into provincial objectives and provincial objectives into basinwide objectives. The products from these workshops will likely inform future iterations of subbasin plans.

The APRE will work with NOAA Fisheries and other regional entities to coordinate with ongoing ESA and other regional processes. We anticipate that this comprehensive project will ultimately include all Columbia River subbasins and encompass nearly 500 hatchery and natural stocks of fish.

Budget: The proposed action will provide funds to facilitate planning, organizing and performing initial coordination activities to implement this project. The total cost for the initial phase will not exceed \$68,500 and will be completed by the end of January 2005. After the initial planning and organizational activities are complete, a final budget for the entire APRE/subbasin plan integration project will be presented to the Council for consideration.