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November 9, 2004

To: Council Members

From: Subcommittee to Review the Fish Passage Center
Members: Derfler, Hines, Cassidy

Subject: Recommendations on Fish Passage Center Functions

Background on Subcommittee's Charge

The Council at its August meeting was presented with a request by the Fish Passage Center (FPC) to increase their 2005 budget to make up for a predicted shortfall of approximately \$145,000. There were three different categories used to explain the shortfall: 30% allocated to increased personnel and benefit costs, 30% additional computer hardware and software upgrades, and 30% to increases in office costs. In addition, FPC stated that maintaining the existing budget will create a shortfall of 18 full time FTE months. FPC stated that this FTE reduction will "severely reduce the ability of the FPC to carry out the tasks in the mainstem program", "including providing existing contract deliverables" and eliminating "data requests and technical information requested by the public." Because of the adverse effects from non-compliance of their contract, the Council Chair created a Subcommittee to review current FPC activities and budget and to determine if there are ways to maintain FPC activities, especially those tasks and analyses undertaken on behalf of the region's Tribes and state fish and wildlife agencies, while maintaining the existing budget as recommended by Council staff.

The Subcommittee is particularly aware of the current financial limitations that are constraining the Direct Program and the need to identify any and all opportunities to eliminate duplication or overlap. If the subcommittee and the Council are not able to identify and agree to efficiency savings with FPC, the budget issue with FPC remains. The Council, due to short-term funding realities, has flat-lined other fish and wildlife budgets for personnel and cost increases. Thus the Council, absent cost-savings by the FPC (an activity they are currently pursuing), will be faced with receiving less deliverables or approving a budget increase for one particular entity.

The Subcommittee began work immediately following the August Council meeting. The subcommittee has tried to systematically understand what the Council required from the FPC in the Program and to compare these functional requirements with what the FPC is currently doing.

Data acquisition and moving the funding entity from PSMFC to CBFWA were identified early in the process as potential areas for achieving better efficiencies and cost-savings for FPC. There have been a series of information requests and informational meetings with regional parties including: CBFWA, DART, FPC, NOAA's Science Center, PSMFC and others.

To allay some erroneous concerns voiced by parties outside the Council regarding the Subcommittee's intent, we note that one of our primary objectives, consistent with the Council Program, is to provide funding to FPC so that they may continue to conduct studies for their constituents -- tribes and state fish and wildlife agencies.

Background

The Subcommittee began its work by attempting to collect the latest information on the FPC budget and the functions that the current budget supports. A request for a breakdown of the FPC budget by the functions outlined in the Fish and Wildlife Program was sent on August 26, 2004. The letter indicated that the Council is interested in how FPC's resources are deployed to accomplish the functions identified in the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program and any additional functions that they are currently conducting.

The letter to FPC also recognized their charge to prepare an annual report to the oversight board and the Council, summarizing its activities and requested the latest annual report to better understand the functions the FPC performed during the previous year.

On September 1st, the FPC responded to the request for additional budget information in the following way:

"In response to your first question the following is a breakdown of the FPC budget by line item for 2005.

Personnel	\$1,075,466
Service & Supplies	\$ 179,029
Travel & Transportation	\$ 4,355
Non-Expendable Equipment & Materials	\$ 0
Indirect Costs	\$ 188,828
Total	\$1,447,678

Your second question requested a budget breakdown by function. As discussed above, based on BPA's contractual requirements PSMFC does not at the present time budget or account by function or activity....

Your third question requested a copy of our most recent annual report to the NPCC... The most recent mainstem amendment process added an additional, unfunded project deliverable, annual report requirement for an annual report summarizing the FPC activities and accomplishments for the year. The FPC Oversight Board has directed that the annual activities accomplishments report be submitted to the Oversight Board in November of each year. Our most recent Fish Passage Center annual report, Comparative Survival Study report and Adult Facilities Inspection report are on the FPC web site at www.fpc.org."

This response made it difficult for the Subcommittee to identify specific areas where there might be inefficiencies or duplication with other database management and data dissemination efforts. However, a more detailed budget was located in materials sent to the FPC Oversight Board and is attached as Attachment 1. This information provides additional information on the allocation of the total FPC budget by accounting category but does not provide an indication of how these funds are allocated to perform the functions outlined in the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. The majority of FPC's costs are personnel and staff related. The following is a breakdown of the staffing costs for FPC. The total salaries are marked up approximately 41 percent for benefits and medical expenses. In addition the entire budget is marked up an additional 15 percent for PSMFC overhead.

PERSONNEL SERVICES DETAIL	(2004)
Position Grade/Step	
Manager 14/6 & 14/7 MD	\$97,216
Biologist 12/10 LB	\$49,932
(Field Coordinator @.667 FTE)	
Biometrician 12/10 TB	\$75,648
Biologist 13/4 & 13/5 MF	\$77,652
System Administrator 12/9 HF	\$75,036
Senior Data Analyst 11/8 & 11/9 SR	\$63,754
Natural Resource Data Ana. 11/1 & 11/2 DB	\$50,172
Biologist/Analyst 12/2 & 12/3 JM	\$62,068
Data Analyst 9/6 Dwood	\$55,848
Computer Assistant 9/4 & 9/5 CM	\$51,827
Executive Assistant 10/4 DW	\$50,231
Total Salaries	\$709,384
PSMFC Benefits (not including medical) @29%	\$205,721
PSMFC Medical Benefits (650x11x12/mo)	\$85,800
Total Personnel Services	\$1,000,905

Findings & Recommendations

While conducting this functional and budget review of the FPC it became apparent that there are several entities in the region, including FPC and DART, that are data and collection depository sites for regional data on river operations fish passage, survival etc.

The FPC budget did not allocate staff functions to budget spending, per the Subcommittee's request. However it appears that a large portion appears to go to data collection.

It is our understanding that the transfer of a data collection function from one entity to another requires no major structural changes. Simply put, primary data is now collected by field personnel that then transmit the data to databases at various entities' computer systems. To modify the data storage location requires that the primary data collectors simply change the

electronic address where they send the data. FPC, DART and others have ongoing data base management efforts. This requires duplicate computer systems and staff to maintain those systems. There are substantial budget affects associated with the data collection function including: computers and associated staff, website development and maintenance - including security, and staff for managing the collected data so that it can be readily used by interested parties in the region. From the breakdown of the staff budget shown in Table 1 below, up to \$551,000 of the budget is devoted to staff responsible for data and computer systems management.

Table 1 - FPC Data Collection Budget

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Biometrician	\$76,000	\$82,000
System Administrator	\$75,000	\$81,000
Senior Data Analyst	\$64,000	\$69,000
Data Analyst	\$56,000	\$60,000
Computer Assistant	\$52,000	\$56,000
PSMFC Benefits (not including medical) @ 29%	\$93,000	\$101,000
PSMFC Medical Benefits (650x5x12mo)	\$39,000	\$39,000
Computer Related		
Internet Monthly Maintenance Fee	\$10,000	\$10,000
Computer Maintenance	\$4,500	\$8,700
Software	\$10,775	\$30,473
	<hr/> \$479,800	<hr/> \$537,352
Indirect Costs (15%)	\$71,970	\$80,602
TOTAL	<hr/> \$551,770	<hr/> \$617,954

* Salaries and Benefits rounded to the nearest \$1,000, actual amounts used in "TOTAL."

The costs of database and computer systems management are approximately one-third of the requested FPC budget increase for next year. The reasons for this are directly related to the complexity of maintaining a high degree of security in an open network environment such as the Worldwide Web. The FPC staff reported on some of their current problems in a recent report where they said,

"Making high quality real-time monitoring data available on the web today has become increasingly frustrating and expensive due to the increasing number of

attacks by hackers, viruses and worms. The FPDS [Fish Passage Data System] has endured over 400 attacks per month since January 2003... The FPDS has over 25 computers running MS Windows that required patching, which resulted in over 1,000 MS Windows upgrade sessions by FPDS staff in 2003, and a similar number in 2004. New security vulnerabilities... requires the FPDS... to evaluate, download, deploy, and install a steady stream of software patches, a complex and time-consuming process... more and more IT resources are needed to merely keep the FPDS running. This diverts IT Resources away from developing the data needed by the agencies, tribes, and the public as hydrosystem management priorities change.”

Areas for Council Consideration:

- The subcommittee has become aware of several entities currently operating in the region that provide data collection services. The subcommittee recommends that the Council immediately commission an outside firm to audit data collection programs in the region and report on whether consolidation of data collection can provide a more efficient and less costly way of accumulating this data while still providing equal or even better access to the data. Such a change may provide financial savings because alternative institutions may already possess the computer infrastructure and secure data bases necessary to provide this function. The subcommittee believes any savings resulting from such a move should be applied to other fish projects.
- The subcommittee continues to evaluate whether consolidating the management function of FPC within CBFWA (currently, CBFWA’s executive director is the position responsible for overseeing FFPC) will provide short and long-term financial and other efficiency savings for the region. The subcommittee has not discussed modifying the role of the oversight board from what is in the Program. In initial discussions with CBFWA and PSMFC, these parties have indicated a net first year increase in costs of moving FPC of \$13,649¹. However, this organizational change, because of lower overhead costs, may provide cost savings over multiple years and is an issue that needs further exploration.
- The subcommittee notes that FPC has been working to limit the amount of their budget increase request. The subcommittee has learned from PSMFC that FPC is not required to accept the federal cost-of-living-allowances, as they indicated in their request for a budget increase. Also, BPA has offered to donate some computer equipment, offsetting some of their budget needs.
- The Council, in reviewing the FPC budget request, is confronted with a short decision timeframe because the FPC contract renewal with BPA is in November. The FPC building lease is also expiring in November. The subcommittee is supportive of a Council recommendation to BPA that they fund, through a continuing resolution, the FPC at the current level until the review by the Council is completed and recommendations of any changes are made by the Council to BPA
- While exploring data collection issues, the Subcommittee has found that there is considerable overlap and confusion with respect to the region’s fish tagging efforts. The subcommittee believes there should be a comprehensive scientific review of all the data collection efforts that are based on tagging fish. The Council should request that the ISAB and the NOAA Science Center collaborate to review all the fish tagging and data

¹ Costs include: vacation payouts, higher medical costs.

collection efforts and to report back to the Council with recommendations on how the region's critical fish survival information could be collected most effectively and efficiently. The specific scientific questions that need to be answered need to be clearly identified and prioritized and the overall tagging and research measurement and evaluation efforts need to be efficiently coordinated. The Council should then take up these recommendations in future Program amendments.

Attachment 1 – 2005 FPC Budget

PERSONNEL

Salaries & Wages - 61100	\$767,183
Employee Benefits – 62100	\$308,283

SERVICES/SUPPLIES

Communications - 63130

Internet Monthly Maintenance Fee 990 X 12 =	\$11,880
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Dues & Subscriptions - 63190

Library Acquisitions	\$800
Subscriptions	\$1,100
Data from COE	\$240

Property & Liability Insurance -63220

\$5,900

Leases - 63310

Vehicle 560 X 10 mo.	\$5,600
625 X 2 mo.	\$1,250
Est. end or lease costs	\$800
New maint. Agreement	\$1,200
Xerox Machine Lease 390 X 12 =	\$4,680
Postage Meter Rent (129/mo.)	\$1,548

Miscellaneous - 63430

Yearly Tenant Fire Inspection	\$79
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Photocopying/Printing - 63460

Xerox Copy Costs-Meter Reading & Maint.	\$1,420
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Postage & Freight - 63520

\$3,000

Rents - 63580

Office Lease (AMP) 4,625 X 12 =	\$55,500
Staff Parking (10@75 = 750/mo.) 750 X 12 =	\$9,000
Staff Buss Passes (1x58=58/mo) 58 X 12 =	\$696
Storage Rent (\$110 per month) 110 X 12 =	\$1,320

Repair and Maintenance - 63610

Computer Maintenance	\$8,700
Office Equipment Maintenance	\$500
UV Maint.	\$419

Software - 63640

\$30,473

Supplies - Field - 63700

\$800

Supplies - Non-Capital Equipment

\$25,124

Supplies - Office

\$6,000

Training

\$1,000

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION

Meals and Lodging - 65100

Per Diem (8 trips)	\$2,800
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Transportation - 65200

Airfare (2 trips @ 420)	\$840
POV (1907 mi @ .375/mile)	\$715

Subtotal

\$1,258,850

Indirect Costs - 67200 (15%)

\$188,828

Total 2005 FPC Budget

\$1,447,678