



# CITY OF PORTLAND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



1120 SW Fifth Avenue, Room 1000, Portland, Oregon 97204-1912 Dean Marriott, Director

## Memorandum

June 6, 2005

To: Jim Kempton  
Judi Danielson  
Bruce Measure  
Rhonda Whiting  
Joan Dukes  
Melinda Eden  
Frank L. Cassidy Jr.  
Dr. Tom Karier

From: Mary Wahl, Watershed Group Manager

Re: City of Portland presentation to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council

At your meeting on June 15, 2005, the City of Portland will make a brief presentation about its work to help improve conditions for fish, wildlife and people within its jurisdiction and its efforts to coordinate with broader state and regional watershed and fish and wildlife planning initiatives.

As the largest city in the Columbia River Basin, Portland would like to express its gratitude to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council for providing a regional forum where Portland can participate as an equal among the other jurisdictions and stakeholders and describe our work and learn from other people's work. Portland made a substantial investment in the Willamette Subbasin Plan and has benefited greatly from that investment.

Portland faces challenges posed by a variety of environmental mandates affecting the lower Columbia River, lower Willamette River and tributaries within Portland. These include:

- Superfund listings in the lower Willamette River: Where the City of Portland is actively participating in remedial investigations in coordination with other public and private Potentially Responsible Parties;
- Clean Water Act requirements for stormwater management and combined sewer overflow abatement: Where the City is spending \$1.4 billion in ratepayer dollars to reduce sewage releases to the Willamette;
- Safe Drinking Water Act compliance: Where the City recently completed the region's first-ever EPA permit the City's 9,000 stormwater sumps;
- Endangered Species Act protections for salmon and steelhead: Where Portland serves as the migration gateway for fish passage to the entire Willamette Basin and as an important resting/rearing area for both Willamette and Columbia River salmonids, and

where Portland is working in partnership with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, NOAA Fisheries, Corps of Engineers and others on original research and permitting strategies.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> I will speak about how Portland is working within the context of the Willamette Subbasin Plan to implement an integrated approach for addressing these regulatory mandates that keeps the ultimate focus on achieving healthy watersheds. We truly believe that striving for watershed health in a highly developed urban area is not only feasible, but also valuable.

Portland's approach, from its management framework to its use of the Ecosystem Diagnosis and Treatment model, to its use of independent scientific peer reviewers, are based largely on work done by the Power and Conservation Council. Your effort to establish an integrated framework for developing subbasin plans has been very helpful in informing Portland's local approach. Our technical analyses, action priorities and ongoing adaptive management plans are captured in the Willamette Subbasin Plan. Our implementation efforts are consistent with the plan.

I believe that working with the Power and Conservation Council's structure and guidance has, and will continue, to save Portland ratepayers' and taxpayers' money, and improve our ultimate effectiveness. This collaboration will help ensure that the investments Portland makes will help implement the Willamette Subbasin Plan, support the Power and Conservation Council's mission, leverage BPA fish and wildlife mitigation spending with city resources, benefit NOAA Fisheries' recovery planning, support the Corps of Engineers' ability to operate the region's hydroelectric and flood management system, and provide the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality with assistance in implementing the TMDL process under the federal Clean Water Act.

So as you can see, the City of Portland is using the Willamette Subbasin Plan. It is a high-quality document that provides guidance to Portland and other municipal jurisdictions throughout the basin. Portland is not an island. Rather it is a place that can offer significant contributions to improving watershed health and species recovery, and that also depends heavily of what happens upstream and downstream in both the Columbia and the Willamette Rivers. Maintaining a viable role within the regional planning and implementation processes serves all of us well. The Power and Conservation Council provides an invaluable venue for us to play that role.

I look forward to discussing these issues and opportunities with you on June 15.