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December 10, 2009

Mr. William C. Maslen
Manager, Fish and Wildlife Division
Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208

Dear Mr. Maslen:

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the Council's decision on a Columbia River Fish Accord proposal. This recommendation was made by the Council at its meeting on December 9, 2009.

In addition, a purpose of this letter is to inform the project sponsor and other interested parties of the status of this Council action. The following is a summary of the action taken by the Council at the meeting in December.

Resident Fish Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (RM&E), Project #2008-109-00

In 2008-2009, Bonneville, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (the "Action Agencies") signed agreements with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation (CTWSRO), the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation (YN), and the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC). The agreement with these Tribes and CRITFC is referred to as the Three Treaty Tribes MOA. The Action Agencies also signed agreements with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CCT), the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (SBT), and the states of Idaho, Montana and Washington. These agreements, the Columbia Basin Fish Accords, fund actions that will deliver specific, scientifically-sound results for the region's fish and wildlife.

As set forth in the guidance document outlining the review process for the Accords, the Council recognizes Bonneville's commitment to Accord projects. The Accords do not, however, alter the Council's responsibilities with respect to independent science review or the Council's role following such review. As with all projects in the Fish and Wildlife Program, Accord projects are subject to review by the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP) and the Council provides funding recommendations based on full consideration of the ISRP's report and the Council's Program.

On July 9, 2009, the Council received from Bonneville a Columbia Basin Fish Accord proposal from the CCT for #2008-109-00, *Resident Fish Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (RM&E)*.

The goal of this project is to identify possible factors which limit rainbow trout production within the San Poil Subbasin by examining spawning and winter ecology among life histories. Specific project objectives include identification of spatiotemporal patterns in movements and spawning areas among life histories, and the identification of overwintering areas of rainbow trout to determine optimal areas for habitat protection and enhancement.

The proposal was submitted to the ISRP for review, and on August 5, 2009 the ISRP provided a review (ISRP document 2009-34). The ISRP members requested additional information before they could determine if the proposal met scientific criteria.

On September 30, 2009 the Council received a response from the CCT, and on October 29, 2009 the Council received the final review from the ISRP (ISRP document 2009-44). The ISRP found that the proposal “Meets Scientific Review Criteria (Qualified).” No public comment was received on the ISRP reviews.

The ISRP found the proposal met scientific review criteria and stated that the data this project collects could be of value for developing management strategies for rainbow trout in the San Poil. The qualification raised by the ISRP addresses the need for a statistical power analysis demonstrating that the proposed sample sizes for the radio-tagging components of the project will be sufficient to achieve project objectives. The ISRP requested that this analysis be reviewed by the ISRP before beginning the radio-tagging. In addition, the ISRP provided other comments intended to benefit and strengthen the proposal’s study design as part of implementation.

The CCT staff agrees with the ISRP that the study design would benefit from a power analysis. At this time the CCT is arranging this analysis through Project #1991-051-00, *M&E Statistical Support For Life-Cycle Studies*¹ and work with Dr. John Skalski of the University of Washington to complete the analysis for ISRP review.

Based on the ISRP review the Council supports this project for implementation conditioned on the favorable review of the statistical power analysis as identified by the ISRP (ISRP document 2009-44).

Sincerely,

Tony Grover
Director, Fish and Wildlife Division

¹ This project develops statistical methods for monitoring and evaluating salmonid recovery plans and provides added-value analyses and statistical support on regional fisheries issues in the Fish and Wildlife Program.

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