

Bruce A. Measure
Chair
Montana

Rhonda Whiting
Montana

W. Bill Booth
Idaho

James A. Yost
Idaho



Dick Wallace
Vice-Chair
Washington

Tom Karier
Washington

Melinda S. Eden
Oregon

Joan M. Dukes
Oregon

July 15, 2010

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 regarding a follow-up action for a BiOp fast-track proposals needed to meet high priority FCRPS reasonable and prudent alternative (RPA) gaps for Bonneville funding. This recommendation was made by the Council at its meeting on July 14, 2010.

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

BiOp fast-track review: Project #2010-033-00, *Estimate the Relative Reproductive Success of Hatchery and Natural Origin Steelhead in the Methow River Basin*

In the summer and fall of 2009, the Bonneville/Action Agency/Council workgroups identified 27 projects necessary to meet high priority FCRPS reasonable and prudent alternative (RPA) gaps. The fast-track review process began on December 14, 2009; the council received 19 complete project proposals by the January 25, 2010 deadline. The 19 project proposals were sent to the ISRP for science review.

The ISRP's preliminary review was issued on February 24, 2010 (ISRP document 2010-7). The ISRP found that nine of the 19 proposals met scientific review criteria. Of those nine proposals, five were qualified based on issues that could be dealt with during contracting. On April 14, 2010, the Council recommended the nine fast-track proposals to Bonneville for implementation.

The remaining ten proposals received an "in part/response requested"¹ recommendation, and on February 24, 2010 a request for a response to the ISRP for the additional information was sent to

¹ The ISRP found that two of the ten proposals justified the fast-track component of their projects but the overall project proposals required responses.

project proponents. On March 25, 2010 responses were received and on April 15, 2010, the ISRP provided their final review for the fast-track proposals (ISRP document 2010-10).

Of the ten proposals reviewed, the ISRP found that four met scientific review criteria, three received a “qualification”; one received an “in part (qualified)”; one remained at an “in part”; and one received a “does not meet scientific review criteria.” On May 12, 2010, the Council provided recommendations for these projects. As part of this recommendation the Council included the following for Project #2010-033-00, *Estimate the Relative Reproductive Success of Hatchery and Natural Origin Steelhead in the Methow River Basin*.

The Council recommends that this project respond to the ISRP’s request for a revised proposal and a complete response ahead of the RM&E/Artificial Production Category Review so that the needed actions associated with this project can be implemented in FY 2010 if a favorable ISRP review and Council recommendation is received.

On May 13, 2010, the Council received a submittal from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) that includes a cover letter, a response to the specific ISRP issues, and a revised narrative. The Council received the ISRP’s final review (ISRP document 2010-18) of the revised narrative on June 9, 2010. The ISRP found that the proposal met scientific review criteria.

The project’s purpose is to evaluate quantitatively the relative reproductive success of naturally spawning hatchery and natural origin steelhead in the Methow River Basin over two generations.

The ISRP stated that the WDFW had addressed the concerns that had been raised as part of the preliminary reviews. In addition, they found the proposal timely in providing an improved understanding of the demography and viability of upper Columbia ESU steelhead and the relationship between hatchery and natural fish in this region.

Based on the ISRP review the Council supports this project for implementation.

Sincerely,

Tony Grover
Director, Fish and Wildlife Division

cc: Jamae Hilliard Creecy, BPA

Peter Lofy, BPA
Bryan Mercier, BPA
Christine Read, BPA
Ben Dick, BPA
Paul Krueger, BPA
Greg Dondlinger, BPA
Rosemary Mazaika, BPA
David Byrnes, BPA
Roy Beaty, BPA
Joe Connor, BPA
Andrew Murdoch, WDFW
Bill Tweit, WDFW