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July 1, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Jim Ruff -- Manager, Mainstem Passage and River Operations

SUBJECT: Presentation by the Action Agencies on the 2010-2013 Implementation Plan for the FCRPS Biological Opinion

Background

At the July 14 Council meeting in Portland, the three federal action agencies will provide a short presentation on the highlights of their 2010-13 Implementation Plan for the NOAA-Fisheries' FCRPS Biological Opinion (BiOp). Presenting the 2010-13 Implementation Plan for the action agencies will be Rock Peters, who is the Fish Program Manager for the Northwestern Division of the Corps of Engineers, Jamae Hilliard Creecy, the Fish and Wildlife Policy and Planning Manager for the Bonneville Power Administration, and Kate Puckett, the Manager of the Columbia/Snake River Salmon Recovery Office for the Bureau of Reclamation.

The 2010-2013 FCRPS BiOp Implementation Plan outlines a comprehensive program of habitat improvements, hatchery reforms and hydrosystem operations and improvements to protect ESA-listed Columbia and Snake river fish. The document describes how the action agencies will boost survival of Columbia Basin salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act. Here is a link to the plan: <http://www.salmonrecovery.gov/Files/2010-2013%20FCRPS%20BiOp%20Implementation%20Plan%206%2010.pdf>

Major Areas of 2010-13 FCRPS BiOp Implementation Plan

Based on the NOAA-Fisheries 2008 BiOp and the 2010 Supplemental BiOp, the action agencies have committed to implementing various actions to improve the survival of ESA-listed salmon and steelhead in the following major areas. The federal action agencies will cover some of the key highlights planned for 2010-2013 in each of the major areas.

Hydro. Fish passage and operational improvements at the eight mainstem federal dams remain the foundation of the agencies' actions for listed fish. Hydrosystem strategies to provide juvenile and adult salmon survival improvements include management of water releases from storage reservoirs, implementing surface passage and other dam passage improvements at the eight mainstem federal dams, spill operations, and juvenile fish transportation program. Specific performance standards (such as 96 percent and 93 percent dam passage survival for spring and summer migrating juvenile fish, respectively) and metrics will guide the action agencies' priorities for action at the mainstem federal hydropower projects.

Predator Management. Predator management actions are designed to improve the survival of juvenile and adult fish as they pass through the hydrosystem. Implementation strategies focus on three areas: piscivorous predation control measures to increase survival of juvenile fish; avian predation control measures to increase survival of juvenile fish; and marine mammal control measures to increase survival of adult salmonid passage at Bonneville Dam.

Habitat. Implementation of habitat actions should benefit all listed species. Habitat actions implemented under the BiOp are targeted at biological needs, addressing priority populations and limiting factors. The habitat strategies involve protecting and improving tributary and estuary habitat, respectively, to increase fish survival.

Hatcheries: Hatchery actions involve funding FCRPS mitigation hatchery programs in a way that contributes to reversing the decline of downward-trending species. The action agencies have two strategies to meet this overall objective: (1) ensuring that hatchery programs funded by the action agencies as mitigation for the FCRPS are not impeding recovery; and (2) preserving and rebuilding genetic resources through safety-net and conservation actions to reduce short-term extinction risk and promote recovery.

Harvest. Harvest actions are not a primary responsibility of the action agencies, but they are encouraging research into improved harvest techniques that can increase the survival of naturally spawning fish. An example of such research is the Colville Tribes' selective fisheries study.

Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (RM&E). Implementation of RM&E provides necessary information to support planning, adaptive management and demonstrating accountability related to the implementation of hydropower and offsite actions for all species. RM&E encompasses project implementation, compliance monitoring, fish status monitoring, action effectiveness research, and critical uncertainties research.

Collaboration with the Region

Through the FCRPS BiOp Implementation Plan, the federal action agencies commit to work closely with regional interests during 2010-2013 to implement actions in each of the major areas above to strengthen Columbia River Basin salmon and steelhead stocks. The action agencies will work collaboratively with the region through the federal-state-tribal Regional Implementation Oversight Group (RIOG) and the Regional Forum technical teams, the Columbia Basin Fish Accords, and the Northwest Power and Conservation Council's Fish and Wildlife Program.

FCRPS BiOp 2010-2013 Implementation Plan

Presentation to Northwest Power & Conservation Council July 2010

Jamae Hilliard Creecy, Bonneville
Rock Peters, US Army Corps of Engineers
Kate Puckett, Bureau of Reclamation

FCRPS Biological Opinion

2008 - 2017

Background

2008 FCRPS BiOp calls for implementation plans in 2010, 2013 and 2016

Actions focused on:

- biological performance standards
- programmatic performance targets
- limiting factors

Adaptive management based on new scientific information and changing circumstances

Mid-course modifications will be detailed in the annual progress reports.

What's in the 2010-2013 Implementation Plan

Summarizes significant 2010-13 BiOp actions in:

- Hydro
- Predator Management
- Habitat
- Hatcheries
- Accountability for results

Implementation Plan contents:

1. Overview
2. RPA Summary Table
3. Project List

2010-2013 Hydropower Action highlights

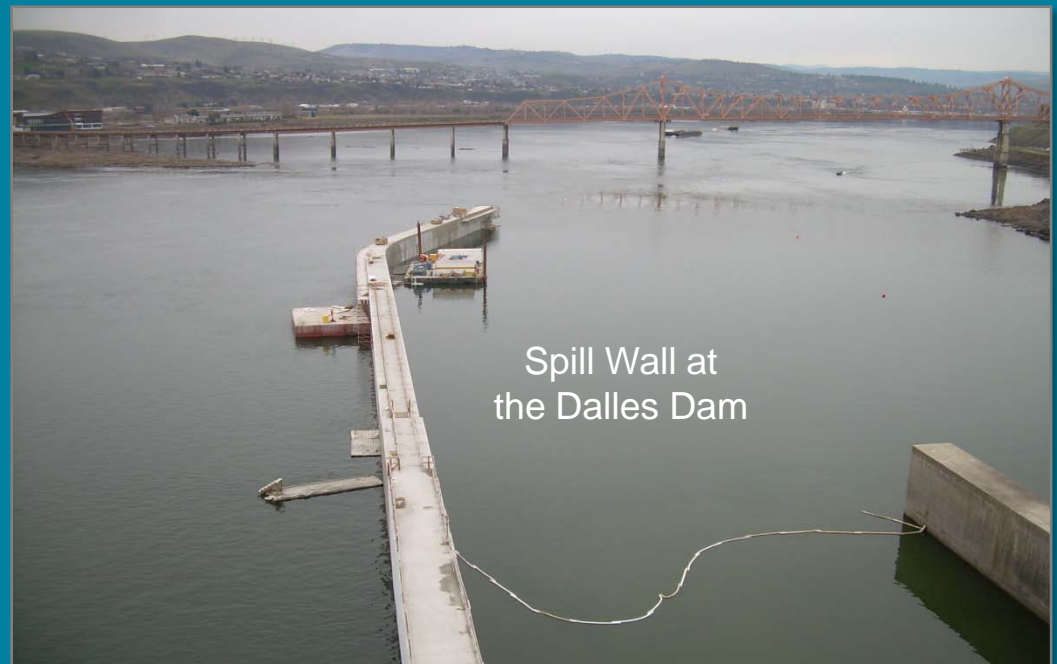
- Performance standards and metrics guide the priorities

Water supply

Dam improvements

Kelt management plan

Climate change impacts
to the hydrosystem



FCRPS Biological Opinion

2008 - 2017

2010-2013 Tributary Habitat Action Highlights

Continue water transactions program

Reach assessments

Upper Columbia region

Grande Ronde

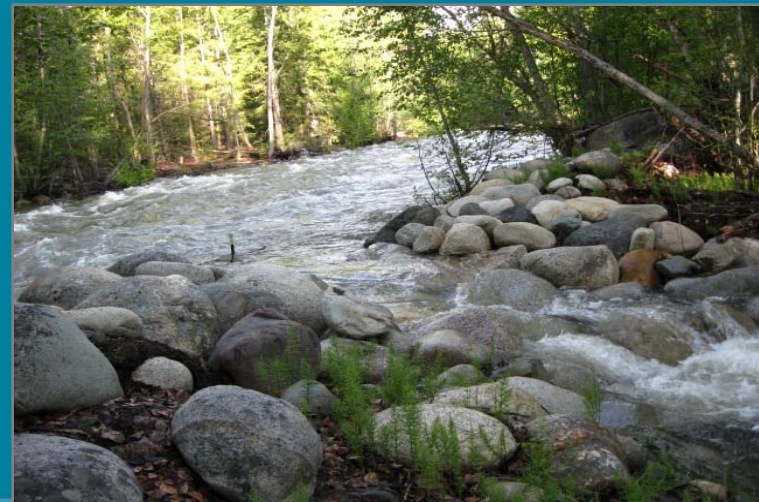
Salmon basin

Various other Snake basins

Expert Panels – 2013-2015



Moody Canyon



Elbow Notch

FCRPS Biological Opinion

2008 - 2017

2010-2013 Estuary Habitat Action highlights

Estuary Ecosystem Habitat
Classification System

Pile structure condition survey

Habitat acquisitions

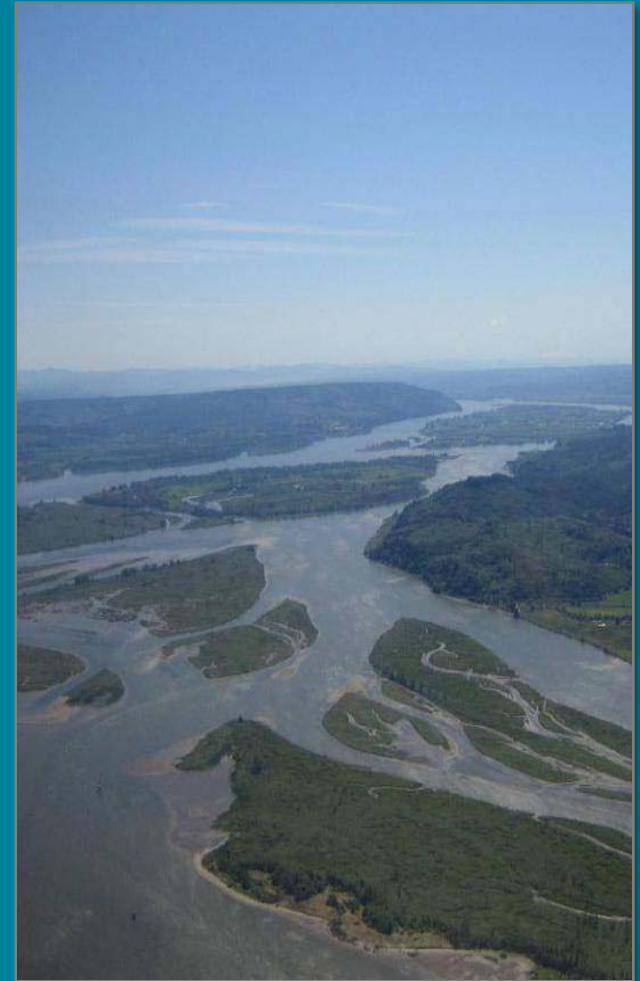
- Fort Columbia
- Mudd Lake

Ensure that the survival benefit targets
will be met

Expect a substantial increase in the rate
of project implementation in 2010-2013

FCRPS Biological Opinion

2008 - 2017



Bonneville Estuary

2010-2013 Predator Management Action highlights

Continue the Northern
Pikeminnow Management
Program

Non-indigenous fish predation

Habitat and dam inland avian
management plans

- Intensive monitoring at
the Potholes colony

Management plan for double-crested cormorants

Sea lions in the Bonneville tailrace



Pikeminnow

FCRPS Biological Opinion

2008 - 2017

2010-2013 Hatchery Action highlights

- Ensure that hatchery programs funded as mitigation for the FCRPS are not impeding recovery
- Preserve and rebuild genetic resources through safety-net and conservation actions

Expand the sockeye captive broodstock program

Complete updated HGMPs and initiate ESA consultations

Revised schedule for completion of ESA reviews



Sockeye salmon

FCRPS Biological Opinion

2008 - 2017

2010-2013 Harvest Action highlights

- Not a primary responsibility of the Action Agencies

Encourage research into harvest techniques to increase the survival of natural fish

- Continue the Colville selective fishery experiment



Colville Selective Harvest

FCRPS Biological Opinion

2008 - 2017

2010-2013 Research, Monitoring & Evaluation highlights

Hydro performance at specific dams

Intensively monitored watersheds

Estuary habitat action effectiveness

Supplemental BiOp provisions

- severe decline triggers and contingencies
- monitoring fish habitat and status



Pitt Tagging & Recording

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2008 - 2017

Fish Status, Ocean Conditions & Climate Change

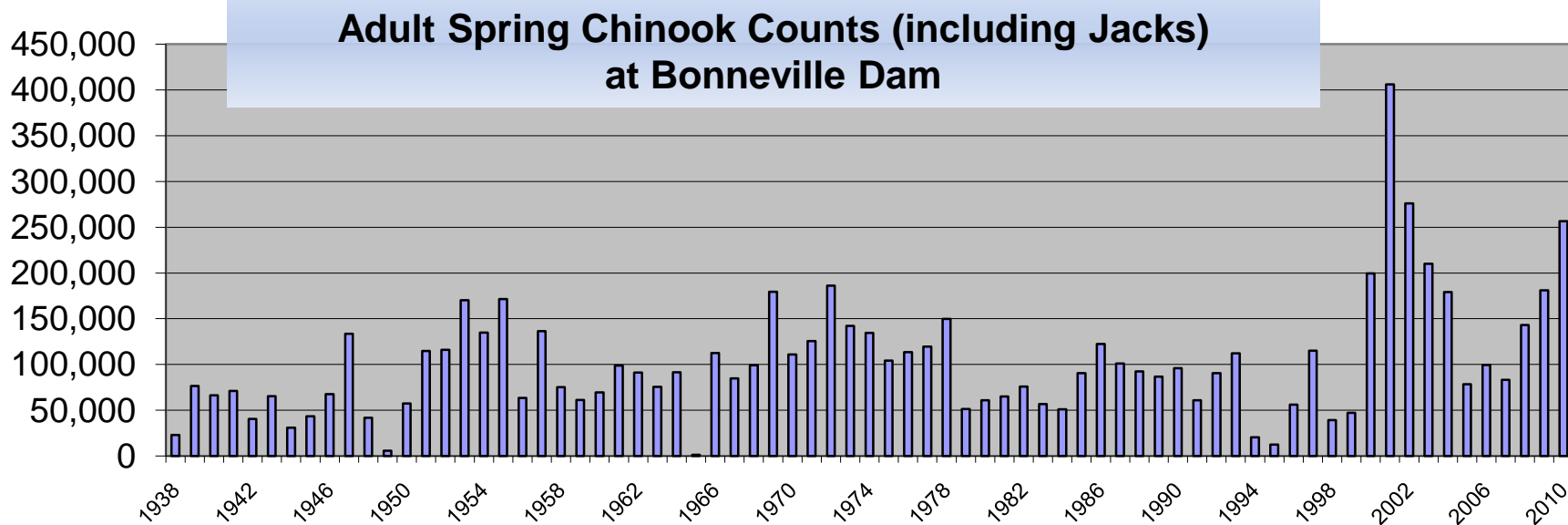
2008 BiOp survival improvements reflected in adult returns:

- 2011 for steelhead & sockeye
- 2012 for Chinook

2010 spring chinook, sockeye and steelhead returns well above 10-year average

Emerging issues with tagging and marking

No significant new information on climate change



The 2010 FCRPS Supplemental BiOp

- Integrates the 2008 RPA and the AMIP
- AMIP and its actions become RPA Action 1A
- Tracked and reported through Progress Reports and Implementation Plans

Next Steps

Comprehensive report June 2013

- Update of the status for each of the interior basin species
- Determine whether additional actions needed to get on track by 2018 (end of the BiOp period)

Results will inform the 2014-2018
Implementation Plan

Working Together

Regional Implementation Oversight Group (RIOG)

Columbia Basin Fish Accords

Northwest Power & Conservation Council's
Fish & Wildlife Program

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2008 - 2017

Discussion

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