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August 5, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fish and Wildlife Committee

FROM: Nancy Leonard, Fish, Wildlife, Ecosystem Monitoring and Evaluation Manager

SUBJECT: Phase II of MERR revisions

Comments received on the March 2010 draft MERR Plan version were divided into (1) technical and editorial comments and (2) policy comments (buckets one, two, and three).

The July 2010 draft MERR Plan version addresses the technical and editorial comments and the policy comments assigned to bucket one.

The July 2010 MERR Plan is available at www.nwcouncil.org/fw/merr. Several placeholders were inserted in the July 2010 version, and these will remain until policy items in buckets two and three are addressed.

Staff will update the Fish and Wildlife Committee in August on the status of bucket two items, including the development of a collaborative and inclusive approach. There are three items assigned to bucket two: (2.1) Council Management Questions; (2.2) Prioritization Approach and Confidence Level for Research and Monitoring; and (2.3) Reporting Forums in the MERR Plan. The policy comments received and staff work status for addressing these comments are summarized below in Tables 1, 2, and 3, respectively.

Staff also will update the Committee on when bucket three will be addressed. The item listed under bucket three is the "MERR Plan Structure". The policy comments received, and when staff plans on addressing these comments, are summarized in Table 4.

Table 1: Council Management Questions (Bucket Item 2.1)

Summary of policy related comments	Status
i. Consider not framing questions as yes/no	Staff suggests keeping questions as yes/no because this format is more amenable to communicate progress to diverse audience such as the Council's HLI report (policy, public etc)
ii. If keep yes/no format, rewrite so that the desired answer is yes for all questions and so that they all lend themselves to a continuum spectrum	Staff will work on revising the questions, as needed, to be consistent in having the desired answer being yes and that all questions lend themselves to a continuum.
iii. Improve the harvest question's clarity	Staff will work on clarifying the harvest question.
iv. Consider increasing topic coverage, so they include fish resident substitution, landuse change, impact of hydro operations on resident fish and wildlife needs above dams	Staff will work on developing a draft question that addresses the FW Program's intent to mitigate for lost opportunities, such as resident fish substitution.
v. Include FCRPS BiOp and Recovery Plan questions	<p>Some of the FCRPS and Recovery Plan questions are covered by the current questions.</p> <p>The more specific questions could be included in the MERR Plan's Anadromous Fish Implementation Strategy as appropriate.</p>
Next Steps: Late 2010 - Staff will revise draft management questions. Late 2010 to early 2011 - Draft management questions will be reviewed by regional partners for accuracy. Early 2011 - Proposed draft management questions will be discussed with Council members.	

Table 2: Prioritization Approach and Confidence Level for Research and Monitoring (Bucket Item 2.2)

Summary of policy related comments	Status
<p>Use a collaborative process to prioritize the FW Program's strategies, actions, and for conducting research and monitoring. This process will consider, among others,:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - prioritization approaches and tools - Program's biological objectives and performance standards, - identifying the 'desired effect size' or confidence level, - considering alternatives for identifying a budget. 	<p>This item is currently being worked on by Council's state and central staff and Council member Wallace.</p> <p>Staff will continue to work with state and central staff to develop an approach (or approaches) for conducting a collaborative and inclusive process that will identify the desired confidence level, aid in prioritizing research and monitoring, and complete the 'right size funding staff project'.</p>
<p>Next Steps:</p> <p>Late 2010 - State and Central Staff will develop approach for the collaborative process and discuss with Council members.</p> <p>Early 2011 - Implementation of the collaborative process.</p> <p>Summer to Fall 2011 - Staff will report on the collaborative process' outcome.</p>	

Table 3: Reporting Forums in the MERR Plan (Bucket Item 2.3)
(Only newly proposed reporting forums are discussed in terms of keeping or deleting from MERR Plan.)

Summary of policy related comments	Status
i. Describe audience, frequency, purpose of report to assure usefulness and not redundant with existing process.	Staff have developed a draft option paper with audience, frequency, and purpose of reports for review by regional partners.
ii. Proponent-ISRPP Exchange as useful to keep Council up-to-date and highlight effective projects for others to use as examples;	Staff will evaluate keeping the Proponent-ISRPP exchange and linking it to the suggested online journal. Combined this will enhance the Council's transparency of Program implementation and make easily accessible to a broader audience project findings.
iii. Create an online refereed Columbia Basin Power and Conservation Journal in which proponents would synthesize and report final or multiple year results. This sort of communication has been discussed in the past and should be a priority of the Program to get the most benefit of funds expended. A timely and efficient refereed reporting system would be beneficial.	Staff will investigate the potential to collaborate with existing journals to regularly produce a peer-reviewed 'Columbia River Basin Special Issue' such as with the American Fisheries Society and the Wildlife Society. If feasible, the 'Columbia River Basin Special Issue' could be produced as an outcome of the Proponent-ISRPP exchange.
iv. Bird Eye View of Program "BEV" (previously Program Synopsis) could be useful since seems like a state of the basin document. But depends on how the data is capture and presented & might be redundant with other reporting requirements.	Staff are evaluating keeping the Program Synopsis but renaming it the "Bird Eye View of Program (BEV)." Staff will continue to collaborate with similar efforts in the Basin to ensure data can be shared among these and that efforts are not redundant.
Next Steps: Late 2010 - Staff will draft details for the reporting forums. Late 2010 to Early 2011 - Details for reporting forums are reviewed by regional partners Early 2011 to Summer 2011 - Draft reporting forums are discussed with Council members.	

Table 4: MERR Plan Structure (Bucket 3)	
Summary of policy related comments	Status
i. Integrate Council's Research Plan with MERR Plan	Not applicable
ii. Keep MERR Plan as a stand-alone guidance document and not integrating with the Program	Not applicable
Next Steps: This item will be addressed after Bucket two items are completed or in progress.	

Draft MERR Plan

Update on Phase II of Revisions

Fish and Wildlife Committee
August 2010

Nancy Leonard
Fish, Wildlife, Ecosystem Monitoring and
Evaluation Manager

A stylized, layered mountain range graphic in shades of teal and blue, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

Comment Categories & Status

1. Technical and Editorial Comments ✓

July 2010 Draft
MERR Plan

2. Policy Comments

[www.nwcouncil.org
/fw/merr](http://www.nwcouncil.org/fw/merr)

2.1 Bucket One - Short-Term ✓

2.2 Bucket Two - Mid-Term

2.3 Bucket Three - Long-term



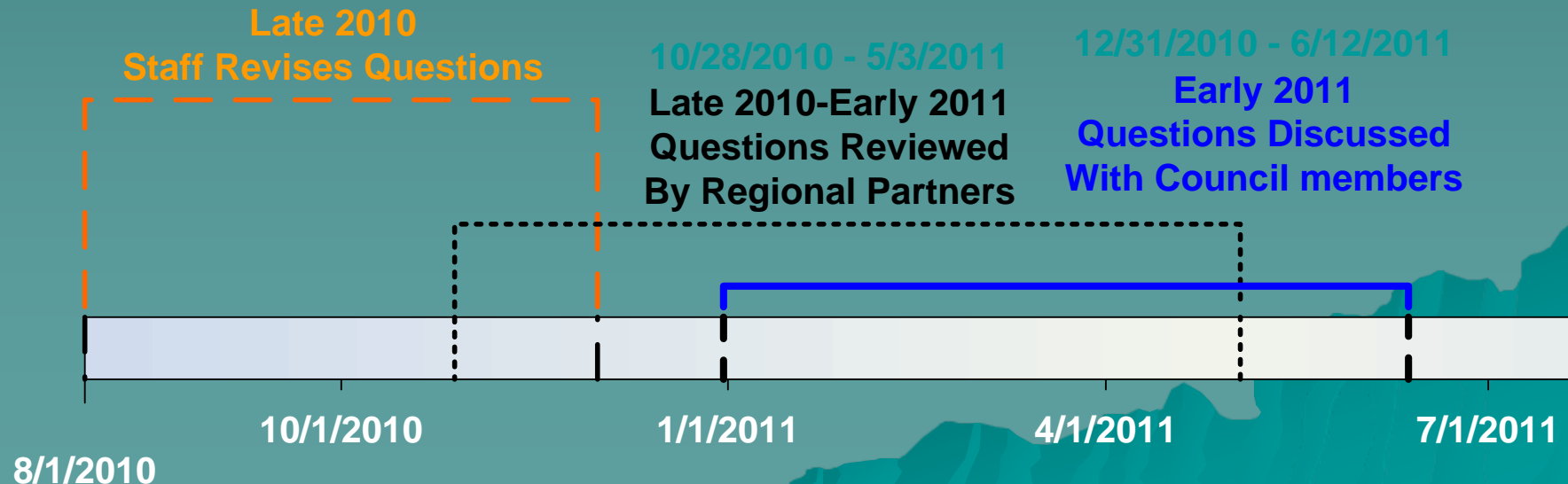


Bucket Two Items & Approach (items 2.1, 2.2, & 2.3)

2.1 Council Management Questions

- ◆ Policy Comments
 - Format and topics for management questions
- ◆ Revision Status
- ◆ Next Steps
 - Tentative timeline

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Bucket Two Items & Approach (items 2.1, 2.2, & 2.3)

2.2 Prioritization Approach and Confidence Level for Research and Monitoring

Policy Comments

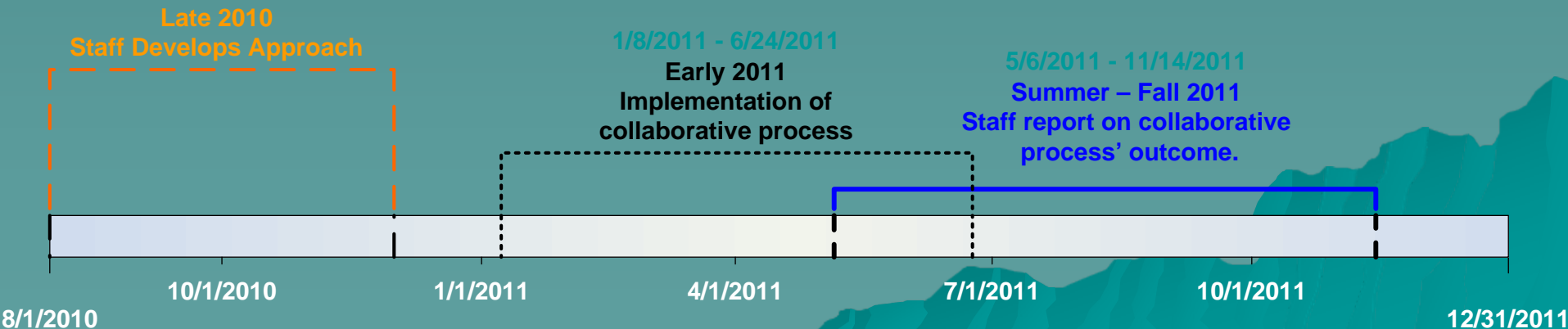
- Collaborative process to prioritize

◆ Revision Status

◆ Next Steps

- Tentative timeline

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Bucket Two Items & Approach (items 2.1, 2.2, & 2.3)

2.3 Reporting Forum in MERR Plan

◆ Policy Comments

- Add audience, frequency, and purpose of reports.
- Keep, modify newly proposed reporting forums

◆ Revision Status

◆ Next Steps

- Tentative timeline

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Late 2010
Staff Develops Reporting Details

1/8/2011 - 5/3/2011
Late 2010 to Early 2011
Reporting details reviewed
By regional partners

5/6/2011 - 8/22/2011
Early to Summer 2011
Discuss with Council members

10/1/2010

1/1/2011

4/1/2011

7/1/2011

10/1/2011



Bucket Three Item & Approach

3. MERR Plan Structure

Policy Comments

- ◆ Integrate Council's Research Plan with MERR Plan
- ◆ Keep MERR Plan as a stand-alone guidance document

*Addressed after Bucket 2 items
are in progress or completed.*

