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Vice Chair
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Washington

January 13, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council members

FROM: Jennifer Anders, Vice Chair
John Harrison, Information Officer

SUBJECT: Report on the October 2014 Columbia River Conference and next steps

BACKGROUND:

In a 2011 memorandum of understanding, the Council and the Columbia Basin Trust committed to "...pursue projects and conduct joint activities such as public workshops, conferences, and meetings that address Columbia River Basin fish, wildlife, energy, and water issues." In October 2014 the Council and the Trust co-hosted a major international conference on the Columbia River. Co-sponsoring the conference completed the most recent list of joint projects, and now it is time to consider developing a new list.

At this meeting Vice Chair Anders, liaison to the Trust, and Council staff will present a draft list of follow-up projects for the Council based on recommendations at the conference (see attached memo). Some projects are specific to the Council and others could be accomplished together with the Trust. CBT staff is reviewing the draft list of projects and will work with Council staff and the two agency liaisons to refine the list for the Council and Trust Board of Directors to consider for approval, probably within the next month. Please review the draft list and comment to John Harrison, including any other ideas for projects the Council and Trust could pursue together.

At this meeting, we also will show a short video of conference highlights.

Finally, a post-conference report is being written and will be posted soon on the conference website, which will remain active until October of this year.

**2014 International Columbia River Conference
Next Steps for the Council, 2015 and Beyond**

A. Flow and volume

1. Train staff to use graphic technology such as raster graphics to transform data into a usable format for decision-makers and the general public regarding transboundary issues such as river flow and volume, and toxic contaminants. Results would be posted on the Council's website.

B. Energy

1. Develop and post on the Council website a graphic presentation of energy efficiency accomplishments in the U.S. Northwest and British Columbia.

C. Governance (response to the *Cassidy-Merkel Challenge Cup*)

1. First, determine the agencies and interests that are involved in transboundary river governance -- in short, who is doing what and why. This could be in the form of a report prepared by an intern (see Youth Focus below). As part of this task, create a map of existing organizations working on Columbia River governance.
2. Next, if the report suggests there is a need for better coordination among interests and mandates (legal, cultural, economic), consider joining the Columbia Basin Trust and others to create a committee that would address important transboundary issues such as Columbia River flows, regional energy issues, and salmon passage over Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph dams. As recommended at the conference, this committee could convene a series of discussions or conferences over time. Ultimately, the committee could produce a report with recommendations to decision-makers.
 - ✓ Alternatively, encourage Canadian and U.S. interested parties to form their own group(s) or consider co-funding an existing group (one focusing on transboundary invasive species seems like a good possibility, as B.C. is part of the regional coalition to monitor and halt the spread of invasive species).

D. Youth focus:

1. Support the Columbia Basin Trust's youth initiatives to the extent they address transboundary issues through, for example, mentoring or funding.
2. Establish an exchange with the Columbia Basin Trust to host a Canadian student intern in our offices and an American student intern in their offices to pursue a series of transboundary tasks determined by the two agencies. As an initial task, two interns could produce the governance report described above. A related, and perhaps separate, intern task could be to produce an inventory of terminology used in various documents on both sides of the border, such as "ecosystem" and "ecosystem function."

E. Ecosystem Function

1. Consider working to identify and publicize joint objectives for managing joint waters such as the Okanogan River (salmon), Lake Koocanusa/Kootenai(y) River (burbot, sturgeon), and the Columbia River mainstem/Lake Roosevelt (sturgeon and possibly salmon reintroduction).
2. Support tribes, First Nations, and fishery agencies in their development of goals and objectives for reintroducing anadromous fish above Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee dams, then work with those parties to publicize and explain reintroduction to the public in both countries.
3. Search for another fish/wildlife, energy, or outreach project that would be co-funded by the Trust and Council.
4. Report on progress of the joint-funded burbot enumeration project in Lake Koocanusa.
5. Consider supporting NOAA Fisheries' effort to articulate long-term goals for the international Columbia River Basin.