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December 8, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fish and Wildlife Committee members
FROM: Patty O'Toole and Staff
SUBJECT: Update on implementation of Fish and Wildlife Program priorities

BACKGROUND:

Presenter: Fish Division staff

Summary: Staff will update the Committee on the status of tasks associated with implementation of the Fish and Wildlife Program's emerging priorities.

Relevance: Addresses implementation of the Council's 2014 Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program

Work plan: Addresses Council annual work plan objective #2, Promote regional fish and wildlife recovery – implement new 2014 Fish and Wildlife Program

The Council identified seven emerging priority areas in its 2014 Fish and Wildlife Program. These are:

1. Provide for funding *long-term maintenance* (Appendix P) of the assets that have been created by prior program investments
2. Implement *adaptive management* (including prioritized research on critical uncertainties) throughout the program by assessing the effectiveness of ongoing projects, developing program objectives when appropriate and taking into account the effects of *climate change*
3. Preserve program effectiveness by supporting: (1) expanded management of *predators*; (2) mapping and determining hotspots for *toxic contaminants*; and (3) aggressively addressing *non-native and invasive species*
4. Investigate *blocked area mitigation* options through reintroduction, passage and habitat improvement, and implement if warranted
5. Implement additional *sturgeon* and *lamprey* measures (passage and research)

6. Update the *subbasin plans* most in need of updates
7. Continue efforts to *improve floodplain habitats*

Staff will update the Fish and Wildlife Committee on the status of the implementation of measures associated with these priorities (see tables 1 and 2) and provide an opportunity to hear from the Committee members if they have any concerns or questions.

Table 1 (Draft). Status of the implementation of Fish and Wildlife Program priorities pending Council action (O = staff work is ongoing; U= under consideration by ISRP, Committee or Council at this time; F = future implementation). Some of these actions may have follow-on actions that will be considered in the future - not all are presented in this table.

Emerging priority	Program language	Associated tasks	Council action	Implementation timeframe (from August)	Status
EP 1	Provide for funding long term maintenance of program assets	O&M Strategic Plan: Screens O&M Strategic Plan: Lands	TBD TBD	Near-term Near-term	O O
EP 2	Developing program objectives as appropriate Prioritized research on critical uncertainties	Refine Program objectives Update Research Plan (RP)	Work with NOAA Partnership ISAB evaluation of ongoing research and uncertainties; coordinate with managers; Council develop research plan	Immediate & Near-term Near-term	O O
EP 3	Expanded management of predators Aggressively address both non-native and invasive species	Possible ISAB assignment; convene a technical workgroup (to consider effectiveness, expansion of efforts, develop common metric) Northern Pike suppression	Convene technical workgroup following ISAB review Consider proposal for funding	Near-term Near-term	U U
EP 4	Reintroduction, passage and habitat improvement if warranted	Phase I - evaluate passage studies at other blockages and from previous assessments	Staff will compile and develop report	Near-term	O
EP 5	Implement additional sturgeon and lamprey measures (passage and research)	Discuss priorities with F&W managers; solicit for proposals Once the synthesis report is available, solicit for lamprey proposals	TBD TBD	Extended-term Extended-term	F F
EP 6	Update subbasin plans most in need of updating	Hold discussions or workshop/discussion with RCG	Maintain/update subbasin dashboards	Near-term	O
EP 7	Continue efforts to improve floodplain habitats	Hold science policy forum (collaborate with other regional efforts)	Plan and convene forum	Near-term	O

Table 2 (Draft). Tasks to implement Fish and Wildlife Program priorities that have Council action (✓).

Emerging priority	Program language	Associated tasks	Council action	Implementation timeframe (from August)	Status
EP 1	Provide for funding long-term maintenance of the assets	O&M Strategic Plan: Hatchery Assessment	RFP for hatchery assessment	Immediate	✓
EP 2	Developing program objectives as appropriate	Refine Program objectives	Compile existing objectives	Immediate	✓
	Take into account the effects of climate change	Complete water temperature analysis and modeling	Send letter to Corps and mid-C PUDs	Near-term	✓*
EP 3	Aggressively address both non-native and invasive species	Assist states' efforts to prevent establishment of quagga/zebra mussels	Letter to Action Agencies	Immediate	✓
	Map and determine hotspots for contaminants	Support work by EPA's Columbia River Toxics Reduction Working Group	Letter to Action Agencies	Immediate	✓
EP 4	Reintroduction, passage and habitat improvement if warranted	Phase I - assess habitat	RFP issued	Immediate	✓

*Decision pending at this Council meeting.