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May 3, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fish and Wildlife Committee members

FROM: Patty O'Toole, Program Implementation Manager

SUBJECT: Update on Council's Research Plan

BACKGROUND:

Presenter: Patty O'Toole

Summary: Staff will update the Committee on the tasks associated with updating the research plan.

Relevance: Updating the Council's Research Plan is relevant to the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program priority #2: Implement adaptive management (including prioritized research on critical uncertainties).

Background: Council staff will describe tasks associated with updating the Council's Columbia River Research Plan and a rough time frame for the work on each task. The staff welcomes input from the Committee on the scope of the effort, tasks, and time frame.

More Info: See attached draft work plan.

Research Plan Update - *draft work plan* (May 3, 2016)

Objective: Update the Council's research plan consistent with the 2014 Fish and Wildlife Program. The purpose of the research plan is to help the Council, Bonneville, project proponents, and the independent science panels track and evaluate research projects, prioritize critical uncertainties for the program, and along with other considerations, guide funding recommendations. Research seeks to resolve critical uncertainties identified in the Council's Research Plan and assesses new methods and technologies to improve the program. The process will provide opportunities for public input.

Tasks	Estimated time frame	Status
Task 1. ISAB/ISRP Report The Council requested on February 23, 2015 that the independent science panels begin a review of past research and the critical uncertainties relevant to the program. Specifically, the Council asked the ISAB and ISRP for 1) a revised set of critical uncertainties; 2) a detailed list of research themes or categories that fully encompasses past, current, and possible future research; 3) scientific input on identifying priorities among the critical uncertainties; and 4) a determination of whether ongoing research is making progress in answering critical uncertainties listed in the current research plan. The ISAB and ISRP's report, Critical Uncertainties for the Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program is now posted on the Council's website.	January 29 th , 2016	Complete
Task 2. Public Comment On February 1, 2016 the Council invited comments on the Critical Uncertainties report. Written comments were received from 16 entities. Some were short and programmatic in nature; many were extensive and detailed. In addition the Council held a public meeting on March 7, 2016 to discuss the report and updating the Council's research plan. Eighteen entities participated in the meeting, and meeting notes are posted on the Council's website .	March 11, 2016	Complete
Task 3. Historical look at past investment for research The Council's Fish and Wildlife Program calls for, as one of the first steps in updating the research plan, an update of how previous research funds were allocated to particular categories and critical uncertainties. To accomplish this directive, staff is using the critical uncertainties report as a structure, and then using budget information from CBfish in order to get a sense of historical spending for categories and critical uncertainties. Pisces information is used for the identification of work element budgets, to account for research that may be nested in other types of projects. The analysis will also account for the relationship of projects to Biological Opinion RPA's. This data was presented to central and state staff and will be reviewed with Bonneville staff in the near future. The goal of this task is to gain an understanding of what level of investment various program areas and uncertainties have received.	May – July, 2016	Underway

Task 4. Identify list of Critical Uncertainties (Sources include: ISAB report, additions from public review)	June-July	Underway
The Council's Fish and Wildlife Program directs the research plan to include critical uncertainties for the Program and requests that the ISAB and ISRP to assist with updating the list of critical uncertainties. This ISAB and ISRP review was completed under task 1. Public comments (task 2) identified additional uncertainties or modified uncertainties for the Council to consider. A categorized list of critical uncertainties for the research plan will be developed using these sources.		
Task 5. Develop priorities/priority framework	July-August	Not yet
The Council's Fish and Wildlife Program notes that the research plan should prioritize critical uncertainties for the program and guide funding recommendations. Priorities will be described in the research plan. Options to consider for a prioritization framework include: Program vision or goals/objectives, models, a decision focused framework, Program guidance-including the risk uncertainty matrix (described in the Program and elaborated upon in the Critical Uncertainties report); adaptive management principles, project categories, other program criteria.		
Task 6. Consider and describe any needed process elements	August	Not yet
The comments on the Critical Uncertainties Report and general comments on the research plan update include process and implementation suggestions. These will be reviewed and considered for the research plan.		
Task 7. Committee, Council approval	September-October	Not yet
Staff will work with the Fish and Wildlife Committee and periodically with the full Council to review a draft revised research plan. Staff will seek a decision from the full Council for the release of the draft plan for public review.		
Task 8. Public comment	October-November	Not yet
Public comment will be collected for at least 45 days beginning with an email notification of the public comment opportunity.		
Task 9. Revise per comments	November	Not yet
Staff will review the comments with the Fish and Wildlife Committee and will make recommendations for incorporating the comments into the draft plan.		
Task 10. Final review and approval Committee, Council	December-January	Not yet
The Fish and Wildlife Committee will review the revised plan and recommend consideration to the full Council for approval. The full Council will approve the final updated research plan.		