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May 30, 2019

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: Council Members**

**FROM: Erik Merrill, Independent Science Manager**

**SUBJECT: ISRP Final Report: Mainstem and Program Support Category Review**

### **BACKGROUND:**

**Presenter:** Steve Schroder, ISRP Chair

**Summary:** The presentation will summarize the Independent Scientific Review Panel's (ISRP) findings from its Final Report: Mainstem and Program Support Category Review, which provides final comments and recommendations on 48 projects. The ISRP finds that 27 projects meet the ISRP's scientific review criteria and 16 projects meet scientific criteria with some qualifications. The ISRP expects the qualifications to be addressed during contracting, implementation, future annual reports, or the upcoming 2020 and 2021 Category Reviews. The ISRP recommends not applicable for 5 proposals that were not amenable to scientific review.

The ISRP's report also provides a brief overview of the issues and key findings concerning the broad array of topics covered in this Category Review (section I, pages 1-9):

- passage, predation, and survival of salmonids—freshwater and ocean
- harvest and conservation enforcement
- artificial production and salmon recovery research, monitoring, and evaluation (RM&E)
- Pacific lamprey

- habitat restoration effectiveness RM&E
- water transactions
- freshwater mussels
- climate change modeling
- data management, storage and dissemination of information.

Finally, the report provides programmatic comments and recommendations on issues that apply across projects to help inform the future direction of the Fish and Wildlife Program (section III, pages 14-26). General topics include the need for projects to establish quantitative objectives, employ adaptive management, easily share information, conduct proper data management/analysis, and communicate uncertainty. More specific topics include quantifying the benefits of conservation enforcement, understanding variation in smolt-to-adult survival estimates, resolving issues related to fish marking, quantifying the effects of toxic contaminants, and the need to consider the complexity and novelty of the Basin's hybrid-ecosystem.

**Relevance:** Section 4(h)(10)(D) of the Northwest Power Act guides the Council in recommending projects to implement the Fish and Wildlife. Project reviews increase Fish and Wildlife Program accountability and transparency; improve project design, implementation, and overall effectiveness; help track project and program performance; and facilitate information sharing and adaptive management.

**Workplan:** Project reviews are an integral part of the Fish and Wildlife Program's workplan.

**More Info:** The full report is posted ([ISRP 2019-2](#)) and available on BOX ([Word document](#)).