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March 2, 2021

DECISION MEMORANDUM

TO: Council members

FROM: Andrea Goodwin, Senior Counsel

SUBJECT: Amendment to Contract C2021-53, Kearns & West, Inc.

PROPOSED ACTION: Authorization to execute an amendment to Contract C2021-53 with Kearns & West, Inc. to extend their facilitation services for the Columbia River Basin Collaborative effort through June 30, 2021 and to add \$25,000 to the total contract budget to support this extension.

BUDGETARY/ECONOMIC IMPACTS

In January of this year the Council approved a contract for \$25,000 to help pay for facilitation services into March to assist the state representatives who are trying to organize what is called the Columbia Basin Collaborative. The effort needs an additional \$25,000 to continue the facilitation services through June 2021. Thus, staff is seeking authorization to add \$25,000 to the budget for a total amended Contract budget not-to-exceed \$50,000.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Governors of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington signed a Letter of Agreement in October 2020, committing to work together in a collaborative effort to continue assessing what is needed in order to rebuild Columbia River salmon and steelhead stocks. This collaborative process is still to be defined, but will include involvement not just from the states but also from the region's tribes, federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations.

This effort is relevant to the Council's work, in that the collaborative effort will necessarily involve consideration of, among other things, implementation of the Council's Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program under the Northwest Power Act. The outcome of these collaborative discussions may include recommendations for how to improve the measures and objectives in the program. The Collaborative effort will also involve considerations about how best to achieve the salmon population goals developed in the recently-concluded Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force effort, goals that the Council incorporated into the program as program objectives in the sense that implementing the program will contribute to the efforts to achieve these task force goals. And the collaborative effort will also serve to engage the public in these considerations, another aspect of the mission of the Council.

To support the Collaborative and its effort to develop a framework to rebuild Columbia River salmon and steelhead stocks, the Council previously engaged Kearns & West to provide facilitation services for the Collaborative from January 2021 through March 2021. However, the Collaborative is still in the initial process design phase, with the first organizational workshop just held in late February. Consequently, Kearns & West's facilitation services remain needed and Council authorization is sought to amend Contract C2021-53 to extend Kearns & West's engagement through June 2021 and to add \$25,000 to the total contract budget to support this extension. We still anticipate that alternative resources will be available to support the Collaborative and any continuing facilitation needs post-June 2021.

ALTERNATIVES

In the alternative to proceeding with an amendment to Contract C2021-53 the Council could choose to either not extend the Contract or could seek the facilitation services of a different contractor. However, the work to stand up this Collaborative is currently in process, therefore, either of these options may delay the timing and ultimately the work of the Collaborative.