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Northwest **Power** and **Conservation** Council

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Vice Chair
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Montana

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Montana

September 6, 2017

DECISION MEMORANDUM

TO: Council members

FROM: Tony Grover, Director, Fish and Wildlife Division
Patty O'Toole, Program Implementation Manager

SUBJECT: Draft letter to ISAB requesting review of 2014 Fish and Wildlife Program

PROPOSED ACTION: **Approve letter to the ISAB requesting review of the 2014 Program**

SIGNIFICANCE: The Council's 2014 Fish and Wildlife Program calls for the ISAB to evaluate the Program on its scientific merits in time to inform amendments to the program and before the Council requests recommendations from the region.

BUDGETARY/ECONOMIC IMPACTS

This task is identified in the ISAB's FY 2018 statement of work and appropriate funds are available.

BACKGROUND

The Council will initiate steps to amend the 2014 Fish and Wildlife Program in 2018. The 2014 Program calls for the ISAB to evaluate the Program on its scientific merits in time to inform amendments to the Program and before the Council requests recommendations from the region, which could occur as early as April of 2018.

ANALYSIS

For the ISAB review to be available prior to the time when the Council calls for recommendations to amend the Program, staff suggests that the Council request the final report by the end of February 2018.

ALTERNATIVES

The staff developed a simple draft memo requesting that the ISAB review the 2014 Program. The draft letter is attached at page 3.

As an alternative, Council could request that the ISAB address particular parts of the Program or current key issues. For example, the Council could insert into the letter some or all of the following:

- *The ISAB should evaluate the Program's scientific principles, biological objectives, and the suite of strategies. Particular areas of interest are lamprey, sturgeon, predation, habitat restoration approaches and effectiveness monitoring.*
- *The 2014 Program included measures to strengthen the information available for adaptively managing the Program, such as identifying existing numerical objectives and expanding guidance under its Adaptive Management section. The Council is interested to learn what improvements could be made to the Program to ensure that information needed to improve strategies is better managed, synthesized, evaluated and reported.*
- *Many ISAB and ISRP reviews informed the development of the current Program, but some program areas might benefit from further review and up-dating based on ISAB and ISRP reviews completed after the last Program amendment, for example the ISAB and ISRP's Critical Uncertainties Report ([ISAB/ISRP 2016-1](#)), the ISAB's Density Dependence Report ([ISAB 2015-1](#)), the ISAB's reviews of life cycle models (in progress and [ISAB 2014-4](#)), the ISAB's Predation Metrics Report ([ISAB 2016-1](#)), and the ISRP's reviews of wildlife, habitat restoration, and white sturgeon mitigation projects (see [ISRP webpage](#)). The report should reference and summarize past ISAB and ISRP findings as appropriate.*

The staff considered these options, but recommends the attached more general letter, 1) recognizing that the ISAB may address these and other topics during their review and this detail may not be necessary and 2) to expedite getting the support of the ISAB Oversight Board in a timely manner.

ATTACHMENTS

Please see draft letter to the ISAB

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September __, 2017

Dr. Alec Maule, ISAB Chair
441 Ashley Drive
Underwood, WA 98651

Dear Dr. Maule,

We request that the Independent Scientific Advisory Board's (ISAB) evaluate the Council's 2014 Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program on its scientific merits in time to inform amendments to the 2014 Fish and Wildlife Program and before the Council requests recommendations from the region.

We request that the ISAB complete the report resulting from the ISAB's scientific review by the end of February 2018 to help guide the region as it develops recommendations and the Council as it frames the amended Program. We understand that the ISAB's review approach and product will reflect the time available. The Council's amendment process is scheduled to begin as early as April 2018. If there is anything we can do to help facilitate this review, please let us know. The Council appreciates efforts of the ISAB in this task.

Sincerely,

Henry Lorenzen
Chair Northwest Power and Conservation Council