

Bruce A. Measure  
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Montana

Rhonda Whiting  
Montana

W. Bill Booth  
Idaho

James A. Yost  
Idaho



Dick Wallace  
Vice-Chair  
Washington

Tom Karier  
Washington

Melinda S. Eden  
Oregon

Joan M. Dukes  
Oregon

December 2, 2010

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Fish and Wildlife Committee Members

**FROM:** Mark Fritsch, project implementation manager

**SUBJECT:** Council decision on Project #2008-903-00, *ESA Habitat Restoration*, Columbia Basin Fish Accord project

**PROPOSED ACTION:** The Council staff recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Committee support this project for implementation.

### BUDGETARY/ECONOMIC IMPACTS

The total budget for this Accord project equals \$4,231,851 (i.e., it ranges from \$252,000 to \$499,545 per year) in expense funds for Fiscal Years 2009 through 2018<sup>1</sup>. To date, two contracts totaling \$495,455 have been issued. The current contract has a performance period of September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011 with a contracted value of \$307,000.<sup>2</sup>

### BACKGROUND

In 2008-2009, the Bonneville Power Administration, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (the Action Agencies) signed agreements with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon (CTWSRO), the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation (YN), and the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC). The agreement with these Tribes and CRITFC is referred to as the Three Treaty Tribes MOA. The Action Agencies also signed agreements with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CCT), the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (SBT), and the states of Idaho, Montana, and Washington. These agreements are known as the Columbia Basin Fish Accords.

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<sup>1</sup> The SBT Accord & Washington MOA goes through 2018 unlike the others (YN, WS, CTUIR, CCT, Idaho, CRITFC) which go through 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Costs to date reflect planning and administrative needs for this proposal and the SBT.

As set forth in the guidance document outlining the review process for the Accords, the Council recognizes Bonneville's commitment to Accord projects. The Accords do not, however, alter the Council's responsibilities with respect to independent scientific review of project proposals or the Council's role following such reviews. As with all projects in the Fish and Wildlife Program, Accord projects are subject to review by the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP), and the Council provides funding recommendations based on full consideration of the ISRP's report and the Council's Program.

On June 29, 2010, the Council received a Columbia Basin Fish Accord proposal from Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (SBT), #2008-903-00, *ESA Habitat Restoration* for science review and on July 23, 2010 the ISRP provided their preliminary review (ISRP document 2010-25). The ISRP requested additional information in the form of a revised proposal augmented by a point-by-point response to the ISRP's concerns.

On August 13, 2010 the Council received a response from Bonneville, and on November 15, 2010 the Council received the final review from the ISRP (ISRP document 2010-39). The ISRP found that the proposal "Meets Science Review Criteria (Qualified)." To date, no public comment has been received on the ISRP reviews.

The goal of this project is to inventory, assess, plan, and implement habitat type actions to address limiting factors identified in the Upper Salmon River Subbasin, primarily in the Upper Salmon Watershed and the Middle Salmon-Panther Watershed. The proposed habitat restoration actions are intended to address sediment delivery, restore riparian function, improve stream temperatures, and improve passage for all life stages of anadromous and resident fish in priority areas of the Salmon River Subbasin.

As you are aware the geographic scope of this project is similar to other ongoing program projects<sup>3</sup>. Coordination and collaboration amongst these projects needs to be addressed through contracting.

## ANALYSIS

The ISRP was impressed with the amount of effort that went into the revised proposal addressing concerns expressed in the preliminary ISRP review. At the same time the Panel felt that additional detail is needed in the proposed inventory and assessment actions outlined in objectives 1 and 2 of the proposal. The ISRP expressed this concern in the "Qualification" that recommends in particular that some type of cost-benefit or cost effectiveness analysis be incorporated to assist in priority setting for the project as a whole. But the ISRP also stated that this qualification can be incorporated and considered in future reviews (likely as a component of a Salmon River subbasin geographic review) and need not occur now prior to implementation.

Based on the ISRP review and the quality of the revised proposal the Council staff recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Committee support this project for implementation.

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<sup>3</sup> Project #2008-603-00, Pahsimeroi River Habitat, and Project #2007-268-00, Idaho Watershed Habitat Restoration - Custer District.