

Judi Danielson
Chair
Idaho

Jim Kempton
Idaho

Frank L. Cassidy Jr.
"Larry"
Washington

Tom Karier
Washington



Melinda S. Eden
Vice-Chair
Oregon

Gene Derfler
Oregon

Ed Bartlett
Montana

John Hines
Montana

Council Meeting Missoula MT

October 13, 2004

Minutes

Reports from Fish and Wildlife, Power and Public Affairs committee chairs:

Ed Bartlett, chair, fish and wildlife committee; Jim Kempton, chair, power committee; and Larry Cassidy, chair, public affairs committee.

Larry Cassidy gave the Public Affairs Committee report, noting that a brochure for the fifth power plan is complete and that staff is designing ads and other materials to publicize public meetings on the plan. The meetings are scheduled for a number of locations around the region, he said. The Council's annual report to the Northwest Governors is being prepared, and our annual report to Congress is now out for a 90-day public review and will be sent by the end of the year, Cassidy said. He reported that the pocket guide on the Columbia River system is being updated, and a video about the Council is being sent to every school district in the region.

Ed Bartlett reported on the Fish and Wildlife Committee, which lasted all day Tuesday. The committee recommends release of 29 subbasin plans so the region can comment on them, he said. In addition, we recommend the Council seek comment on some broader issues related to subbasin plans, according to Bartlett. With regard to the Artificial Production Review and Evaluation, staff will have a report to be submitted to Congress after the first of the year, he said. The committee discussed the Fish Passage Center budget, Bartlett continued, noting the need to respond to rumors and clarify what "we are not doing" with regard to the FPC.

Bartlett said the committee is interested in taking up the issue of implementing subbasin plans as soon as possible and will look at recommendations in November. He added that there was discussion of three items from the Council's mainstem amendments, including the proposed regional forum, a symposium requested in a letter from NOAA Fisheries' Bob Lohn, and summer spill. We also had a report from Peter Paquet regarding a data management contract, Bartlett said, adding that the committee recommends adoption of a scope of work for the Northwest Environmental Data-Network Project. The committee had a presentation on fish and wildlife budget tracking – the CBFWA website is complete and providing information for the region, he concluded.

Jim Kempton gave a report on the Power Committee. The committee worked with Dick Watson to refine a briefing for public audiences on the fifth power plan, he said. It's difficult to condense a briefing on so complex a topic, Kempton acknowledged. We talked about outreach for the plan and about Power Point slides that will be available for Council members when they meet with various stakeholder groups, he said. Kempton noted that the committee concurred with a power staff proposal to fund an honorarium of \$2,500 for people who have been instrumental in regional conservation work.

1. Presentation by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes regarding a proposed agreement on land management with the Bonneville Power Administration:

Lynn Ducharme, watershed coordinator for the Flathead Basin.

[Included with Agenda Item #7]

2. Council decision on draft amendments to adopt subbasin plans:

Doug Marker, director, fish and wildlife division; John Shurts, general counsel; Lynn Palensky, subbasin planning project manager; and John Ogan, senior counsel.

Staffer John Ogan said subbasin planning grew out of a Council commitment in 2000 to restructure its fish and wildlife program and rebuild it on a consistent scientific foundation. The 2000 program called for objectives and strategies to be developed at different geographic scales, including subbasin, ecological province, and basinwide, he explained. Before moving to the province-scale objectives, we found we needed a better understanding of the technical assessments and objectives at the subbasin level, Ogan indicated.

The Council requested recommendations for amendments to the fish and wildlife program in 2002, he continued. We encouraged people to submit recommendations in the form of subbasin plans, Ogan said. The Council worked with others to develop a template for the plans and secured Bonneville funding for the process, he pointed out. It was the first time funds were available to help people come up with recommended amendments to the fish and wildlife program, Ogan noted.

On May 28, 2004, "a difficult deadline" for planners to meet, we received 59 subbasin plans, he stated. The subbasin plans were put out for public review within a few days of their receipt, Ogan reported.

The Council also engaged an independent science team to review the plans, he said. We received extensive public comment as well as independent science reviews by the August 12, 2004 deadline, Ogan stated.

The Council staff reviewed each subbasin plan against a framework of adoptability standards based on provisions in the Northwest Power Act, he explained. Every plan had the same review, using the same standards, and "we feel good about the consistency of the reviews," according to Ogan. We found the plans fell into three groups, he continued: the first group looked very strong and usable for the Council's fish and wildlife program; the second group was not as

strong, but appeared susceptible to getting the issues worked out; and the third group needed more effort and a longer time to bring up to speed.

Ogan outlined issues that arose in the staff's review, such as a weak link between the assessment and key findings. There were also issues related to artificial production and whether the Artificial Production Review and Evaluation (APRE) strategy was integrated with other strategies in the subbasins, he said.

We found that the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) elements were an issue in many plans, Ogan noted. Since we have regional work going on with M&E, we decided it made sense to let the regional effort mature and "flow back into the plans," rather than hold up and have individual preparers address M&E on their own, he explained.

We have 29 plans that are adequate to move to the next step of public review, Ogan said. "We aren't saying that the plans are perfect," but they are strong enough to release as draft amendments to the fish and wildlife program and for further comment, he wrapped up.

Staffer John Shurts outlined several issues raised in comments on the subbasin plans. He reported that a major question involves how to get from subbasin plans to specific sets of measures to implement. This comment also reflects a broader question about the process for setting priorities and selecting projects, Shurts added.

Another issue that arose often is "what these plans add up to" and whether in aggregate, they make up a basinwide fish and wildlife program, he continued. A related issue is how these subbasin plans relate to Endangered Species Act (ESA) recovery plans, Shurts said. These are significant issues and some are not new, but we need to sort out how and when we are going to address them, he stated.

Shurts suggested the Council could resolve the broader issues as it moves the subbasin plans along toward adoption. We hope to send out a draft notice letter with the first group of 29 subbasin plans in which we identify and seek comment on these overarching issues, he said. Shurts indicated he would prepare a letter for the Council to review.

Jim Kempton said the Council needs to resolve an issue that came up when the subbasin planning process began: the relationship to ESA recovery plans. According to a letter we received from Bob Lohn, there were additional activities needed if these subbasin plans were to be recognized as local recovery plans, and it seems NOAA Fisheries should identify what those activities are, he stated.

We are looking for plans that meet Northwest Power Act requirements, Shurts responded. We hoped we would produce work that is useful to NOAA Fisheries, but it is not our intent to claim that we have produced recovery plans, he said. It is NOAA Fisheries' responsibility to decide if the subbasin plans are useful for its purpose, Shurts went on. We don't presume to do any analysis of whether these satisfy the ESA mandate, he said.

It seems we are raising the issue in what we propose to send out, Kempton replied. NOAA Fisheries may want to clarify whether the region should be discussing recovery planning in the context of subbasin plans, he said. It's important for us to include recovery planning in our list

of issues because it was raised in comments to us, not because it is something we want to raise, Shurts replied.

Tom Karier asked about M&E and fish counts. These plans target specific species, so we need to know whether these fish are being counted, he said. If we have an objective to improve a particular population, how will we know what we are achieving, if we don't have the counts? Karier asked.

We are discussing the status of fish counts with others in the region, staffer Doug Marker replied. In general, the focal species in the subbasin plans are being counted, but some plans acknowledge there aren't good counts, and the strategies include the need to start counting, Ogan said. We expect specific projects will be proposed to fill those gaps, he added.

I have reservations about asking NOAA Fisheries for anything before we release the subbasin plans, Larry Cassidy stated. I wouldn't want to hold up our process, he said, adding that NOAA Fisheries seems now to be saying its legal responsibility is for a jeopardy determination only, not for recovery plans.

I can't agree with the statement Mr. Cassidy made, Rob Walton of NOAA Fisheries stated. We have a clear legal responsibility to write recovery plans, he said. We appreciate the staff's intent to clarify this issue of subbasin versus recovery plans, and we should help you to address it, Walton said. John Shurts raises a good point about the ambiguity with regard to what is a recovery plan, and we should try to clarify it, he added.

The Council should send a letter of its own, which covers our responsibilities for the fish and wildlife program, Council chair Judi Danielson stated.

John Hines pointed out the Council's need to know whether the subbasin plans aggregate to a basinwide fish and wildlife program. We need that information to make decisions about projects and to determine how they will work together from one subbasin to another, he indicated.

Staff is recommending the Council release 29 plans and seek comment on them through November 22, Ogan said. We will review the comments and prepare the plans for adoption in December, he said. Ogan outlined a schedule for public meetings on the draft amendments beginning in late October.

Ogan advised the Council that an addendum was submitted to the Columbia Gorge subbasin plan, which responds to review comments. We propose to add the addendum to the Columbia Gorge plan, Ogan said. A group of subbasins in Washington have also advised us they will submit updates in the future, he said.

With regard to the second group of plans, there will be work on them through November 26, he said. We have contracted for specific tasks to be done, and we believe another set of 20 or more plans will be ready to release in December, Ogan reported.

How are we going to respond to what Rob Walton suggested to clarify the relationship between subbasin and recovery plans? Kempton asked. We are putting out a notice letter asking for comment on the subbasin plan issues, Shurts replied. NOAA Fisheries could respond to the

question related to recovery plans, he suggested. I recommend we not coordinate on our letter, Shurts added.

Bartlett made a motion that the Council authorize the staff to publish for public comment the 29 subbasin plan recommendations presented by the staff as draft amendments to the Council's fish and wildlife program and direct the staff to give appropriate notice of today's actions, including a discussion of the issues and request for comment on the issues identified by staff that relate to subbasin planning and the program amendment process, as presented at today's meeting. Cassidy seconded the motion, which passed on a unanimous vote.

3. Council decision on "Step Two" approval of Northeast Oregon Hatchery proposal:

Mark Fritsch, manager, project implementation.

Staffer Mark Fritsch, along with representatives of the Nez Perce Tribe, presented an overview of the Step 2 review for the Northeast Oregon Hatchery Spring Chinook Master Plan. We are here to seek approval to proceed to Step 3, he said.

Fritsch went over the significance of the project, noting that it aims to reduce the risk of extinction for five stocks of spring chinook in the Grande Ronde and Imnaha subbasins, and that it covers four individual programs. The master plan for the project was approved in September 2000, and the Step 2 submittal came in August 3, 2004, he explained.

Specific activities covered in the proposal include modifications to a satellite facility (Gumboot) and to the Lookingglass Hatchery, as well as construction of a new incubation and rearing facility and an adult capture facility on the Lostine River, Fritsch said. The cost of the project since 1988 has been \$7.1 million, which covered the initial siting, assessment, conceptual decision, and capital construction, he explained. The estimated construction cost is \$16.3 million, Fritsch said. Estimated annual operations and maintenance (O&M) is \$676,000, with \$2.4 million annually for M&E, he added. Approval of the total cost package would depend on the Council's Step 3 decision in 2005, Fritsch clarified.

He proceeded to explain how the Step 2 submittal responds to questions that arose in September at the fish and wildlife committee meeting. These questions related to costs of the proposal associated with captive propagation; relationship to the Lower Snake River Compensation Plan; fish marking; and relationship to the Imnaha final rearing facility.

Fritsch said the fish and wildlife committee recommended having an "independent value analysis" conducted on capital construction costs, at an estimated cost of \$40,000. In addition, fiscal year (FY) 2005 costs include of \$1.6 million for final design and land acquisition/easement, and \$458,000 for planning.

Hines asked how the project squares with recommendations of the APRE. This is the best example to date of a project that addresses the APRE concerns, Fritsch responded. Items such as rearing densities and size/growth rate are being addressed here, he said. Staffer Bruce Suzumoto concurred, saying the project satisfies issues related to broodstock, hatchery protocols, and densities. From our review, "it's a very good project," he said, adding that the improvements are

reflected in the price tag for the project. Hines suggested there be an “off-ramp” in the contract related to APRE. We don’t know where APRE will end up, and it seems that from the perspective of prudent contracting, we should include that, he said. We can reflect that concern in our letter to Bonneville, Fritsch replied.

I’d suggest that an IEAB review be done on all of these large projects, Karier said. I like that suggestion, Bartlett said.

With regard to M&E, the ISRP has been very supportive of the plan for this project, Fritsch continued. It comes with “a big price tag” of \$2.4 million, he added. We need to look at how the M&E for this project fits into a regional approach, Fritsch said. This highlights the need for a regional M&E plan, Karier concurred.

This project is a product of what the Council and NOAA Fisheries have been directing us to do with regard to dealing with listed fish, Dave Johnson of the Nez Perce Tribe said. This addresses the issue of how better to grow fish, and “I truly hope it’s not a surprise” for you to see us incorporate better science and ideas for this project, he said. We aren’t seeing a lot of new production efforts, and this may point toward revamping some old hatcheries to incorporate better ideas, Johnson stated.

Hines asked if the majority of the M&E costs are personnel. A significant amount is personnel, according to Jay Hessee of the Nez Perce Tribe. The plan calls for a lot of data collection in remote areas, he added. We need to get a handle on a master M&E plan, Hines commented.

They have priced this project out according to what we said we wanted, Cassidy pointed out. We should get this moving forward – “every time I look at this project, it gets better and better,” he said.

I agree with the concern about the M&E costs, Melinda Eden said. If the Step 3 submittal isn’t coming in until September 2005, we have time to break down these numbers and take a closer look, she said. “That’s a big number for us to swallow without more examination,” Eden added.

Hessee pointed out that the linkage with regionwide M&E planning is taking place, and he said the linkage would be more fully developed as subbasin plans for the Imnaha and Grande Ronde are refined.

I’m proud of the way this project has developed, Johnson stated. It incorporates all three goals in the Northwest Power Act, he said: protect, mitigate, and enhance.

Walton pointed out that NOAA Fisheries has a role in preparing a Biological Opinion (BiOp) on the construction and issuing a Section 10 permit. The BiOp is complete and signed and the Section 10 permit is in process, he reported. We support this as an important example of hatchery reform, Walton said. We also support Tom Karier’s call for a regional look at the M&E expenses, he said. We also need to look at how we are allocating dollars in the region among the Hs, Walton added.

Ken Kirkman of Bonneville offered his agency’s support for the project.

You have heard the Council's concerns about balancing ESA-related work with our fish and wildlife program, Council chair Judi Danielson said. You've also heard our recommendations regarding the value-added analysis and an IEAB review, she said. The M&E costs associated with the project will continue to rise over time, so we need to be prudent, Danielson said. When you come back for Step 3, these are the kinds of questions you will get, she added.

Eden made a motion that the Council approve the Step 2 review of the Northeast Oregon Hatchery Spring Chinook Master Plan and initiate Step 3 activities, subject to the conditions outlined by the staff. Cassidy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

4. Discussion of avian predation management:

Peter Paquet, manager, wildlife and resident fish.

Staffer Peter Paquet summarized issues related to avian predation, following up a September presentation by the Corps and University of Washington researcher Dr. Julia Parrish. Avian is one of many types of predation on juvenile fish populations, he said. Most avian predators are native species, and human actions have altered or created new habitats that are conducive to increasing their populations, Paquet explained.

He reviewed information presented in September, noting that a Corps Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on Caspian terns will be out in January. The preferred alternative in the EIS is to maintain a population of a certain size on East Sand Island and to disperse the other birds, Paquet said. A controversy has developed over whether the states want these populations moved to within their borders, and the Corps has asked for the Council's help in resolving that issue, he said.

Another issue is whether we need a regional approach to avian juvenile fish predation, Paquet continued. Some have suggested that we need a better regional strategy and efforts should be aimed at developing it, he said. There are also budget issues in the discussion of avian predation, including who has responsibility to pay for the measures, Paquet said. The impacts are not directly related to the hydro system, and while many of these measures are cost-effective, there is the question of whether Bonneville should pay for them, he explained.

Cassidy registered his interest in the issue, saying it makes no sense to spend millions of dollars to nurture juvenile salmon and then feed them to birds. The Corps said there would be no more dredge spoil sites created in the Columbia, and we should send a letter to General Grisoli and confirm that is the case, he said. We need to think about whether we want to get involved in negotiations with the states on Caspian tern sites – "it's very dicey," Cassidy stated. The new Biological Opinion calls for an emphasis on predation control, and there may be an opportunity there, he added.

The Corps has raised the issue of whether it could pay to relocate birds to sites far away from the river, Marker said. I don't think the idea is to actually deliver the birds to another site, but to make conditions inhospitable so they would move, Paquet said.

The Council needs to decide how to address this, Danielson said, suggesting a task force would be one approach. Perhaps a meeting or two with various parties would be adequate to develop a

strategy for the region, Paquet responded. “You’ve got a head nod to go forward on this,” Danielson summed up.

5. Presentation on Hungry Horse Mitigation, Project #1991-019-03 - Sekokini Springs:

Brian Marotz, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

Brian Marotz of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks said the facility at Sekokini Springs upstream from Hungry Horse Dam could become the cornerstone of West Slope cutthroat trout restoration. “It’s now a sow’s ear, but it could be a silk purse,” he said of the site, a former private trout farm that “leaked fish” into native cutthroat habitat.

We can grow cutthroat in a natural habitat at Sekokini Springs, Marotz said, adding that biologists are trying to keep the wild genetic cutthroat traits alive and restore the integrity of the species. “This isn’t broodstock – this restores native fish with wild behavior,” he stated. Marotz outlined the steps needed to improve the site before introducing four strains of wild fish.

We’ve tested hatching and rearing fish on the water source at Sekokini Springs, and improvements have been made to the building at the site, he said. There are also plans for a visitors’ center and a wetlands exhibit, according to Marotz. Sekokini Springs offers an educational opportunity for people to see West Slope cutthroat in their native habitat, he said. The facility will also be a source of wild fish for other programs, Marotz concluded.

6. Presentation on implementation of fish and wildlife program performance metrics:

Roy Beaty, fishery biologist, Bonneville Power Administration.

Roy Beaty, a fisheries biologist with Bonneville, gave an update on Bonneville’s efforts to attach metrics to work elements in the fish and wildlife projects it funds. Our purpose is to define a set of metrics as meaningful measures of accomplishments in the fish and wildlife program, he said.

Bonneville solicited ideas for metrics associated with various fish and wildlife projects and received 41 responses, Beaty continued. The benefit of soliciting ideas is twofold, he said: it gives us an opportunity to see the types of information you want, and it could start a discussion of how we get there. Beaty offered a list of the ideas submitted and said metrics would be incorporated into the “Pisces” Project Management Data System. (Pisces is the system Bonneville is using to track and manage fish and wildlife projects.)

We so far have 92 metrics for 42 of 133 work elements in the program, he reported. For example, we have 35 metrics associated with habitat protection and restoration, Beaty said.

Bonneville wants comments on its lists of metrics by October 22 and plans to have final metrics identified by November 1, he said. We will specify metrics in all fish and wildlife project contracts beginning November 1, Beaty added.

Bonneville should be congratulated – they have made great progress, Karier commented.

7. Report on long-term fish and wildlife program funding agreement:

Doug Marker; and John Ogan.

We have had two work groups meeting since spring on a long-term fish and wildlife funding agreement, Greg Delwiche of Bonneville told the Council. In September, we received version 1.0 from Council staff, and last Friday, “we hit the send button on version 2.0,” he explained. We are close to being on the same page, Delwiche reported.

The Bonneville rate case will begin in February with workshops, so we are working against that deadline, Marker said. We are anxious to have a draft that we can work through line by line and determine what belongs in the agreement and what belongs elsewhere, he said. For example, do we want details on project selection in the agreement, Marker added.

Now that we have a draft version 2.0, we are interested in getting feedback on both the mechanics in the agreement and the concepts, Delwiche said. There may be more detail on the mechanics in our proposal than Doug thinks is appropriate, but if we don’t have them in the agreement, we need to specify where they will be addressed, he said.

Delwiche went over the draft, noting that for the direct program, version 2.0 combines Bonneville’s Northwest Power Act and ESA-required spending for both capital and expense. We would fund both the Northwest Power Act measures and Bonneville’s share of ESA actions, he explained. With regard to mechanics, there is a heavy emphasis on cost sharing, Delwiche said. Bonneville’s internal fish and wildlife costs would generally be covered elsewhere, with a few exceptions, including NEPA work on projects in the direct program, he continued. We also tried to define a ratio for how we would allocate the dollars, Delwiche said: 70 percent for on-the-ground work; 25 percent for research, monitoring, and evaluation (RM&E); and 5 percent for coordination. Our goal is to get dollars on the ground, he added.

The timeframe for the agreement would be 2007 to 2012, which goes beyond the proposed two or three-year rate case, Delwiche stated. Bonneville and the Council would be signatories to the agreement, and we see the tribes signing as concurring parties, he stated. We have had a high level of participation from tribal representatives, Delwiche said. If the tribes bring specific commitments to the table, we’d consider a different signatory role for them, he added.

There are a number of positive things in this draft, but there are also things to worry about, Karier stated. The provisions on project selection de-emphasize the role of the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP) and the Council, he said. Reducing the ISRP involvement to a role of reviewing selected samples is going too far, Karier said.

It was not our intent to de-emphasize the role of the ISRP, but it was our intent to have the option open of making a very quick project solicitation if directions from Judge Redden require us to do that, Delwiche responded. We want an opportunity to expedite a solicitation if we need to, he said.

I’m surprised about this process, Kempton commented. I don’t understand how we took such a big jump from what the Council sent Bonneville in version 1.0 to what Bonneville sent back, he said. The current draft contradicts the process my state would expect with subbasin planning, Kempton added. I am disappointed this has happened, he said.

We have a lot of work to do on this draft, Marker acknowledged. We offered a draft to Bonneville as a starting point, he said. We weren't making enough progress in discussions, and "putting pen to paper was helpful," Delwiche agreed. We need more time to review and work on the Bonneville draft, Marker reiterated.

Hines said he was concerned about intertwining funds for the ESA with the Council's fish and wildlife program. I see that this could become "ESA-driven," and I'm not interested in that happening, he stated.

This has served its purpose – we have two divergent opinions, one from Bonneville and one from the Council, Danielson said. Now we need to collaborate, she stated. Cassidy asked staff to pull out the issues and display the Bonneville and Council positions side by side.

Several tribal representatives offered comments on the long-term funding agreement. Billy Barquin, an attorney for the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, said the tribes want to have a signatory role beyond that of concurring with the agreement.

Ron Trahan said the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes are very interested in the agreement. We need the full strength of a signatory role, and we need to have a role in dispute resolution, he said. We want to encourage the Council to clearly define everything in the agreement and not leave things to interpretation, Trahan urged. All parties should be clear about the provisions, he said.

It is unfortunate that the tribes have to deal with so many people in so many different arenas – the Council, Bonneville, NOAA Fisheries, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – to address fish and wildlife issues, according to Ryan Smith, Warm Springs Tribes. We'd rather not be in court on these issues, but we have a tough time getting our voices heard, he said. With regard to river operations, if water is diverted away from our fishing areas, you are affecting our treaty rights, Smith said.

Jamie Pinkham of the Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission said the long-term funding agreement offers an opportunity for parties "to harmonize" on contentious issues. We have an opportunity to have an equitable relationship, he said. There is good momentum for this agreement, and it could be an example of bringing all sides together, Pinkham added.

It is an opportunity to increase the collaboration between all parties, Barquin agreed. We want to be an equal partner, he stated.

I heard Bonneville open the door to a signatory role if the tribes bring commitments to the table, Hines said. We would like to see the tribes sign as an equal party – there would be tremendous value added if we have tribal signatures, Delwiche said. Have you discussed anything about the commitments with Bonneville? Hines asked. This is the first time we have heard this, but we are committed to move forward as a basin, Barquin replied.

8. Discussion of Fish Passage Center budget:

Doug Marker; and John Shurts.

Gene Derfler gave an update on the work of a Council subcommittee looking into the FPC's budget and responsibilities. He noted that "what we're not doing" has become as important as "what we're doing." We are not changing the FPC program, Derfler stated. What we are doing is addressing concerns about whether the FPC can handle its current responsibilities in the face of a budget shortfall, he explained. Our legal staff said it is within the Council's purview to consider these issues, Derfler added.

In its review, the subcommittee has talked to a number of interests, including the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC), NOAA Fisheries Science Center, Bonneville, and the DART program at the University of Washington, he said. We are not recommending changes to the FPC at this point, Derfler noted.

There is so much concern about what we are doing that we need advice from an outside party about the structure and responsibilities of the FPC, he said. Among the issues are whether the FPC should be under a jurisdiction other than the Council, such as PSMFC, and how to centralize data so it can be used by everyone in the region, Derfler explained. We need a neutral party to take a look and make a recommendation about whether changes are needed, he said.

It is valuable to clear the air about our review, Cassidy stated. The remaining issues need an assessment by an outside party, he agreed. We have work left to do, Cassidy added. I'd encourage you to continue the work you're doing, Danielson told Derfler.

9. Council Business:

- Approval of minutes

The Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes from its September meeting.

- Approval of scope work for data management contracts

The Council approved a scope of work and \$175,000 for the Northwest Environmental Data-Network Project. Stewart Toschach of NOAA Fisheries outlined work elements, which include organizing technical groups on data sharing and quality control, and preparing a plan for data management in the region. Bartlett made a motion that the Council approve the scope of work for the Northwest Environmental Data-Network Project as presented by the staff. Karier seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- Approval of Columbia Basin Bulletin contract

Staffer Mark Walker presented a request for an additional \$15,000 to supplement the current fiscal-year budget for the Columbia Basin Bulletin. Bulletin editor Bill Crampton requested \$180,000 for FY 2005, we approved \$150,000, and Bonneville is cutting another \$15,000 from what we approved, he said. This request would restore the funding level to what it was in 2004, Walker reported. The Public Affairs Committee recommends approval and would also urge Bonneville to continue to fund the Bulletin, he stated.

Bonneville has made this a low priority, but many people look at the Bulletin as an informative document, Cassidy said. I think Bonneville's view is mistaken, and I strongly support this, Melinda Eden commented. The funding request was approved unanimously.

Eden made a motion that the Council approve the request of the editor of the Columbia Basin Bulletin to contribute to the funding of the publication in an amount not to exceed \$15,000 for fiscal year 2005, as recommended by the Public Affairs Committee and as presented by the staff. Cassidy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- **Public comment on *Chief Joseph Dam Hatchery Program*, Project # 2003-023-00 Issue Paper (Council Document 2004-09).**

Kirk Deal of the Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters commented on the Chief Joseph Dam Hatchery Program. He indicated general support for the project and said he would submit written comments.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Approved November 17, 2004

/s/ Melinda S. Eden

Vice-Chair

x:\jh\ww\minutes\oct04.doc