W. Bill Booth
Chair
Idaho

James A. Yost
Idaho

Tom Karier
Washington

Dick Wallace
Washington

Northwest Power and Conservation Council

Bruce A. Measure
Vice-Chair
Montana

Rhonda Whiting
Montana

Melinda S. Eden
Oregon

Joan M. Dukes
Oregon

April 16, 2009

RECEIVED
APR 21 2009
0048545
CBFWA

Mr. William C. Maslen
Manager, Fish and Wildlife Division
Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208

Dear Mr. Maslen:

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the Council's decision on a Columbia River Fish Accord proposal. This recommendation was made by the Council at its meeting on April 14, 2009.

In addition, a purpose of this letter is to inform the project sponsor and other interested parties of the status of this Council action. The following is a summary of the action taken by the Council at the meeting in March.

Expanded Multi-Species Acclimation in the Wenatchee/Methow Basins, Project # 2009-001-00

In 2008-2009, Bonneville, 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 (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, the Columbia Basin Fish Accords, fund actions that will deliver specific, scientifically-sound results for the region's fish and wildlife.

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 science review or the Council's role following such review. 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.

851 S.W. Sixth Avenue, Suite 1100
Portland, Oregon 97204-1348
www.nwcouncil.org

Steve Crow
Executive Director

503-222-5161
800-452-5161
Fax: 503-820-2370

The *Expanded Multi-Species Acclimation in the Wenatchee/Methow Basins*, Project #2009-001-00 submitted by the YN is a compilation of the following six accord proposal from the May 2008 agreement.[1]

- Proposal #2008-453-00, *Methow Steelhead-Winthrop*,
- Proposal #2008-460-00, *Methow Steelhead Acclimation*,
- Proposal #2008-461-00, *S. Chinook-Chiwawa R/Nason Cr*
- Proposal #2008-462-00, *S. Chinook-Little Wenatchee*
- Proposal #2008-463-00, *S. Chinook-Peshastin*
- Proposal #2008-464-00, *Steelhead-Wntch,Chmstk,Mission*

The proposals were inter-dependant upon each other, and were therefore combined by agreement of the sponsor and Bonneville for the review submittal.

The objectives of this project are to develop an expanded acclimation program for existing spring Chinook and steelhead hatchery mitigation programs in the Wenatchee and Methow basins. Through the implementation of these objectives, small acclimation/release sites will be scattered throughout appropriate spawning habitat ("targeted acclimation") in an effort to disperse returning adults to appropriate locations and produce higher smolt to adult survival rates than direct scatter-type or large single-point releases. The goal of the project is to help achieve the recovery goals for the two listed stocks.

On February 24, 2009, the Council received from Bonneville a set of two Columbia Basin Fish Accords proposals. Included in this set was a proposal from the Yakama Nation (YN) for #2009-001-00, *Expanded Multi-Species Acclimation in the Wenatchee/Methow Basins.*

The proposal was submitted to the ISRP for review, and on April 1, 2009 the ISRP provided a review (ISRP document 2009-10). The ISRP found that the proposal "Meets Scientific Review Criteria (Qualified)".

The ISRP found the project narrative adequate to understand the intent of the project, but qualified their recommendation with the understanding that the project's objective associated with the development of a plan (i.e., Objective 1) that would detail the biological and physical data for the acclimation sites, and would be reviewed prior to the implementation of the project. As part of this recommendation the ISRP requested that the following items be address as part of the plan.

- fully document the current status of the resource (spring Chinook and summer steelhead) in the two subbasins;

- establish clear improvements to the VSP parameters for these focal species as a consequence of using long-term acclimation ponds;

[1] The proposal is listed in the May 2008 agreement in Attachment B; Hatchery Planning, O&M. New, and Hatchery Capital.

- craft a monitoring design to evaluate any success (especially since the sponsor acknowledges not much is known about whether this strategy will improve the status of the species); and

- integrate the principles from the Council's 2009 program, the HSRG findings, the Upper Columbia River Chinook and Steelhead recovery plan, the 2008 BiOp, and impending hatchery biological opinions.

The ISRP stated that the project is interesting and potentially important, but there is a need for additional detail so that the review qualification can be addressed. The ISRP states that the detail, outlined above, could be addressed as part of the planning objective associated with this project.

The Yakama Nation is concerned about the detail and type of information requested by the ISRP especially given the relatively small scope of the project that is addressing only the development of an appropriate acclimation strategy of existing hatchery production levels in the Wenatchee and Methow basins. In addition, this recovery production is evaluated through well-established, reviewed and intensive monitoring programs.[2]

Based on the ISRP review the Council supports this project with the understanding that implementation of the action be dependant on the outcome of the proposed planning effort (objective 1) and future review by the ISRP and Council.

Sincerely,

Tony Grover
Director, Fish and Wildlife Division

[2] Mid-Columbia Coho Restoration Project #1996-040-00, Integrated Status and Effectiveness Monitoring Program (ISEMP) #2003-017-00, and HCP's Conceptual Approach to Monitoring and Evaluating the Chelan and Douglas County Hatchery Programs.

cc: Jamae Hilliard Creecy, BPA
Peter Lofy, BPA
Christine Read, BPA
Paul Krueger, BPA
Greg Dondlinger, BPA
David Byrnes, BPA
Marchelle Foster, BPA
Roy Beaty, BPA
Tom Scribner, YN
Brian Lipscomb, CBFWA
Binh Quan, CBFWA