

Bruce A. Measure
Chair
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. Duker
Oregon

Council Meeting Portland Oregon

July 14, 2010

Minutes

Council chair Bruce Measure called the meeting to order. Dick Wallace made a motion that the Council meet, at the call of the Chair, in executive session to discuss participation in civil litigation. Joan Duker seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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

Bill Booth chair, fish and wildlife committee; Tom Karier, chair, power committee; and Rhonda Whiting, chair, public affairs committee.

Fish and Wildlife Committee chair Bill Booth reported that the committee held a short meeting on July 7th via Go to Meeting. We had a report on the continuing progress of the Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Reporting (MERR) work, he said. We undertook the quarterly review of within-year project budget changes, some of which will be considered later today and others next month, Booth continued. Most of our meeting time was spent on drafting a letter to the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP) with guidance for the upcoming review process, he said.

Power Committee chair Tom Karier said the committee took up several items at its meeting July 8th. There is a constant process of reviewing issues in the power plan, he said, and staff reported on the annual update that is being done on resource adequacy. The short-term demand forecast seems to be on track with what we have in the plan, Karier reported. The overall demand is slightly lower because of the economy, but there have been instances of peak demand higher than anticipated, he said.

The committee had presentations on an analysis conducted on the rates and bills forecast in the plan; and on the economics of the direct use of gas, which compares the economic competitiveness of gas versus electricity, Karier said. We reviewed Northwest Energy Efficiency Taskforce recommendations, particularly those related to the Regional Technical Forum (RTF), he continued. The latest recommendation on the RTF is to form a committee to

evaluate the structure and governance, Karier said. The Power Committee supports that recommendation and will ask the rest of the Council to support it as well.

Public Affairs Committee chair Rhonda Whiting reported that 10 Congressional staff people have expressed interest in making the annual trip sponsored by the Council. Four members have confirmed, and the activities are being planned, she said.

1. Council decision on project reviews:

Mark Fritsch, manager, project implementation.

Staffer Mark Fritsch presented three fish and wildlife (F&W) projects for Council approval. The first is a Biological Opinion (BiOp) fast-track project related to the relative reproductive success of hatchery and natural origin steelhead in the Methow River Basin, he said. Initially, the project did not receive a favorable ISRP review, but the sponsor, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), responded to the issues the ISRP raised, it was given a positive review, and the F&W Committee recommends the project be funded.

The second project, also related to the BiOp, was submitted in December 2009, Fritsch continued. After its initial review, the ISRP asked the sponsors for additional information, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and USGS submitted what was needed to address the ISRP concerns, he said. In May, the ISRP gave the project the go-ahead, with qualifications related to the study design, Fritsch said. The ISRP suggested the qualifications be dealt with in BPA's contracting process, he stated.

In June, the F&W Committee considered the project and recommended the sponsor return to the Council with findings within two years and explain how the information is being used to help listed stocks in the basin, he explained.

Tom Karier asked whether the project is studying something that is already known about whether bass are consuming young salmon and steelhead. This study looks at conditions in late fall and fills a gap in the data about what role non-indigenous species play in predation on migrants, Fritsch responded.

What would the next step be? Karier asked. Would there be a program proposed to diminish the bass population, for example, or has anyone thought about that? he asked. This was a major discussion point in the committee, Booth acknowledged. We wanted the check-in to find out how the information gathered is being used, he said.

Measure commented that the study looks at the food web in the fall, when there are still salmon in the lower river. Fritsch said shad are prevalent in the system in the fall, and the study will see what role they play.

Fritsch said the third project relates to catch sample rates and has been reviewed by the ISRP twice. In May, the panel gave it a qualified approval, he said. The ISRP wants more information, but does not want to hold up the project since the first step is to develop a framework for the rest of the study, Fritsch explained. The F&W Committee recommends the

initial aspects of the project be approved, although another submission from the sponsors is expected and will be reviewed by the ISRP, he said.

Almost all of the Columbia Basin Accord projects are five-to-ten years in duration and are moving through our process step by step, Booth said. This is a multiyear project, with the initial step being to develop the study plan for the rest, he said. It makes sense to start with an initial approval so we don't hold up the whole project, Booth said.

My reading of the motion shows there are adequate constraints, Measure said. Wallace made a motion that the Council recommend that Bonneville implement Project 2010-033-00, Estimate the Relative Reproductive Success of Hatchery and Natural Origin Steelhead in the Methow River Basin as presented by the staff and recommended by the Fish and Wildlife Committee. Booth seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Wallace made a motion that the Council recommend that Bonneville implement Project 2008-719-00, Research Non-Indigenous Actions, and require the sponsors both to present the findings of the project to the Council within the next two years and to demonstrate how the information gathered is being used to protect salmonids in the Columbia River Basin. Dukes seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Wallace made a motion that the Council recommend that Bonneville implement the initial phases of Project 2008-508-00, Power Analysis Catch Sampling Rates, with further implementation dependent on review by the ISRP and Council of a revised proposal containing the information requested by the ISRP, as presented by the staff and recommended by the Fish and Wildlife Committee. Whiting seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

2. Council decision on guidance to the ISRP on policies that should be considered during the RM&E and AP categorical review:

Tony Grover, director, fish and wildlife division; and Nancy Leonard, fish, wildlife and ecosystem monitoring and evaluation manager.

Staffer Tony Grover said the F&W Committee had discussed sending a draft letter to the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP) regarding the upcoming RM&E and artificial production reviews. We have the development of the monitoring, evaluation, research, and reporting (MERR) strategy and a huge body of work coming forward on RM&E, he said, and it seems timely to send guidance to the ISRP about issues the Council feels the panel ought to look at closely, he said. The letter states: "While setting a hard and fast budget-reduction target is premature, the Council intends to recommend appropriate adjustments to projects and apply savings to on-the-ground work."

Karier proposed an amendment to the letter. Every time we review RM&E, we end up expanding it, he said, adding that the Council has not always looked at ongoing projects "that may have run their course." In describing his amendment, Karier said the Council should be clear about its goals, including obtaining data for measuring performance on high-level indicators, the BiOp, and projects under the Council's F&W program.

The amendment does not set a firm budget, but says the Council will consider reprogramming funds to meet a goal for “a specific percentage” of spending on RM&E, he explained. While the Council may decide not to do that, the amendment tells the region the Council is considering doing so and is looking for opportunities to make changes that will bring more benefits to on-the-ground work, Karier stated.

He made a motion to adopt his amendment, and Council chair Bruce Measure seconded it. Wallace pointed out that the letter is directed toward a science panel. Some of the points in the amendment are already built into the letter, but some of the suggestions are not appropriate for the science panel to address, he indicated.

Wallace said he thought setting specific percentages for categories of spending “is tricky business.” When the Council considered the level of RM&E in the program, it decided to initiate MERR, “which is progressing,” he said. MERR will engage the region in setting priorities, Wallace said. He pointed out that there is debate going on about the overall cost of the F&W program, and depending on how the costs are calculated, RM&E may make up only 12 percent of the spending.

I support the motion, Measure said. These are aspirational goals for the region, and it’s a good idea to have them, he said.

Karier said even though the letter is for the science panel, it is appropriate to include the spending consideration, and it implements policy we set in the F&W program, he stated.

Eden said she agreed with the goal of setting the most cost-effective budget to get the information needed. But this is a letter to the ISRP, and funding recommendations belong to the Council, she stated. It’s inappropriate to include this in the letter, and even if it were a good idea, it is premature since we are not finished with MERR, Eden said.

I’ll support the letter that came out of the committee, Booth said, although I don’t disagree about having a goal for RM&E. I don’t think we’re ready to set the right goal yet, but we can continue to do the MERR work and get there, he stated. We need better information about what is the right number and how it affects other parts of the program, Booth said.

When I came on the Council, there was very little information about the level of RM&E, Rhonda Whiting said. But since then, BPA has come up with accounting programs that let us know about the amounts being spent, she said. “People were shocked,” Whiting added. But we make the policy on this, and we don’t want to put money issues into the hands of the ISRP, she said.

Whiting also said the tribes have had a great deal of experience with “cookie-cutter” approaches to determining funding, and they create problems. If we put in a cap on the RM&E spending, we could have the same kinds of problems, she said. I agree that at some point we need to establish a percentage, but not today, Whiting stated. And when we do, we need to look at each project individually, she added.

The motion to amend the draft letter failed, with Karier and Measure alone voting in favor of it.

Wallace made a motion that the Council approve for the signature of the Chair the letter to the Independent Scientific Review Panel containing policy guidance for the Panel’s consideration

during the Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation and Artificial Production Categorical Reviews, as presented by the staff and recommended by the Fish and Wildlife Committee. Dukes seconded the motion. Measure pointed out that the draft may need minor revisions.

The Council voted in favor of sending the letter from the F&W Committee to the ISRP, with minor revisions.

We should take a systematic look at determining what the percentage numbers should be, Booth stated. Let's discuss it next time, he suggested. Booth said he hoped all Council members would participate in the process. This has to be a "communication intensive" process and will take collaboration between state and central staff, he added. Wallace agreed such an approach is a good way to get into the next steps.

Bill Maslen of BPA noted there has been much discussion about RM&E. We seem to be on an upward path, he said, adding that with BPA's Taurus and Pisces programs, we have new tools "to dig into this." When we do the geographic reviews, we may see opportunities for savings, Maslen said, adding "we're anxious to change the trend."

3. Update from BPA on contract implementation of wildlife categorical review recommendations:

Bill Maslen, Bonneville Power Administration.

Maslen briefed the Council on how BPA is implementing the Council's recommendations for wildlife projects. Your recommendations came to us in July 2009, and we already have contracting under way for half of the 30 projects, he said.

Maslen went over a list of BPA's review and follow-up principles for implementing the wildlife projects, including funding all work through existing budgets. Other principles covered maintaining project integrity, even where changes were made, and collaborating with partners to make any project changes, Maslen said.

BPA's baseline budget for projects was the 2009 funding level plus 2.5 percent, he continued. He described other budget and contracting considerations, including BPA's discussions with project managers about ISRP and Council recommendations for changes as contracts come up for renewal.

Maslen said BPA is also looking carefully at the Habitat Evaluation Procedures (HEP) work elements and the cost of a HEP analysis. BPA will support HEP activities that align with the standard operating procedures recommended by the Wildlife Crediting Forum. BPA is also considering expanding HEP to fish habitat acquisitions, Maslen added.

BPA contracts will include a schedule for developing plans that include milestones and deliverables. Maslen also said BPA will work with Council staff and sponsors to establish a template for land management plans that will be more consistent across projects. As for regional coordination, he said BPA will work to make sure there is minimal redundancy and overlap.

Maslen previewed BPA's "broadsheet" in the Taurus program for tracking the Council project recommendations and BPA decisions, which he said is still under development. Booth suggested Council staff sit down with BPA to see how the tracking works.

Maslen wrapped up with figures for wildlife program funding. He said BPA's expense budget for wildlife is \$12.2 million in 2010, growing to \$12.9 million in 2011. Maslen noted the capital budget is large, but capital spending is "opportunistic" and subject to many variables. The planned budget is larger than the opportunities, he added.

Wallace asked for clarification about when the contracts would start reflecting savings the Council identified in its recommendations. Maslen explained the timing between the Council's recommendations and BPA's contracting process doesn't allow for immediate savings. We have to spread the contracting over time to manage the work load, he said.

4. Update on Wildlife Crediting Forum:

Peter Paquet, manager, wildlife and resident fish.

Staffer Peter Paquet said the Wildlife Mitigation Crediting Forum is making progress on developing a comprehensive agreement for crediting the mitigation of wildlife losses that occurred due to federal hydrosystem construction and inundation. The Council's 2009 F&W program called for initiating the forum.

A subcommittee has developed an accepted ledger of habitat units acquired, which will be posted after a July 20 meeting, he said.

Paquet acknowledged a forum subcommittee found inconsistencies in the way Habitat Evaluation Procedures (HEP) were used, and that, along with other issues, complicates the accounting for habitat units. While there are mechanisms to correct the issues, he said, the time and money it would take "to get to a perfect ledger" would be considerable.

Rather than argue about the inconsistencies, we decided to move forward, Paquet reported. The "bottom line" is that the group is in consensus that "it is not worth the time or money to get to a perfect ledger and agreement on the numbers," he reiterated.

The forum has turned to developing a roadmap that will get to an agreement on the crediting issues, Paquet went on. This will in turn lead to a long-term comprehensive agreement on losses due to construction and inundation, he said.

Philip Key of BPA said he agreed with Paquet's summary, and that Bonneville is encouraged by what's coming out of the subcommittee.

Lawrence Schwabe of the Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde pointed out that F&W managers in the Willamette Valley are using a different tool than HEP to establish habitat units. He said habitat acquisitions are going forward in the valley. "It seems good on our end," Schwabe added.

Brian Lipscomb of the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (CBFWA) said the agencies and tribes recommended the forum to get the crediting consistent across the basin. We're encouraged by the progress and are optimistic about resolving the issues, he stated.

Booth asked if the roadmap would be the template to be used for settlement. Paquet said the roadmap would spell out the steps and timelines for getting to an agreement and a schedule. Booth asked Paquet to put together a memo for the Council about what the forum is doing with the roadmap and how it addresses the issues raised in the F&W program.

5. Presentation from Action Agencies Implementation Plan for the FCRPS:

Kate Puckett, Manager, Columbia/Snake River Salmon Recovery Office, Bureau of Reclamation; Jamae Hilliard Creecy, Fish and Wildlife Policy and Planning Manager, Bonneville Power Administration; and Rock Peters, Fish Program Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Jamae Creecy of BPA told the Council the 2008 federal Columbia River Biological Opinion (BiOp) calls for implementation plans in 2010, 2013, and 2016. Speaking as part of a panel of Action Agency representatives, she said the 2010-2013 plan outlines how the agencies intend to implement the BiOp over the next four years.

The plan focuses on biological and programmatic performance standards, and limiting factors, Creecy said, adding that the agencies addressed adaptive management in a supplemental plan, the Adaptive Management Implementation Plan (AMIP). AMIP brings in new scientific information and changing circumstances, she said.

Rock Peters of the Corps of Engineers explained the hydropower actions in the plan. We need to make sure the actions meet the performance standards in the BiOp, he said, noting that the actions address water management, dam improvements, kelt management, and climate change. With regard to fish passage at the dams, Peters reported that a spill wall was recently completed at The Dalles Dam to aid juvenile migrants.

The Corps also develops an operational plan, which outlines spill and transportation activities, he continued. Peters said the Corps is working with a group at the University of Washington to develop a plan to address climate change.

Kate Puckett of the Bureau of Reclamation said the BiOp-related work will improve the habitat for 90 populations of salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River Basin. Through their activities, the Action Agencies are building "on-the-ground momentum" to sustain programs through the end of the BiOp period, she said.

Reach assessments, which are being done as part of the habitat effort, give us information that helps us operate our projects, Puckett said, adding, "we hope they are biologically successful." She also described Reclamation's water transactions program, which is improving conditions in the Entiat and Methow river subbasins.

Creecy said the BiOp has aggressive survival goals for the estuary, and the agencies are focusing on large projects that offer big opportunities to meet the goals. Habitat acquisitions have been

made in the estuary, including Fort Columbia and Mudd Lake, and we expect a substantial increase in activity in the estuary in 2010-2013, Creecy stated.

Peters described predator management activities in three areas: fish, bird, and sea lions. He said the program to reduce predation by the Northern pikeminnow has been very effective. There are also studies under way to shed light on the role of non-indigenous species, like shad, catfish, and smallmouth bass, in predation, Peters said.

We are starting to “squeeze down the population” of Caspian terns on East Sand Island, but the cormorant population in the estuary is increasing, and we are developing a management plan for cormorants and will start working with others in the region to reduce the cormorant take of salmon and steelhead, Peters said. The state agencies are central to reducing sea lion predation, he noted, pointing out there will be a major review of the program this year.

The Action Agencies are focusing their hatchery-related activities on getting Hatchery Genetic Management Plans (HGMPs) completed and sent to NOAA Fisheries, Puckett said. The HGMPs will be followed up with site-specific consultations, she said.

While harvest is not the responsibility of the Action Agencies, the Agencies encourage research into harvest techniques, and BPA is funding a project with the Colville Tribes on selective fishing equipment, Creecy said.

There is a lot going on with research, monitoring, and evaluation (RM&E), Puckett reported. The Corps will continue to measure juvenile survival at the dams, and there are a number of watersheds that are being “intensively monitored” to see what projects are making a difference, she added.

Peters said the 2008 BiOp survival improvements will be reflected in the adult returns in 2011 for steelhead and sockeye and 2012 for chinook. The 2010 returns are well above the 10-year average – the sockeye numbers “are the big surprise this year,” he said. An emerging issue is the number of fish that are being tagged and marked, Peters added. There’s not a lot that is new regarding climate change, but there is much more detail coming out, he said.

Creecy wrapped up with a look at next steps, which include a comprehensive report in 2013 that will update the status for each of the interior basin’s Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species. The agencies will determine at that time whether additional actions are needed to get on track by 2018, she said. The region is working together through the Regional Implementation Oversight Group, the Columbia Basin Fish Accords, and the Council’s fish and wildlife (F&W) program, Creecy concluded.

6. Washington update on Selective Fishery Implementation: Alternative Gears and Barbless Hooks:

Bill Tweit, Columbia River/Distant Waters Policy Lead, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is testing selective fishing gear and barbless hooks in Columbia River fisheries, according to Bill Tweit of WDFW. The use of

selective fishing gear is not an end in itself, but a means to achieve other goals, he said. Our overarching goal is to “promote the conservation and recovery of wild salmon and steelhead and provide fishery-related benefits,” Tweit stated.

Harvest is an important cultural value in the region for tribes and others, he said. The department wants to avoid “getting caught in the harvest-versus-recovery buzz saw,” Tweit added. As the salmon returns improved, we reinstated harvest, and we’ve had a very positive reaction, from people happy to fish in areas previously off-limits, to communities benefiting economically from more fishing, he said.

Tweit went on to explain managing hatchery fish and selective fisheries. There are only three ways to manage hatchery fish to remove them from the river, he said: increase harvest on them; install weirs to trap them; or decrease hatchery production. Tweit stressed the importance of harvesting all of the hatchery fish. And he pointed out the difficulty in avoiding stocks other than those being targeted; there are always species present that you don’t want to harvest. “There’s overlap” in the timing of stocks present in the river, Tweit said.

There are many things managers can do in terms of timing, area, and gear selectivity to avoid harvesting wild fish and promote catching hatchery fish, he said. There is no one tool to use, Tweit explained, giving an example of how the mesh size in a net can make a large difference in which fish are caught.

We can mass mark hatchery fish and implement mark-selective fisheries for both commercial and recreational fishers, he continued. The goals of WDFW’s alternative commercial fishing gear program are to maximize the harvest of hatchery fish and the survival rate of wild fish, as well as support stable and economically viable commercial fisheries, Tweit said. Commercial fisheries are where you get the most results, he added.

Tweit said there was pilot program in 2009 to test types of gear, including purse seines, beach seines, and trap nets. The pilot project, a partnership between Washington and Oregon, is being expanded in 2010, and there is \$1.975 million in funding available to carry it out, he reported. The 2010 project will focus on fall chinook and coho and be carried out in a number of locations on the river. The objectives are “to prove we can catch fish,” and if we don’t, commercial fishers won’t use the gear, he pointed out. And if we can’t remove the hatchery fish, we’re back to weirs and reducing the number produced, Tweit indicated. The project will also look at how many wild and upriver chinook are encountered – the concentrations and where they occur, he added. The next step is to “catch fish” and then design a project for 2011, Tweit said.

With regard to recreational fisheries, we intend to expand the range of the mark-selective fisheries, including spring and summer chinook, coho, and steelhead in the Columbia River, he said. The expansion will also include a pilot mark-selective ocean fishery for chinook, and we’re planning to develop selective fishing in Puget Sound, Tweit added.

The rules for a selective fishery relate to gear, handling, and promoting responsible fishing behavior, he explained. “Careful handling” is a basic ethic of selective fishing, and we want to emphasize that to anglers, Tweit said. We are releasing the fish to survive and spawn, so it’s important to follow such rules as leaving fish in the water as they are dehooked, he explained.

New for 2011, only barbless hooks can be used in Washington for salmon and steelhead in the Columbia from the mouth upstream to McNary Dam, Tweit said. That is not concurrent with Oregon rules and “that’s a big problem,” he added. We’re committed to reconciling the discrepancy, Tweit stated.

Idaho and Washington have prohibited barbed hooks for Columbia River salmon, but Oregon hasn’t, although it advises against their use, Karier said. I know it is hard to get evidence to prove there is a difference for the fish, but “we need to use common sense,” he said. What happens now that there are different policies? Karier asked.

The states are not bound to have concurrent regulations, but it helps if they do, Tweit responded. Over the next months, we’ll work to get concurrence, he said. The science out there is not definitive, and it’s more of a social question, Tweit noted. Oregon shares our perception that careful handling is paramount with selective fisheries, Tweit stated.

Dick Wallace asked if barbless versus barbed hooks is a science or policy question. It’s more of a policy call, Tweit responded. We’d like to have more science, he said, but in terms of whether it’s easier to take a barbless hook from a fish than a barbed one, it is. But “I can’t prove scientifically” that it’s better, Tweit stated.

7. Briefing on RTF recommendations from NEET:

Tom Eckman, conservation resources manager; and Charlie Grist, senior analyst.

Staffer Tom Eckman reported that the evaluation of the Regional Technical Forum (RTF) recommended by the Northwest Energy Efficiency Taskforce (NEET) concluded with the consultants’ recommendation that a regional committee continue the review and come up with guidance on changing the RTF’s charter and other procedures. The aim is to move forward with “a new and improved” RTF, he said. NEET recommended the Council oversee the committee and made suggestions for people to serve on it.

The consultants’ report said concerns about the RTF fell into two broad areas: growth of RTF responsibilities relative to its management and funding, and concerns about the visibility of RTF operations to utilities and others. Specific concerns included objectivity of RTF members, composition of the membership, how the RTF prioritizes its work, how the RTF will manage additional demands, adequacy of funding and staffing, information management systems, and transparency of procedures.

Eckman said the RTF will release a new work plan for 2011 with a recommendation that the budget be increased from \$1.1 million annually to \$1.5 million. Melinda Eden, who served on the NEET steering committee, said she did not agree, as some have suggested, that we need a steering group to oversee the committee. Since it is going to be a Council entity, I think Council members should be included as members, and I would like to volunteer, Eden added.

Bill Booth asked if utilities are interested in continuing funding for the RTF, and Eckman said they were, as was BPA. The Council agreed to go forward with convening a review committee.

8. IEAB Mussel report:

Noelwah Netusil, Professor of Economics, Reed College.

Noelwah Netusil of the Independent Economic Advisory Board (IEAB) briefed the Council on the board's report on the potential economic effects of a zebra/quagga mussel infestation in the Northwest. Roger Mann, IEAB chairman, was the primary author of the report and presented draft findings in April, she said, adding the report is now final.

The major changes that have been made since April include adding "a worst-case" scenario about an invasion in the upper Snake River; expanding a section that details state prevention programs; and expanding our contacts with experts and incorporating their suggestions, Netusil reported.

As reported in April, calcium levels and temperature are key factors in mussel survival, she said. There are areas in the upper Snake where calcium concentrations could be hospitable to mussels, Netusil said. An analysis of the potential impacts shows the costs "could be as low as tens of millions of dollars or as high as hundreds of millions" if there is a major infestation in the upper Snake, she said, adding that there is a great deal of uncertainty and a wide range of potential costs.

Netusil said the IEAB analyzed the impact on federal hydropower and fish passage facilities, hatcheries, habitat and valuable species, and water diversion and pumping facilities, including fish screens. The analysis does not include impacts to non-federal dams, costs to navigation or irrigation facilities, or to other waterfront facilities, she said.

An infestation in one area also increases the likelihood of an infestation elsewhere, Netusil continued. She said there are major benefits, beyond the immediate savings, to using prevention to delay infestation, including ongoing scientific research and advancements in control techniques. Delay would give officials more time to prepare, Netusil added.

The evidence is that prevention efforts are underfunded, with the region currently spending about \$3 million annually, she continued. The IEAB suggested that funding could be targeted toward areas in the basin that are most susceptible to invasion, but to understand the environmental conditions that promote mussel growth, more research is needed, Netusil said.

Morlan explained that a major factor in the potential expense to the hydro system is an infestation of fish screens so heavy it inhibits water passage. The screens would have to be removed and cleaned, and if you take the screens out during fish passage season, you would have to shut down the turbines, he said.

Booth said the report is a tool to advise the region about the potential costs of an infestation. He suggested the Council put out a press release to publicize the IEAB's findings.

Staffer Jim Ruff said there is tremendous interest in the report and that it will be sent to the invasive species coordinators in all Northwest states. He also said the report will be posted on the websites of other organizations.

The consensus is we need "as strong a prevention program as we can afford," Yost stated.

Wallace asked about the research into calcium levels and the difference between the zebra and quagga mussels. Ruff said quaggas have infested Lake Mead, and the calcium levels there are much higher than anywhere in the Northwest, including the upper Snake. Researchers at Portland State University are trying to grow quaggas in Columbia River water down at Lake Mead, and this research will give us an indication of whether the mussels could be productive here, he added.

9. Update on transmission development:

Wally Gibson, manager, system analysis and generation.

There is considerable ongoing transmission planning and development activity in the West, according to staffer Wally Gibson, who briefed the Council on a number of large high-voltage projects. The main drivers of the proposals are load service and renewable portfolio standard (RPS) requirements in the Northwest and California, he said.

Some of the projects are under construction, but many are in the planning and permitting stage, and some are encountering siting difficulties, Gibson said. But the main constraint may be the commercial viability of projects, especially those that are targeted to meeting RPS, he said. Much of the construction that is currently going on is the result of BPA's network open-season process, Gibson added.

A number of major projects are now under study to examine the interactions among them for Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) rating purposes, he said. WECC rating establishes maximum safe operating limits for a line, Gibson explained, adding that WECC's review is not about commercial viability.

BPA's McNary-John Day project, which is largely to handle new wind development, is under construction, but BPA's I-5 corridor project is one of several in the region facing siting issues, he said. Portland General Electric's Cascade Crossing project, which would move power from east of the Cascades, also has siting issues, Gibson pointed out.

He described a number of projects planned for the Northwest from 2010 to 2015 and beyond. Some, like PacifiCorp's Hemingway to Captain Jack, which would connect the company's eastern territory with the Pacific Intertie, have been shifted to "the back burner," and others, like Northern Lights from Canada, are "merchant projects" seeking customers, Gibson said.

A number of projects are proposed for the Intermountain Area, he continued. The Zephyr project, which would bring power south from Wyoming to California and the Southwest, recently announced 3,000 megawatts of shipper agreements and has some "anchor tenants," Gibson reported. It is "heavily dependent on California's RPS," he added.

According to Gibson, there is overlap among the proposals to bring power from Montana and Wyoming to the south. He said the projects are faced with uncertainty about how California's rules on renewables will play out, particularly what percent of the generation will have to come from in-state versus out-of-state sources.

The biggest hurdle for a number of these projects is commercial viability, he summed up. There is a heavy dependence on expectations about California's renewables market for some projects, but the RPS requirements "are iffy," Gibson said. Siting is the next big hurdle, he noted. Typically, the sponsor must demonstrate need and "gain some aggregate level of public acceptance," Gibson concluded.

10. Council Business:

– Membership renewals and appointments of ISRP ISAB members

Staffer Eric Merrill explained the process for appointing members to the ISRP and Independent Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB). The Council makes ISRP membership decisions; ISAB appointments are decided by an oversight panel that includes the Council chair, science director of NOAA Fisheries Northwest Fisheries Science Center, and a representative of the Columbia River Indian Tribes, he said.

Merrill said the proposal before the Council is to renew the term of ISRP member Bob Bilby and appoint Dennis Scarnecchia to the panel. In addition, he gave the credentials of candidates for additional terms or appointment to the ISAB, including Tim McDaniels, Chris Wood, Richard Alldredge, and Dennis Scarnecchia.

Wallace made a motion that the Council renew the appointment of Bob Bilby to the Independent Scientific Review Panel for a second three-year term and appoint Dennis Scarnecchia to the panel for a three-year term, both through September 2013, as presented by the staff. Eden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

– Adoption of 2012 and revised 2011 Council budget

Staffer Sharon Ossmann reported that the Council released its 2012 budget and revised 2011 budget for comment May 13. There were no comments and no requests for consultation, she said.

Wallace made a motion that the Council adopt the FY 2012 budget of \$10,114,000 and FY 2011 Revised budget of \$9,891,000 and authorize reprogramming of available FY 2010 funds for unanticipated FY 2010 costs such as personnel actions and increased operating costs. Dukes seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

– Approval of the Council's Annual Report to the Governors on fish and wildlife spending

Staffer John Harrison said BPA has been very helpful with the annual report to Northwest governors on BPA's F&W expenditures. He reported the Council received four sets of comments on the draft report, and he itemized what they were and how they were addressed.

The Council discussed whether the report on wildlife expenditures should include both acreage and habitat units (HUs). Karier pointed out that the previous reports included both, but the HU figure is now being revised. He also said the graphs that break out BiOp versus non-BiOp spending tells the story of a "significant increase" in spending and is an important message.

Eden said HUs are still "the currency in the program," and said the report should include them. She also said there needed to be more explanation of the difference between the BiOp and non-

BiOp categories, and Accord and non-Accord categories. Harrison said he would include explanations.

Wallace made a motion that the Council approve the Ninth Annual Report to the Northwest Governors on Fish and Wildlife Expenditures of the Bonneville Power Administration, with changes adopted by the Members at today's meeting, and direct staff to give appropriate notice of its action. Booth seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

– **Approval of Fish Passage Center Oversight Board member**

Wallace made a motion that the Council approve the appointment of Ritchie Graves to the Fish Passage Center Oversight Board, as nominated by NOAA Fisheries. Whiting seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

– **Approval of minutes**

Wallace made a motion that the Council approve for the signature of the Vice-Chair the minutes of the June 8-9, 2010, Council meeting in Missoula, Montana. Karier seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

Approved August 19, 2010

/s/ Dick Wallace

Vice-Chair