

W. Bill Booth
Chair
Idaho

James A. Yost
Idaho

Tom Karier
Washington

Dick Wallace
Washington



Bruce A. Measure
Vice-Chair
Montana

Rhonda Whiting
Montana

Melinda S. Eden
Oregon

Joan M. Dukes
Oregon

Council Meeting Portland Oregon

December 8-9, 2009

Minutes

Council Chair Bill Booth called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. All members were present.

Greeting from Phil Anderson, director of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Dick Wallace introduced Phil Anderson, new director of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). Anderson noted that the department has many common interests with the Council's fish and wildlife (F&W) program -- the agency has a statutory mandate to preserve, protect, and perpetuate F&W resources, and is also charged with maintaining the well-being of the fishing community. WDFW's "broad set of mandates" also cover hunting regulation and recreational activities, such as wildlife viewing, Anderson explained.

He reported that the state of Washington's budget crisis has resulted in a significant reduction in WDFW staff. There are more reductions to come, Anderson said, noting that the state's revenue forecasts show a shortfall, and agencies will be expected to cut expenditures even further.

Anderson stressed the need for healthy partnerships with entities like the Council, success in hatchery reform and the importance of working with the fishing industry to advance selective fisheries.

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

Rhonda Whiting chair, fish and wildlife committee; Melinda Eden, chair, power committee; and Dick Wallace, chair, public affairs committee.

Fish and Wildlife Committee chair Rhonda Whiting reported that the committee considered two Columbia Basin Accord projects, including a Colville Tribe resident fish research, monitoring, and evaluation (RM&E) project, which will come to the full Council for a vote. The committee recommends its approval, she said. A second project, sponsored by the Warm Springs Tribe, to

determine the status and limiting factors of Pacific Lamprey, was also on the committee's agenda. Some aspects of the project are still under review so there is no recommendation yet, Whiting indicated. The Committee also discussed selective harvest techniques for the lower Columbia River, she said.

Power Committee chair Melinda Eden reported that staff presented changes that have been made to the draft power plan. Because fuel and electricity prices are going down according to updated forecasts, the resource portfolio model will produce a lower cost/lower risk plan, she said. The committee undertook a more detailed review of the chapters and the appendices in the plan, and staff described further analyses that are being conducted, Eden said.

The committee has scheduled a conference calls for January 8 and tentatively for January 11 to discuss results of the analyses that are currently being conducted, she said. Our goal is still to have a vote on the plan on the January 2010 Council agenda.

Public Affairs Committee chair Dick Wallace said the committee would meet on Tuesday afternoon. The agenda includes a discussion of how the Council could use social media in its communications, he said. Wallace listed several publications that are in the works or due to be released, including a brochure on the power plan, which is currently available electronically but will be printed when the plan is final. The Council has released its latest quarterly, and the draft annual report to Congress is out for review, he said. A brochure on energy efficiency is also under way, which will be a review of efficiency dating back to when the Council was first established.

1. Working session on Draft Sixth Power Plan Issues:

Terry Morlan, director, power division.

Staffer Terry Morlan briefed the Council on changes being made to the draft Sixth Power Plan, many in consideration of the public comments received. While staff is making numerous updates to data and conducting several new analyses, there is no reason to think the overall resource strategy will change, he said.

The revised document will highlight the resource strategy and its key components much more clearly, including an emphasis on the following: aggressive and consistent energy efficiency; state renewable portfolio standards (RPS) and diversity of renewable resources; operational solutions to expand flexibility, capacity, and wind integration; natural gas generation for energy and capacity needs; and exploration and development of longer-term options for efficiency, low-carbon generation, and system operations, including Smart Grid and demand response.

Morlan described the changes under way in each chapter of the plan. He said staff will beef up the discussion of carbon reduction targets in the document's introduction and add the following language to the vision statement: "The regional power system will do its part through the above actions to achieve the carbon reduction goals that have been adopted by three of the four states in the Pacific Northwest."

Morlan said the final plan will reflect changes to the assumptions about economic growth, and fuel and electricity prices, as well as modest changes to all of the forecasts that incorporate impacts of the recession and current conditions. The chapter on the demand forecast will include additional discussion of plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, he pointed out.

There are changes anticipated in the chapter on conservation, including language that recognizes compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) as an available conservation measure in the near term, Morlan went on. There has not been much change in the conservation supply curve as a result of changed assumptions about demand and electricity prices, he added.

The chapter on generating resources will include an expanded discussion of the potential impacts of the export of wind energy outside the region, Morlan explained. Karier pointed out that there is a lot of interest in the impact of California's RPS policy on the Northwest. Since the issue isn't settled, Morlan said staff may have to make assumptions about how that will work out.

Morlan noted changes that will be made to a chapter on the direct use of natural gas, explaining there will be an action item added to do further analysis of the issue. He also said staff will provide an enhanced explanation of how the Resource Portfolio Model (RPM) is used to develop a resource strategy. And the chapter on the strategy will reflect new scenarios with specific carbon goals, as well as an expanded discussion on the role of nuclear power, Morlan explained.

Staff will expand and clarify its discussion of capacity and flexibility in the power system, making clearer the region's options for wind integration, he stated. There is an action item aimed at exploring ways to use the existing system more efficiently to deal with variable resources like wind, Morlan added.

He said the chapter on BPA's obligations will contain additional language to recognize that the agency's resource program and the Council's power plan seem well aligned. And the chapter on resource adequacy now has a new section on the utility perspective on loads and resources, including how the power plan addresses the need for additional resources to meet growing loads, Morlan noted.

Morlan outlined changes in the appendices and recapped the parts of the plan that are dependent on new analyses to be completed. With regard to Appendix M, which addresses integrating the F&W program and power plan, staffer John Shurts said that while there has been a redraft of the language on how much F&W operations cost the power system, more drafting will improve the section further. He suggested the Council give staff more time for redrafting and "sharpening up" the language before having a debate on the appendix, and the Council agreed.

Melinda Eden reported that the Power Committee will meet in a conference call January 8 and possibly again on January 11. We would still like to have a vote on the January agenda.

2. Council decision on project reviews and within-year adjustments:

Mark Fritsch, manager, project implementation.

– #2008-109-00, Resident Fish Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

Staffer Mark Fritsch explained a proposal submitted by the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation on July 9, 2009 for RM&E on resident fish, specifically rainbow trout. The Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP) rated the project as meeting scientific criteria qualified, he said. The tribe is working to provide the ISRP with additional information about the radio tagging technology that is to be used in the project, Fritsch said. That work should be completed by January. The F&W committee recommends going forward with the project, which has a total cost of \$2.2 million in expense funds for fiscal years 2010 through 2017 and is part of the Columbia Basin Accords, he said.

Measure made a motion that the Council recommend that Bonneville fund Project 2008-109-00, Resident Fish Research, Monitoring and Evaluation, conditioned on a favorable review by the ISRP of the statistical power analysis identified in ISRP Document 2009-44, as presented by the staff and as recommended by the Fish and Wildlife Committee. Wallace seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

– **Project #2007-007-00, Determine Status and Limiting Factors of Pacific Lamprey in Fifteenmile Creek and Hood River subbasins, Oregon**

Fritsch went on to describe a project, which he said had not yet received a recommendation from the F&W committee. The Warm Springs proposal is also one of the Columbia Basin Accord projects and relates to determining the status and limiting factors for Pacific Lamprey, he said.

The ISRP said the project met scientific criteria with qualifications, Fritsch explained. There is a question of whether to include a study of toxic contaminants in the project since that could be a limiting factor for the lamprey, he said. The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission is also engaged in a project on lamprey that will seek to determine if toxic contamination is a limiting factor, Fritsch said. He said coordination between the studies is needed and discussions to address the issue are planned.

Eden pointed out that the issue of toxic contamination is in the Council's F&W program and someone needs to address it. The discussion should include who is doing what on the contaminant studies, she said.

3. Briefing on the Quagga-Zebra Mussel Action Plan for Western U.S.

Waters:

Eileen Ryce, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks; and Stephen Phillips, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission.

Staffer Jim Ruff introduced Eileen Ryce, chair of the Western Regional Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS), by reading from the executive summary of the recently completed quagga-zebra mussel action plan: "Without increased action, quagga and zebra mussels will cause irreparable ecological damage and long-term mitigation costs will be in the billions." The summary calls the mussels "among the most devastating aquatic nuisance species to invade North American fresh waters."

Ryce noted that the action plan was tentatively approved by the Western Regional Panel in November. It covers 19 states and a diversity of conditions, and was developed at the request of the panel's ANS Task Force, she said. The plan covers coordination, prevention, early-detection monitoring, rapid response, containment and control of existing populations, and outreach and education, she said. Early detection is key, as is rapid response, Ryce added. But there are currently no funds for rapid response, and "we will have to have funds to be effective," she said.

The Western Regional Panel will establish a group to work on implementing the plan, Ryce continued, noting that it could be implemented in pieces. The actions bear a \$76 million price tag, and we're asking all of the affected agencies and others to assist in getting the plan under way, she indicated.

Amy Feritter, Idaho's invasive species coordinator, described a recent incident in which water samples near Bell Rapids and Milner Dam appeared to test positive for zebra/quagga mussels. After more testing, the samples proved to be negative, but the area where the samples were taken

would be “the perfect storm” in terms of a bad place to find the mussels, Feritter added. In Idaho, we need to increase our monitoring, and we need to develop control techniques for moving water, she stated.

Rapid response depends on money, Stephen Phillips of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission stated. He outlined attempts to get funding through Congress and indicated that Senator Harry Reid may introduce a bill to fund rapid-response actions. After our experience in the Snake, “we need a rapid-response fund,” Phillips stated. We can’t depend on Congress to provide it, he said, adding that the task force needs help to set it up.

Wallace noted that the Council is “a friendly audience” for the presentation and would be willing to help. The “silver lining” to the incident in Idaho is the realization that “this really can happen and we are woefully unprepared,” he said.

Idaho state representative Eric Anderson encouraged the Council, with the help of utilities, to educate the public about the issue. Information about the threat the mussels pose to fisheries, wildlife, and power rates should be in power bill inserts and other media, Anderson said. We need to continue to lobby for funds, he urged.

Jim Yost commented that the West has made important progress on defending against the mussels, and that several things need to be done, including giving authorities an easier and more streamlined way to inspect boats and trailers coming across state lines.

We also need to coordinate on reciprocity agreements among states to provide uniform inspections and on ways to indicate that an incoming boat has passed inspection, he said. The scare we had in Idaho will encourage utilities to refocus their operations and maintenance toward prevention, Yost added.

Ryce said states vary considerably in terms of their monitoring and early-detection capabilities. Montana, for example, has a good system and is covering the water bodies in the state that fall within the Columbia River Basin, she said. But we need to work with the labs to get samples processed.

4. Presentation by Natural Solutions on Innovative Project “Physical and Biological Field Testing of a Flow Velocity Enhancement System (FVES)”: Dr. Charles Coutant, Gordon Burns, and Jean Johnson.

Dr. Charles Coutant, a past member of both the Independent Scientific Advisory Board and the Independent Scientific Review Panel, briefed the Council on results of testing for an innovative flow-velocity enhancement system (FVES) that is being developed to aid salmon migration. He explained that the project aims “to work smart” with salmon biology to aid downstream migration.

Natural Solutions, LLC, received BPA funding in 2008 for the FVES under the Innovative Projects program, Coutant said. The researchers, Gordon Burns and Jean Johnson, developed a system that uses pumps to create additional flow velocity and aims to provide a safe and effective means to guide migrating fish in areas such as the forebay at dams, he explained.

Coutant described the design for a test that took place in the Cowlitz River upstream from Riffe Lake; the study used 90 acoustic-tagged smolts tracked by a detection array positioned across the

river. The analysis of data concluded with “a highly significant finding” that fish were being guided into the current when the pump system was operating, he said.

Coutant said the FVES created the plume we expected and the smolts oriented toward the plume. The FVES has great potential for fish guidance, he said, adding that there has been a lot of interest in the system, including an inquiry from the Netherlands, to test its ability to guide eels.

5. Update on Research Monitoring and Evaluation (RM&E):

Tony Grover, director, fish and wildlife division; and Nancy Leonard, Fish, Wildlife and Ecosystem Monitoring and Evaluation Manager.

Staffer Nancy Leonard gave an update on progress with developing a regional RM&E program. Following Columbia Basin Coordinated Anadromous Monitoring Strategy workshops in October and November, staff is working on several action items, she reported. They are:

1. Determine which proposed new BiOp work should be high priority “fast track”.
2. Clarify, confirm, and prepare proposals for submission to ISRP during the RM&E Categorical Review.
3. Revise Anadromous Fish Framework to reflect November workshop discussion and forward for review by the ISAB and ISRP.
4. Develop a basinwide fish, wildlife, and habitat monitoring and evaluation framework for review by the region.
5. Update the anadromous fish monitoring strategy tables one, two, and three.

Leonard said staff is making “great progress” on items one and four. On item two, we should have the proposals prepared by spring, she said. We’re a little behind on item three, but should have the revisions done by December 14, Leonard added. And we are on track with the last item, she said.

6. Status report and discussion on the role of the Independent Economic Analysis Board:

Terry Morlan.

Morlan and Independent Economic Analysis Board (IEAB) chair Roger Mann, reported to the Council on potential new tasks for the board. Morlan said the IEAB’s future is “in limbo” since its charter expired earlier this year, but the group has been scoping new analyses that could be carried out for the Council.

We do need a broader discussion about the future of the IEAB, Booth acknowledged, but he said he would like to postpone to a later date. In the meantime, Booth asked Mann to describe the projects the IEAB has been considering.

Mann listed potential economic impacts to the region of a zebra/quagga mussel infestation; implications of improved irrigation efficiency; and the expected power and fish survival benefits of additional turbine modifications at dams. We like these three projects, he stated, adding that the IEAB has prepared scoping documents for the analyses.

Yost asked whether the IEAB has looked at conditions in Idaho's Salmon Basin, where the relationship of irrigation efficiencies to groundwater and aquifer recharge is of great interest. Mann said that could be addressed.

Karier asked about the cost of the zebra/quagga analysis, and Mann said it would be \$19,500, including compensation for scientific experts. That study is needed and it would be very cost-effective, Karier responded.

Morlan noted that the IEAB charter has expired and that it currently encompasses only F&W-related studies.

Wallace said he looked forward to a broader conversation about the IEAB's future since the Council is charged with bringing economics into play when it makes policy choices. With regard to the mussel analysis, it is "the most ripe" of the three projects to go forward, and the Council is very interested in this topic, he stated. We should probably not move ahead with all three before we have that broader conversation, Wallace added. Eden agreed.

A good next step would be to get the scoping documents out for our review, Booth said. It sounds like there is consensus on getting the zebra/quagga analysis scoped in more detail, he indicated. An appropriate time to talk about the charter would be February, when we have completed the power plan, Booth added.

Morlan offered to send out the scoping documents for the proposed projects and the expired charter language, with a list of issues related to the charter. He pointed out that one of the issues with the IEAB has been its "weak link" with the Council. Having a more regular relationship with the Council would help with that, Morlan said.

7. Council business:

– Approval of minutes

Measure made a motion that the Council approve for the signature of the Vice-chair the minutes of the November 12-13, 2009, Council meeting held via Webinar. Eden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The Council adjourned at 10:55 a.m. on Wednesday, December 9, 2009.

Approved January 13, 2010.

/s/ Bruce Measure

Vice Chair