

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. Duker
Oregon

Council Meeting Missoula Montana

January 13-15, 2009

Minutes

Bill Booth called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. on January 13th and adjourned it at 10:40 a.m. on January 15th. All members were present.

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.

Rhonda Whiting reported that the Fish and Wildlife Committee discussed the quarterly review of within-year project funding adjustments and the proposed format of the annual report on monitoring and evaluation. We talked about the guidance document for the science review of the Accord projects and how we could get these projects off the ground as soon as possible, she said. The committee also reviewed two fish and wildlife projects that will be coming before the Council, Whiting noted.

Melinda Eden reported the Power Committee had held a special meeting via the web on February 8. At the committee's meeting Tuesday morning, she said they discussed utility-scale, solar photovoltaic generating resources and their potential, as well as electricity price forecasts. We also talked about the introductory chapters of the power plan, the demand forecast, the draft fuel price appendix, and energy-efficiency pilot projects that could be funded as part of the federal economic stimulus package, Eden reported.

Dick Wallace reported that the Public Affairs Committee is planning a trip to Washington, D.C. for the Fish and Wildlife Committee in early March. He also said they had worked on a Council document on the history of energy efficiency and on the Council quarterly.

1. Presentation on release of demand forecast paper for public comment:

Terry Morlan, director, power division; and Massoud Jourabchi, manager, economic analysis.

Staffer Massoud Jourabchi described elements of the draft economic and demand forecasts for the Sixth Power Plan, pointing out that electricity consumption grew by 2.8 percent in the first nine months of 2008. He said the electricity consumption behavior of Northwest customers is becoming similar to that of people elsewhere in the country, and he noted the rising contribution of ICE (information, communication, and entertainment) activities to electricity use.

Jourabchi told the Council that staff will do some more work on the forecasts and bring the results back in March.

2. Panel on Bonneville Power Administration role in conservation acquisition:

Nancy Hirsh, Policy Director, NW Energy Coalition; Jim Morton, Executive Director, Human Resources Council, District XI, and John Krigger, President of Saturn Resource Management, Inc.

Nancy Hirsh of the Northwest Energy Coalition (NWECA) told the Council the economic and environmental benefits of energy efficiency have never been as clear as they are today. Energy efficiency has even become "the darling of the media," she said.

Now is the time to challenge BPA to take on a new role and expand its commitment to raising conservation acquisition levels, Hirsh stated. The Northwest can provide a model for the rest of the country, she added.

NWECA recommends these seven areas of focus for BPA, Hirsh said:

1. The Regional Technical Forum should become even more important -- it needs an increase in funding and more staff, and BPA should be the principal funder.
2. Because research, development, and demonstration (RD&D) projects are "a natural" for BPA, it should increase its efforts to carry out such projects.
3. BPA should fund programs at technical colleges and community colleges to train people for green jobs.
4. Comprehensive, broad-based marketing and message campaigns, such as those encouraging recycling, are effective, and BPA should "maintain the buzz" for energy efficiency by funding them.
5. BPA should provide funds so the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance can be expanded, and BPA should fund market transformation efforts beyond NEEA.
6. NWECA wants energy efficiency and conservation to cover all the region's load growth, and to do that, the region will need a more aggressive focus on monitoring and

verification of savings. BPA should fund monitoring and verification, no matter who does the monitoring.

7. BPA should increase funding for low-income weatherization work in the region and help utilities and the states expand their commitments to weatherization.

Hirsh said NWECC also sees a role for BPA working directly with utilities.

Jim Morton of the Human Resources Council in Missoula, an agency that does low-income weatherization, explained the key role BPA funding plays in such programs. The need is growing, and BPA must increase program flexibility so states can target funds to reach hard-to-reach audiences, such as cluster tribal housing and mobile home parks, he said.

One question to be answered, according to Hirsh, is whether conservation funding should be included in Tier 1 rates. NWECC sees a role for a substantial Tier 1 conservation budget within BPA, and for BPA to work with utilities on Tier 2 conservation resources, she stated.

People in the interior have talked about having conservation programs that suit their individual needs, said Measure. What works in the I-5 corridor isn't necessarily what works in Missoula or Browning, and you need to be sensitive to that, he added.

3. Update on Bonneville Power Administration role in conservation acquisition:

Mike Weedall, Bonneville.

Mike Weedall of BPA told the Council the federal agency will launch a regional discussion January 27 on BPA's role and the role of others in achieving public power's share of the Council's energy-efficiency target for post-FY 2011. The world of energy efficiency doesn't stay static, and we've got new drivers, such as Tier 2, the federal economic stimulus package, and new tools for energy efficiency, he stated.

Weedall said BPA would conduct the process in two phases. Phase 1 would focus on policy issues and kick off with a meeting in Portland January 27, he reported. That will be followed by meetings in the Tri-Cities, Seattle, Spokane, and Idaho Falls, Weedall said.

Based on what we hear, we'll put together a proposal by the end of April or May, and then we'll move into Phase 2, which will deal with implementation issues, he stated. Phase 2 will begin in May and last for three to five months, according to Weedall. At the end, our goal is to have a region that is stronger and more flexible and has the right tools, he said. "That would be a win-win for all of us," Weedall added.

The Council sent a letter to BPA about principles for Phase 1, and we will participate in the process, Karier said. How much funding will be available for your program? Booth asked. Our budget varies from year to year, and this year, our budget is in the \$130 million range, Weedall replied. About \$80 million is available for us to use to pay incentives, he noted.

The region has been successful in driving the costs of energy efficiency down, Weedall said. Although our spending has been down, we've been acquiring more conservation, he noted. It

seems, if you offer the right incentive, you can get the behavior you are looking for, Weedall concluded.

4. Update on generating resource assumptions for draft Sixth Power Plan:

Jeff King, senior resource analyst; and Maury Galbraith, resource analyst.

King explained the staff's assessment of the different types of generating resources available to the region over the next 20 years. The assessment has become more complicated now that capacity has become much more important to the Northwest, he said.

Of all the generating technologies, natural gas is the most flexible, according to King. He presented comparisons of different resources and their costs in the early 2020s and discussed how risks associated with the different choices affect costs. The three important sources of risk are fuel price uncertainty, CO₂ allowance costs, and investment risk, King said.

5. Update on conservation resource assumptions for draft Sixth Power Plan:

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

Staffer Tom Eckman described the Sixth Power Plan's assessment of regional conservation potential, noting that the Fifth Power Plan identified nearly 4,600 aMW of "technically available" conservation potential. Of that amount, the plan identified 2,700 aMW that were economic to pursue and set that amount as the plan's target over 20 years, he said.

Eckman described new factors affecting conservation estimates, such as changes in laws, markets, and in the demand forecast. He also noted increases in available conservation potential from new sources, such as distribution system efficiency improvements, improvements in consumer electronics, and changes in data and technology.

Eckman summed up the adjustments to the Fifth Power Plan's estimates of achievable potential that will be reflected in the draft of the Sixth Power Plan. These include: a reduction of 875 aMW for program accomplishments; a reduction of 450 to 500 aMW for the impact of codes and standards; an increase of 400 to 500 aMW for utility distribution system efficiency improvements; an increase of 100 to 200 aMW for industrial sector efficiency; and an increase of 2,800 aMW as a result of new efficiency options.

Staffer Charlie Grist explained what Council staff has been looking at in terms of commercial sector savings. Utility distribution system efficiency is a new area not included previous plans, he noted. It could represent a savings of almost 500 aMW by 2030 from system optimization, line drop compensation, end-of-line voltage feedback, and home voltage regulation, Grist said.

Eckman explained conservation potential in the agricultural sector, pointing out there are 70 to 75 aMW of potential savings in the irrigation sector.

Right now, for the Sixth Power Plan, it looks like there could be about 5,500 aMW of "technically available" conservation potential, he reported. We are still looking at how much of that is cost-effective, Eckman told the Council.

6. Status report on Wind Integration Action Plan:

Jeff King and Maury Galbraith.

Staffer Jeff King reported on what's been happening in the region since the Wind Integration Action Plan was adopted in 2007. We have learned that wind has a low capacity value (5 percent) and that supplementary peaking capacity will eventually be needed, he said. That new capacity could bring additional flexibility with it if it is properly chosen, King noted.

We've found that wind integration costs are lower than previously estimated, he said. Numerous proposals for new transmission projects benefitting wind are being pursued in the region, King reported. We have learned that improved short-term wind forecasting can greatly reduce the demand for system integration services, and that there are low-cost, largely institutional measures, such as control error sharing and sub-hourly scheduling, that can extend the supply of system flexibility, he noted.

The Wind Integration Forum Policy Steering Committee met in December and developed a set of proposals for further work on wind integration issues, according to King. He said the steering committee recommended numerous tasks, including:

- Full implementation of area control error sharing
- Exploring the feasibility and benefits of sub-hourly scheduling
- Assessing and carrying out upgrades to Southern and Northern Intertie dynamic scheduling limits
- Establishing dynamic scheduling capability across other Pacific Northwest interchange points
- Assessing the value of a regional wind forecasting network
- Setting up a pilot project to access third-party flexibility
- Developing a synthetic hourly wind data set to complement long-term hydro and temperature data
- Testing the ability to assess flexibility/hydro constraint tradeoffs
- Evaluating future demand for and supply of system flexibility on a regional basis
- Identifying options for extending system flexibility
- Assessing the nature and extent of the Renewable Energy Credit (REC) market, with a focus on issues associated with REC "stripping."

The steering committee and others in the region, including BPA, think the study proposals that I outlined can give us the ability to integrate 6,000 MW of wind in the region "without too much pain," he stated. We'll bring a proposal to extend the WIF charter to you in March, King told the Council. Utilities need to support this effort, he noted, pointing out the Technical Work Group, which mostly consists of utility representatives, will soon start meeting regularly again.

7. Update on preliminary drafts of introductory chapters of Sixth Power Plan:

Terry Morlan

Staffer Terry Morlan asked Council members to provide him with their comments on the drafts of the two introductory chapters for the Sixth Power Plan. He described the contents of the

chapters, noting how they are designed to explain changes that have occurred in electricity use in the region.

These changes include loss of the direct-service industries, the substitution of natural gas for electricity for space and water heating in the region, and the role of conservation in reducing demand, according to Morlan. The two themes that are shaping up for the Sixth Power Plan are: how we deal with policies that address climate change, and the need for the region to provide more capacity and ancillary services, he said.

8. Council Business:

– ISAB nominations

Staffer Erik Merrill told the Council there are two open positions on the Independent Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB). He described the ISAB nomination process and noted that there is an interest in filling the open positions with people with expertise on fisheries ecology, hydro system passage, and resource economics. We have a list of seven names for the two positions, and we are asking for the Council's feedback on those names, Merrill said.

Booth said the Council would like to have more notice from staff when ISAB openings come up. He suggested Council members provide him with their input on the seven people on the list within a week to 10 days.

– Discussion of ISAB work assignments

Merrill said the ISAB is interested in carrying out two new projects, one dealing with food web dynamics and their effect on salmon, and the other with landscape-scale restoration. Staffer Jim Ruff described the food web project and noted that it was suggested in the *Return to the River* report.

I'd like to see how these ISAB assignments are connected to policy, said Karier. The Council may want to consider how it is or isn't using the services of the ISAB and the Independent Economic Advisory Board, Booth stated. We need to consider how to make better use of these two panels, he said.

– Approval of minutes

Measure moved to approve the minutes for the December 9-10, 2008 Council meeting held in Portland, Oregon. Wallace seconded, and the motion passed.

9. Fish and Wildlife Program Amendments work session:

Tony Grover, director, fish and wildlife division; Patty O'Toole, program implementation manager; and Sandra Hirotsu, senior counsel.

The Council held an all-day work session on its draft fish and wildlife program, aimed at getting a final version ready for an approval vote at the February meeting. At the outset, Booth said the Council needed to spend some time on five issues that had not been resolved: biological objectives, wildlife strategies, resident fish mitigation, the Fish Passage Center (FPC), and implementation provisions.

Biological Objectives With respect to biological objectives, staffer Patty O'Toole said there had been a lot of discussion about the quantitative goals for anadromous fish in the program, including the goal of increasing salmon and steelhead runs to an average of 5 million annually by 2025 and achieving smolt-to-adult return rates (SARs) in the 2-6 percent range for listed salmon and steelhead. The draft program, as now written, "continues to include" a set of quantitative goals and related timelines for anadromous fish, including the 5 million goal, Booth noted. It also calls for the Council, within one year of adopting the new program, to work with F&W agencies, tribes, and others to initiate a process to assess the value of quantitative biological objectives for the program, and if they are determined to be useful, to develop an updated and "scientifically rigorous" set of such quantitative objectives, he said.

Tom Karier pointed out that increasing fish runs to 5 million annually by 2025 would have to be a regional process and not something BPA could do on its own. He suggested revising the language in the draft to say: "the ability of the region to achieve these goals will depend on the coordinated actions of many parties to improve fish habitat and passage, improve hatchery operations, and limit harvest on potential spawners." The Council agreed to that change.

Karier also suggested adding new language that says: "In the process of assessing the value of the SAR goal, the Council should consider refocusing on metrics that are consistent with the Biological Opinion (BiOp) and productivity metrics that measure adult fish returns relative to juvenile outmigration (i.e., fish in and fish out). Whatever metric is selected should minimize the risk to wild fish from tagging and handling."

The Council agreed to add that language. The program, as amended, now says that after the process to determine new quantitative goals concludes, the Council "will then consider adopting revised quantitative objectives in a future amendment process."

Wildlife Strategies We received a lot of comments to maintain the 2-to-1 crediting ratio for wildlife mitigation, O'Toole noted. The draft says the Council continues to endorse that crediting ratio, but "the ratio only applies when loss estimates are not inaccurate due to stacking." [Stacking refers to using multiple target species as indicators for the same habitat type, according to a Council staff document.]

Oregon has objected to the language about stacking from the beginning, and I understand it is aimed at the Willamette, said Melinda Eden. What are we trying to accomplish with it? she asked. Washington supports the stacking language, stated Karier. He suggested adding a "technical footnote" that explains stacking in more detail.

There is no definition of "stacking," said Joan Dukes. To put something into the program that has no definition is problematic, she stated. Oregon wants to have flexibility to be able to negotiate with BPA about Willamette wildlife mitigation, Dukes said.

This language is saying the 2-to-1 ratio worked for everything except now the Willamette, she continued. This is a big one for us -- we need the ability to negotiate like everyone else did, Dukes added.

Oregon has been unsuccessful in negotiating a wildlife mitigation agreement for the Willamette with BPA, Eden said. We are trying to use the Combined Habitat Assessment Procedure

(CHAP) or another tool to remedy the difficulties with wildlife loss assessments, she stated. BPA had the opportunity to redo the loss assessments and declined to do so, Eden noted.

She suggested deleting the sentence that says "the ratio only applies when loss estimates are not inaccurate due to stacking," and adding new language that would say: "however, when loss estimates appear inaccurate due to habitat unit stacking and those inaccuracies cannot be resolved through the use of a different cost-effective crediting tool or approach, then the 2-to-1 ratio will not apply to the remaining stacked habitat units."

After further discussion, the Council adopted Oregon's suggestions, but added in the words "when the loss estimates appear inaccurate due to habitat unit stacking and those inaccuracies cannot be resolved through the use of a different cost-effective crediting tool or approach, *recommended by the Wildlife Crediting Forum and approved by the Council*, then the 2-to-1 ratio will not apply to the remaining stacked habitat units." The Council also added a technical footnote that provides more information about stacking.

Resident Fish Mitigation Staffer John Shurts explained that the program contains a new section on resident fish mitigation and that it derives from recommendations from the Salish-Kootenai tribes and others. It recognizes and describes resident fish mitigation settlement agreements, he said.

The Council asked staff to include in the section a list of the elements that should be in resident fish settlement agreements. The Council agreed to language that says: "where a resident fish loss assessment has been developed for a particular hydro facility or for an entire subbasin using the best available scientific methods, and the loss assessment has been accepted as part of the program, the Council encourages mitigation settlement agreements that represent full mitigation for the identified losses."

Fish Passage Center The Council agreed to replace "the program calls for the continued operation of the FPC" with language, proposed by Washington, that says "the program calls for the continuation of the fish passage functions currently conducted by the FPC." The Council discussed whether the section should contain any specific references to the center itself, versus references to "fish passage center functions."

Dukes objected to language that does not specifically reference the FPC. The Power Act calls for giving deference to F&W managers and tribes, and we received comments from every state manager and tribe saying they want to leave the FPC as is, she said. "To me, we are flying in the face of the Act," Dukes added.

Rhonda Whiting questioned whether the Council would want to specifically name one entity. She suggested referring to the functions in the program, but said "to create a contract with one specific entity is not consistent with the program."

The FPC has always been a bit of an anomaly in the program, said Karier. The language that refers to the FPC specifically is essentially "earmarked" funding for a particular entity, he stated. Our idea is to eliminate the earmark, but we are listening to the region about the need for the functions the FPC performs, Karier said. The FPC needs to go through our funding process and scientific review like other projects, he added. The new language actually makes it more consistent with the Act, Karier stated.

He recommended inserting into the program: "the FPC Oversight Board will ensure that FPC products that involve analysis will be subject to peer review prior to release."

The managers want to continue this center, and that's what we ought to do, stated Eden. Plus, it's in the Accords, she noted. Eden said Oregon would support compromise language that says: "analytical products requested of the FPC by managers would be released to the inquiring party, but not to a broader audience without broader peer review."

After further discussion, the Council agreed to recommendations from staff about which parts of the document should contain references to the center or which to its functions. The Council also okayed this language about peer review: "The FPC Oversight Board shall determine the requirements for peer review of analytical products before dissemination to an audience broader than the managers requesting the analysis."

After these decisions, Dukes asked again why the Council is changing the language about the FPC. This has been a contentious issue we've had to deal with all along, replied Booth. The majority on the Council would like to see some change in the way the FPC operates, he said.

We've heard comments ranging from remove it from the program altogether, to maintain its contract as part of the program, Booth stated. There's dissatisfaction with the current operation of the FPC, he said. I see this language as saying that the FPC's functions need to continue, Booth stated. But the language is a step back from a full endorsement of the operations of the FPC on the part of the majority of this Council, but not the full Council, so let's move on, he summed up.

Implementation Provisions The Council discussed new language in the implementation section that deals with multi-year action plans that will be put together starting in 2009. The Council agreed to several revisions to make sure that implementation needs are addressed for areas of the program not covered under the BiOps or the Accords.

At Oregon's suggestion, language in the section was revised to say: "the Council recognizes the funding commitments already made by BPA and other federal agencies to certain measures. Those commitments must not come at the expense of sufficient funding for other program priorities." Yost said the Council needs to set time aside to talk about how all the multi-year action plans will fit together.

The Council spent the rest of the work session on a page-by-page walk-through of the program, making revisions. For example, in the section dealing with data management, the Council added the following language, suggested by Dukes, to the section on High-Level Indicators: "the Council, *in consultation with F&W managers and others*, will adopt and periodically update high-level indicators for the purpose of reporting success and accomplishments to Congress, the region's governors, legislators, and citizens of the Northwest."

The Council also added this new language about the priorities for funding improvements at the Willamette projects under NOAA Fisheries' Willamette River BiOp: "Priority work at the Columbia and Snake dams funded through the Columbia River Fish Mitigation (CRFM) should not go unfunded because of the diversion of CRFM funds to implement the Willamette BiOp." The Council also encouraged the Corps "to seek alternative funding for Willamette BiOp implementation using existing or new authorities, if necessary."

O'Toole said staff would get a new version of the document to the Council by the end of the month so it can be reviewed before the February meeting.

10. Council decision on Columbia River Fish Accord project, Genetic Assessment of Columbia River Stocks, Project #2008-907-00:

Mark Fritsch, manager, project implementation.

Staffer Mark Fritsch presented a request for funding for a project, Genetic Assessment of Columbia River Stocks. This is a Corps project, and it is the only Columbia River Fish Accord project that has satisfied the Independent Scientific Review Panel's scientific review criteria to date, he noted. The F&W Committee approved this project, but added a caveat that the project be subject to further review after more work is done on a regional approach to monitoring, evaluation, research, and reporting in the basin, Whiting said.

Measure moved that the Council recommend that BPA fund the Genetic Assessment of Columbia River Stocks, Project 2008-907-00, and Yost seconded. Karier moved to amend the motion to reflect the caveat Whiting mentioned, and Measure seconded that motion, which passed. Measure re-stated that the motion would say the Council recommends that BPA fund the Genetic Assessment of Columbia River Stocks, Project 2008-907-00, as presented by staff, recommended by the F&W Committee, and with changes recommended by Member Whiting at today's meeting. The motion passed.

11. Council decision on within-year request for Oregon Fish Screens Project, Project #1993-066-00 and in-lieu discussion:

Mark Fritsch; and John Shurts, general counsel.

Fritsch presented a within-year funding request for an Oregon Fish Screens project. The project involves operation and maintenance (O&M) for fish screens, and the funding is being requested by the Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to cover the anticipated loss of Mitchell Act funds, he noted. BPA representatives and Council staff have raised concerns that this funding request may run up against the "in-lieu" prohibition in the Power Act, Fritsch said.

Staffer Sandra Hirotsu said the Council believes that the funding for the fish screens needs to be continued. Although the project might appear to present a "classic case" of an in-lieu problem on the surface, we think the in-lieu provision may not apply for several reasons, including a close reading of the history of the Power Act, she stated.

It is up to BPA to make the in-lieu determination, Hirotsu said. But staff thinks the Council should recommend that BPA provide funds for the screens in FY 2009, conditioned on BPA being able to conclude the in-lieu provision doesn't apply, she noted. If BPA concludes that the in-lieu provision does apply, we think BPA should provide a written explanation to the Council, Hirotsu continued. The Council should also work with BPA and NOAA Fisheries to find another way to fund the O&M for the screens in 2009 and FY 2010, she said.

BPA's Greg Delwiche said the agency hasn't made a decision yet.

Measure moved that the Council: recommend that BPA provide additional expense funds in the amount of \$198,302 for the Oregon Fish Screens Project, Project 1993-066-00, in FY 2009, as requested by the ODFW, provided BPA determines that the in-lieu prohibition does not apply; request that BPA provide the Council a written explanation if it determines that the in-lieu prohibition does apply, and then work with NOAA Fisheries and ODFW to ensure continued funding in some other manner for the O&M of these screens; and request that BPA and NOAA Fisheries find a way to fund the screen program in full in FY 2010 and beyond, including full restoration of Mitchell Act funding if that is the only legal way to fund these screens. Karier seconded, and the motion passed.

12. Update on High Level Indicators:

Tom Karier, Washington Council Member.

The Council approved a working list of High-Level Indicators (HLI) in July, and since then, we've located a lot of data for the indicators and have been working on their development, reported Karier. The HLI measure levels and changes in fish abundance and survival, harvest, fish habitat, and wildlife habitat, he explained.

Karier noted that some of the HLI have been completed, and he reported on the status of each biological indicator to date. He said, for example, that the indicator dealing with abundance of adult fish is being developed in conjunction with the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority's (CBFWA) *Status of the Resource* report.

For the indicator, "fish population status and trends for each Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU), especially listed ESUs," Karier pointed out that while this information is essential for NOAA Fisheries, it is not yet available from that agency, "even after all the BiOps." NOAA Fisheries doesn't have an annual report of the numbers of listed fish, and we are working with them and waiting for its development, he said.

Data for the indicator, "survival rates through the hydro system for adult and juvenile fish," is available and is particularly important for the Council's program, according to Karier. Data is also available from BPA for the indicator, "wildlife habitat units by dam," and we expect the data can be further refined as part of the Council's upcoming Wildlife Crediting Forum, he stated.

Karier also described "implementation indicators," which he said are "actions we think will contribute to success, but aren't by themselves the ultimate measures of success." One such indicator is "instream passage improvement by additional habitat made accessible." He said the data is available from BPA's PISCES system, and as a result, we can report on "how many miles or acres of habitat we open up each year."

Data on two other indicators -- how much riparian habitat has been improved, and the number of installed fish screens -- is also now available from BPA, Karier pointed out.

He said he hopes the Council will adopt these indicators, subject to future revisions, in February or March, and release them for public comment. After that, we will post them on the Web site and start using them and keeping them updated, Karier added.

Brian Lipscomb of CBFWA said discussions of the Council's HLI have been helpful to his organization as it prepares "the next iteration" of the *Status of the Resource* report. The HLI provide us a way to "focus the conversation" and to get necessary data and make it available, he stated.

Are the HLI going to be part of the *Status of the Resource* report? Whiting asked. The Council needs to send reports to Congress and the governors, and we will include the HLI in those, replied Karier. The *Status of the Resource* report is a complementary effort, and on our Web page that features the HLI, I envision having a link to the *Status of the Resource* report, he added.

Booth said the Council would target the March meeting for a final discussion of the HLI, and he urged Council members to review them. We need to focus on what data the region needs, how it can be used, and who will use it, Booth stated. "It's time for Council members to start weighing in on this process," he said.

Election of Council officers for 2009.

Dick Wallace nominated Bill Booth of Idaho to serve a second term as Council chair. Wallace cited Booth's "steady, calm leadership" and respectful approach to other Council members and the Council's constituents. Bruce Measure seconded the nomination, and the motion passed unanimously.

Jim Yost nominated Montana's Bruce Measure to serve again as vice-chair in 2009, saying that the team effort of the past year should continue in the coming year. Tom Karier seconded the nomination, and the motion passed unanimously.

Approved February 11, 2009.

/s/ Bruce Measure

Vice-Chair