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March 5, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council members

FROM: Jim Ruff – Manager, Mainstem Passage and River Operations

SUBJECT: Update on May 15 Quagga-Zebra Mussel Summit

Due to the severe threat posed by the invasive quagga and zebra mussels to the waters of the Pacific Northwest, there is a compelling need to define and implement a region-wide prevention and response strategy. Recognizing this need, this is to inform you that The Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER), the Northwest Power and Conservation Council and the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) have begun efforts to jointly sponsor a regional workshop entitled:

Preventing an Invasion: Building a Regional Defense Against Quagga and Zebra Mussels

The purpose of the May 15, 2013, workshop in Vancouver, Washington, is to bring together private and public sector utilities, natural resource agencies, industries, tribes and environmental groups (e.g., water users and natural resource managers) that could be affected by these non-native freshwater mussels if they were to successfully colonize our waterways. Council staff is currently working with staff at PNWER and PSMFC to develop an agenda, develop a mailing list of regional decision makers, prepare a letter of invitation, and meeting logistics.

The agenda will include speakers from impacted water utility and power generation industries from the Lower Colorado River Basin and the Great Lakes, an overview of potential ecologic and economic impacts to the Northwest, and comments from state and regional decision makers. We also plan to have breakout sessions to provide attendees with the opportunity to learn about the mussel threat and provide feedback on regional issues of importance such as hydropower vulnerability assessments, rapid response and control options, enhancing watercraft inspection efforts, and the funding and legislation needed to protect the economic and ecological resources of the Pacific Northwest.

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