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June 30, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Fish and Wildlife Staff

SUBJECT: RME/AP Category Review:
Final Project Recommendations for Ocean Research Projects

At its June meeting in Whitefish the Council made its final decisions on the programmatic and specific project recommendations for the RME/AP Category Review, with one exception. The Council deferred to the July meeting its final project recommendations for three ocean research projects in the review.

The July meeting now includes on the agenda a decision on the final recommendations for these three projects. This memorandum identifies the projects and provides the staff recommendation on how to proceed. The three projects:

Ocean Survival of Salmonids	199801400	NOAA Fisheries
Salmon Shelf Survival Study	200300900	Canada Department of Fisheries and Oceans
Coastal Ocean Acoustic Salmon Tracking (COAST)	200311400	Kintama Research

Summary detail on each project, including budgets and contract dates provided by Bonneville, is attached at the end of the memorandum.

The Council already made its final decision on a programmatic issue that arose out of the ocean research, calling on the project sponsors involved to complete jointly a comprehensive synthesis report on the ocean research. The programmatic recommendation is also attached at the end for context.

What the Council needs to decide at the July meeting is the content of the specific project recommendations for these three projects. In other words, make a decision on what to include for each project in the "Council recommendation" box of the project spreadsheet.

We already know, from the programmatic issue recommendation, that a part of that specific recommendation for each project must be to participate in FY 2012 in completing the

coordinated synthesis report, and that there is no guarantee of funding after FY 2012 for any of the projects, pending the review of the synthesis report.

The only question not guided by the programmatic issue is whether and what research is to be conducted under each project in FY2012. The staff recommendation to the Fish and Wildlife Committee in May, and then the Committee’s recommendation to the Council in June, is that the first two projects should be funded through FY2012 to complete the synthesis work and to complete one year of ongoing research. For the third project (COAST), the recommendation is to fund in FY2012 just to help complete the synthesis report, and not to conduct any additional research next year.

This is still the staff and Committee recommendation, and so if followed by the Council, the Council recommendation for each project would appear as follows:

ProjNum	Title	Sponsor	ISRPreC	BiOp	Accord	FY12Req BPA	Programmatic Issues	Council Recommendation
199801400	Ocean Survival Of Salmonids	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)	Yes (Qualified)	x		\$2,141,999	Ocean, Research	Implement through FY 2012 to conduct research as proposed and to participate in the completion of the coordinated synthesis report per programmatic issue #5. Implementation beyond FY 2012 based on ISRP and Council review of the report.
200300900	Salmon Shelf Survival Study	Canada Department Of Fisheries and Oceans	Yes (Qualified)	x		\$460,075	Ocean, Research	Implement through FY 2012 to conduct research as proposed and to participate in the completion of the coordinated synthesis report per programmatic issue #5. Implementation beyond FY 2012 based on ISRP and Council review of the report.
200311400	Coastal Ocean Acoustic Salmon Tracking (COAST)	Kintama Research	Yes (Qualified)	x		\$656,377	Ocean, Research	In FY2012 implement only to participate in the completion of the coordinated synthesis report per programmatic issue #5. ISRP and Council review of synthesis report to determine if there is a critical need for new work beyond FY 2012.

The reason for the different recommendation for the COAST project is that it is the perspective of the staff and Fish Committee that this project is an expensive research project that has already had six years of funding and research, was intended to be a demonstration project only but it remains in the “proof of concept” stage after several years of funding, and is focused on what is now a lower priority issue of the delayed mortality effects of transportation vs. in-river migration. The ISRP also raised significant technical issues with the project, even as it gave the project a qualified approval rating, technical issues that seem unnecessary to address unless and until a priority for the work in FY 2012 is identified. The staff can provide more details if the Council desires.

Attachment

Summary detail on each project

Ocean Survival of Salmonids: NOAA/OSU/OHSU.

FY11 Budget: \$2,122,893

BPA Proposed FY12 Budget: \$2,141,999

FY12 Contract Start Date: 6/1/12. There are multiple contracts under this project-- the 6/1 start date is for the first FY12 contract under the project.

Canada-USA Shelf-Survival Study: Canada DFO.

FY11 Budget: \$455,971

BPA Proposed FY12 Budget: \$460,075

FY12 Contract Start Date: 10/1/11. As of 6/27/11, most materials have been submitted for FY12 contract and are under Bonneville review.

Coastal Ocean Acoustic Salmon Tracking (COAST): Kintama Research.

FY11 Budget: \$2,142,086.00

BPA Proposed FY12 Budget: \$656,378 for project closedown; synthesis: Estimate of cost for retrieving receivers, downloading and processing data, and writing up annual/final reports.

FY12 Contract Start Date: December 1, 2011-November 30, 2012.

(2) Programmatic Issue on Ocean Research: Final Council Recommendation

Council recommendation: The Council calls for the project sponsors involved to complete jointly a comprehensive synthesis report on the ocean research. The synthesis report should be responsive to the program's strategies, the ISRP's comments, and the points noted here in the description of the programmatic issue. The synthesis should detail what has been learned, what is being investigated, what conclusions can be drawn now, and the expected time frame for the research to yield further conclusions. The synthesis report should include consideration of potential salmon management implications, and if possible recommendations for management based on the information collected and evaluated. The report should also describe how the disparate research projects will be coordinated from here on, and how data collection will be standardized and data made widely accessible. The report should also take into account related ocean research conducted by others not funded under the program, including an assessment of what opportunities we have to draw information and conclusions useful for the program from that other research.

Under this scenario, the Council recommends that the funding for the ocean research projects through FY 2012 are to include the completion of the synthesis report and to allow for subsequent ISRP review and a Council recommendation on future implementation and funding. The project sponsors have already begun working on the synthesis, in the hopes of completing it near the end of 2011. Even if the synthesis report is completed in 2011, it likely will still be necessary to continue the projects into 2012, during which time the ISRP will review the report and the Council will consider future funding for ocean research projects. If the scope of work and budgets for the projects need to be reworked to accommodate the production of the synthesis report, Bonneville should see to that. The Council and Bonneville will decide on additional funding for these projects in out years depending on the production and review of the synthesis report, and then on how the project sponsors propose to re-shape the research projects consistent with the recommendation here and the outcome of the synthesis report review.