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September 1, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Joan Dukes, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: Update on our work projects with the Columbia Basin Trust

Background: I met with Garry Merkel, Chair of the Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) who also serves as the CBT's liaison to the Council, on August 10. This memo summarizes our discussion and identifies decisions Council members need to consider.

1. Creating a website with transboundary mapping and data-sharing

The Council staff created, with input from CBT staff, a data-sharing and general information website about the Columbia River Basin with a focus on the Columbia River Treaty (see www.nwcouncil.org/treaty). The intent of the website is to facilitate greater public awareness of the environmental characteristics of the basin and also the history and future of the Columbia River Treaty. We will continue to add links, but for now this project is complete.

2. Summary of potential hydrologic changes due to climate change

Canadian and American scientists have been studying, in some cases together, the potential impacts of global climate changes on the Columbia River Basin. To date, no one has assembled the collective findings and conclusions of this work, and that is the intent of this project. The CBT and Council would share the cost of the report, if any, equally.

Council and CBT staff met with scientists at the Climate Impacts Group (CIG) at the University of Washington and the Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium (PCIC) at the University of Victoria to discuss whether they could develop a summary report. In response, the scientists proposed three options:

1) A detailed model "intercomparison study" leading to a peer-reviewed journal article and a summary report. Estimated cost: \$100,000.

2) A summary report primarily using existing studies with some additional assistance from CIG and PCIC to incorporate new data and information, followed by an internal review. Estimated cost: \$40,000.

3) A summary report using only material available from published studies and publicly available reports, with an internal review by CIG and PCIC. Estimated cost: \$25,000.

The CBT is interested in Option 2 and has committed to fund some part of the cost. To date, the Council has not committed funding to the project, as the Council has internal staff resources to produce the summary report described as Option 3 above. Questions for the Council

are 1) which option best suits the Council's needs; and 2) how much are we willing to spend and/or commit in terms of our own staff resources to produce the report?

3. Joint funding of a transboundary fish and wildlife project

Council and CBT staff have focused on the geographic area of the Koocanusa reservoir to explore joint funding of a transboundary fish and wildlife project. Working with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks and a consultant hired by CBT, five potential projects have been identified:

- Didymo: Identify distribution of the diatom within the Koocanusa watershed.
- Transboundary bull trout: Identify a sustainable level of adult production in the Wigwam River, which flows into Lake Koocanusa.
- Gerrard rainbow trout: Identify limiting factors and distribution in Lake Koocanusa.
- Kokanee: Index abundance in Lake Koocanusa
- Burbot: Identify limiting factors and distribution in Lake Koocanusa.

The next step is for the Council and CBT to select one of the projects. Each agency will address funding according to its own practices. Brian Marotz of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks confirmed that these projects would not require new proposals but could be handled with existing funds under the umbrella of the Libby Mitigation Project. CBT is working with its fish and wildlife partner, the Canadian Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fishery Commission, to identify the project that best fits the CBT's priorities.

4. Other matters:

- a. We discussed the *Third Annual Symposium on Transboundary River Governance in The Face of Uncertainty: The Columbia River Treaty, 2014*, which is scheduled Oct. 4-5 in Kimberly, BC. The Council and the CBT each contributed \$10,000 to help support the symposium, which is being presented by the Universities Consortium on Columbia Basin Governance. Members include the University of Washington, University of British Columbia, University of Idaho, University of Montana, and Oregon State University. The consortium is promoting the symposium as a unique opportunity to explore alternative interests and scenarios regarding the future of governance in the Columbia River on both sides of the border. I encourage Council members to attend.
- b. We also tentatively agreed to convene our annual meeting of the Council and CBT board of directors in conjunction with the Council's November 8-9 meeting in Coeur d'Alene.