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September 1, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairman Booth and members of the Fish and Wildlife Committee

FROM: Tony Grover

SUBJECT: Mini-Science & Policy Exchanges

State and central fish and wildlife staff held a retreat in July. We were joined by the Executive Director and by the Director of the Power Division and a Public Affairs staff person. We spent some time at that retreat discussing the next Fish and Wildlife Program Amendment process. Through consensus the group concluded it would be prudent to prepare for the next Program amendment by convening several 'mini-Science & Policy Exchanges'. A consensus also emerged that these S/P exchanges should involve interested Council members, and may differ from past Science / Policy exchanges by being more frequent, focused, shorter, with targeted outcomes for possible Program implementation or possible issue incorporation into the next Program as appropriate for the topic. These exchanges might take place at or around a council meeting in a classroom-style setting, or even as a longer panel discussion at a meeting; thus the term 'mini-Science & Policy Exchanges'.

Discussions at these mini-Science & Policy exchanges are intended to inform and frame issues for the next Program amendment process, not to predetermine Program language and may help shape implementation strategies.

Fish and Wildlife managers, researchers and other experts on each topic would be invited to share their latest findings. They will also be encouraged to discuss among themselves, and with Council members and staff, how best to integrate their science findings with management and policy implications.

At our retreat, several potential topics were identified that could be addressed through mini-Science & Policy exchanges are listed below. Several of these same topics were identified by the ISRP in their programmatic review of the RM&E projects. However, additional topics may also emerge today, or during the next year:

- Program Objectives with the intent that the next program will have more specificity than the 2009 program.

- MERR, and its anadromous, resident fish and wildlife RME implementation strategies
- A plan to update and make subbasin plans more easily accessible
- The Council's Research Plan
- Lamprey
- Sturgeon
- Sockeye
- Ocean effects on Program activities
- The Columbia River Estuary
- The Food Web report from the ISAB
- ISAB's review of "the Program" will be available in early 2012 – how to use that?
- Fish tagging or alternative identification methodologies
- The phenomena of jacks and mini-jacks
- O&M for wildlife lands.
- Supplementation
 - Wild versus hatchery fish
 - Mark or not
 - ISS
 - HSRG results
 - Council criteria from the RM&E / AP review
- Reintroduction above blocked areas
 - in the Willamette basin under the NOAA and USF&WS BiOps
 - elsewhere in the Columbia basin.
- Habitat restoration (at the watershed scale prompted by the ISAB report currently under development). Consider ties to:
 - CHaMP
 - ISEMP
 - IMWs
 - Geographic review
- Predation
 - Current conditions
 - Predator "share"
 - Native fish versus non-native fish and invasives
 - Trophic cascades and impacts to food webs

While the above list is not the final word on the science and policy integration issues confronting the Council, it is a good start. Assuming a window of time commencing in November of 2011 and ending between July and September of 2013, all of these and a few more could be discussed in some detail. Indeed, several are already well underway, through state of the science assessments or the production of synthesis reports following the recent RM&E/AP category review.

If the Committee agrees, staff will return in October with some alternatives for scheduling these mini-Science & Policy Exchanges.