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October 27, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairman Booth and Fish and Wildlife Committee members

FROM: Tony Grover

SUBJECT: Discussion on Supplementation

The Council, the Independent Science Advisory Board (ISAB) and the Independent Science Review Panel (ISRP) have worked with NOAA, BPA, fish managers and others to understand the effects in the natural environment of salmon and steelhead supplementation, specifically the ISAB Review of Salmon and Steelhead Supplementation (ISAB 2003-3), the ISRP Retrospective Report (ISRP 2005), and Monitoring and Evaluation of Supplementation Projects (ISRP and ISAB 2005-15). Through these reports and with additional information gained from Ad-Hoc Supplementation Workgroup and the Hatchery Scientific Work Group (HSRG) efforts, the Council has developed a good understanding of the various risks and limiting factors that constrain the success of supplementation efforts.

Supplementation has been implemented throughout the anadromous zone of the Columbia River Basin for many years. Lately much progress has been made by fish managers to monitor and implement supplementation efforts consistently among their various projects. However, the Council is concerned about the lack of a basin wide policy concerning monitoring, evaluation and reporting of results and conclusions regarding supplementation effects on naturally spawning fish. Ideally, NOAA, with its strong interest in, as well as a responsibility for protecting and enhancing the abundance and productivity of naturally spawning salmon and steelhead, would work with the region to develop a comprehensive policy framework on supplementation which the region needs. The framework should include the adaptive management protocols needed, including timeframes, if naturally spawning fish are being adversely affected by supplementation.

In June of 2011, the Council concluded its review of Research, Monitoring, Evaluation and Artificial Production projects. At the start of that review, the federal agencies proposed a BiOp project titled Columbia River Hatchery Effects Evaluation Team (CRHEET). However, late in the review process BPA and NOAA reported CRHEET was not ready for review and would not be for some time. The purpose, extent, relationship to the work of the HSRG and, importantly, the regional partnerships envisioned for CRHEET remain uncertain. The Council understands that this project may be intended to develop useful clarification as to where supplementation works well, where it

does not, and how to manage for uncertainty in this regard. The Committee will discuss with NOAA a shared interest in providing the region a supplementation policy proposal. The Committee will also discuss with both NOAA, BPA and others how to engage the region in a collaborative manner involving tribes, state and federal agencies, to develop a schedule and process to provide a concrete description of a robust hatchery effects evaluation process, which may be CRHEET, integrated with the proposed supplementation policy, by May 2012.

Representatives of NOAA-Fisheries, Bonneville Power Administration, other fish management entities and Council staff will discuss with the Committee the next steps to successfully accomplish the tasks above.