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January 26, 2012

MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Tony Grover, Fish and Wildlife Division Director

SUBJECT: Follow-up to strategic options for hatchery and CHREET issues

The Council's Fish and Wildlife Program has provided for the use of artificial fish production facilities under the following conditions: 1) in an integrated manner to complement habitat improvements by supplementing native fish populations up to the sustainable carrying capacity of the habitat with fish that are as similar as possible, in genetics and behavior, to wild native fish; or 2) in a segregated manner to maintain the genetic integrity of the local populations in order to expand natural production while supporting harvest of artificially produced stocks; or 3) to replace lost salmon and steelhead in blocked areas.

The Program also acknowledges the need to determine how artificial production activities can play a role in providing significant harvest opportunities throughout the basin while also protecting and rebuilding natural spawning populations.

The region has responded to the Program direction by adopting and implementing the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Supplementation Work Group and through continuous adaptation of artificial production techniques. The science related to and understanding of artificial production is complex and rapidly evolving, and may take some time to fully understand.

Staff recommends the Committee chair request experts come to the Committee from time to time over the next several months to discuss aspects of artificial production and related issues. The goal would be to build a thorough understanding of the issues by the end of calendar year 2012, so as to better inform the upcoming Fish and Wildlife Program Amendment process, which will commence in early 2013.