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September 4, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fish and Wildlife Committee Members

FROM: Tony Grover, Fish and Wildlife Division Director

SUBJECT: Follow up to fish tagging recommendations

Staff proposes the following schedule and activities to follow-up on the Council's August 2013 recommendations to Bonneville concerning fish tagging under the Fish and Wildlife Program. Staff recommends that no significant follow-up activity by the Council and others should commence before the completion of the current fish and wildlife program amendment process. It may also be appropriate for the Committee to reconsider the intensity and timing of these activities based on the priorities and tasks established in the 2014 amended fish and wildlife program.

Follow-up on Council Fish Tagging recommendations

		Council Recommendations			Time frame	Who	What
1	Global	Any reduction in funding associated with the recommendations would be available for redirection to other F&W projects.	Near term	BPA,	BPA Annual budget report		
2	Global	NOAA to provide guidance in coordination with state, tribal, and other researchers/experts regarding best practices for tagging ESA-listed salmonids.	Mid-term	NOAA Fisheries	Compilation of NOAA guidance shared with region via Council's FW Committee during mid 2014, as written document & oral presentation /discussion		
3	PIT	Implement an annual PIT tag coordination and review forum including federal, state, tribal, utility representatives and other entities for both fish and wildlife projects with the purpose of reviewing short-term and long-term study plans relying on the use of PIT tags to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i - Evaluate opportunities to increase efficiency of tag use in a way that minimizes costs and reduces the number of fish tagged; and ii - Provide input and review of the PIT tag forecasting system for the purchase of PIT tags in the Columbia Basin 	Near term	NPCC convenes Federal, state, tribal, utility representatives and other entities. Begins in FY 2015.	PIT tag coordination report to Council annually. First report Sept 2015.		
4	PIT	Council sponsor periodic subject matter expert evaluations of rates of PIT tag loss and effects of tagging on fish behavior and survival throughout the life cycle to understand how it affects	Long term	Council convenes first meeting in FY	Triennial report from the forum created in 3,		

		confidence in critical parameters derived from PIT tag studies.			2015. Work through forum created in 3, above.	above.
5	PIT	Council utilize the IEAB and ISAB to work together with interested regional partners to develop an analytical tool to evaluate trade-offs between PIT tagging levels, detector arrangements and the accuracy and precision of parameters used in making priority management decisions.	Long term		Council request IEAB and ISAB partner with Pit tag forum created in 3, above, to begin work in FY 2015	ISAB/IEAB/Pit tag group submits tool to Council within 6 months.
6	PIT	At the completion of the current PIT tag harvest monitoring project (2010-036-00), the Council and ISRP should follow a deliberate and measured approach to evaluate the project.	Long term		Project sponsor submits report to ISRP.	ISRP and sponsor recommend next steps to Council.
7	CWT	Eliminate routine coded wire tagging of steelhead and sockeye because they are not sampled in the ocean at levels significant enough to influence decision making. However, some coded wire tagging of these species will be necessary for specific research projects and hatchery operations and evaluations.	Long term		BPA and users of CWT phase out use of CWT on steelhead and sockeye.	Report by CWT users and BPA to Council in FY 2017
8	Genetic	Funding of on-going FWP projects developing and evaluating genetic methods (GSI and PBT) should continue consistent with the projects' goals and objectives. After 5-10 years of monitoring have been completed the effectiveness and efficiency of the genetic methods should be evaluated for broader application. The funding of new projects within the FWP should follow a deliberate and measured approach to consider how those new projects would complement existing projects.	Long term		Genetic project sponsors.	Report by genetic project sponsors to Council and ISRP in FY2018 and in FY2023
9	Acoustic	Recommends twenty or more year interval between JSATS studies at USACE operated dam(s) unless major modifications to the structures or operations at the dams require updated	Near term		U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in	Report to the Council by USACOE and

		information about fish survival at the dam(s). Furthermore, before future JSATS studies are implemented the Corps of Engineers, in collaboration with NOAA Fisheries and the Council, should evaluate whether existing, less expensive, tag technologies could be used and if acoustic tags are the appropriate technology for the research objectives, then what is the appropriate data collection required (i.e., presence/absence, two-dimensional or 2D, or three-dimensional or 3D, which provides depth information), to provide adequate information to assess juvenile survival at the dam(s) at a lower cost.		collaboration with NOAA Fisheries and the Council.	NOAA in early FY2014.
10	Acoustic	Within one year of date of this recommendation, the Corps of Engineers, in consultation with NOAA, should develop a long term 20 year plan for acoustic tag studies within the Columbia and Willamette River basins. This plan should include the purpose of studies, coordination planning to be done with other entities that may be using acoustic tags, locations of the studies, study dates and estimated costs for acoustic tag studies that are envisioned over the next 20 years. This plan should be shared with the Council and the region for comment.	Mid-term	USACOE and NOAA Fisheries	Report to Council by USACOE and NOAA Fisheries in late FY2014. May be included in the 2013 FCRPS BiOp.
11	Acoustic	Council should sponsor a public review of the USACE 2014 to 2018 forecast for JSATs performance testing cost and schedule for potential additional efficiencies and associated cost savings.	Near term	Council 60 day public comment period as soon as USACOE and NOAA release the details of the 2014 to 2018 JSATS testing schedule.	Council takes and compiles comments during FY2014 and recommend to USACOE and NOAA Fisheries how to use the comments. Will likely be included in the 2013 FCRPS BiOp.

12	Radio	Council should continue to support the use of radio tags for specialized purposes to meet the evaluation criteria for specific research objectives and should continue to be used when appropriate for short-term study designs.	Near term	Project sponsors	Council and ISRP review as proposals are developed.
13	Data	Extend PERC process to evaluate potential improvements in the PIT tag and CWT regional databases (PTAGIS and RMIS) that provide important data sharing and analysis, leading to good decision making for our shared salmon resource on the Pacific Coast.	Mid term	Council convenes PIT / CWT data users / managers, PNAMP and BPA in FY2015	Recommend database improvement to Council in FY2016
14	Data	Implement a regional SNPs genetics database at PSMFC that can be shared in the same manner as the current PTAGIS and RMIS databases.	Underway	PSMFC	Biennial report to Council.
15	Data	Link the PTAGIS, RMIS, and SNPs databases to bring more power to these databases, leading to easier and more complete regional mark/tag data analysis (i.e., linking fish with multiple marks or tags in these databases).	Underway	PSMFC	Report to Council when linkages completed.
15	Data	Through BPA contracting procedures, provide better documentation of tagging protocols through MonitoringMethods.org.	Near term	BPA and project sponsors	Biennial report to Council.
17	Data	Evaluate the costs and benefits of incorporating tag-related cost-tracking components into future upgrades to PISCES, and CBfish.Org	Long term	Council, BPA, project sponsors and IEAB form a working group in first quarter of FY2015	Report to Council in first quarter of FY2016

Follow-up on Council principles and conditions added to the Fish Tagging Forum recommendations:

1. The Council concludes that the use of Bonneville funds for CWT is not obviously outside Bonneville's spending authority under the Northwest Power Act, nor is it a clear violation of the "in lieu" provisions of the Act. Rather, in a situation of overlapping authorities, the question is whether the level of Bonneville funding for coded wire tagging is out of proportion with what could be considered Bonneville's 'fair share' of the coded wire tagging program, based on the amount of information gleaned from the tags that is relevant to the Council's program. This is a policy within the purview of the Council as well as Bonneville.

Follow-up: none required

2. Fish managers rely on CWT as a primary indicator for many management questions, including population status and recovery of endangered species. The Council and Bonneville rely on the fish managers to help develop the Fish and Wildlife Program and to provide Program implementation expertise.

Follow-up: none required

3. The ISAB and ISRP have both endorsed the use of CWT (ISAB/ISRP 2009-1 report).

Follow-up: none required

4. The IEAB reports that there are inefficiencies in tagging programs across the board. The preliminary fish tagging economic model development reported by the IEAB (June, 2013) indicates this concept is worth further development into a tool by Bonneville. The Council recommends Bonneville, in collaboration with NOAA, the Council, fish managers and appropriate others, develop a Request For Proposals to further refine the tagging model developed by the IEAB, or a similar model, and fund the development of that model to facilitate regional collaborative decision-making regarding programmatic and cost efficiencies in the fish tagging programs funded by Bonneville. The model should be operational in two years.

Follow-up: Bonneville report to Council on RFP development process before the end of calendar year 2013.

5. Encouraging efficiency in existing tagging programs and reducing costs in favor of more efficient tagging methods is a goal endorsed by the Council and recommended to Bonneville.

Follow-up: as tagging efficiencies and cost reduction opportunities are identified.

6. A centralized, integrated process that includes evaluating program priorities, as well as costs could play a highly beneficial role in a rationalization process that would improve both cost and program effectiveness of fish tagging (IEAB, June 2013).

Follow-up: Council articulates program priorities during the 2013-2014 Fish and Wildlife Program amendment process or describes the priority setting process in the new 2014 Fish and Wildlife Program.

7. Implement alternative 1 of the non-consensus recommendation, until the results of conditions 4 and 6 provide a rational alternative that is supported by the Council.

Follow-up: Report by Bonneville by December 2013 on how the Council's tagging recommendations will be implemented.

8. The Council recommends that Bonneville and the managers report annually on the number of juvenile fish released each year, and the subsequent number of adults that contribute to harvest, broodstock, and the spawning grounds for all hatchery programs receiving Bonneville funding. Provide this information annually for each hatchery by stock and brood year. The first report should be submitted by December 2013.

Follow-up: Bonneville and managers report to the Council at the December 2013 regular Council meeting.

9. Regardless of the above conditions, the Council may adjust its recommendations to Bonneville regarding fish tagging as new information regarding technological improvements, efficiencies or tagging opportunities become known.

Follow-up: Council decisions as new information regarding fish tagging technological improvements, efficiencies or tagging opportunities become known.