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April 2, 2009

DECISION MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Mark Fritsch, project implementation manager

SUBJECT: Council decision on Project #2008-210-00, *Snake River fall Chinook - modify ponds @ Lyons Ferry to improve adult holding*, a Columbia Basin Fish Accord project.

PROPOSED ACTION: The Council staff recommends that the project be recommended by the Council.

BUDGETARY/ECONOMIC IMPACTS

The total amount associated with this Accord project equals \$500,000 in capital funds. The Contract Request (CR-10795) associated with the action has a start date of May 1, 2009 and an end date of April 30, 2010.

BACKGROUND

In May 2008, Bonneville, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation signed agreements with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation (CTWSRO), the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation (YN), the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC), the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and the states of Idaho and Montana to implement a set of projects and actions that will deliver specific, scientifically sound results for the region's fish and wildlife. Collectively these agreements are known as the Columbia Basin Fish Accords.

As with all projects in the Fish and Wildlife Program, the Accord projects are subject to scientific review by the ISRP. As outlined in the guidance document associated with the review process for the Accords, the Council recognizes Bonneville's commitments to the projects under the Accords. However, the Accords do not alter the Council's responsibilities with respect to ISRP review or the Council's role following ISRP review. Consequently, the Council will provide its recommendation on each project based on full consideration of the ISRP report and the Council's Program.

On February 12, 2009, the Council received from Bonneville a set of two Columbia Basin Fish Accords proposals. Included in this set was a proposal from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) for Project #2008-210-00, *Snake River fall Chinook - modify ponds @ Lyons Ferry to improve adult holding*.¹

The proposal was submitted to the ISRP for review, and on March, 6, 2009 the ISRP provided a review (ISRP document 2009-5). The ISRP found that the proposal “Meets Scientific Review Criteria”.

ANALYSIS

The biological objective associated with this project is to modify the Snake River fall Chinook adult holding ponds at Lyons Ferry Hatchery² in order to provide additional segregation capacity from four to eight ponds. This action will allow fish transported from Lower Granite Dam and adults that voluntarily swim into the facility to be segregated by run-timing, sex, origin, and sexual maturation. In addition, these eight ponds will reduce the need to crowd fish, handle, and sort fish by maturity status and as such decrease fish stress.

This lack of flexibility for holding adult fall Chinook at Lyons Ferry Hatchery has restricted the ability of the managers to hold and process fish during spawning as well as limited the capability to segregate adults for run reconstruction purposes by increasing the ability to segregate adult groups at the facility. To promote this spatial structure, local adaptation, and to improve productivity, the Hatchery Scientific Review Group (HSRG) recommended in its recently completed report that managers pursue development of broodstock collection capabilities for releases into the Clearwater River.³

Based on the ISRP review and confirmed support from the HSRG the Council staff recommends that the Council supports this project for implementation. This recommendation is conditioned with the understanding that the information provided through this review will be used and incorporated in the anticipated categorical review associated with artificial production.

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¹ The proposal is listed in the May 2008 agreement in Attachment B, New, Hatchery Capital; and Attachment G, Snake River Fall Chinook ESU Hatchery Benefits Summary.

² Lyons Ferry Hatchery is a Lower Snake River Compensation Plan (LSRCP) facility and the work would be done under the auspices of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) who administer the LSRCP.

³ Columbia River Hatchery Reform Project Lower Snake River Fall Chinook Population Report, January 31, 2009.