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January 6, 2010

DECISION MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Mark Fritsch, project implementation manager

SUBJECT: Council decision on Project #2008-904-00, *Salmon River Basin Nutrient Enhancement*, a Columbia Basin Fish Accord project.

PROPOSED ACTION: The Council staff recommends that the Council support the project for implementation.

BUDGETARY/ECONOMIC IMPACTS

The total amount associated with this Accord project equals \$2,650,845 (e.g., ranges from \$109,747 to \$312,216 per year¹) in expense funds for Fiscal Years 2009 through 2017. A contract (#42907) is in effect and reflects a performance period of August 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010 at \$109,747.

BACKGROUND

In 2008-2009, the Bonneville Power Administration, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (the "Action Agencies") signed agreements with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon (CTWSRO), the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation (YN), and the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC). The agreement with these Tribes and CRITFC is referred to as the Three Treaty Tribes MOA. The Action Agencies also signed agreements with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CCT), the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (SBT), and the states of Idaho, Montana, and Washington. These agreements are known as the Columbia Basin Fish Accords.

As set forth in the guidance document outlining the review process for the Accords, the Council recognizes Bonneville's commitment to Accord projects. The Accords do not, however, alter the Council's responsibilities with respect to independent scientific review of project proposals or the Council's role following such reviews. As with all projects in the Fish and Wildlife Program,

¹ This range includes the anticipated 2.5-percent annual inflation adjustment, beginning in Fiscal Year 2010.

Accord projects are subject to review by the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP), and the Council provides funding recommendations based on full consideration of the ISRP's report and the Council's Program.

On June 11, 2009, the Council received from Bonneville a Columbia Basin Fish Accord proposal from the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, #2008-904-00, *Salmon River Basin Nutrient Enhancement*. The proposal was submitted to the ISRP for review, and on June 30, 2009 the ISRP provided a preliminary review (ISRP document 2009-26). The ISRP members requested additional information before they could determine if the proposal met scientific criteria.

The goal of the project is to assess the effectiveness of nutrient enrichment treatments in upper Salmon River subbasin streams. Key project objectives include the study and evaluation of nutrients, river metabolism and organic matter breakdown, periphyton, macroinvertebrates, and the bioenergetics, growth, and survival of resident and anadromous salmonids in treatment streams receiving nutrient additions and control streams that do not receive nutrient additions.

On November 2, 2009 the Council received a response from SBT intended to address the additional detail as requested by the ISRP and on December 11, 2009 the ISRP provided their final review (ISRP document 2009-53). The ISRP found that the project "*Meets Scientific Criteria (Qualified)*". The ISRP recommended additional information on some of the methods and power analysis on the fish response to provide some indication of the size of response that will be detectable. The ISRP also recommended integration of specific project components before beginning the study. No public comment was received on the ISRP reviews.

ANALYSIS

The ISRP sees value in the information gathered from this project. The qualifications raised by the ISRP are intended to be addressed through contracting and strengthen the project for future reviews (e.g., power analysis of fish response and integration of project components, respectively).

Based on the ISRP review the Council staff recommends that the Council supports this project for implementation.