

## **RM&E and Artificial Production Categorical Reviews Describing Planning Phase and Critical Path**

### **Planning Phase**

The Council and Bonneville staffs are working together in a planning group to map out the process for reviewing Fish and Wildlife Program projects the research, monitoring, evaluation, and program support category. Monitoring of artificial production initiatives in the basin link to the RM&E framework and categorical reviews. Thus, we will coordinate with the Artificial Production category review. All of which will be looked at through the lens of a broad RM&E framework. With the RM&E category, Council and Bonneville staffs are engaged together on many levels of planning that will result in two primary outcomes: (1) identification of RM&E-related requirements within the Biological Opinion and the Program (including assessment of current project level coverage and gaps); and (2) definition of the process for science review.

BiOp and Program workgroup outcomes include:

1. Bonneville Workgroup<sup>1</sup> recommendations on RM&E, and filling gaps for the BiOp
2. Expected cross-cutting issues to address in review
3. Draft targeted solicitations to fill gaps as needed

Category planning outcomes include:

4. Final project list for science review by subcategory
5. Overall objectives for RM&E and Artificial Production (including O&M) review
6. Overall review schedule and detailed schedule for ISRP review
7. Summary of current spending on RM&E and related work
8. Proposal form update and consistency with Pisces and Taurus
9. Narrative update with specific questions tailored to each subcategory
10. Guidance documents for sponsors

As part of the planning phase staff develops a guidance document to inform and guide the process for the Council, and define expectations for project managers, and partners. Included are the critical path for review; identification of programmatic issues; schedules; criteria and decision points. Staff will continue to work with Bonneville in this planning phase to ensure that the planning group and the workgroups keep tasks moving along and integrated with each other. Staff will provide updates of progress on categorical reviews at Council meetings. Staff will meet with managers and regional coordination groups throughout the process as needed or requested. Staff will make process information available on our website (even in draft form) provided the information has general agreement by Council and BPA managers.

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<sup>1</sup> Bonneville Workgroups include Action Agencies, NOAA, Bonneville and Council staff

Figure 1 below shows the draft schedule for the RM&E and the artificial production review by phase . The wildlife category review is in progress and is shown here as well. The planning group has discussed the idea of conducting the review of all artificial productions projects simultaneously with the RM&E projects since nearly half of the artificial production projects involve large RM&E components.

Figure 1. Schedule and Review Steps

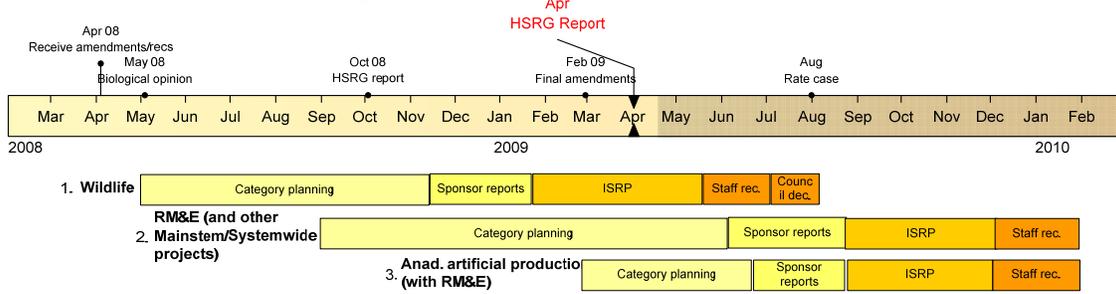
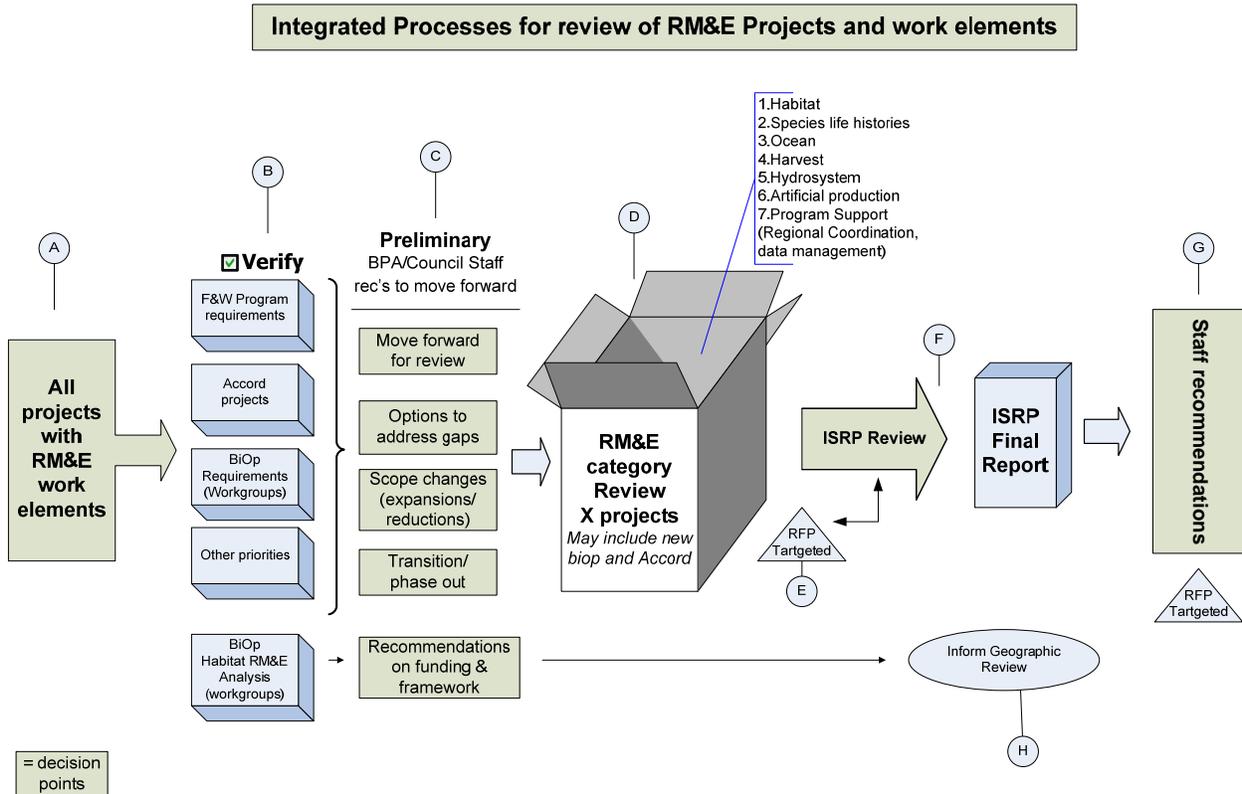


Figure 2 below illustrates the overall critical path for the RM&E review process. The steps are identified with letters A through H, and each step is described in greater detail below the figure.



**A. Project Portfolios**

The RM&E review process has two portfolios. The first portfolio is used by the BPA workgroups. The BPA portfolio, broader in scope, includes all projects that have at least one work element that is considered to be research, monitoring and or evaluation, which includes most of the Bonneville-funded. The second portfolio is a subset of the first portfolio and is for the Council and ISRP categorical review. . Projects in the second portfolio are primarily focused on RM&E, mainstem, or systemwide actions, and do not include projects such as habitat work that has a small RM&E component to it. The largely habitat-based projects will be reviewed in the geographic reviews

**Workgroup Portfolio**

The initial list of projects used to determine the review set began with all projects (Contracts) in Pisces that listed any RM&E work element. The work elements are listed below:

<b>Work Element ID</b>	<b>Work Element Name</b>
70	Install Fish Monitoring Equipment
156	Develop RM&E Methods and Designs
157	Collect/Generate/Validate Field and Lab Data
158	Mark/Tag Animals
159	Transfer/Consolidate Regionally Standardized Data
160	Create/Manage/Maintain Database
161	Disseminate Raw/Summary Data and Results
162	Analyze/Interpret Data
182	PIT Tags
183	Produce Journal Article
189	Regional Coordination

Most projects include at least one of these elements (including many habitat restoration projects). The workgroups will look at all projects’ M&E components to determine how that work informs development and implementation of a RM&E framework that satisfies BiOp and Program requirements. For example, the workgroups will make recommendations on M&E embedded in a project whose primary focus is habitat restoration. Those recommendations will inform how M&E is addressed in all subsequent reviews – both categorical and geographic.

**Council and ISRP Categorical Review Set**

The categorical review set takes a more narrow focus and does not include, for example, a habitat project in a subbasin that includes a small RM&E component. It does absorb the projects that were in the old grouping of mainstem and system wide projects as well as regional coordination, and regional habitat projects such as the water transactions program.

Staff determined the draft list by using the following screens:

1. Any project with a RM&E work element, then:
2. Confirmed projects with RM&E as a primary emphasis

3. Confirmed mainstem and systemwide projects
4. Confirmed program support projects (regional coordination and data management)
5. Confirmed RM&E-focused habitat and estuary projects with broad regional implications (e.g. water transactions) Then, the following screens to determine whether projects would be reviewed here or geographic:
  - Does the project have direct benefits or implications greater than subbasin/province?
  - Do we expect the sponsor to submit a proposal here for a funding decision in this category?
  - What percent of the project is RME work and budget?
6. Species population status and life histories (e.g. lamprey or sturgeon studies)
7. Artificial production projects. Artificial production projects include large RM&E components

The resulting review set generally includes projects with an emphasis:

- Harvest
- Artificial production
- Species population status and life histories
- Ocean and estuary RM&E
- Program support (*data management, regional coordination, and enforcement*)
- Hydro and predation
- Habitat with broad geographic focus (*i.e. water transactions*)
- New Accord and BiOp projects that fit the RM&E screens above *and* are defined enough to review

#### B. Verification Process

The phase (current) involves verifying the “labels” for each project and assessing the level of consistency each project has with program and BiOp requirements. The Council and Bonneville staff are “checking” each project with labels of Fish and Wildlife program requirement, Accord project, or meeting an RPA in the Biological Opinion. For example some projects will fall into one or more categories of being an Accord project, BiOp project and or a project that meets a direct Program requirement. Categorizing or labeling the projects will result in a comparison of what we are required to fund and what we are currently funding which will show gaps. This work is being conducted by Bonneville and its various RM&E workgroups. Council staff is working with the RM&E workgroup leads. (Specific workgroup tasks are outlined in Attachment 1 – “Primary AA/NOAA/NPCC Workgroup Tasks and Timelines”.)

#### C. Preliminary recommendations

The preliminary recommendations phase will begin once the workgroups and Council staffs finish the verification work. Staff expects to make preliminary recommendations to move a project forward to science review depending on the status of the project. The most obvious and simple recommendation being moving a project forward to science review if it appears to meet program, Accord or BiOp requirements. Two other outcomes that would require further discussion with Council, Bonneville, and project

sponsors would be a recommendation to (1) expand or reduce an existing project’s scope to fill a gap or to better fit with requirements; and (2) phase out a project, either because they are close to completion or the projects is not “required” by the program, an Accord, or the BiOp Preliminary recommendations may also include other options to fill gaps such as targeted solicitations.

D. Final Review Set

Based on preliminary recommendations, we will have a list to move forward for science review for RM&E and artificial production category. The project sponsors of projects in this review set will be asked to update or complete their proposal forms for science review. .

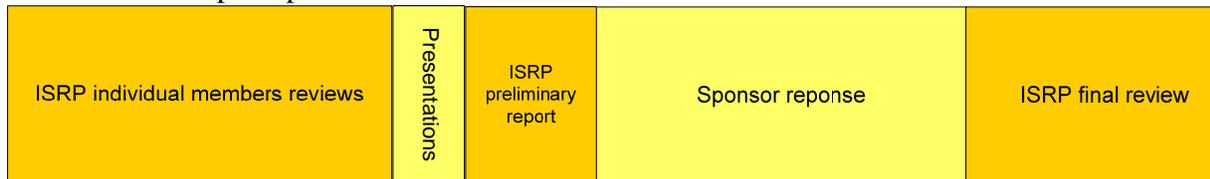
E. Targeted solicitations

Targeted solicitations or RFP’s are tools we can use to fill gaps in program (including BiOp) requirements, and will require a decision to implement For example, if a particular need (project type or action) is identified, and it is something we are not currently funding, we could choose to focus a targeted solicitation (or RFP) for that work or geographic area. When a decision is made to utilize this option, council and Bonneville staff will work together to create a focused and clear process to solicit for that particular work.

F. ISRP Review

The ISRP review will begin once the project sponsors complete the updated proposal forms. The ISRP will have all available policy information available to them to help guide the review, for example the RM&E strategy developed by the Council and any Bonneville policies developed through the workgroups. The ISRP review represents several steps in itself which are expanded and outlined in the figure below. During the three-plus months for ISRP review, the following steps occur:

ISRP Review Step - expanded



Guidance for new Accord projects and BiOp projects is available on the Council’s website <http://www.nwcouncil.org/fw/projectselection/accord>, and generally follows the same process as what is described here for science review. ISRP reviews will be based primarily on project descriptions (narratives) prepared by project proponents. Project presentations will be scheduled for most if not all projects as well, by subcategory. Reviewers will review the RM&E and artificial production projects by subcategory. Reviews of existing projects will be based primarily on reported results and adaptive management implications on future implementation. Wherever feasible,

project proponents will link to their Statements of Work in Pisces, BPA's web-enabled software tool for managing Fish and Wildlife Program projects and contracts. Links to historical data — project evolution, previous reviews, and recent Statements of Work — will be provided for consideration in the review.

#### ISRP Final Report

The ISRP's final report summarizes the findings on how the project does or does not meet scientific criteria. The criteria they use to evaluate projects include:

1. Are based on sound scientific principles
2. Benefit fish and wildlife
3. Have a clearly defined objective and outcome
4. Include provisions for monitoring and evaluation of results
5. Are consistent with the Council's fish and wildlife program

Within the scope of this review, the ISRP report may also identify potential scientific problems with the projects and suggestions for how project sponsors may improve them. In addition, the ISRP will include Accord projects in its annual "retrospective" review of the results of prior year Fish and Wildlife Program expenditures.

#### G. Staff Recommendation

Taking into account the ISRP final report on each project, the overall budget, and individual project recommendations, Council staff will develop a package of summary information about the entire set of RM&E and artificial production projects accompanied by funding recommendations for the Council to consider. This may include discussion of policy or programmatic issues, relationship to other program areas, linkages to the RM&E framework, category budgets, and options to fill gaps in the program.

#### H. Inform Geographic Review

The review and decision results for projects reviewed in the RM&E category that either occur in or influence a particular geographic area (e.g. a hatchery facility in a subbasin or tributary) will be brought forward to inform a geographic review for that area.

**Attachment 1****Primary AA/NOAA/NPCC Workgroup Tasks and Timelines  
(Developed by Bonneville and Action Agencies)**

1. Review Management Questions (and associated decisions) and RPAs for monitoring and research requirements (January 16).
  - a. Each workgroup review key management questions identified in the AA's BA under strategy areas that are associated with their group.
  - b. Review applicable RPAs and clarify/document any expectations regarding information needs and compliance requirements.
2. Review and further develop RM&E Work Plan for documentation of expectations, information needs, and identification of subtasks, task leads, and milestones. (February 1)
  - a. For each RPA, complete the cells in the RM&E Work Plan (spreadsheet) to document expectations, information needs, associated subtasks (including coordination needs), responsible staff leads, and milestones for completion.
3. Assess coverage of RPA actions and information needs and areas that may be reduced through critical, project specific reviews (Gap and Excess Assessment) (March 1).
  - a. Identify all RM&E projects currently being implemented or planned by the AAs, develop key summary information in spreadsheets, and parse projects to applicable workgroups (based on metric information from PISCES and AFEP one page reviews).
  - b. Critically review each project to:
    - i. Identify what specific NOAA FCRPS BiOp RPAs, USFWS BiOp RPAs, and Fish and Wildlife Program RM&E Objectives are supported by the project (document in Work Plan).
    - ii. Identify which components or work elements of the projects support the specific NOAA or USFWS BiOp RPAs or F&W Program RM&E Objectives; or are considered low priority or non-essential relative to these information needs (document in Work Plan).
    - iii. Identify potential modifications or restructuring of the project to add value or eliminate non-essential work (document in Work Plan).
  - c. After all projects have been reviewed, assess overall coverage of each RM&E RPA and F&W Program RM&E Objective and document any gaps in expected information needs, coverage or compliance.
4. Develop recommendations for changes to existing projects and/or needs for additional projects that would address any RM&E gaps (April 1).
  - a. Based on project critical reviews, any identified gaps in RM&E, and cost information on RM&E placeholders and RM&E close-outs, develop recommendations for project modifications and targeted requests for proposals.
  - b. Recommendations should balance needs within existing RM&E budgets.

5. Develop targeted requests for proposals as needed (May 1).
6. Review proposals and make recommendations to proposed work relative to RM&E gaps. (July 1).
7. Support annual and 3-yr comprehensive performance reports (June 1).
8. Support RM&E implementation plans on a 3-year cycle (October 1)