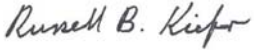



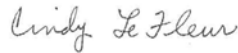
State, Federal and Tribal Fishery Agencies Joint Technical Staff Memo

*Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
United States Fish and Wildlife Service*


TO: Members Advisory Group, CBFWA

FROM: 
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Richard Kruger
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife


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Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission


Dave Wills
United States Fish and Wildlife Service

DATE: December 8, 2008

RE: Smolt Monitoring Program 2009

The state, federal and tribal fishery managers have and continue to rely on the Smolt Monitoring Program data for in-season discussion of fish passage operations, post season analysis and long term fish passage mitigation decisions. The Smolt Monitoring Program has been flat funded for the past six years. During that time inflation has increased, fuel costs have increased, costs for materials and supplies have increased and personnel costs have increased. In the past six years of

flat funding the SMP project was reduced and forced to eliminate or reduce line item budgets for travel, meetings, and training. The project utilized all cost saving measures available in order to implement the project under the flat funding constraints.

The BPA start of Year budget for 2009, once again included flat funding for the SMP. After reducing all possible budget line items, the SMP project for 2009 (March 1, 2009 through February 28, 2010) would not be able to properly function. In order to implement the SMP in 2009, the project requires an additional \$124,968 to the start of year budget identified by BPA.

The SMP is designed to provide a consistent, continuous data time series addressing downstream passage characteristics of salmon and steelhead juvenile migration. The SMP is a measure in the Northwest Power and Conservation Council Fish and Wildlife Program, and is identified in the Biological Assessment (on page B.2.6.1.7), attachment B, for the NOAA Fisheries Biological Opinion. The SMP provides daily data on the downstream migration of salmon and steelhead smolts out of major drainages and through the mainstem Columbia and Snake Rivers dams. The SMP generates daily indices of migration, magnitude by species. Dissolved gas trauma symptoms, required by the state water quality agencies' total dissolved gas waivers, are collected as part of the SMP. Fin clips and other marks are recorded. In addition, incidental catch of species such as lamprey, that are severely depressed, are recorded. The daily data is transmitted to the Fish Passage Center website and posted for regional access. In addition marked smolts for the SMP, from hatcheries traps and dams provide measures of smolt speed and in-river survival through key reaches. The SMP is coordinated to achieve maximum efficiency of effort with Corps of Engineers' facility monitoring to provide descaling and fish condition data as an indicator of project effects. These data are used for in-season operational decisions relative to flow and spill management particularly during periods when spill is being provided to improve smolt passage at dams.

All of the SMP data is processed daily and submitted to the FPC data system, updated daily and displayed on the FPC website for regional access. The continuous, consistent data time series provided by the SMP provides a historical data base, for comparison among years, and consideration of short and long term mitigation decisions regarding mainstem fish passage. It is critical that funding for the SMP be increased to meet the functions and needs of the basin's fish and wildlife managers.