



COLUMBIA BASIN FISH AND WILDLIFE AUTHORITY

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Coordinating and promoting effective protection and restoration of fish, wildlife, and their habitat in the Columbia River Basin.

The Authority is comprised of the following tribes and government agencies:

- Burns Paiute Tribe
 - Coeur d'Alene Tribe
 - Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation
 - Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
 - Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
 - Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation
 - Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation
 - Idaho Department of Fish and Game
 - Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
 - Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
 - National Marine Fisheries Service
 - Nez Perce Tribe
 - Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
 - Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of Fort Hall
 - Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley
 - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
 - Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Coordinating Agencies**
- Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
 - Upper Columbia United Tribes
 - Compact of the Upper Snake River Tribes

DATE: July 24, 2009

TO: Members Advisory Group

FROM: Ray Hartlerode, Chair, Fish Screening Oversight Committee (FSOC); Dave Ward, CBFWA Staff

SUBJECT: Mitchell Act Funding

On July 23, 2009, Rob Jones of NOAA briefed the Fish Screening Oversight Committee (FSOC) on recent and expected Mitchell Act appropriations. Rob noted that the new NOAA administrator of Mitchell Act funds will be Brian Allee.

Annual Mitchell Act funding has been about \$16 million for the past few years, with about \$3 million going towards screens. Specific funding levels for screens have been:

2006 = \$3.318 million;

2007 = \$3.318 million;

2008 = \$2.901 million;

2009 = \$3.123 million;

The FSOC noted that these levels are below those realized in the 1990s. Oregon and Idaho split the majority of funding, with Washington receiving about \$200,000.

Rob indicated that it is difficult to predict future funding levels. The NOAA regional office does not know the annual funding allocation until March or April of each year. However, the House has inserted a \$10 million increase (to over \$25 million) for FY 2010. It is unknown how much of this will survive into the final appropriation, or how much of any additional funding will be available for screens. It is likely that the primary target for increased funding will be production, because the proposed increase comes in the wake of the recently released HSRG report.

Rob and the FSOC agreed that lobbying early in the funding appropriation process is important. Mitchell Act funding has not been a federal priority in the past, and that can be changed. NOAA should be encouraged to request increased funding early in the process, and the Commerce Department and Congress should be encouraged to maintain increased funding in the final appropriation. NOAA has no discretion once funding is appropriated.

To increase the chances of success, Oregon and Idaho will need to work internally to make screen funding a priority.

A final note is that a draft EIS on the production portion of Mitchell Act funding will be completed this year. The attention drawn by this EIS may funnel more funding to production, resulting in a further decrease in funding for screens.