



June 8, 2005

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Greg Delwiche, Environment, Fish and Wildlife
Bonneville Power Administration
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Dear Sirs:

The purpose of this letter is to clarify the role of Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (CBFWA) staff with respect to participation in the Budget Oversight Group (BOG). The BOG was formed in 2004 as a mechanism for Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NPCC), Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and CBFWA staffs to monitor the implementation of BPA's Integrated Program Budget in an open forum with consistent and transparent presentation of project budget information. The CBFWA agreed to host a web page to insure adequate dissemination and tracking for all Integrated Program Budget information. It now appears that the role of the BOG may be changing to include decision making on the priority of distribution of unallocated funds among within-year budget adjustment requests for project funding. We believe that this project funding allocation role is inappropriate for the BOG for the following reasons:

- 1) the BOG members do not have the project level information and experience necessary to make fair and informed decisions regarding the full list of requests;
- 2) allocation decisions should consider all projects within the Program that have submitted requests during the start-of-year process (see enclosed CBFWA letter dated November 15, 2004 regarding NPCC's flat funding policy), as well as projects making requests in the within-year process; and
- 3) the CBFWA has recommended in the past a formal within-year process for consideration by NPCC and BPA, that appropriately included the fish and wildlife managers in the prioritization process (see enclosed CBFWA Guide to Within-year Modification Requests – August 2002).

If the BOG becomes a de-facto decision making body for prioritization of funding requests, the CBFWA staff's role on the BOG may be relegated to that of observer. We

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COORDINATING AND PROMOTING EFFECTIVE PROTECTION AND RESTORATION
OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND THEIR HABITAT IN THE COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN

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continue to offer our assistance in developing an open, transparent and efficient process for implementation of the NPCC's Fish and Wildlife Program.

Sincerely,

for


Tony Nigro, Chair
CBFWA

Enclosures (2)

cc: Rod Sando, CBFWA
CBFWA Members
Budget Oversight Group
NPCC Members