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REFERENCE:

October 13, 2005

Lawrence Schwabe, Chair
Resident Fish Advisory Committee
851 SW Sixth Avenue, Suite 260
Portland, Oregon 97204-1339

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe submitted a within year request to complete an on-going project that has been denied funding for no other reason than it has been overlooked by both the Council and BPA. The following provides some history to the project and recommendations by the ISRP and NPCC.

In the 1995 Fish and Wildlife Program the Council approved the measures submitted by the Tribe for construction and operation and maintenance of five Trout Ponds. This goal of maximizing harvest in Trout ponds provides opportunities for both tribal and non-tribal members on the Reservation.

Measure 10.8B.20 - 3) develop an interim fishery for tribal and non-tribal members of the reservation through construction, operation and maintenance of trout ponds. (NPPC 1995 F&W Program)

This project was first reviewed by the ISRP in 1999 for FY2000:

***Fund.** The original proposal was generally excellent. The response to the ISRP's questions about Objective 3, the construction of put-and-take trout ponds, was of equally high quality. It is clear that the Tribe has thought through their management strategy, has emphasized native stocks, but also needs some interim fishing opportunities to take pressure off the native fish restoration efforts. The put-and-take ponds seem well located (in closed basins not accessible to native species) and are designed to avoid the problems that concerned the ISRP. (ISRP 99-4)*

In the most recent reviews (ISRP 2001-4 and 2003-5) the ISRP provided no comment on the Trout ponds. In ISRP 2003-5 the following was noted about the project:

Production and planting of catchable sized fish in Reservation streams could provide harvest for short-term, intensive fisheries similar to fisheries produced by stocking reservation ponds with rainbow trout,

It appears that the ISRP believed that BPA funded fisheries were already occurring in the trout ponds. Most likely this was the reason they chose not to comment on that phase of the project. Since previous reviews were positive it would seem appropriate that BPA continue to fund the Trout pond project in its entirety and on schedule. This would include construction of three more ponds and an annual allocation for purchase of catchable sized fish and O&M on the ponds. Subsequently, this measure was adopted into the 2000 F&W program. This measure was continued in the subbasin summary process and is also prominent in the subbasin plan. Establishing a Trout Pond program is the second highest priority in the Coeur d'Alene subbasin plan

*(2) Establish put-and take fisheries for westslope cutthroat trout in waters that currently do not, or likely will not, support native cutthroat trout populations by 2010. **Objective 2C1 (Table 10.3-1 CDA Subbasin Plan)***

The following recommendation by the NPCC further supports the immediate and necessary implementation of this project.

The staff agrees with the CDA Tribe that there is a need to address, and jointly define expectations regarding the trout ponds element of this program. It is Council staff understanding that there are currently 2 of the 5 ponds constructed. The remaining sites have been identified, but have not been constructed. Since activities associated with the trout ponds have not been incorporated into other existing proposals that were reviewed as part of the provincial review (construction, O&M and M&E) there is a need for the CDA Tribe to initiate a within- year request to address the needs associated with constructing the additional ponds, fish stocking, and operating and maintaining all trout ponds. It is anticipated that the CDA Tribe in the near future will be submitting a within year request to address the needs associated with the trout ponds. Council staff recommends that these needs be submitted and addressed under Project 1990-044-00, Implement Fisheries Enhancement Opportunities on the Coeur d'Alene Reservation, that was the original project that identified the activities associated with the trout ponds. (Council Staff Issue Paper Recommendation Adopted 10/03)

The Tribe feels that this project has been unjustly overlooked and unfunded for too long and are asking the RFAC to review this letter and project proposal and recommend to the MAG and Members its immediate prioritization for emergency funding through the within year process. Because this has not been funded since 2001 we have had no support for an alternative fishery resource promised us by the council and BP. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe are the only fishery management entity in the entire Columbia Basin that does not receive support by BPA for alternative fisheries when their primary fisheries were completely eliminated by the construction and operation of the FCRPS.

It is my understanding that this is to be an agenda item at the October 24, 2005 meeting of the RFAC. I will be available to speak to this issue then.

Sincerely,

Ronald L. Peters
Fisheries Program Manager

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