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Jan #17

January 17, 2003

Frank L. Cassidy, Jr., Chair  
Northwest Power Planning Council  
851 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 1100  
Portland, OR 97204-1348

Dear Chairman Cassidy:

Your staff has requested a review of two projects that were submitted in the Estuary Province rolling review process in the context of our Mainstem and Systemwide Province recommendations. Since the submission of the Mainstem and Systemwide Province Work Plan on October 24, 2002, the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (CBFWA) has performed two additional reviews for Project Number 30010, *Canada-US Shelf Salmon Survival Study*, and Project Number 30007, *an Acoustic Tracking Array for Studying Ocean Survival and Movements of Columbia River Salmon*. These two reviews were performed in context of the overall work plan for this province.

**Review comments for Project 35064 (previously 30007):**

*An Acoustic Tracking Array for Studying Ocean Survival and Movements of Columbia River Salmon*

**Short description**

Development of a skeleton acoustic array to demonstrate an approach to tracking movements of individual fish through the river and along the West Coast of North America. The project will initially be focused on salmon, but has much wider application.

The ISRP gave this project a "Fundable in part" recommendation.

This project is focused on deploying an array of sub-surface acoustical buoys to track the movements of acoustically-tagged salmon through the lower Columbia River estuary and plume. The ISRP stated: "The importance of this technology is that it provides a means to actually measure migration rates (not necessarily migration paths, they will be inferred between two points), residency time in an area (e.g., within the Columbia River plume), and mortality rates."

CBFWA Recommendation and Comment: Recommended Action. While this project is clearly innovative and scientifically appealing, a primary, and substantive concern for the fish and wildlife managers in the basin is: "How would the (potential) results of this work be implemented to enhance fish and wildlife management efforts?" There are no clear links to the effects of dredging (the lower Columbia) that might be elucidated by the project and other management applications (near-ocean shipping channel considerations). Stronger linkages to fish and wildlife management strategies need to be made.

**Review comments for Project 35065 (previously 30010):**

*Canada-USA Shelf Salmon Survival Study*

**Short description**

This project surveys the size, condition, and biological condition of juvenile salmon occupying the British Columbia & SE Alaskan continental shelf regions in the autumn (October). The survey also includes extensive collection of oceanographic data.

The ISRP gave this project a "Fundable in part" recommendation.

The part that was fundable was the gathering of chinook and coho data along the Vancouver BC to AK shelf region, involving October sampling from a ship along this shelf. The part that troubled ISRP was the uncertainty about funding of FTEs for the senior staff of the project (and they recommended not funding this aspect).

There was also concern about the coordination with NMFS' related bioacoustical projects (and proposals); this seemed to be only partially addressed in the sponsor's response. The analysis components of the project (as noted by ISRP) still require some clarification (i.e., genetic work tasks). The sponsor should have made this component of the project clearer.

CBFWA Recommendation and Comment: Recommended Action; with proposed budget to be reduced to reflect the ISRP recommendations. Overall, the project would indeed offer some very insightful and scientifically interesting insights into salmonid movements and growth in this important region. The focus on examining younger fish is relevant, and supported in the proposal and response. CBFWA concurs with the ISRP's concern over the lack of clarity on the funding aspects for staff.

If you have questions please contact Tom Iverson at 503-229-0191.

Thank you,

Sincerely,



John Palensky, Chair  
Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority

cc: NWPPC Members  
Doug Marker and Mark Fritsch, NWPPC  
Sarah McNary and Bob Austin, BPA  
CBFWA Members and Fish and Wildlife Managers