



Department of Energy

Official File

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

August 4, 2003

In reply refer to: KEW-4

Mr. Doug Marker, Director
Fish and Wildlife Division
Northwest Power and Conservation Council
851 SW Sixth Avenue, Suite 1100
Portland, Oregon 97204-1348

Dear Mr. Marker:

I am pleased to provide Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) funding decision for the first set of fish and wildlife projects recommended for implementation through the region's Provincial Reviews for the Mainstem/Systemwide (MS/SW) Province. The funding decision for this initial group of projects was based on the following principles that were developed in meetings with NOAA Fisheries, BPA, and Council staff over the last few weeks:

- Work within a Fish and Wildlife Program funding of \$139 million expense and \$36 million capital, allowing \$31.5 million for MS/SW projects.
- Determine the best mix of projects that accomplish adequate coverage for NOAA Fisheries Biological Opinion (BiOp) critical research, monitoring, and evaluation (RM&E) requirements for the 2003 check-in.
- Preserve current high value Fish and Wildlife Program investments.
- Continue to explore other appropriate funding sources (appropriated dollars from federal and state agencies) for out-year funding.
- Maintain the draft RM&E Plan as the basis for these Endangered Species Act (ESA) research needs.
- Plan for a regional technical workshop following Independent Scientific Advisory Board review of the RM&E plan to review all Program RM&E projects. This review may occur later this year and serve as a focal point for sharpening a regional approach to future BPA and other agency funding for Integrated Program and ESA RM&E actions that validate the expected results from fish and wildlife projects.

Approaching this initial decision in an atmosphere of openness and collaboration with the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (Council), Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (CBFWA), and NOAA Fisheries staff, BPA set the above principles as a guide to the MS/SW decision. One of those principles was to stay within the \$31.5 million, which we have done. We believe that this decision, when completed next month, will have attained adequate coverage for RM&E categories described in the NOAA Fisheries BiOp for operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS). Attached is a table of those projects and

associated costs in the Mainstem/Systemwide Province that are mutually supported in scope and funding level by the Council and BPA and that we plan to proceed with in FY 2004. As you will see, the costs are well under the \$31.5 million budget for MS/SW projects.

We are pleased that there is mutual agreement on the majority of MS/SW projects. We look forward to working with Council, CBFWA, NOAA Fisheries and others as we work to finalize the decision on the remaining projects and to ensure that BPA meets its obligations under the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program and the NOAA Fisheries and US Fish and Wildlife Service FCRPS Biological Opinions.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Austin
Deputy Director for Fish and Wildlife

Enclosure

cc:

Mr. Mark Fritsch, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Mr. Mark Walker, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Mr. John Ogan, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Mr. John Palensky, NOAA Fisheries
Mr. Brian Brown, NOAA Fisheries
Mr. Rod Sando, Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority

bcc:

T. Lamb - KE-4

S. McNary - KEW-4

J. Rowan - KEWL-4

L. Hermeston - KEWL-4

J. Geiselman - KEWR-4

P. Krueger - KEWR-4

B. Maslen - KEWR-4

H. Moore - KEWS-4

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