

**CHARTER
OF THE
COLUMBIA BASIN FISH AND WILDLIFE AUTHORITY'S
Wildlife Committee**

December 8, 2003

PART I – HISTORY

Nineteen federal and state agencies and Indian tribes manage Columbia Basin fish and wildlife resources. Most of the agencies and tribes have management authority over a discrete geographic area of the Columbia Basin that is defined by political boundaries. Management activities are disjointed because no single agency or tribe has authority over habitat necessary for all phases of the life history of a species or over all species within a particular ecosystem. The fish and wildlife managers, however, are united in their desire to establish and maintain a mechanism to coordinate their management activities.

The Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (Authority) was established in 1987 as an informal collaborative forum for the region's fish and wildlife managers. The managers established the Authority to coordinate the efforts of its Members to protect and enhance fish and wildlife resources of the Columbia River Basin through joint planning and action. The Authority provides a forum to facilitate the exchange of information among Members on matters affecting anadromous fish, resident fish, and wildlife resources and their habitat in the Columbia River Basin. These exchanges provide for informed, coordinated decisions and joint actions by the Members and more effective review of other uses of the Basin in relation to fish and wildlife. The Authority is a consensus-based organization. The Members cooperate in good faith to participate in the consensus process.

PART II - PURPOSE

Through the Authority, the Wildlife Committee (WC) was established as a technical/policy committee of state and federal fish and wildlife agencies and Indian tribes (Members). The purposes of the WC are:

- (1) to provide members with coordinated technical and policy analyses necessary to assure comprehensive and effective planning and implementation of wildlife programs in the Columbia River Basin, ongoing or proposed, consistent with requirements of applicable law;
- (2) to facilitate discussion among wildlife managers of the technical merits and policy implications of wildlife programs and developmental issues in an effort to find consensus; and
- (3) analyze and provide the members with recommendations on wildlife programs.

The WC also provides a forum for wildlife concerns and information exchange among federal, state, tribal and private entities with wildlife interests in the Columbia River Basin.

PART III - OBJECTIVES

The WC shall:

1. Act as a forum for technical discussion of wildlife-related issues in the Columbia River Basin.
2. Coordinate, analyze, review and promote wildlife mitigation planning and implementation under the Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program.
3. Facilitate the development of basin-wide wildlife goals and objectives.
4. Review proposals for wildlife protection, mitigation and enhancement; help guide program consistency, evaluation, and implementation.
5. Facilitate the development of consensus on wildlife matters among members of the Authority and between the Authority and other entities in the Columbia River Basin.
6. Coordinate with other Authority committees as needed.
7. Assess and provide information on wildlife on a local, state and regional basis affecting development and operation activities in the Columbia River Basin and provide reports or summaries of these findings to the members of the Authority.
8. Review wildlife research/management proposals that have regional implications and help guide prioritization of proposals for funding.

PART IV - PARTICIPATION

Membership

1. Membership of the WC shall include one representative from the agencies and tribes holding membership in the Authority. Representatives must have the technical qualifications required to effectively evaluate wildlife concerns.
2. Entities, other than members of the Authority, may attend, and at the discretion of the WC, participate in WC meetings in a non-voting capacity.

Officers

1. Committee members shall select a chair and vice-chair by majority vote annually or as needed. It is desirable, but not mandatory, that candidates for chair have served as vice-chair of the WC.

2. Duties of the chairperson include:
 - (A) preside at all meetings of the WC;
 - (B) assure that all instructions and statements of the WC are properly executed;
 - (C) sign written statements requiring official signature as determined by the WC;
 - (D) assure distribution of meeting notes, agendas, and action notes (with assistance of the CBFWA staff)
3. The vice-chair shall be vested with all the powers and perform all the duties of the chair in the absence of the latter.
4. The chair or vice-chairperson or a person designated by the chairperson or vice-chair shall attend all MMG and Authority Members meetings as necessary, and provide WC members with a summary on issues of interest at the following WC meeting.
5. Provide leadership in wildlife related activities involving Bonneville Power Administration, Northwest Power and Conservation Council, and the Authority.

Procedures

1. The WC shall prepare written technical and policy analyses for Authority review as needed.
2. The WC shall insure that significant wildlife issues are submitted to the Authority in time for Authority deliberation and action.
3. The WC shall function under Robert's Modified Rules of Order.
4. The Chair will provide the agenda at least two weeks prior to each meeting and provide action notes for WC review prior to the next meeting.
5. The WC shall meet at the request of the chair or a majority of its members.
6. The WC shall appoint subcommittees as needed to perform WC business.
7. The WC shall develop an annual work plan for Authority review.
8. The WC decisions shall be made by the designated WC representatives. Members unable to attend a particular meeting may participate in the decision-making process by telephone on the scheduled meeting day. The WC shall resolve issues through consensus (i.e., no objection by a WC representative).
9. The WC may amend or modify this charter on its own motion for approval by the Authority.