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September 13, 2006

Rick Sherwood, Chairman
Spokane Tribe of Indians
P.O. Box 100
Wellpinit, WA 99040

Dear Chairman Sherwood;

As the Chairman of the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (CBFWA), I am writing to provide an update on several key discussions of regional importance to all of the tribes and other fish and wildlife managers in the Columbia River Basin. The CBFWA Members continue to discuss these issues and invite your valuable input as we exercise our collective authority to help formulate the policies that affect all of our resources.

While the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NPCC) works on its final recommendations of projects to mitigate, restore, and enhance fish and wildlife resources affected by the Federal Columbia River Hydropower System (FCRPS), the CBFWA has continued to analyze the total breadth of the Fish and Wildlife Program. Our analysis has been disturbing, and we are concerned that the progress envisioned in the subbasin planning process for the NPCC's Fish and Wildlife Program may be lost through the FY 2007-2009 project selection process due to insufficient funding. We have communicated this concern to the NPCC in a letter to their Chairman dated August 30, 2006; numerous essential needs that will not be met at the current funding level were identified in this communication. Our hope is that this list of needs will be the basis for further discussion with the NPCC, and Bonneville Power Administration to identify more funding opportunities.

In an effort to develop an effective Fish and Wildlife Program evaluation tool that works from a regional prospective and helps the fish and wildlife managers clearly articulate the status of fish and wildlife resources across the region, the Members are currently implementing the Status of the Resources Project and developing the associated *Status of the Resources Report*. This project includes an interactive website that will provide the region with historical project information, the current status of fish and wildlife populations, and the extent to which the managers are attaining regional biological objectives. The CBFWA members envision using the results from this effort to assist in the development of recommendations for any adjustments that need to occur during the NPCC's amendments to the Fish and Wildlife Program. Our plan is to promote this report and website using an aggressive public relations campaign so that all of the region's stakeholders find value in the efforts of the CBFWA to restore the basin's fish and wildlife resources.

The CBFWA is sponsoring a Data Management Workshop on September 20-21, 2006, to discuss a data management framework, that will support adaptive management for the NPCC's Fish and Wildlife Program. Key management questions need to be addressed at the basinwide scale regarding how data can be collected, shared, and presented to address these questions. Resolution of these management questions will provide a greater level of detail for CBFWA's Status of the Resource Project. This initial workshop will focus on re-prioritizing the data that is managed by StreamNet and the Northwest Habitat Institute. These projects support regional access and distribution of key data necessary to inform regional decision making.

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The CBFWA Members recently agreed to reactivate the Fish Passage Center Board of Directors. This action renews and emphasizes the management role of the CBFWA Members in Columbia River issues and management, including river operations. This is an important step that promotes the management role that each CBFWA Member brings to regional decisions associated with the operations of the FCRPS.

As we deliberated on these issues at our recent meeting in Astoria, Oregon, the CBFWA Members continued to note, with regret, the absence of your input to the discussions and invite you to consider participating with the CBFWA without rejoining as a full member. Because you are an entity with fish and wildlife management authority, there are funds available for your attendance and participation in these meetings and discussions which would cover both time and travel. We could also help to keep you informed by providing you with the agendas and actions notes for our meetings. As stated in our previous letter, our goal is to be an organization that assists all of the fish and wildlife managers in their efforts to restore Columbia River Basin fish and wildlife resources.

If you would like to join in our discussions or if there is anything else we can do to assist you, please call me (406) 675-2700, ext. 1003, or Brian Lipscomb, the Executive Director of CBFWA, (503) 229-0191.

Sincerely,

Ron Trahan, Chairman
Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority

Cc: CBFWA Members
NPCC Members
Greg Delwiche, BPA