

Tom Karier
Chair
Washington

Frank L. Cassidy Jr.
"Larry"
Washington

Jim Kempton
Idaho

W. Bill Booth
Idaho



Joan M. Dukes
Vice-Chair
Oregon

Melinda S. Eden
Oregon

Bruce A. Measure
Montana

Rhonda Whiting
Montana

April 6, 2007

Solicitation for Innovative Fish and Wildlife Project Proposals for Fiscal Years 2007-09

Dear Interested Party:

The Northwest Power and Conservation Council (Council) and the Bonneville Power Administration (Bonneville) invite you to submit an *Innovative* fish and wildlife project proposal to be considered for funding by Bonneville during Fiscal Years 2007-09. An *Innovative* project should rely primarily on a method or technology that has not been used before in Columbia River Basin fish and wildlife projects or, if used before in other projects, has not been used in the proposed application. Project sponsors should propose innovative on-the-ground "demonstration" or "pilot" projects, which if successful will contribute to direct improvements in the survival or productivity of Columbia River fish or wildlife species. Investigations of basic biological and physical phenomenon are not targeted with this solicitation.

This special solicitation for innovative project proposals is part of the ongoing effort by the Council and Bonneville to implement the Council's *Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program* under the Northwest Power Act. The Council, in its project funding recommendations to Bonneville for Fiscal Years 2007-09, recommended that Bonneville reserve a portion of its available funds for an innovative project solicitation. The purpose of seeking out innovative projects is to improve knowledge, encourage creative thinking, and provide an opportunity for sponsors to submit proposals that focus on testing or demonstrating new methods and technologies designed to directly benefit fish and wildlife in the Columbia River Basin. Bonneville has agreed to make available up to \$2,000,000 total to fund innovative projects during these fiscal years. For more information on the Council's Fiscal Years 2007-09 project funding recommendations, see www.nwcouncil.org/fw/budget/2007/finalrec.

Project sponsors will need to explain how their proposed innovative project is consistent with the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. Proposals should address key management questions or limiting factors identified in the program's subbasin plans or mainstem amendments. The Council Fish and Wildlife Program can be found at www.nwcouncil.org/fw/program.

A project sponsor must also demonstrate that it is feasible to complete the proposed project within 18 months, including one year to implement the work and six months to complete reports and other deliverables as appropriate. Project sponsors should communicate their readiness to begin work (for example, are necessary permits in place?) as well as their capacity to complete

work on schedule. No innovative project will be considered complete until the project sponsor submits to Bonneville a final report that includes results, findings, and conclusions. Innovative proposals selected for funding in response to this solicitation will be ineligible for funding in any subsequent innovative project solicitations. Proposals for any follow-up work will need to compete for funding through a subsequent Fish and Wildlife Program project review process.

If you are interested in submitting an innovative project proposal, please fill out the online proposal form. The form and instructions are at www.nwcouncil.org/fw/budget/innovate. **Proposal forms must be completed by the close of business on May 18, 2007.** You will receive a confirmation email after you submit your completed proposal form. Completed proposal forms will be stored by the Council, and made publicly available for review after May 18. Check back at the above link for news and updates regarding the proposal development and review process.

The ISRP will review completed proposals against the criteria for an innovative project described in this letter and against the ISRP's review criteria in Section 4(h)(10)(D) of the Northwest Power Act. The ISRP will report to the Council by June 26, 2007 with their recommendations for innovative project funding. The fish and wildlife managers of the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority may also review the completed proposals. The Council will make the project proposals and the reports of the ISRP and the fish and wildlife managers available for public review and comment until July 24. After considering the project proposals, the ISRP report, fish and wildlife managers' and public comment, the Council plans to make funding recommendations to Bonneville by mid-September.

If you need further information or assistance, please contact one of the following individuals:

| | |
|--|---|
| Council staff lead | Patty O'Toole, 503-222-5161 potoole@nwcouncil.org |
| Bonneville staff lead | Bob Austin, 503-230-4748 rjaustin@bpa.gov |
| Technical contact (forms and website) | Eric Schrepel, 503-222-5161 eschrepel@nwcouncil.org |
| Science review/Section 10 (narrative) | Erik Merrill, 503-222-5161 emerrill@nwcouncil.org |

Sincerely,



Stephen L. Crow
Executive Director
Northwest Power and Conservation Council



Gregory K. Delwiche
Vice President
Environment, Fish & Wildlife
Bonneville Power Administration

COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN FISH AND WILDLIFE PROGRAM

Guide

to

Fiscal Years 2007-2009

Project

Peer Reviews

in the

Innovative Category

Bonneville Power Administration
Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Independent Scientific Review Panel

This guide was prepared with the assistance of the Independent Scientific Review Panel for use by both project sponsors and proposal reviewers for the Columbia River Fish and Wildlife Program.

April 6, 2007

Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| Introduction..... | 2 |
| Who Submits a Proposal?..... | 2 |
| What is a Project Proposal? | 2 |
| Why are Formal Proposals Part of the Fish and Wildlife Program?..... | 3 |
| How and When Are Proposals Solicited?..... | 4 |
| How Are Proposals Evaluated and Selected? | 5 |
| 1. Administrative Review..... | 5 |
| 2. Peer Review of the Proposals..... | 5 |
| 3. ISRP Report..... | 5 |
| 4. Public Comment | 5 |
| 5. Northwest Power and Conservation Council Recommendations to Bonneville... | 5 |
| Attachment 1. Independent Scientific Review Panel Proposal Review Criteria | 6 |
| Background..... | 6 |
| ISRP Innovative Review Evaluation Form | 7 |

Introduction

The Northwest Power and Conservation Council (Council) and the Bonneville Power Administration (Bonneville) have solicited for *Innovative* fish and wildlife project proposals to be considered for funding by Bonneville during Fiscal Years 2007-09. An *Innovative* project should rely primarily on a method or technology that has not been used before in Columbia River Basin fish and wildlife projects or, if used before in other projects, has not been used in the proposed application. Project sponsors should propose innovative on-the-ground “demonstration” or “pilot” projects, which if successful will contribute to direct improvements in the survival or productivity of Columbia River fish or wildlife species. Investigations of basic biological and physical phenomenon are not targeted with this solicitation. Proposals for new projects that are not innovative will not be considered for funding.

These guidelines are provided to assist individuals or groups preparing innovative project proposals for funding consideration under the Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program for Fiscal Years 2008-2009. All projects submitted for consideration must include a formal proposal according to these guidelines.

Who Submits a Proposal?

Submission for funding under the Council’s Program is open to all individuals or groups. All project sponsors applying to this innovative category must follow these guidelines and prepare a formal project proposal for evaluation.

What is a Project Proposal?

A project proposal is a formal description of the work that an individual or group would like to conduct to meet certain objectives of the Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program that has been adopted by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (Council). The proposal should be a cohesive communications tool, a persuasive justification for the work, a coherent synthesis of relevant information, and a statement of qualifications of the project sponsor.

Proposals are the basis for recommending projects for funding. When a proposal is written, the responsibility is on the sponsor to present an idea in a coherent way and to justify its funding. All proposals should have clearly written objectives, plans for accomplishing those objectives, budgets, and means for reporting the results. The sponsor must do planning and synthesis before the proposal is presented. The sponsor should "market" the work in the most compelling way. This requires systematic and disciplined preparation.

A project proposal contains information such as the program objectives being addressed, the nature of the proposed work, methods to be used, the relationships to related work, the qualifications of the individuals and organization to do the work, and costs, all of which are presented in a standard format. The proposal must be sufficiently complete so that competing proposals can be evaluated by independent scientists and regional administrators in a peer review process. The formal written proposal is the administrative record of project plans, the

substantive background for the Bonneville Power Administration's Statement of Work and contract, and a basis for subsequent performance reviews of the project.

A proposal justifies why a funding agency should allocate money to this project and to the proposing individual or team. The proposal has to make the case for how this work fits into the larger body of the program, why this is the best approach to the program objectives addressed, and what public benefit will be achieved by funding it. It also needs to show why this is the most appropriate individual or group of people to entrust with the project.

A proposal synthesizes information related to the work. Project sponsors are encouraged to think about the specific questions or actions and how best to present them to people outside their field of specialization. The history of previous research or management actions that logically leads to the proposed work should be explained clearly.

Project sponsors are able to provide necessary information most effectively when they know the type of information that is desired and the form in which it is preferred. Similarly, proposal reviewers can most efficiently evaluate proposals when all information is organized in a consistent manner and available in a central location. Thus, a standard form with explicit instructions is provided for proposal development and submission. Past innovative proposals, background material, and ISRP reports can be found on the Council's and Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority's (CBFWA) Web sites.¹

The content of all innovative project proposals will be kept confidential by the Council until after the deadline for submitting proposals has passed. At that time, copies of the proposals will be distributed to reviewers and made available to the public at www.nwcouncil.org/fw/budget/innovate. In the event that a project sponsor wishes to protect intellectual property rights contained in a proposal, the project sponsor is free to copyright the proposal or take other appropriate legal steps consistent with this review process.

Up to the deadline, a list of completed proposals (title and sponsor only) will be available at www.nwcouncil.org/fw/budget/innovate. Check this list to ensure your proposal has been received.

Why are Formal Proposals Part of the Fish and Wildlife Program?

The written proposal is the primary basis by which a project is recommended for funding. Recommendation or rejection will depend on the completeness and persuasiveness of the formal proposal. Review of projects for funding in the Fish and Wildlife Program is accomplished most fairly and effectively when there is a clear and uniform way to propose innovative work and a uniformly applied evaluation and recommendation procedure. A primary objective of formal proposals and their review is to attain and maintain a high level of technical quality in the program. Another objective is to ensure that projects selected for funding demonstrate that

¹ Council: www.nwcouncil.org/fw/projectselection/innovative/2002status.htm
CBFWA: www.cbfwa.org/FWProgram/ReviewCycle.cfm?ReviewCycleURL=FY+2002+Innovative
ISRP: www.nwcouncil.org/library/isrp/isrp2002-8.htm and www.nwcouncil.org/library/isrp/isrp2000-10.pdf.

agency funds are used wisely and efficiently to meet the Program's goals. There is a continuing need for thorough evaluation of the benefits of all prospective new projects, particularly in light of funding constraints and the large number of worthy projects that might be supported.

A stated general goal of the federal government is to significantly enhance the use of peer review in selection of projects for federal funding. For projects funded through Bonneville's fish and wildlife budget, the 1996 amendment to the Northwest Power Act specifically states that projects shall be peer reviewed by the ISRP to ensure they are consistent with the Council's program, based on sound science principles, benefit fish and wildlife, have clearly defined objectives and planned outcomes, and include provisions for monitoring and evaluation of results. The proposals are the project-specific documents that are reviewed by the ISRP mandated by the 1996 amendment to the Act.

How and When Are Proposals Solicited?

The Council distributes this announcement to known sources and by publication in public documents and websites. The solicitation for innovative proposals was announced on April 6, 2007. *Full proposals are due by no later than close of business on May 18, 2007.* This deadline will be strictly enforced, and any applications received after this date will not be reviewed for funding consideration.

Only complete applications will be reviewed. To complete the application process:

- Provide complete answers to every question in the proposal form, available on the web at www.nwcouncil.org/fw/budget/innovate.
- Complete the narrative portion (Section 10) in Word and upload that document, as indicated at the above link.
- Please contact the Council offices as soon as possible if you have technical difficulties meeting these requirements.

To confirm that your completed proposal was received, check the listing at www.nwcouncil.org/fw/budget/innovate. This listing is automatically updated to show proposals that sponsors have marked as "completed." You will see your completed proposal on the list as soon as you follow the "this proposal is complete" instructions at the above link. If you don't see your completed proposal on the list, contact Eric Schrepel below.

If you need further information or assistance, please contact one of the following individuals:

| | |
|--|---|
| Council staff lead | Patty O'Toole, 503-222-5161 potoole@nwcouncil.org |
| Bonneville staff lead | Bob Austin, 503-230-4748 rjaustin@bpa.gov |
| Technical contact (forms and website) | Eric Schrepel, 503-222-5161 eschrepel@nwcouncil.org |
| Science review/Section 10 (narrative) | Erik Merrill, 503-222-5161 emerrill@nwcouncil.org |

How Are Proposals Evaluated and Selected?

Proposals are evaluated and recommended by a combination of administrative evaluation and professional and scientific peer review. The evaluation occurs over five months in several steps, which are described below.

1. Administrative Review

All proposals are reviewed first to see that they contain the requested information. Incomplete proposals will not be considered for funding. The entire set of project proposals will be posted on the Web at www.nwcouncil.org/fw/budget/innovate for the ISRP and public as soon as possible following the close of the solicitation (approximately two days is scheduled for processing).

2. Peer Review of the Proposals

By May 21, project proposals for the innovative category will be distributed to the ISRP. To ensure the most consistent and fair evaluation of proposals, standard formats and criteria are applied to all proposals. These criteria are included below. To learn more about the ISRP see www.nwcouncil.org/fw/isrp/background.htm.

The fish and wildlife managers of the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority may also review the completed proposals and provide comments on the potential application of proposals to regional management needs.

3. ISRP Report

The ISRP is scheduled to provide the Council with a final report on June 26. This report will include:

- a) an overview of the evaluation, general observations of the match between proposed projects and the regional management needs, and overall recommendations on the projects reviewed;
- b) recommendations and comments on proposals that meet the innovative criteria;
- c) a prioritized list of projects.

4. Public Comment

The Council will make the project proposals and the ISRP report available for public review and comment until July 24.

5. Northwest Power and Conservation Council Recommendations to Bonneville.

Finally, based on the advice provided the ISRP, the fish and wildlife managers, and the public, the Council will select the projects to be recommended for funding and transmit these recommendations to Bonneville by early September 2007. If Council's recommendations

differ notably from those of the ISRP, the Council will explain its reasoning in its recommendations.

When a project is recommended to Bonneville for funding, the amount budgeted by the Council for the project and the description of the project as recommended by the Council becomes the starting point for Bonneville's contracting process. However, during the course of the contracting process further information may be required both to establish more specifically the work to be performed and the reasonable cost of that work. The amount of funding ultimately approved by Bonneville for a project may be greater or less than the amount initially budgeted by the Council in its recommendations.

Attachment 1. Independent Scientific Review Panel Proposal Review Criteria

Background

The 1996 Amendment to the Northwest Power Act provides criteria on which the ISRP bases its review. The amendment states that the ISRP's project recommendations be based on a determination that projects:

1. are based on sound science principles;
2. benefit fish and wildlife;
3. have clearly defined objectives and outcomes;
4. include provisions for monitoring and evaluation of results.

In addition, the ISRP will ensure that the prioritized list of recommended projects is consistent with the Council's fish and wildlife program. **Project sponsors should use the ISRP criteria as a checklist to ensure that their proposal addresses all the criteria and, if not, to describe why a particular criterion does not apply.**

The ISRP does not provide final scores for projects but uses this evaluation form to assist in developing written recommendations and comments.

ISRP Innovative Review Evaluation Form

Consistency with Power Act Amendment Criteria:

- 1) SOUND SCIENCE PRINCIPLES (all proposal)
- 2) CONSISTENT WITH PROGRAM (criterion 2)
- 3) BENEFIT TO FISH AND WILDLIFE (all proposal)
- 4) CLEARLY DEFINED OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOME (criterion 4a)
- 5) PROVISION FOR M&E OF RESULTS (criterion 4c)

PART I: Innovative Criteria Screen

Is the proposed project innovative?

Does the proposed project offer a method or technology designed to directly benefit fish and wildlife, that (1) has not previously been used in Columbia River Basin fish and wildlife projects or (2) if used before other projects, has not been used in the proposed application; and 3) is an innovative on-the-ground “demonstration” or “pilot” project, which if successful will contribute to direct improvements in the survival or productivity of Columbia River fish or wildlife species. (Investigations of basic biological and physical phenomenon are not targeted with this solicitation.)

(YES/NO) _____

If yes, provide scores on Part II below.

PART II: Ranking Criteria

1. Technical and Scientific Background

Is there an identified problem related to fish and wildlife in the Basin? Does the proposal adequately explain (with references) the technical background and logical need to address the problem to benefit fish or wildlife? (0=no explanation; 1=poorly defined problem; 5= adequately defined problem; 10=highly persuasive, clearly defined problem)

SCORE (0-10) _____

2. Rationale and Significance to the Council’s Fish and Wildlife Program

Does the proposal demonstrate a clear relationship to specific objectives of the Council’s Fish and Wildlife Program? Specifically, does the proposal address key management questions or limiting factors identified in the Program’s Subbasin Plans or Mainstem Amendments? (0=no explanation; 1=poorly defined problem, not associated with Program, 5= adequately described significance to Program; 10=well associated with a high priority the Program, a Subbasin Plan, or the Mainstem Amendments)

SCORE (0-10) _____

3. Relationships to Other Projects

Does the proposal put the work into the context of other work funded in the Columbia River Basin, and specifically to implement the Fish and Wildlife Program? Do the innovative techniques and methods offered by this proposal have application to other projects? Does this proposal include collaborative efforts with similar projects, even if not part of an overall joint plan? (0=no effort to document or collaborate, 3=minimal linkage or rationale, 5=clear application of innovative technique to ongoing efforts and projects, strong collaborative effort with logical allocation of effort and linkages described, or full rationale why linkages are not appropriate)

SCORE (0-5) _____

4. Proposal Objectives, Work Elements, Methods, and Monitoring and Evaluation

A. Objectives

Does the proposal have clearly defined and measurable objectives (whenever possible in terms of measurable benefits to fish and wildlife)? Are the objectives tied to those in the Fish and Wildlife Program (Subbasin Plans and/or Mainstem Amendments)? (0=no explanation; 1=poorly explained with poor match to the Program, explained as tasks where could be in biologically measurable terms; 5=adequately explained in terms of measurable benefits to fish and wildlife management; 10=clearly explained with close match to management objectives and when possible stated in biologically measurable terms)

SCORE (0-10) _____

B. Work Elements (Tasks) and Methods

Do the work elements, methods, and associated timelines and budgets ensure that the proposed innovation will be sufficiently tested to determine its potential benefit to fish and wildlife without further funding? Are the methods adequately described, innovative, and appropriate? Are they based on sound scientific principles? Does the project offer innovative techniques and methods that will further the understanding of fish and wildlife ecology, correct a specific problem in the basin, or broaden and better define the spectrum of management options? Is the project reasonable and defensible in techniques and resources? (0=no explanation or scientifically unsound; 1=poorly explained or poor techniques; 10=adequately explained, sound and innovative techniques with timelines, and assurances that the innovation will be adequately tested with proposed budget; 15=clearly explained with promising innovative techniques and the best available scientific information with specific timelines, with adequate testing with proposed budget) **SCORE (0-15)** _____

C. Monitoring and Evaluation

Does the proposal include provisions for monitoring and evaluation of results (in the context of the objectives) that apply at the project level? (0=no explanation; 1=poorly explained, will not allow for determination if the project met its objectives; 8=adequately explained and will allow for determination if project met its objectives; 15=clearly explained, will allow for determination of success or failure of the project, inform adaptive management decisions, and be applicable to other efforts) **SCORE (0-15)** _____

5. Facilities, Equipment, and Personnel

Are the facilities and personnel appropriate to achieve the objectives within 18 months? (0=no explanation; 1=poorly described or inadequate; 3=reasonable; 5=exceptional personnel and facilities for the work) **SCORE (0-5)** _____

6. Information Transfer

Does the proposal include explicit plans for how the information, technology, etc. from this project will be disseminated and used? Are methods and procedures for collection of monitoring data (i.e., metadata) adequately described? Are plans for release and long-term storage of data and metadata adequate? (0=no explanation; 1=poorly explained and inadequate dissemination given the importance of the information generated; 3=adequate plan for the information generated; 5=excellent plan for the information generated, e.g. included in usable format on regional website, peer review journal) **SCORE (0-5)** _____

7.A. Benefit to Fish and Wildlife (Proposal as a whole)

Will the proposed project benefit focal species/indicator populations, as an individual project or as a critical link in a set of projects? Will the benefits persist over the long-term and not be compromised by other activities in the basin? (0=no benefit; 5=likely benefits but short-term; 10=some benefits that will persist; 20=high likelihood of significant benefits that will persist over the long-term) **SCORE (0-20)** _____

7.B. Will the project effect other non-focal species? Does the project demonstrate that all “reasonable” precautions have been taken, based on the best available science, to not adversely affect habitat/populations of native biota? (-10= adverse effect and precautions not taken; 0= no adverse effect; or potential adverse effects and adequate precautions proposed; 5=demonstrated benefits to non-target species, habitat, populations.)

SCORE (-10 to 5) _____

TOTAL SCORE: ____ of 100