

2009 WILDLIFE PROGRAM REVIEW

- 1. CBFWA Recommendation for 2:1 Credit Ratio.** The CBFWA recommendations supported language in the 2000 Program for the BPA and the Fish and Wildlife managers to complete mitigation agreements equal to 200% (2:1 ratio) of the habitat units identified in the loss assessments (Table 11-4 in the 2000 Program). The CBFWA provided a revised Table 11-4 to reflect the 200% mitigation obligation. *The 2009 Program carries forward the losses displayed in Table 11-4 as table C-4. In the 2009 Program the Council supports the 2:1 crediting ratio for the remaining units except where loss assessments appear inaccurate due to stacking issue. Where stacking issues exist BPA and the manager can agree to another accounting tool, otherwise the 2:1 will not apply. Note there is no crediting ledger so what is meant by remaining habitat units is unclear. The definition of stacking issues is also unclear other than reference to a white paper by Paul Ashley that discusses some problems in the Willamette and Albeni Falls.*
- 2. CBFWA recommendation for long-term funding agreements.** The CBFWA recommendations included language that BPA will enter into long-term funding agreements for existing and future mitigation projects with four criteria for the agreements to cover. *The 2009 Program states BPA and the managers should develop long-term agreements that should include seven elements that are somewhat consistent with the CBFWA recommendations for long term agreements and crediting. BPA and the managers should develop mitigation agreements by 2011 and report progress to the Council*
- 3. CBFWA recommendations to fund existing projects at levels adequate to implement management plans.** The CBFWA recommendations listed the existing wildlife habitat projects and included language to fund those projects at levels sufficient for habitat maintenance and enhancement, and appropriate monitoring as agreed upon in the management plans. *The 2009 Program contains no specific language to fund the existing habitat projects commensurate with management plan needs.*
- 4. CBFWA recommendation to establish a Wildlife Crediting Forum for maintaining the crediting ledger.** The CBFWA amendment included establishing a wildlife crediting forum to track crediting of construction, inundation and operational losses; and to address disputes, inconsistencies and other crediting issues. The forum was to be in place no later than one year after adoption of the revised Program. The recommendation includes four criteria to be met to for a project to receive credit against construction and inundation losses. *The 2009 Program states that on or about April 2009 the Council will initiate a Wildlife mitigation Crediting Forum. The CBFWA recommended criteria for crediting are included.*

5. **CBFWA recommendation to fund operational loss assessments.** The CBFWA recommendations described an ecological approach to assess operational losses. The approach presented in the recommendations was based upon work being conducted by the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho. The recommendations include developing a framework to assess operational losses by the end of 2009 and initiation of loss assessments in 2010. *The 2009 Program does not commit to operational loss assessments. The Program states the Council will consult with the managers and BPA on the value to commit resources to such assessments at this time, the Program recognizes the work by the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho as a potential pilot; the managers and BPA should use mitigation agreements to settle operational losses in lieu of assessments.*

6. **CBFWA recommendation to fund adequate M&E.** The CBFWA recommended that BPA fund research monitoring and evaluation to track crediting, to evaluate trends in ecological functions of the Wildlife Program lands, and provide managers to ability assess the effectiveness of management strategies. The recommendations included continued use of HEP as accounting tool but described an ecological framework for monitoring ecological functions, developing project objectives, and to support adaptive management. *The Council Program endorses continued use of HEP as an accounting tool and allows for the use of alternative methodologies. There is no other language specific to wildlife project monitoring although the Program's Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Reporting Strategies do include language to identify priority fish, wildlife and ecosystem elements to monitor track the status of priority focal species (priority focal species not defined) and limiting factors in priority areas (priority areas not defined) .*

2009 POTENTIAL WAC WORK ELEMENTS

1. **Wildlife Project Reviews.** The Council is currently conducting a review of existing wildlife projects. The ISRP has issued draft report and recommendations for project sponsor response. The ISRP will issue a final report and Council staff will make their recommendations to the Council. It has been stated that a goal of the review is to put existing projects on a long-term funding track but little other specific information is available. The review is not an assessment or evaluation of current wildlife mitigation program and identification of implementation gaps. The nature of future solicitation through a geographic review process is unclear; and call for proposals for new wildlife acquisitions or operational loss assessments has not been described.

2. **Wildlife Crediting Forum.** Establishing the forum including development of a charter, operating guidelines and membership will probably be an emphasis for the WAC. An initial meeting to initiate discussions was canceled by BPA about a month ago. No new date has been scheduled. Members should discuss internally how managers will be represented in the forum.

3. **Operational Loss Assessments and Wildlife Monitoring Framework.** The WAC has not discussed a strategy to address the 2009 Program call for the Council to consult with the managers and BPA on the value of committing resources to such assessments. Further review of the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho pilot work for applicability to other parts of the Basin could be considered. The WAC may also consider exploring the UCUT RM&E approach or some other approach to wildlife monitoring and evaluation. The ISRP review of wildlife projects may identify programmatic issues, such as monitoring, but the nature of any programmatic issues is not known at this time.

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