



Department of Energy

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

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

November 8, 2007

In reply refer to: KEW-4

Daniel H. Diggs, Chair
Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority
851 SW Sixth Avenue, Suite 260
Pacific First Building
Portland, OR 97204-1339

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Dear Mr. Diggs:

Thank you for your letter of October 3, 2007, updating us on the accomplishments and progress to date of the Collaborative Systemwide Monitoring and Evaluation Project (CSMEP) and requesting funding for FY 2008 at the Northwest Power and Conservation Council's (Council) recommended level of \$968,000. Our implementation decision funded the project at \$500,000 with consideration of project close-out later this year.

We believe that there is a tremendous need for a coordinated and comprehensive regional monitoring plan for both ESA-listed and nonlisted fish and wildlife in the Columbia River Basin. However, we think it is premature to move ahead with funding CSMEP at the budget level you requested. There are a number of upcoming and related regional activities and factors that will have a bearing on the application of work that CSMEP has accomplished to date and should be considered as further planning for CSMEP is contemplated. Among these are 1) the new draft Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) Biological Opinion released by NOAA Fisheries on October 31, 2007; 2) the Council's November 1 initiation of a year-long process to amend the Fish and Wildlife Program; 3) the October 2nd Executive Summit on Information Sharing, which identified regional monitoring framework tasks that are currently being scoped out further under various subgroups; 4) the Independent Science Review Panel review of the CSMEP project, with their report and recommendations to the Council possibly being available in early 2008; and, 5) the recently released Summary of the Council's Science/Policy Exchange Conference, which identified several areas regarding monitoring and evaluation issues that need resolution – both system wide as well as within the subbasins where the majority of offsite mitigation is accomplished. All of these regional processes and reviews have already or will soon offer invaluable guidance towards crafting a regional and comprehensive M&E plan that may meet a variety of regional needs.

In talking with both Brian Lipscomb Executive Director of Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority and Tony Grover of the Council, they suggested that we all meet in early November, along with representatives of the regional fishery managers and Tribes, to discuss these issues, help come to a better understanding of what CSMEP has accomplished, and how this project

may be able to contribute products to regional M&E forums that are addressing RM&E needs. We are meeting on November 9, and anticipate this discussion will result in a much better common understanding of both the CSMEP project itself, as well as the degree of, or lack of, alignment between it and regional M&E needs and issues identified in the above five processes.

In summary, we are not prepared to support the request for increased funding at this time. We look forward to the continuing discussion about the CSMEP project as well as the results from the broader regional discussions of issues surrounding a comprehensive regional M&E plan. We anticipate that this will help inform what role CSMEP may provide in terms of specific deliverables for that regional plan. Please feel free to contact Jim Geiselman or me if you would like to discuss further.

Sincerely,



William C. Maslen
Director of Fish and Wildlife

cc:

Dr. Tom Karier, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Mr. Bill Booth, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Mr. Larry Cassidy, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Ms. Joan Dukes, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Ms. Melinda Eden, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Mr. Jim Yost, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Mr. Bruce Measure, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Ms. Rhonda Whiting, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Mr. Tony Grover, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Mr. Brian Lipscomb, Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority