



COLUMBIA BASIN FISH AND WILDLIFE AUTHORITY

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Coordinating and promoting effective protection and restoration of fish, wildlife, and their habitat in the Columbia River Basin.

The Authority is comprised of the following tribes and fish and wildlife agencies:

- Burns Paiute Tribe
- Coeur d'Alene Tribe
- Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation
- Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
- Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation
- Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation
- Idaho Department of Fish and Game
- Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
- Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- Nez Perce Tribe
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of Fort Hall
- Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Coordinating Agencies**
- Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
- Upper Columbia United Tribes
- Compact of the Upper Snake River Tribes

October 3, 2007

Gregory K. Delwiche
Vice President, Environment, Fish and Wildlife
Bonneville Power Administration
905 NE 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97232

Dear Mr. Delwiche:

The Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (CBFWA) Members request that the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) fund the Collaborative Systemwide Monitoring and Evaluation Project (CSMEP) in FY2008 as recommended by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NPCC). Despite the NPCC's recommendation and prior reviews (see Independent Scientific Review Panel [ISRP] 2006-4b, pg.188 at <http://www.nwccouncil.org/library/isrp/isrp2006-4.htm>), BPA funded the project at approximately one-half the recommended amount in FY2008. The Members of CBFWA are disappointed by BPA's decision to terminate the project considering CSMEP accomplishments towards coordinated, regional monitoring. The Members of CBFWA support CSMEP and have directly contributed approximately \$320,000 to the project in FY2007. Without BPA funding, as recommended by the NPCC, the ability of the fish and wildlife managers to provide the coordinated, rigorous technical analysis necessary for a cost effective monitoring program to assess the effectiveness of actions implemented to mitigate for fish and wildlife losses due to the FCRPS is severely compromised.

If BPA maintains the current funding level, CSMEP efforts will be limited to completing the on-going analyses and reports. Listed below are tasks that CSMEP plans to complete or initiate in FY2008. Tasks in grey will be eliminated if the project remains at the current funding rather than recommended level.

- Survey managers to determine key decisions and monitoring questions that have not been addressed by CSMEP to date to determine priorities for future monitoring design work,
- Development of a regional hatchery monitoring framework to assess the effect of hatchery straying on productivity,
- Completion of a spring Chinook viability model and cost database to help managers design cost effective population abundance monitoring programs, but no testing of the model,
- Wrap-up of the current hydro and harvest analysis,
- Preparation of reports for NPCC and ISAB review,
- Consolidation of recommendations to date for regional monitoring programs,
- Complete development of a data quality summary for the Status of the Resource Report.
- Based upon survey of managers to determine key decisions and monitoring questions that have not been addressed by CSMEP, examine the strengths and weaknesses of the monitoring programs informing those decisions, and as necessary develop integrated monitoring designs within a regional monitoring context,
- Extend the spring Chinook viability simulation model to steelhead to help managers assess their current programs and explore alternative, cost effective monitoring designs as necessary,
- Work directly with local recovery teams and subbasin planners to use the CSMEP analytical tools to improve their M&E designs,
- Expand the CSMEP hydro action effectiveness analysis to FCRPS performance standards,
- Develop alternative designs for steelhead harvest monitoring and assist US vs. Oregon managers develop programs to better determine fishery impacts to listed populations,

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- Complete the analysis of the strengths and weakness of current population abundance monitoring programs for all Chinook salmon and steelhead populations above Bonneville Dam,
- Facilitate and coordinate the implementation of the regional hatchery effectiveness monitoring program,
- Complete development of an integrated PIT tag program to answer monitoring questions across multiple “H’s,”
- Begin to work with habitat managers to integrate habitat action effectiveness and status/trend monitoring with fish population monitoring programs.

Prior to CSMEP, the NPCC’s Fish and Wildlife Program lacked a consistent and integrated monitoring program. The CSMEP has successfully facilitated collaboration across management agencies to focus on key decisions and fish management questions in the region, assessed the strengths and weaknesses of existing monitoring programs, and collaboratively designed alternative monitoring programs that built upon the strengths and overcame the weaknesses of existing efforts. The CSMEP products have begun to influence programs within the Basin; either directly through use of developing CSMEP products, or indirectly through adoption of CSMEP ideas and processes (see attached Appendix).

The fish and wildlife management agencies consider CSMEP essential for a long-term, cost-effective, regional fish and wildlife monitoring program. CSMEP work in FY2009 and beyond will be informed by monitoring guidance provided in the Fish and Wildlife Program Amendments and the requirements of the upcoming FCRPS Biological Opinion. The CBFWA Members request CSMEP be funded at the NPCC’s recommended level in 2008.

If you have questions regarding this request, please contact Brian Lipscomb or Ken MacDonald at (503) 229-0191.

Sincerely,

Daniel H. Diggs, Chair
Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority

cc: Stephen J. Wright, BPA
Tracey Yerxa, BPA
Jim Geiselman, BPA
Council Chair Tom Karier, NPCC
Council Member Bill Booth, NPCC
Council Member Larry Cassidy, NPCC
Council Vice-Chair Joan Dukes, NPCC
Council Member Melinda Eden, NPCC
Council Member Jim Kempton, NPCC
Council Member Bruce A. Measure, NPCC
Council Member Rhonda Whiting, NPCC
Tony Grover, NPCC
CBFWA Members

APPENDIX

CSMEP Influence on State and Regional Monitoring Programs

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

- WDFW has used CSMEP's strengths and weaknesses analysis to improve their monitoring programs for winter steelhead and Chinook;

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

- IDFG has used CSMEP results to retool their natural production monitoring programs, integrate M&E across fish species, develop probabilistic sampling approaches for their juvenile sampling program, and help develop a plan for effectiveness monitoring in the Lemhi watershed.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

- ODFW, along with the Warm Springs and Umatilla Tribes, have used the CSMEP data inventories and strengths and weakness assessments to develop viability assessments in Oregon's Mid-Columbia Steelhead Recovery planning efforts, and CSMEP design work to develop a cost effective and statistically sound steelhead monitoring program.

Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority

- CSMEP is developing a Data Quality Guide for use by CBFWA in the *Status of the Resources for Fish and Wildlife in the Columbia River Basin Report*. The Data Quality Guide will be used to assess the quality of abundance estimates. The guide not only helps the region understand the precision and accuracy of data based on the monitoring design but also can be used to help managers prioritize monitoring programs

Technical Recovery Teams (TRTs)

- CSMEP models are helping to assess consequences of different M&E strategies on accuracy of viability assessments

US vs. Oregon Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

- CSMEP analyses are being used to review plans for monitoring mortality rates of listed species caught in various fisheries

Ad Hoc Supplementation Workgroup

- CSMEP's hatchery group is providing leadership and technical expertise in the development of a Columbia Basin-wide monitoring program to assess the extent of hatchery straying and effects to natural production for the ISAB Ad Hoc Supplementation Work group