



# 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

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation

Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation

Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribe

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Kootenai Tribe of Idaho

Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

National Marine Fisheries Service

Nez Perce Tribe

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of Fort Hall

Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

## Coordinating Agencies

Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

Compact of the Upper Snake River Tribes

Upper Columbia United Tribes

DATE: August 10, 2011  
TO: Wildlife Advisory Committee (WAC)  
FROM: Scott Soultis, Chair  
SUBJECT: July 27, 2011 WAC Meeting Final Action Notes

Wildlife Advisory Committee Meeting  
July 27, 2011  
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Commission Meeting Room  
Salem, Oregon

The support material for the meeting is posted at: [http://www.cbfwa.org/committee\\_wac.cfm](http://www.cbfwa.org/committee_wac.cfm)

## Final Action Notes

**Attendees:** Kyle Heinrick (Vice-Chair) and Jason Kesling (BPT); Norm Merz (KTI); Tracy Hames (YN); Carl Scheeler (CTUIR); Dwight Bergeron (MFWP); Laura Tesler (ODFW); Paul Dahmer (WDFW); Nancy Leonard and Peter Paquet (NPCC); David Byrnes (BPA); Tom O'Neil (NHI); and Tom Iverson and Paul Ashley (CBFWA).

**By Phone:** Scott Soultis (Chair, KTI); Carol Perugini (SPT); and Karl Weist (NPCC).

### **ITEM 1: Introductions and Approve Agenda**

**Discussion:** The group reviewed the agenda. No modifications were requested.

**ACTION:** The agenda was approved as written.

### **ITEM 2: Review and Approve as Final May Draft Action Notes**

**ACTION:** The WAC approved the May 24-25, 2011 Action Notes as final with no modifications.

### **ITEM 3: Willamette Wildlife Settlement Program**

**Discussion:** Laura Tesler, ODFW provided an overview of the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program (presentation available on the WAC website). The Willamette River Basin MOA Regarding Wildlife Habitat Protection and Enhancement between the State of Oregon and BPA was signed on October 22, 2010. The settlement provides \$117 million from BPA for wildlife habitat conservation and restoration in the Willamette Basin over the next 15 years. The settlement initiated the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Advisory Group (Group), a collaborative process with the Tribes and regional stakeholders, for developing and applying project selection. The agreement strongly affirms the value of cost sharing from other entities to include in the project selection criteria and defines dual credit project provisions related to fish habitat benefits through the Willamette River Biological Opinion.

The Group is currently developing project selection and prioritization criteria in a public process and coordinating with the Willamette BiOp Habitat Technical Team. To date, the Group has recommended 4 projects for FY2011 funding and is currently soliciting potential FY2012 acquisition projects. Laura described several of the acquisitions currently being pursued for funding and explained the extreme complexities of most of the acquisitions due to multiple ownerships and historic land use on parcels large enough to be relevant for the Program is to pursue.

Laura can be reached at 503-947-6086 or by email at [laura.tesler@state.or.us](mailto:laura.tesler@state.or.us).

**ITEM 4: Regional HEP Team – 2012 and Beyond**

**Discussion:** Paul Ashley, CBFWA presented a proposed work plan for the Regional HEP Team (RHT) for fiscal years 2012, 2013, and 2014. At the WAC meeting in Bonner's Ferry in May, the WAC and BPA representatives agreed that Paul should plan on implementing two survey crews for the next few years. Following the Wildlife Crediting Forum discussions, BPA staff had indicated that they would like to see an increase in "lifting power" from the RHT. Paul reviewed a preliminary list of surveys likely to be needed for various properties, based on when baseline surveys had been originally conducted. He did not include Albeni Falls, IDFG, NPT, or Willamette Valley projects. Paul demonstrated that two crews could easily stay busy during the field season over the next three years performing HEP surveys. Paul then presented the likely budgets necessary to support two survey crews for each of the next three years. The proposed budgets represent an annual increase of approximately \$140,000 to the current FY2011 RHT budget. The work plan has been submitted into PISCES and the final step is to submit this budget once it has been approved by the WAC.

It was also suggested that the RHT could perform surveys in collaboration with the CHaMP project (Collaborative Habitat Monitoring Project for salmon habitats). The CHaMP project is measuring habitat bank to bank and the HEP surveys could measure the habitat beyond the bank. Tom O. is working with Chris Jordan (lead for the CHaMP project) to coordinate surveys.

Scott voiced some concern that leaving out Albeni Falls, IDFG, and NPT properties could have a large impact on the workload necessary for the RHT, if surveys are called for on any of those properties. Paul confirmed that surveys for those projects would mean a 30% or more impact on the current schedule and more likely a 50% increase due to travel needs. There is flexibility in the schedule in case unforeseen surveys are called for.

Paul announced a HEP training course that will occur in Spokane in mid-September. The course will occur in a classroom and not include field visits. If you are interested in attending the HEP training, contact Paul right away as there are only a few spots available.

Paul Ashley can be reached at 509-979-0369 or by email at [lonepinebutte@comcast.net](mailto:lonepinebutte@comcast.net).

**ACTION:** The WAC approved the general work plan and budget for the RHT for FY2012, 2013, and 2014 to support two field crews. Paul will enter the budget into PISCES and complete contracting for FY2012.

*NOTE: Since the WAC meeting, BPA has decided to hold the RHT budget level funded for FY2012; therefore, there will only be one survey crew for the FY2012 field season. This will remove some of the flexibility of the project so be sure to contact Paul if you require HEP surveys next summer.*

**ITEM 5: Wildlife Area Management Plan Template Update**

**Discussion:** Tracy Hames, YN and Scott Soult, KTI did not receive any comments on the draft management plan template from the WAC following the last meeting. Tracy walked through the management plan template and received comments from all the participants, and discussed the intentions and purposes of various sections. The group did not perform a line-by-line edit of the document, just provided comments that could be used in re-drafting the template.

Tracy will provide a revised template for review and discussion at the August WAC meeting.

**ITEM 6: Wildlife Crediting Forum Update**

**Discussion:** Peter Paquet, NPCC provided a brief update on his presentation to the Council on the final draft Wildlife Crediting Report (WCF). The document will be finalized and posted to the Council's website as an official Council publication. There was a general acknowledgement from the Council that the WCF was successful in creating a best summary or ledger of the current status of BPA wildlife mitigation and that the final report

can serve as a framework for future negotiations of wildlife settlement agreements.

Tom Iverson, CBFWA demonstrated the new wildlife section of the Status of the Resource website, based on the final WCF report data, available at:

[http://sotr.cbfwa.org/HLI\\_SummaryWildlife.cfm?mnu=HLI](http://sotr.cbfwa.org/HLI_SummaryWildlife.cfm?mnu=HLI).

**ITEM 7: Wildlife High Level Indicators and Monitoring Implementation Strategy Update**

Discussion: Nancy Leonard, NPCC provided an update on the Council's Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Reporting (MERR) Plan and its tie to the Fish and Wildlife Program objectives. Nancy expressed the need to have objectives to provide relevance for monitoring strategies. The monitoring strategy or plan should be geared towards reporting against specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely (SMART) objectives, in order to evaluate successful implementation of mitigation actions. Reporting success is easier, the closer you report at the project level; however, we need to be able to report success at the Program level, which may be more difficult. It is anticipated that the monitoring strategies will be complete by 2013 in order to inform the 2014 Program Amendment process.

Tom reviewed the most recent Resident Fish Monitoring Strategies as an example of where the WAC may wish to proceed for wildlife. The resident fish managers have developed a framework that displays the linkage from their project actions, through their monitoring programs, to management objectives, and finally to the Council's high level indicators. The tables are then brought together under a common document that describes how the tables should be used to guide monitoring.

The group reviewed wildlife High Level Indicators (HLIs) that the WAC identified last fall and discussed appropriate indicators for wildlife at a basin-wide or regional scale. The indicators cover status and trend monitoring for vegetation cover types and focal species and compliance monitoring for BPA's mitigation strategy for replacing habitat units.

The vegetation cover or habitat type objectives are more difficult to define; however, using data layers provided by NHI could report total acres and other statistics that would allow monitoring and reporting of status for focus habitats at an ecosystem scale. The group discussed the fact that monitoring status and trends of focal species for wildlife may be very difficult to correlate back to specific wildlife mitigation actions funded under BPA's program.

Reporting basin-scale HLIs from project data may not be practical and generally this level of data does not consistently join up for reporting against HLIs. Therefore we need to develop a work plan to produce a pilot project for reporting HLIs at a basin wide or ecosystem scale using other data sources. Individual project acquisitions may appear insignificant when measured against the total acres of a specific cover type within the Basin; however, other cumulative metrics of project actions may show promise. These unknowns need to be explored.

The group discussed lost harvest opportunities and that project benefits to tribal resources and society in general may be a good indicator of success.

The purpose of the Wildlife Monitoring Implementation Strategy (WMIS) is partially to report progress and success of Program actions, but also the report should demonstrate knowledge of the status and trends of wildlife information in general. The HLIs will be used to report to Congress and the Governors on ecosystem health of the Columbia River Basin.

Scale is causing a lot of confusion on what the WMIS should be designed to report. It was clear that the group needed to develop specific examples for consideration. There was a lot of concern that high level reporting for wildlife habitat may present a negative impression of individual habitat investments and will overlook the benefits occurring at the local scale.

The next step will be to take habitat types from subbasin plans and prioritize a few for the monitoring framework. Tom will take the lead in developing the first draft of the WMIS

and will include some specific examples to demonstrate how the HLIs will link to Program level reporting as well as project level reporting.

**ACTION:** Tom will work with Scott, Tom O, and Paul to develop a first iteration Wildlife Monitoring Strategy for review at the August WAC meeting.

**ITEM 8: Next WAC Meeting**

The next WAC meeting will held in Kalispell, Montana on August 25-26, 2011. Tom will work with MFWP to provide a site visit to Montana Wildlife Settlement properties on August 25 and the WAC meeting will be held on August 26 at a location in Kalispell, yet to be determined. Agenda items will include: 1) Update from August 24 CBFWA Members' Meeting, 2) Wildlife Monitoring Implementation Strategy, and 3) BPA land management template.

A meeting announcement will be sent out two weeks prior to the meeting.

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