

From: Johnson, Gary E
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2006 2:30 PM
To: Baugh, Zenobia
Subject: Comments on Project 2005-001-00

Re: Comments Draft Fish and Wildlife Project Funding Recommendations for Fiscal Years 2007 through 2009 (FY07-09)

Dear Mr. Walker,

This email letter concerns Project 2005-001-00, *Pilot Study for Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation of Subyearling Salmon in Tidal Freshwater of the Columbia River*. As the manager for this ongoing project, I am writing to urge the Northwest Power and Conservation Council to fund this project during FY07-09. The project supports the Biological Opinion (BiOp) on operation of the Federal Columbia Power System (FCRPS) by providing essential data on the importance of tidal freshwater habitats to the survival of juvenile salmonids migrating from nearly the entire Columbia Basin.

The Council's draft recommendation to not fund the project may have been affected by the project's convoluted path within the FY07-09 project solicitation process. The project, which was part of the Lower Columbia Province's review process, originally received a not fundable recommendation from the Independent Scientific Review Panel. Apparently because of this, the project was not on the list of projects for the States to review and provide recommendations to the Council. The Bonneville Power Administration, however, added the project as part of the Council's "fix-it-loop" because it is a BiOp research and monitoring project that is included in the draft Proposed Action for operation of the FCRPS under the Endangered Species Act. We revised the technical proposal during the fix-it-loop. The ISRP reviewed the revised project proposal and deemed it fundable (in part, qualified). In conclusion, the review process may have obscured the project's primary management implication -- What is the ecological importance of shallow (0-5 m) tidal freshwater habitats to the recovery of Upper Columbia River spring Chinook salmon and steelhead and Snake River fall Chinook salmon?

On behalf of my colleagues from the National Marine Fisheries Service (Paul Moran and Earl Dawley, retired), the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (Dave Ward, now with the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority), and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (Tom Carlson, Dave Geist, and Ron Thom), I encourage the Council to fund this project during FY07-09.

Sincerely,
Gary E. Johnson
Research Scientist, Battelle
620 SW 5th Avenue, Suite 810
Portland, OR 97204