

JUDI DANIELSON
CHAIR
Idaho

Jim Kempton
Idaho

Gene Derfler
Oregon

Melinda S. Eden
Oregon

NORTHWEST POWER PLANNING COUNCIL

851 S.W. SIXTH AVENUE, SUITE 1100
PORTLAND, OREGON 97204-1348

Fax:
503-820-2370

Phone:
503-222-5161
1-800-452-5161

Internet:
www.nwcouncil.org

TOM KARIER
VICE-CHAIR
Washington

Frank L. Cassidy Jr.
"Larry"
Washington

Ed Bartlett
Montana

John Hines
Montana

July 14, 2003

To: Regional Coordinating Group

From: Doug Marker, Director
Fish and Wildlife Division

Subject: Status report on four Governors' fish and wildlife recommendations

The attached status report summarizes the recommendations made by the Pacific Northwest Governors at their meeting of June 5, 2003. I have provided a brief statement of the status of each recommendation for review and clarification at the Regional Coordinating Group meeting.

This report is meant to be regularly updated and to help identify points of implementation or coordination for regional discussion.

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Current work on the specific fish and wildlife recommendations of the four Pacific Northwest Governors of June 5, 2003

Status as of July 14, 2003

Recommendation	Status
<p>1. Biological Opinions should look to subbasin plans to guide habitat, hatchery and harvest actions in Columbia watersheds</p>	<p>NOAA and USFWS regularly review the progress and scope of subbasin plans in the Regional Coordinating Group. The next such meeting is in Boise on July 22. The two agencies have faithfully reiterated their reliance on subbasin plans. Specific expectations and questions for policy discussion are raised first within each state's subbasin coordination group and then as needed in the Regional Coordinating Group. This structure of communication is currently effective and can be monitored through reports to the Governors</p>
<p>2. State guidelines for population and ESU-scale recovery plans should be endorsed by NOAA and USFWS. State points of contact for this to be named by NOAA and USFWS by 9/1/03</p>	<p>Guidelines for ESU scale recovery plans need to be proposed by states and confirmed by NOAA. NOAA is designating staff to work with State organizations and recently named an assistant regional administrator for recovery planning who works directly with each state, the Council and represents NOAA at the Regional Coordinating Group.</p>
<p>3. Technical Recovery Team (TRT) process and products must be coordinated with subbasin planning and regional processes</p>	<p>NOAA has provided interim rebuilding targets for the Interior Columbia ESUs for use by subbasin planners for this round of subbasin plans. In the Willamette/Lower Columbia targets are available and recovery goals are being developed with in coordination with the states. The NOAA regional administrator offers that eventual TRT products for the Interior Columbia will be offered to subbasin planners for incorporation if desired but not required as a standard for any NOAA review.</p>

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<p>4. NOAA and USFWS should resolve with the Council and appropriate State organizations what legal assurances will be provided for approved subbasin plans and necessary procedural or review requirements by 12/21/03</p>	<p>NOAA staff are drafting approaches to possible incentives and regulatory assurances. In regional coordination group discussions NOAA has requested more specificity on what type of assurances might be sought by the States or by subbasin planners. The working concept is a possible "menu" of assurances with associated review requirements that would be selected by subbasin planners or the States. USFWS has not offered an approach.</p>
<p>5. By fall, the Council should convene state, federal and tribal managers to integrate a monitoring system. The Council with the same partners should complete a draft systemwide research plan by 12/31/03. Establish an equitable plan for funding.</p>	<p>A federally drafted integrated monitoring plan is under final review by the NOAA Northwest Science Center. The Council staff is coordinating planned review by states and tribes through appropriate state organizations and through the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority for acceptance or proposed revision. Confirm that the draft plan has budgets and priorities. Council staff have convened regional independent scientific and economic reviewers for guidance on a regional research plan and are organizing measures of the Council's mainstem program amendments for inclusion.</p>

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<p>6. Governors, Council and regional partners will seek congressional support for appropriations to meet federal commitments</p>	<p>The Administration has improved the coordination of budget presentations for Columbia River salmon recovery towards the desired "cross-cut" budgets but more geographical specificity and coordination mechanisms for implementation of subbasin plans is desirable.</p>
<p>7. Implement the Council Program including the Mainstem Plan as soon as is practicable. Develop a new funding agreement to be in place beginning in October, 2003</p>	<p>Council staff are organizing a schedule for review of mainstem amendments through the Regional Forum processes. This was presented at the Implementation Team meeting on July 3. Council staff are collecting comment. Bonneville is developing its response to the Council's mainstem/systemwide project recommendations. Work has not begun on a new funding agreement.</p>
<p>8. Set clear goals, schedule and assignments</p>	<p>Continued collaboration among Governors and regional entities</p>