4. Ecological province level -- province visions/objectives/strategies

4(a) General recommendations on development of provincial visions/objectives/strategies

Source: **Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife**
Recommendation No. **26**

Recommendation: Biological objectives and strategies should be developed for each province as part of the subbasin planning process. Province-level objectives and strategies should assure that biological objectives and strategies for subbasins within a province complement each other.

Finding: The Council adopted provisions consistent with this recommendation. The recommendations and comments the Council received supported the concept of having biological objectives and strategies at the ecological province level, to tie together the objectives and actions in related subbasins and at the same time provide more far more specificity than can be provided at the basin level. But the recommendations and comments differed significantly as to when and how these should be developed and adopted into the program, whether before, during or after subbasin assessments and planning (or some combination of these times). The Council decided to continue discussions with interested parties on when and how best to develop objectives and strategies at the ecological province level. Even if the Council and others decide not to develop a set of province-level objectives, the Council intends, in the course of reviewing and adopting subbasin plans, to ensure that subbasin plans within a province or affecting the same populations or species assemblages complement each other. And, the Council expects that at least at the conclusion of the subbasin planning process, it will conduct a specific amendment process to incorporate provincial visions, objectives and strategies into the program, as critical to documenting what are the specific objectives of the program and providing the basis for evaluating progress toward those objectives. Sections IV.B, VIII.3.

Source: **Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission**
Recommendation No.: **40**

Recommendation: The Council noted that developing sound, realistic basin and provincial biological objectives requires an iterative process that cannot be completed before draft subbasin assessments and plans are available. The Council should not adopt firm biological objectives during this part of the program amendment cycle. In broad concept, the Commission agreed with the intent of this section. But major concepts are unclear and more discussion is required before it can provide practical guidance for fish and wildlife recovery efforts. Establishing objectives at multiple spatial scales is best accomplished by an iterative process across those scales. It is almost certain that consistent objectives cannot be developed the first time we attempt to use a new approach, especially when we do not have all information (subbasin assessments) in front of us. This is the major reason objectives cannot be adopted at this time.

Finding: The Council adopted this recommendation, as described just above. Sections IV.B, VIII.3.

Source: **National Marine Fisheries Service**
Recommendation No. **54**

Recommendation: The Fisheries Service recommended that the Council develop province-level visions and objectives that incorporate de-listing criteria for ESUs. The program should address recovery needs for threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead to the greatest extent possible. This would be consistent with the technical and planning tasks that the Fisheries Service must engage in the recovery planning process for all ESUs of salmon and steelhead in the Basin.

As the Fisheries Service moves forward to develop recovery plans using technical information developed for that purpose, it intends to rely on existing processes and institutions. The subbasin assessment and planning process proposed by the Council may well provide the organization and include the stakeholders in the interior Columbia basin that would enable the Fisheries Service to rely on this process to develop recovery plans. Subbasin plans would need to be "aggregated" to ensure they will provide for the recovery of the entire ESU. The Council's program is in a good position for this since the delineations of ecological provinces evaluated by the Council's framework are very close to the geographic delineations of ESUs. The Fisheries Service will continue to discuss these issues with all of the affected entities in the basin.

Finding: The Council adopted provisions consistent with this recommendation. Sections IV.B, V.A.3, A.5, VIII.3.

Source: **Shoshone-Bannock Tribes**
Recommendation No. **38**

Recommendation: The Shoshone-Bannock noted that the Council's Strawman proposed that the program contain goals and objectives for geographic sub-divisions of the Columbia River basin, distinct from basin-wide goals and objectives yet larger than those for individual subbasins. This poses two questions: "What is the appropriate geographic sub-division?" And, "what is the purpose for another set of goals and objectives?" The concept of grouping subbasins in different ways is an interesting idea and can be useful. One can have a geologically based physiography or regions based on biomes or hydrologic groupings. All have value for certain kinds of environmental analyses; all have limitations relative to other analyses. Any grouping of subbasins intended to serve several different purposes (such as those in the Council's program), will be filled with self-limiting compromises.

All of the existing sub-divisions of the basin are valid and should continue to be used for the purposes for which they were established. The program should be flexible and not attempt to impose a single set of sub-divisions to serve a variety of purposes. If the Council proposes a new set of sub-divisions for the Columbia River basin, the program should clearly articulate the need for this different grouping and explain the situations in which it should be used.

Because of the wide variety of subbasins in each province, these objectives will have to be very general. What then is their purpose? If the provincial objectives are intended to constrain or guide the subbasin objectives, what additional guidance is anticipated beyond that provided by the basin-wide objectives? If on the other hand, provincial objectives will be derived by aggregating the subbasin objectives, what additional benefit does the region get? The nature of the proposed province-level goals and objectives and their purpose remains vague, and, as a result, endlessly debatable. The example provided by the Council appears to be a combination. Many of its goals appear to apply to all or most subbasins and hence can be considered as a part of the basinwide goals while its numerical objectives are

really an aggregation of objectives from individual subbasins. The first phase amendments should address goals and objectives applicable to all or most subbasins, including areas above and below hydrosystem blockages. The Council should not develop "provincial" objectives until subbasin plans are adopted. Also, the Council should not break up the mainstem of the river, but instead should adopt a fish management plan for the mainstem Columbia and Snake rivers.

Finding: The Council adopted provisions consistent with this recommendation. Sections IV.B, V.A.3, A.5, VIII.1, VIII.3. The Council agrees that it needs to continue discussions with the fish and wildlife agencies and tribes and others over the what, how and when of province-level objectives. The Council also agrees that province-level objectives and strategies, to be successful, must address population and habitat characteristics specific to that province, and not be so general as to apply to all subbasins in the basin. The purposes will be to aggregate objectives from the related subbasins within the province to assist in monitoring and evaluating progress under the program, to provide insight into and a focus or priority on the types of habitat problems and strategies that are common across a province, and to provide guidance and consistency when subbasin plans are addressing populations that transcend particular subbasins, so that actions in one subbasin complement and do not work at cross-purposes to actions in another. Finally, the Council adopted the recommendation to develop a separate mainstem plan.

4(b) Visions, objectives and strategies for specific provinces

Source:	**Upper Columbia United Tribes**
Recommendation No.	**47**
Source:	**Spokane Tribe**
Recommendation No.	**28**
Source:	**Coeur d'Alene Tribe**
Recommendation No.	**42**
Source:	**Kalispel Tribe**
Recommendation No.	**48**
Source:	**Kootenai Tribe**
Recommendation No.	**50**

Recommendation: These tribes recommended that the Council reorganize the proposed provinces to create a unified Upper Columbia River Basin Blocked Area Province. This would require a re-configuration of the Council's proposed Inter-Mountain and Mountain Columbia provinces, and include the following subbasins:

- Spokane (all, not separated as in the Council's proposal)
- Upper Columbia
- Nespelem
- Sanpoil
- Colville
- Kettle
- Coeur d'Alene
- lower and upper Pend Oreille
- Priest
- Kootenai
- numerous minor tributaries to the Upper Columbia River

The tribes then recommended a province vision and an extensive set of goals, objectives, strategies and management principles and priorities. Finally, these tribes recommended that all measures in the current (1994-95) program which fall within and/or affect this province should be retained and continue to be funded for implementation unless and until specifically modified or replaced through the subbasin planning process.

Finding: The Council reorganized the Inter-Mountain and Mountain Columbia provinces so that the Inter-Mountain is the same as the upper Columbia province recommended by the tribes. Section IV.A (the table and maps in the "pre-publication" version of the 2000 Fish and Wildlife Program referred to here are not completely accurate in showing the re-configuration; this error is being corrected in the published version). And, the specific objectives and measures in the 1994-95 program remain in effect until superseded in the specific planning phases of the program amendment process.

The Council did not adopt or reject the specific vision, objectives, strategies or other provisions recommended by the tribes for the province or the subbasins in the province. Based on the entirety of the recommendations and comments received, the Council concluded that the time was not ripe to incorporate specific provisions for the provinces in the program. These matters will be an appropriate subject for the subsequent phases in the program revision process, especially subbasin planning, that will adopt specific objectives and measures for geographic regions less than the basin as a whole.

Source: **Public Utility District No. 1 of Chelan County**
Recommendation No. **4**

Recommendation: The district recommended that the provisions to be contained in the habitat conservation agreements for the mid-Columbia region be incorporated, when finalized, as part of the subbasin plans for the Columbia Cascade Province. The agreements under development include establishing a "no net impact" standard for the survival of salmon and steelhead through the Wells, Rocky Reach and Rock Island hydroelectric projects. The proposed standards include 91% per project survival, which is based on a subordinate standard of 95% juvenile dam passage survival calling for 95% of the juveniles over 95% of each species' migration period to survive migration through each project's forebay, dam and tailrace. Compensation for the remaining 9% of the unavoidable mortality at each project is to be provided through hatchery and tributary programs, with 7% compensation to be provided through hatchery programs and 2% compensation provided through tributary program. The Agreements continue the "coordinating committees" for the mid-Columbia projects and establish detailed dispute resolution procedures to ensure the timely resolution of disputes.

Finding: This recommendation can be considered in the appropriate processes for developing the mainstem plan and the subbasin plans within that province.

Source: **Idaho Department of Fish and Game**
Recommendation No. **36**
Source: **Idaho Water Users**
Recommendation No. **18**
Source: **Boise Valley Fly Fishermen, Inc.**
Recommendation No. **14**

Recommendation: The Idaho Department of Fish and Game recommended a vision and a set of goals, objectives, strategies, and implementation standards intended to apply to all the ecological provinces in Idaho, and then a specific set for each province (Mountain Columbia, Mountain Snake, Middle Snake, Upper Snake).

The Idaho Water Users separately recommended a vision and a set of biological objectives and strategies for what it called the Upper Snake River Basin provinces (the Blue Mountain, Middle Snake and Upper Snake provinces).

The Boise Valley Fly Fishermen recommended specific but not comprehensive provisions for the Middle Snake province.

Finding: The Council did not adopt or reject the specific vision, objectives, strategies or other provisions recommended by Idaho or the Idaho Water Users for the provinces in that state. Based on the entirety of the recommendations and comments received, the Council concluded that the time was not ripe to incorporate specific provisions for the provinces in the program. These matters will be an appropriate subject for the subsequent phases in the program revision process, especially subbasin planning, that will adopt specific objectives and measures for geographic regions less than the basin as a whole.

5. Subbasin plans

5(a) Elements of a subbasin plan, including assessments

Source: **Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife**
Recommendation No. **26**

Recommendation: Oregon recommended that biological objectives and strategies for subbasins should be developed as part of a regional subbasin planning process and then adopted as part of the program. Subbasin plans should be consistent with the visions and objectives at province and basin levels. Actions to implement the program should principally be planned and evaluated at the subbasin level. Subbasin plans should provide the ultimate direction for fish and wildlife and water quality management activities funded by Bonneville and provide the context in which the Independent Scientific Review Panel will review fish and wildlife proposals for funding. Subbasin plans should also include strategies and actions funded by others. Each subbasin plan should not only serve the purposes of the Council under the Northwest Power Act, but should also serve the purposes of fish and wildlife, water, and land managers under the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and other laws governing natural resource management.

Each subbasin plan should include the following components:

- *Subbasin assessment*, providing a description of historical and existing conditions, an assessment of limiting factors and the biological potential of the subbasin and an identification of protection and restoration opportunities. The assessment also should include an inventory of existing and past projects and clearly and comprehensively describe what is being done and what has been accomplished in the subbasin.
- *Strategic plan*, with a 10- to 15-year time horizon, describing the vision and biological objectives for the subbasin and the strategies to be taken to achieve the biological objectives. The strategic plan should include a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan.
- *Implementation plan*, with a three-year time horizon, details the specific actions and measures to implement the strategies in the subbasin plan. The implementation plan should be a "living" document, that is, updated as projects sunset and new ones begin. It should be separate from the subbasin plan and should not be adopted into the program.

To assure that subbasin plans address the broadest set of needs, the region should develop and use a standard template for subbasin assessments and plans. Subbasin plans for a province should be developed in concert with each other, and should be evaluated to determine what, if any, impacts each has on the others.

Finding: The Council adopted provisions consistent with this recommendation for the function and structure of subbasin plans and their relationship to each other and to the province and basin elements of the program. The comprehensive revision of the program will include a "subbasin planning process" using the procedures provided in the Act for program amendments. The program calls for the subbasin plans to integrate Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act requirements as fully as possible. Section V; *see also* Sections II.B and C, VI.A.3, VIII.4.

The Council adopted the subbasin assessment template developed by a Subbasin Assessment Science Team as part of the Technical Appendix to the revised program. *See* Section V.A.3, Technical Appendix C. That template will be the foundation for subbasin assessments conducted for the program's subbasin planning process in conjunction with the region's state, federal, and tribal fish and wildlife managers and other interested parties. The Council also outlined the elements of the plan itself, *see*