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Pacific Northwest
Aquatic Monitoring
Partnership

June 23, 2006

2006-06-31

Mark Walker
Director of Public Affairs
Northwest Power & Conservation Council
851 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 1100
Portland, Oregon 97204-1348

Dear Mr. Walker,

On behalf of the Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership (PNAMP), I would like to note our interest and support of many of the concepts in the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (Council) Document 2006-7, "Columbia Basin Data Center proposal", dated May 2006.

As with the recently released "Draft Guidance for Developing Monitoring and Evaluation as a Program Element of the Fish and Wildlife Program" the Columbia Basin Data Center proposal represents a significant undertaking by the Council. We appreciate your recognition of the substantive changes to monitoring and evaluation that are needed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of monitoring and evaluation efforts in the Columbia Basin associated with the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program.

We would like to state our interest in the general topic of data management as it relates to aquatic resource monitoring. We also noted that several aspects of the proposal refer to data collection protocols, a topic of specific interest to PNAMP and its members. As outlined in the PNAMP charter "...monitoring will be improved if: all programs use consistent monitoring approaches and protocols; follow a scientific foundation; support monitoring policy and objectives; and collect and present information in a manner that can be shared."

PNAMP concurs that the issue of adequate access to high quality monitoring data, analyzed information, and reports is a critical, and as yet, unmet need for many partners working to restore our watersheds and salmon populations. The US Congress, the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, and many others have identified access to and improved quality of information as a gap and a primary focus point.

The overall PNAMP data management goal is to assist scientists in the identification and development of data standards as they relate to the monitoring of fish and aquatic habitat. Our intent is also to help identify specific needs for improved access, sharing, and

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coordination among different collectors and users of fish and aquatic habitat monitoring data. This would provide a basis for improving data management through the efforts of existing data management entities, towards coordinated agency reporting, uniform monitoring protocols, and improved data quality and quantity within the Columbia Basin and other portions of the Pacific Northwest.

PNAMP is keenly interested in contributing to this conversation as it unfolds. The Columbia Basin Data Center proposal has already catalyzed significant discussion among PNAMP Steering Committee members. PNAMP has encouraged partner agencies (currently 19) to respond to your proposal independently.

PNAMP is a forum for coordination of aquatic resource monitoring. Our approach with respect to data management has been to establish a workgroup to identify data management needs and work with existing entities (NED, PNW-RGIC, CBFWA, others) to coordinate data management solutions. We envision working closely with all existing data management efforts in moving the conversation to an implementation phase.

PNAMP has benefited greatly from the early support and participation of the Council. Council staff have actively participated in the PNAMP Steering Committee and various technical committees, but did not specifically contribute to the preparation of these comments.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to hearing from you about our request to participate in future developments related to this topic.

Sincerely,

JMB

Jennifer M. Bayer
PNAMP Coordinator
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cc: PNAMP Steering Committee