

High level indicators -



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northwest Region
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Seattle, WA 98115

Council members
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SC, MW, JAH,
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JUN 12 2008

June 9 2008

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Mr. Bill Booth, Chair
Northwest Power and Conservation Council
851 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 1100
Portland, Oregon 97204-1348

Dear Mr. Booth:

This letter is regarding the June 11, 2008, Northwest Power and Conservation Council (Council) meeting to consider the release of draft high-level biological and implementation indicators for public comment (Agenda Item 5).

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) supports adopting high-level indicators for reporting the status of fish and wildlife resources and the progress of conservation actions in the Columbia River Basin. We believe that adopting such indicators will encourage the identification and prioritization of regional information needs, data management requirements, and monitoring programs.

We are pleased to see that many of the proposed indicators would provide the information necessary for assessing the status of ESA-listed species, evaluating the severity of the threats that led to their decline, and tracking the progress made by regional conservation actions toward sustainable recovery. Though we support the development of high-level indicators, we recognize that considerable effort and collaboration will be needed to develop such reporting capabilities. For each high-level indicator there are specific data requirements, as well as the need to develop standard data definitions and protocols. There is the need to link existing databases from various sources to provide timely updates of the data necessary to support the annual reporting of high-level indicators. We also believe it is important to have indicators that can be reported at different spatial scales (e.g., at the population, ESU, sub-basin, and basin scales) to meet the unique reporting needs of local, state, tribal, and federal entities. We are ready to assist the Council in developing the regional data framework that will be necessary for reporting high-level indicators.

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The Council has been a leader in advocating for, and funding attempts to, develop unified data-sharing systems. We will continue to support this concept through the Executive Information Summit and other venues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Barry A. Thom", followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Barry A. Thom
Deputy Regional Administrator