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## NORTHWEST POWER PLANNING COUNCIL

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April 16, 2003

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Fish and Wildlife Committee

**FROM:** Steve Waste, Manager, Program Analysis and Evaluation

**SUBJECT:** BPA Request for Expedited Funding of M&E Proposals from the Mainstem/Systemwide Project Selection Process

#### Action

Bonneville Power Administration has requested a decision from Council to approve expedited funding for three new monitoring and evaluation projects (35007, 35019, and 35047) in the Mainstem/Systemwide Project Selection Process. BPA has decided not to request expedited funding for one other project on their original list (35046).

#### Recommendations

We recommend that the Council approve this funding request. These three projects address requirements of the 2000 National Marine Fisheries Service's Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion that must be underway prior to a regulatory check-in by NOAA Fisheries in September 2003. All of these projects were recommended as fundable by the ISRP.

#### Background

It is important to consider the context in which this request for an expedited funding decision is being made. Bonneville is developing a monitoring and evaluation program that addresses the requirements of the 2000 National Marine Fisheries Service's Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion. At present, several parts of the monitoring and evaluation program required by the Biological Opinion have yet to be implemented. These missing elements of the monitoring and evaluation program are referred to as "gaps" in Bonneville's coverage of Biological Opinion requirements.

In some cases these gaps exist because the Mainstem/Systemwide Provincial Review generated proposals that only addressed them indirectly. For other gaps, no proposals were received which addressed them. In order to comply with the requirements of the Biological Opinion, Bonneville needs to achieve full coverage of these gaps with funded projects, and it needs to do so as

expeditiously as possible. In September 2003, NOAA Fisheries will evaluate Bonneville's progress in implementing projects to meet the requirements of the Biological Opinion for monitoring and evaluation.

### **Analysis**

It is clear that Bonneville needs to shore up its coverage of the monitoring and evaluation gaps. Bonneville plans to achieve full coverage of the gaps by drawing upon four sets of monitoring and evaluation proposals that are currently pending action. The first set of proposals is the one for which Bonneville is requesting expedited funding at this time.

If the schedule for completing the Mainstem/Systemwide project selection process slips past May 2003, Bonneville will seek an expedited funding decision for a second set of additional proposals also deemed critical for the September check-in. This second set would be derived from list of "New Start Projects from the Critical Elements for BiOps" that accompanied Bonneville's letter of April 7, 2003. It may also contain projects derived from sets three and four, described next.

The third set of monitoring and evaluation are projects are those that were proposed in response to Bonneville's the Request For Studies. These proposals are currently undergoing an ISRP review that is scheduled for completion on April 25, 2003.

The fourth set is comprised of proposals to revise existing monitoring and evaluation projects by adding or changing elements that were ranked by the ISRP as not fundable. The ISRP recommended a national targeted solicitation for two of these and the others are undergoing significant revisions.

Bonneville's letter to the Council posing this request provides a strong rationale for Council support (see Attachment 1.). It includes total costs for FY03 through FY07 as well as the individual costs for each project. Most importantly, it confirms that Bonneville considers these to be the top priority projects in the Mainstem/Systemwide project selection process, and has considered the implications of expedited funding of these three projects to the balance of the Mainstem project proposals.

Bonneville also acknowledges that reprogramming of existing projects could potentially provide funds to support new monitoring and evaluation needs. However, any effort to embark on reprogramming should be done with full collaboration of the existing project sponsors and would ideally be developed in the context of the start of year budget for FY04.

Attachment 1. Letter from Bonneville to Council, April 16, 2003.



## Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3621  
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

April 17, 2003

In reply refer to: KEW-4

Mrs. Judi Danielson  
Northwest Power and Conservation Council  
P.O. Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0062

Dear Mrs. Danielson:

An errata sheet for the enclosure "Rationale and Cost per Project for Funding" that was included with the April 16, 2003 letter requesting expedited funding decisions for three Mainstem Systemwide Provincial proposals is attached. It reflects the modified effort approved by the ISRP for Project 35019, increasing the outyear budget estimates. We have also added the annual estimated FY03 budget for each project for reference. We apologize for any confusion and thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert J. Austin".

Robert J. Austin  
Deputy Manager, Fish and Wildlife Program

Enclosure  
Rationale and Cost per Project for Funding

cc:

Mr. Doug Marker, Northwest Power and Conservation Council  
Mr. Steve Waste, Northwest Power and Conservation Council  
Ms. Kendra Phillips, Northwest Power and Conservation Council

## Rationale and Cost per Project for Funding

The budgets estimated below should be considered reasonable estimates for the scope of work to be accomplished for each project and will be further refined as contracts are negotiated with the proponents. Since we are more than halfway through the fiscal year for 2003, the accrual for FY 03 will be less than the annual budget. This accrual estimate is listed to the right of the annual estimate for FY 03 and is based on a partial year accrual.

### **35007 Evaluate Restoration Potential of Snake River Fall Chinook Salmon Spawning Habitat**

The sponsors of this project propose to evaluate the restoration potential of Mainstem habitats for the Snake River Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) fall run. Both Reasonable and Prudent Alternative (RPA) actions the project will address, the identification of Mainstem habitat (RPA 155) and the development of a hierarchical monitoring program (RPA 180) are areas currently lacking adequate implementation. In 1998, the ISRP identified the need to protect and enhance spawning and rearing habitat for salmonids in the Mainstem. The effectiveness of this project depends on collection of physical habitat data during the low flow period (summer-early fall) before spawning activity. Therefore, this study needs to proceed before the beginning of the summer, which will enable Bonneville to make substantial progress toward RPA 155 and 180 as required for the September check-in.

**Budget costs:**

<b>FY 03 –Annual</b>	<b>FY 03 -Accrual (50% of Annual)</b>
<b>\$315,000</b>	<b>\$157,500</b>

<b>FY 04</b>	<b>FY 05</b>
\$406,700	\$423,300

### **35019 Develop and Implement a Pilot Status and Trend Monitoring Program for Salmonids and their Habitat**

This project received a favorable and urgent funding recommendation from the ISRP and the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (CBFWA). This project will develop and test a hierarchical monitoring program for anadromous salmonids to assess BiOp performance measures and standards. Delaying the initial development and testing of this monitoring program will delay the needed basin-wide research, monitoring, and evaluation Program. The expedited funding of this project is both paramount to meeting BiOp check-in requirements and to evaluate effectiveness and efficiency of mitigation actions for the Fish and Wildlife Program.

**Budget costs:**

<b>FY 03 -Annual</b>	<b>FY 03 -Accrual (50% of Annual)</b>
<b>\$905,000</b>	<b>\$452,750</b>

<b>FY 04</b>	<b>FY 05</b>	<b>FY 06</b>	<b>FY 07</b>
\$3,530,000	\$4,030,000	\$5,030,000	\$7,030,000

**35047 Evaluate Delayed and (Extra) Mortality Associated with Passage of Yearling Chinook Salmon Smolts through Snake River Dams**

The current facility at Lower Granite Dam is insufficient to meet the handling and tagging requirements demanded by this study, and will require extensive modification prior to the initiation of tagging in spring 2004. The addition of the third study group, as recommended during the ISRP review, adds significantly to the necessity for these modifications. Therefore, to enable this work to be completed in time to begin tagging in spring 2004, we recommend that funding for materials and construction be made available for this project in FY 03.

**Budget Costs:**

<b>FY 03 -Annual</b>	<b>FY 03 -Accrual (50% of Annual)</b>
<b>\$202,500</b>	<b>\$101,250</b>

<b>FY 04</b>	<b>FY 05</b>	<b>FY 06</b>	<b>FY 07</b>
\$1,100,000	\$1,150,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,250,000

**Total Annual Budget Costs:**

<b>FY 03</b>	\$1,422,500
<b>FY 04</b>	\$5,036,700
<b>FY 05</b>	\$5,036,700
<b>FY 06</b>	\$6,230,000
<b>FY 07</b>	\$8,280,000



## Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3621  
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

April 16, 2003

In reply refer to: KEW-4

Mrs. Judi Danielson  
Northwest Power and Conservation Council  
P.O. Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0062

Dear Mrs. Danielson:

This letter is a follow-up request by Bonneville Power Administration (Bonneville) for the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (Council) to consider expediting its funding recommendation on three new proposals (35007, 35019, and 35047) initially submitted in the Mainstem/Systemwide Provincial Review Process (Enclosure). These three projects address Bonneville's Endangered Species Act and the Fish and Wildlife Program research, monitoring, and evaluation (RM&E) requirements. All three proposals received a fundable review from the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP). The ISRP in their comments also recommended these projects be high priority projects.

Bonneville supports the Council's current process of finalizing the Mainstem/Systemwide Province project selections. Bonneville's Endangered Species Act obligations per the 2000 National Marine Fisheries Service's Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion (BiOp) requires time sensitive implementation of critical Mainstem projects in advance of the Council's schedule for the Mainstem/Systemwide project recommendations. The ESA schedule requires substantial progress in implementation on RM&E actions prior to the September 2003 check-in date. At the time of the check-in, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries will evaluate Bonneville's progress in implementing projects to meet RM&E requirements. If these projects do not receive prompt implementation, their delay will cause the start date to be deferred until FY 04 and thereby create negative consequences for Bonneville during the September 2003 check-in.

Bonneville staff, in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries staff, reviewed the Mainstem/Systemwide proposals that were essential to meeting 2003 BiOp check-in requirements. The result has been Bonneville's attempt at implementing a RM&E program to meet both the Fish and Wildlife Program and BiOp objectives. Since these projects, with consideration to all projects submitted in the Mainstem/Systemwide Province, were identified as critical to the RM&E requirements of

BiOp implementation and received a high priority rank by ISRP, they remain a priority and are considered crucial for timely implementation this fiscal year. For these reasons, Bonneville is requesting that the Council consider expediting FY 03 funding recommendations for these projects. This will allow the Council to finalize their recommendation for FY 04 to assure these projects are consistent with the remainder of the Mainstem/Systemwide Province project recommendations. If the Council agrees to this course of action it will enable Bonneville to meet both its ESA obligations as well as its Fish and Wildlife Program requirements in many instances.

Initially our intent was to request advance funding of four proposals; however due to delays, the start date for an important project on juvenile residency in the Columbia River plume (35046) has been deferred until FY 04. The expedited funding of these proposals will not resolve all aspects of a comprehensive RM&E program but it is the essential first step. An important point to note is if the schedule for Mainstem/Systemwide recommendations is delayed beyond May, Bonneville may need to submit a further request for advance funding consideration of additional proposals described on the "New Start Projects from the Critical Elements for BiOps" list included with our previous letter of April 7, 2003.

A second important point to note is that while FY 03 partial costs for these projects are modest, the full twelve month costs in the out years are much greater. However, in the long-term, future reprogramming of current ongoing projects within the Fish and Wildlife Program to integrate RM&E requirements is expected to produce an overall reduction in costs. In a concurrent effort to reduce overall RM&E costs and improve the effectiveness of regional recovery efforts, Bonneville is coordinating with states and Tribes to leverage existing information, avoid duplication of effort, and collaborate on RM&E activities. Although the development of a regionally accepted comprehensive and coordinated RM&E program will require a substantial initial investment, the information produced will allow for more informed decisions and in turn create opportunities to increase effectiveness and efficiencies within the Integrated Fish and Wildlife Program and BiOp implementation over the long term. This constitutes a major step toward achievement of biological objectives at least cost.

I would like to thank the Council for its consideration of this urgent and important matter. Please do not hesitate to call me with any questions.



Robert J. Austin  
Deputy Manager, Fish and Wildlife Program

Enclosure  
Rationale and Cost per Project for Funding

cc:  
Mr. Doug Marker, Northwest Power and Conservation Council  
Mr. Steve Waste, Northwest Power and Conservation Council

## Enclosure

### Rationale and Cost per Project for Funding

The budgets estimated below should be considered reasonable estimates for the scope of work to be accomplished for each project and will be further refined as contracts are negotiated with the proponents.

#### **35007 Evaluate Restoration Potential of Snake River Fall Chinook Salmon Spawning Habitat**

The sponsors of this project propose to evaluate the restoration potential of Mainstem habitats for the Snake River Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) fall run. Both Reasonable and Prudent Alternative (RPA) actions the project will address, the identification of Mainstem habitat (RPA 155) and the development of a hierarchical monitoring program (RPA 180), are areas currently lacking adequate implementation. In 1998, the ISRP identified the need to protect and enhance spawning and rearing habitat for salmonids in the Mainstem. The effectiveness of this project depends on collection of physical habitat data during the low flow period (summer-early fall) before spawning activity. Therefore, this study needs to proceed before the beginning of the summer, which will enable Bonneville to make substantial progress toward RPA 155 and 180 as required for the September check-in.

#### **Budget costs:**

**FY 03**

**\$157,500.00**

**FY 04**

**\$564,200.00**

**FY 05**

**\$423,300.00**

#### **35019 Develop and Implement a Pilot Status and Trend Monitoring Program for Salmonids and their Habitat**

This project received a favorable and urgent funding recommendation from the ISRP and the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (CBFWA). This project will develop and test a hierarchical monitoring program for anadromous salmonids to assess BiOp performance measures and standards. Delaying the initial development and testing of this monitoring program will delay the needed basin-wide RM&E Program. The expedited funding of this project is both paramount to meeting BiOp check-in requirements and to evaluate effectiveness and efficiency of mitigation actions for the Fish and Wildlife Program.

**Budget costs:**

**FY 03**

**\$452,500.00**

**FY 04**

**\$520,000.00**

**FY 05**

**\$520,000.00**

**FY 06**

**\$520,000.00**

**35047 Evaluate Delayed and (Extra) Mortality Associated with Passage of Yearling Chinook Salmon Smolts through Snake River Dams**

The current facility at Lower Granite Dam is insufficient to meet the handling and tagging requirements demanded by this study, and will require extensive modification prior to the initiation of tagging in spring 2004. The addition of the third study group, as recommended during the ISRP review, adds significantly to the necessity for these modifications. Therefore, to enable this work to be completed in time to begin tagging in spring 2004, we recommend that funding for materials and construction be made available for this project in FY 03.

**Budget Costs:**

**FY 03**

**\$202,500.00**

**FY 04**

**\$1,100,000.00**

**FY 05**

**\$1,150,000.00**

**FY 06**

**\$1,200,000.00**

**FY 07**

**\$1,250,000.00**

**Total Annual Budget Costs:**

**FY 03** \$ 812,500.00

**FY 04** \$2,184,200.00

**FY 05** \$2,093,300.00

**FY 06** \$1,720,000.00

**FY 07** \$1,250,000.00

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April 18, 2003

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Fish and Wildlife Committee

**FROM:** Steve Waste, Manager, Program Analysis and Evaluation

**SUBJECT:** BPA Request for Expedited Funding of Proposal 35019

#### Action

In its letter of April 16, 2003 Bonneville requested a decision from Council to approve expedited funding for three new monitoring and evaluation proposals (35007, 35019, and 35047) in the Mainstem/Systemwide Project Selection Process. In a letter dated April 17, Bonneville provided an errata sheet to the preceding letter providing the revised, and significantly greater, future cost estimates for proposal 35019. This memo explains the reasons for the increased costs and the recommendations of the ISRP on the issue of cost.

#### Recommendations

We recommend that the Council conditionally approve funding the initiation of proposal 35019 through completion and ISRP review of the study design. Further funding should be dependent on the outcome of that review and a positive decision by the Council. We have asked Bonneville to estimate the cost of this planning phase.

#### Background

In Bonneville's letter to Council of April 16, 2003, they request expedited funding for three monitoring and evaluation proposals.

In response to the recommendation by the ISRP that the Action Agencies use existing proposals to address monitoring and evaluation requirements of the Biological Opinion for which they had no coverage, proposal 35019 underwent major revision. The scope of work was increased to incorporate additional elements that would address action effectiveness research gaps.

The original proposal 35019 was titled "Develop and Implement A Pilot Status and Trend Monitoring Program for Salmonid Populations and their Habitat."

The budget that was used in the letter of April 16 was the original budget submitted by the sponsor in the provincial review, as follows:

FY03 \$452,500  
FY04 \$520,000  
FY05 \$520,000  
FY06 \$520,000

However, after NMFS agreed to use one of their proposals, the additional proposal elements added by the Action Agencies significantly increased both the scope and the cost of the proposal. The title of the revised proposal is “Develop and Implement and Integrated Subbasin-scale Status and Watershed-scale Effectiveness Monitoring Program for Salmonid Populations and habitat.”

The correct costs of the revised proposals are:

FY03 \$ 905,000  
FY03 \$ 452,750 - Accrual (50% of annual)  
FY04 \$3,530,000  
FY05 \$4,030,000  
FY06 \$5,030,000  
FY07 \$7,030,000

In the letter of April 16, Bonneville inadvertently left the original cost figures in their enclosure which provided the rationale and cost per proposal. Upon realizing this error they sent Council an “errata sheet” with the correct figures for proposal 35019. These cost figures are significantly greater than what appeared in the letter of April 16. It is important to note that while this increased the initial budget for 35019 it significantly decreased Bonneville’s first request for an overall research, monitoring, and evaluation budget. We cannot support the level of commitment to the proposal in this budget climate without additional review.

### **Analysis**

In its “Review of Revised Mainstem/Systemwide Proposals for Research, Monitoring and Evaluation” that ISRP provided the following evaluation of proposal 35019:

Fundable. This is an excellent, well-organized proposal for Status and Trend monitoring and it addresses the question of monitoring the combined effects of multiple habitat actions over time. This version is expanded from the earlier version to include additional monitoring and evaluation components. The proposals would not only evaluate status and trend monitoring and include action-effectiveness monitoring but would also advance knowledge about the effectiveness of monitoring methods. Detailed objectives, tasks, and methods are provided. Extensive coordination with ongoing proposals is described. The ISRP strongly recommends funding of this proposal.

The ISRP also provided the following qualifications to its recommendation:

However, we again raise the question of relationship of the proposal to not only the BiOp mandates, but also the monitoring needs of the Council’s Fish and Wildlife Program and other state, federal, and tribal responsibilities in the Columbia basin. At issue is the whole

basinwide monitoring effort. To base the basinwide monitoring effort only on the NMFS BiOp mandates seems to be shortsighted and a sensitive issue

This proposal does incorporate the states and tribes monitoring efforts. In each region the state and tribal organizations will be involved in design, implementation, and data processing. The success of this proposal depends upon fish agency and Tribal technical support for much of the monitoring and data gathering. NOAA is responsible for much of the experimental design and some level of technical support and guidance in this proposal.

In regards to cost the ISRP stated that:

Verification of population and habitat parameters at very large geographic scales is badly needed. However, the proposed budget is very large and if a proposal like this is going to last for the long-term, it needs to be as cost-effective as possible. The costs do not seem to be well justified

Finally, they recommended a peer review of the plan design.

The ISRP recommends that there be a thorough peer review by independent scientists once the plan is fully designed (i.e., after selection of study sites, development of protocols for indicator variables, development of error terms for determination of final sample sizes, etc.) and before implementation in the field. This proposal should also be reviewed in the future at certain milestones.

In light of the high cost of this proposal; the recommendations of the ISRP to proceed cautiously; and, uncertainty regarding funding needs for other monitoring and evaluation proposals in the Mainstem/Systemwide proposal selection process, we recommend using a step-wise process to implement this proposal. Specifically, we recommend a phased approach to implementation and contracting; i.e., funding only the initial phase of this proposal at this time, which includes the completion of the study design and the independent scientific review of the plan.