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November 30, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Power Committee Members
FROM: John Fazio, Senior System Analyst
SUBJECT: Recommendation on a Funding Request from the Climate Impacts Group

At its December meeting, the Council will decide whether to provide a \$25,000 funding request from the University of Washington's Climate Impacts Group (CIG). The details of that request are provided in a decision memo in the Council packet under "Council Business."

Since 2003, the Council has used climate change data provided by the CIG to assess impacts of global warming on hydroelectric generation. The Council also recognized that climate change could have a significant impact on fish and wildlife populations. Using data from the CIG, the Council analyzed the effects of projected shifts in temperature and river flows under various global warming scenarios. The Council understood that research in this area was an ongoing process and, therefore included an action item (MON-4) to "monitor climate change science and policy" in its Fifth Power Plan.

CIG temperature and streamflow data is in need of updating to include recent improvements made in global climate models. Unfortunately, the CIG has experienced a decline in both funding and in personnel. So, obtaining updated data from the CIG in the near term seems to be unlikely. The good news, however, is that the Washington Department of Ecology (WDOE) is planning to fund the CIG (providing over \$400,000) toward a study that would update temperature and streamflow data under various warming scenarios. The bad news is that the WDOE is only interested in sites located within the state of Washington. The CIG suggested that with an additional \$100,000, it could provide data for the entire Columbia River Basin.

In order to ensure that the CIG can develop new data in a time frame consistent with the Council's work plan, the Council has been asked to provide a \$50,000 grant over a two-year period. (A follow up decision to contribute an additional \$25,000 in the next fiscal year will be made next fall.) The remainder of the required funding (\$50,000 over a two-year period) is expected to come from the Bonneville Power Administration, which is currently attempting to procure the funds.

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