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July 30, 2013

DISCUSSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Fish and Wildlife Committee Members

FROM: Peter Paquet, Manager Wildlife and Resident Fish
Lynn Palensky, Program Development Manager

SUBJECT: Discussion of next steps with wildlife projects

BACKGROUND

In 2008, the Council and Bonneville, with advice from the ISRP, decided to review projects funded under the Fish and Wildlife Program in functional categories (wildlife; monitoring, evaluation and research; artificial production; resident fish; and anadromous fish habitat). The wildlife projects were the first to go through this new review process. At its July 2, 2009 meeting the Council made its final recommendations on the Wildlife Category Review, stating the following with regard to future reviews:

1. The ISRP's science review of the ongoing wildlife projects is sufficient, and additional review generally is not needed for at least five years, with two exceptions: a) the ISRP may review elements of a project or management plan in the interim period between category reviews based on staff recommendation, and b) any *new* wildlife projects proposed during that five-year period will be reviewed when submitted.
2. Staff will develop a schedule for future reviews by July 2013.
3. Bonneville and Council staff will conduct performance check-ins with sponsors by July 2013, and the performance check-in process will be developed and described in the summer of 2012.

When the Council first developed the process for this type of review in 2008, it was envisioned that this process would cycle back through the categories starting again with wildlife projects. The Council is now about four months away from having completed all the category reviews once through. At this point, we should reflect on the experience of the category reviews -- lessons learned and how policies, agreements, and social, physical, and biological changes might influence how we conduct reviews in the future. Early discussions among staff highlight areas of agreements on how we move forward:

- a. Consider wildlife project review in the context of the review process for all projects;
- b. Determine specific project components and issues that should be reviewed (research results, accomplishments, big changes in management or external factors)
- c. Consider how the Council can help with common programmatic issues through follow-on workshops and science policy forums (e.g. weed control, pesticide management, and fencing).
- d. Consider how the next review will continue to be a value-added effort, given that most wildlife projects are under long-term agreements and have had three or more reviews.

Programmatic Issues - Wildlife

The category review process has proved valuable and successful, particularly in identifying and developing programmatic issues that affect multiple projects. Many of the programmatic issues that came out of this wildlife review have been addressed through the Wildlife Crediting Forum and the PERC processes in 2010-2012. The programmatic issues that have been addressed include:

1. New funding opportunities
2. The Habitat Evaluation Procedure (HEP)
3. Wildlife Crediting Issues
4. Regional Coordination Funding
5. New Acquisitions and Agreements