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September 4, 2024

### **DECISION MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Council members

**FROM:** Kris Homel and Maureen Hess

**SUBJECT:** Contract with QW Consulting, LLC for Fiscal Year 2025

**PROPOSED ACTION:** Council staff recommends authorization to contract with QW Consulting, LLC for fiscal year 2025 in an amount not to exceed \$95,150 to assist staff in enhancing and maintaining the functionality of the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program (Program) [Program Tracker: Resource Tools and Maps](#).

**SIGNIFICANCE:** The tools on the Council's Program Tracker: Resource Tools and Maps site are identified in the 2020 Addendum to the Fish and Wildlife Program as the primary tools for reporting and communicating Program performance. These tools help staff report-out relevant information about the Program, including accomplishments, work implemented and Program progress, in part through the compilation, analysis, and display of indicator datasets. These tools and maps also improve our outreach to broader audiences as summary information is shared in bold data points and visual storytelling.

### **BUDGETARY/ECONOMIC IMPACTS**

Total contract budget is not to exceed \$95,150 for fiscal year 2025.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Council has worked over the past several years to redevelop our communication and reporting tools, which has included development of webtools that track and communicate Program performance and progress, as well as initial efforts to revamp the Program Tracker Tool (formerly the Fish Information Site). A component of this is the ongoing work on data compilation associated with the strategy performance indicators identified in the 2020 Addendum. This work requires expertise in data acquisition, management, and analysis, as well as web tool development. QW Consulting, LLC assisted the Council with the past efforts and has experience with the regional databases from which information is sourced to support these tools and products.

If authorized to contract with QW, work under this contract would include maintenance and support for the existing sites and the continued developmental work associated with the build-out of the Program Tracker. It will also include work to acquire, compile and import status and trends datasets that support program goals, objectives and strategy performance indicators as identified in the 2020 Addendum Part 1, to integrate existing datasets (fish screens, hatcheries, lands) into the Program Tracker, and to continue to develop methods for Council staff to update the Program Tracker directly.

There are two tasks that will be carried forward from the FY24 contract into the FY25 contract due to the need to complete work on visual communication tools (e.g., storymaps, handouts) for Fish Screens and Lands. This work was intended to be complete in FY24, however there were other higher priority tasks that took longer to complete than anticipated. Specifically, this work included re-structuring and developing the hatchery Program Tracker tool to include a comprehensive representation of Columbia basin hatchery facilities and programs, providing context for the region, in addition to the Council's Program. This work required iterative coordination with staff, and led to additional hours spent on both this task and the coordination meeting task.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

The Fish and Wildlife Division is currently building our capacity to maintain the Program Tracker, conduct the anticipated updates, and make refinements, but we have limited staff resources to apply. In addition, the division continues to need assistance in revising and updating datasets and functionality of Program Tracker. Therefore, alternatives for the Council include not pursuing the effort, reducing the effort, or delaying the work, which may not be as efficient or cost-effective.