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Chair
Idaho

Ed Schriever
Idaho

Doug Grob
Montana

Mike Milburn
Montana



Northwest **Power** and **Conservation** Council

KC Golden
Vice Chair
Washington

Thomas L (Les) Purce
Washington

Ginny Burdick
Oregon

Louie Pitt, Jr.
Oregon

Council Meeting Summary **March 13, 2024** **at Portland, OR and via Webinar**

This is a summary of the Council's March 2024 public meeting and the actions the Council decided upon. The meeting agenda and presentation materials for each agenda item during the meeting are posted at <https://www.nwcouncil.org/calendar/council-meeting-2024-03-12/>. The meeting recording and a copy of this summary will also be posted on that page.

March 13, 2024

Council Chair Jeffery Allen brought the meeting to order at 8:29 a.m. Pacific time. Council Members Ginny Burdick, KC Golden, Doug Grob, Mike Milburn, Thomas L (Les) Purse, and Ed Schriever were in attendance in Portland, OR. Member Louie Pitt Jr. was not in attendance. The next Council meeting is scheduled for April 9-10 in Olympia, WA and via webinar.

Reports from the Committee Chairs and Executive Director

Fish and Wildlife Committee

Member Milburn, Fish and Wildlife Committee Chair, reported on the fish and wildlife committee meeting held on March 12, 2024.

1. Fish and Wildlife Committee Update and Planning

Patty O'Toole, the Council's Fish and Wildlife Division Director began her presentation by introducing Kym Buzdygon, Communication Lead on Fish and Wildlife. O'Toole then

gave a brief overview of each of the committee's agenda items and provided an overview of upcoming assignments for the Independent Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB).

For the report and the presentation materials, see https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18648/2024_03_f1.pdf.

2. Expansion of Non-native Walleye: Another Threat to Salmon and Steelhead

The Council's Idaho Fish and Wildlife Policy Analyst, Windy Schoby, introduced Mrika Dobos and Dr. John Powell of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game who provided an update on efforts to discussed how the distribution of walleye has been increasing and expanding in the Snake River upstream of the Lower Granite Dam. This expansion poses a threat to wild and hatchery stocks of juvenile salmon that use overlapping habitats. It was shared that a group has been formed consisting of state, federal, and tribal agencies to focus on this expanding threat.

For the report and the presentation materials, see https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18652/2024_03_f2.pdf.

3. Loss Assessment of Spring/Summer Chinook in the Upper Snake River Basin

The Council's Idaho Fish and Wildlife Policy Analyst, Windy Schoby, introduced Dennis Daw and Scott Hauser with the Upper Snake River Tribes Foundation and Steve Seville with Parametrix who discussed a loss assessment of Spring/Summer Chinook in the Upper Snake River Basin that was recently completed. The tribes requested and were granted a review of the scientific elements of the document by the ISAB. The ISAB review will provide an evaluation of strengths, uncertainties, and limitations of the overall approach and identify and provide input to know how they may be addressed.

For the report and the presentation materials, see https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18655/2024_03_f3.pdf.

4. Overview of the Step Review process and Fish and Wildlife Program Hatcheries

The Council's Fish and Wildlife Project Review and Implementation Manager, Mark Fritsch provided an overview of the Three-Step Review Process and Fish and Wildlife

Program Hatcheries. The Step Review Process is a valuable tool for review of nature investments including new hatchery programs and facilities. The Step Review allows for review of scientific soundness, environmental impact, design, and fiscal considerations at appropriate stages of development.

For the report and the presentation materials, see https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18651/2024_03_f4.pdf.

5. Fish and Wildlife Division Workplan Highlights for 2024

Council Fish and Wildlife staff Mark Fritsch and Maureen Hess provided an update on three resource tools located on the Council's website that displays information on the Fish and Wildlife Program's land acquisitions, fish screens, hatchery facilities, and artificial production programs. These topics are important components of the Program's implementation history and investments to mitigate for effects of the construction and operation of the hydrosystem on fish and wildlife.

For the report and the presentation materials, see https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18653/2024_03_f5.pdf.

Power Committee

Member Grob, Power Committee chair, reported on the power committee meeting held on March 12, 2024.

1. Power Committee Update and Planning

Jennifer Light, the Council's Director of Power Planning, shared a Power Committee update. The update included the current plan, a focus on load forecasting, and the 9th power plan preparation which includes a proposal for a new advisory committee, the Climate Weather Advisory Committee (CWAC).

For the report and the presentation materials, see https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18654/2024_03_p1.pdf.

2. Approach to Solar and Electric Vehicles in the Long-Term Load Forecast

Council Power Staff Steven Simmons, Dor Hirsh Bar Gai, and Dylan D'Souza provided an update on the continued buildout of the new long-term load forecasting approach to EVs and solar. Staff covered recent efforts to add two important load components to the

overall forecast – electric vehicles and small-scale solar. Staff are planning to utilize the 2021 Power Plan High Electric Forecast Case for the EVs going forward which aligns with recent individual Utility integrated resource portfolios (IRP) forecasts in our region.

For the report and the presentation materials, see https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18658/2024_03_p2.pdf.

3. Data Center and Chip Fabrication Forecast

Council's Senior Power Analyst, Tomás Morrissey introduced Amber Riter of Portland General Electric and Mark Symonds of Bonneville Power Administration to discuss their organizations outlook on data center and chip fabrication forecast. Industrial load growth, including data centers in high tech manufacturing, is increasing rapidly in the Hillsboro region. There was a discussion of getting data centers to provide demand response as next steps. Morrissey presented a draft Northwest load forecast for these sectors, including extending the forecast past 2029.

For the report and the presentation materials, see https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18660/2024_03_p3.pdf.

Executive Director Report

The Council's Executive Director, Bill Edmonds, shared that the meetings that were scheduled to be webinars in May and October are now going to be in-person in Portland, OR and by webinar. Council and committee meetings are also likely to become longer as there is an increase in the amount of material to cover. Edmonds provided insight to upcoming Council meetings. At the April meeting in Olympia, WA, Governor Dan Evans will be speaking. At the May meeting in Portland, OR there is anticipation for presentations by representatives from the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Coeur d'Alene Tribes, the Spokane Tribe of Indians, the Bureau of Reclamation and others to be presenting on the Phase 2 Implementation Plan: testing feasibility of reintroducing salmon to the basin. Lastly, Edmonds shared that BPA Administrator, John Hairston is confirmed to attend the July meeting in Portland, OR.

Council Meeting Agenda Items

1. Actions Update on Ocean Conditions for Salmon and Steelhead

Council's Biologist for Program Performance, Kris Homel, introduced Brian Burke, Supervisory Research Fish Biologist, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Northwest (NOAA) Fisheries Science Center to present research findings and outlooks associated with Chinook and Steelhead returns to the Columbia River based on indicators of ocean conditions. Burke shared that the ocean is not homogeneous and that where and when salmon migrate will determine their ocean experience, growth, and survival. Adding that 2022 and 2023 were about average and that should continue this year and in 2025. Burke also presented that freshwater management can affect marine survival and in the absence of the ecosystem-based stock-specific stoplight charts, correlative stock-specific tools can be created for use by managers.

Presentation materials are at: https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18656/2024_03_1.pdf.

2. Briefing on Columbia River Basin Salmon and Steelhead Returns for 2023 and Forecasts for 2024

Mark Fritsch, Council's Project Review and Implementation Manager, introduced Dr. Charlene Hurst, from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Stuart Ellis From the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, and Dr. John Powell of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Dr. Hurst provided an overview on adult Chinook, coho, sockeye, and chum salmon and steelhead run forecasts for the Columbia River, and expectations for the 2024 fisheries. The presentation also included a retrospective review of the 2023 adult salmon and steelhead returns and non-treaty fisheries. Stuart provided a summary of information regarding the treaty fisheries summary for 2023 and expectations for 2024. Dr. Powell provided additional information for the Snake River Basin for salmon and steelhead returns along with the forecasted returns for 2024, focusing on the species/run groupings of spring/summer and fall Chinook salmon; summer steelhead; and sockeye salmon.

Presentation materials are at: https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18657/2024_03_2.pdf.

3. Release Issue Paper on Preparation for the Ninth Power Plan

Council's Director of Power Planning, Jennifer Light, presented with purpose of seeking Council authorization to release an Issue Paper that outlines early thinking on the ninth power plan for an approximately 45-day comment period. Light shared that the power division is starting to prepare for the Council's ninth power plan and getting public comment on early scoping and priorities will support the Council with preparing models and inputs in preparation for the plan. The ideas outlined in the issue paper are draft

and anticipated to evolve based on public comment and further staff and member discussion.

Presentation materials are at: https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18659/2024_03_3.pdf.

Member Golden moved that the Council approve the release of the issue paper in preparation for the Ninth Northwest Power Plan for public review and comment for a period of 45 days, as presented by staff.

Member Purce seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.

4. Overview of the Bonneville Integrated Program Review (IPR) and Rate Case process for the BP26 Rate Period

Council's Fish and Wildlife Director, Patty O'Toole introduced Benjamin Agre, Manager, Financial Analysis & Forecasting, Bonneville Power Administration who presented on an overview of the Integrated Program Review (IPR) and Rate Case processes used by the Bonneville Power Administration. Agre provided details of what IPR is and the reason for holding it, all that is included in the IPR, and the process. Lastly, Agre spoke to the Bonneville Power 2026 (BP-26) IPR and to alignment with BPA's Regional Dialogue contracts, the BP-26 IPR and BP-26 Rate Case will cover three years: FY 2026 – 2028.

Presentation materials are at: https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18643/2024_03_4.pdf.

5. January 2024 Cold Weather Event

Tomás Morrissey, Council's Senior Power Analyst provided a brief background on the details of what took place during the January 2024 cold weather event. Morrissey introduced James Gall and Tom Pardee with Avista, who presented via webinar. Gall highlighted that this was one of the most critical resource adequacy events that has taken place in the northwest over the last 20 years and it is important to ensure resource adequacy to meet the needs of an event like this in the future. Gall shared the unique perspective that Avista has on this issue due to being a dual bill utility and spoke to the electric system challenges. Pardee presented the natural gas system challenges and how they interplay. Lastly, potential resource adequacy changes were discussed.

Presentation materials are at: https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18649/2024_03_5.pdf.

6. Regional Technical Forum (RTF) Annual Report

Laura Thomas, Regional Technical Forum (RTF) Manager began the presentation with a brief background on the RTF and gave an update the Council and stakeholders about the RTF's activities from the previous year and provided a preview of the ongoing work in the current calendar year. Thomas shared highlights from 2023 as captured in the annual report, including enhancing the existing measure portfolio, expanding the measure portfolio, and expanding the portfolio to add new measures. Lastly, Thomas shared the 2023 financials which included current funding for the RTF and unspent and unallocated funds.

Presentation materials are at: https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18650/2024_03_6.pdf.

7. Release New Climate and Weather Advisory Committee Proposal

Council staff Jennifer Light, Daniel Hua, and Christian Douglass presented with purpose of seeking the release of a proposal for a new Climate and Weather Advisory Committee for a 30-day public comment period. It was shared that the reason for this new advisory committee is due to climate and weather impacting the power system, both in terms of loads and resource availability. Therefore, understanding the potential implications of changing climate and extreme weather events is critical for the Council's power planning activities. The proposed Climate and Weather Advisory Committee will advise the Council on issues connected to climate and weather data.

Presentation materials are at: https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18644/2024_03_7.pdf.

Member Golden moved that the Council approve the release of the proposal to establish a Climate and Weather Advisory Committee for public review and comment for a period of 30 days.

Member Schriever seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.

8. Council Business

Approval of February 2024 Council Meeting Summary

Member Golden moved that the Council approve for signature of the Vice Chair of the Vice-Chair the official summary of the February 2024 Council Meeting held in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and via webinar, as presented by staff.

Member Burdick seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.

The approved summary of the February 2024 Council meeting and other materials from that meeting are at: https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18647/2024_03_8minutes.pdf.

Member Golden moved that the Council approve the sending of the comment letter to the United States Department of Energy in support of the proposed energy conservation standard for fans and blowers, as presented by staff.

Member Purce seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.

Materials are at: https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18646/2024_03_8fans.pdf.

Member Golden moved that the Council authorize staff to extend the contract with Coates Kokes for communications support through July 2024, in an amount not to exceed \$26,000, as presented by staff.

Member Schriever seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.

Materials are at: https://www.nwcouncil.org/fs/18645/2024_03_8ck.pdf.

Public Comments

Fred Heutte with Northwest Energy Coalition commented on outages in recent severe weather, speaking to the January cold weather event, and the need to enhance reliability and resource adequacy.

Comment recording can be found here at: <https://vimeo.com/923487133#t=368m10s>.

Chair Allen adjourned the meeting at 2:54 p.m. Pacific time.