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Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2010 10:11 AM
To: Merrill, Erik
Subject: ISAB questions on Friday

Erik:

There were a couple of questions that were asked and some statements that were made during the ISAB meeting on Friday that we thought were worth clarifying.

1. One of the attendees on the phone asked if about adult sockeye straying from the upper Columbia to the Snake River. We checked the PIT tag data base and did not find any detections of Upper Columbia sockeye in the Snake, nor did we find detections of Snake River sockeye in the upper Columbia.
2. Ritchie Graves, NOAA, stated that in 2009 all PIT tagged sockeye juveniles were diverted back to in-river passage. In 2009 approximately 60% of PIT tagged juvenile sockeye were transported and about 40% of PIT tagged juvenile sockeye were diverted back to in-river passage as part of the sockeye transportation evaluation.
3. The FPC submitted comments on the NOAA sockeye analysis, entitled "Factors affecting sockeye salmon returns to the Columbia River in 2008" in response to a request from Ed Bowles. The comments (Feb. 18, 2009) are posted on the FPC web site and I have attached them to this email. At the meeting on Friday NOAA presented a comparison of upper Columbia River SARs and Snake River SARs, saying they were correlated and upper Columbia sockeye are not transported so therefore discounting the impact of either transportation or in-river conditions on sockeye. This comparison of the upper Columbia with the Snake sockeye SARs was presented without discussion of the significant changes in juvenile passage conditions through the upper Columbia projects, which have not been accounted for in the NOAA comparison. As an example, beginning in 2006, spring spill at PRD has decreased substantially. Prior to 2006, spring spill at PRD ranged from 44-66%, where as spill since 2006 has ranged from 12.7-29%. (Spill at Wanapum and Rocky Reach have also decreased). Subsequently, spring spill at JDA and MCN has increased since 2006, particularly at MCN where spill has been 40% for 24-hours in recent years. Prior to 2006, spill at MCN was limited to 12-hour spill to the gas cap. Although we all agree that marine conditions are important, comparison of sockeye SARs between the Snake and Columbia rivers also encompasses the impact of changes in fresh water migration conditions.

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