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September 10, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Council Staff

SUBJECT: Update on the review phase of the staff Draft Columbia Basin Habitat Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

BACKGROUND:

Presenter: Leslie Bach, Nancy Leonard and Mark Fritsch

Summary: On September 10th the staff draft of the *Columbia Basin Habitat Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy* was released for review. Council staff will discuss the timeframe associated with the review of the strategy and the critical importance of this phase in the development of the strategy, specifically collaboration with the region's fish and wildlife managers.

Relevance: This work focuses on implementing the Council's 2013 conditions and recommendations for ensuring a cost-effective approach to tributary habitat monitoring and evaluation, as defined in Programmatic Issue #2 (i.e., Habitat effectiveness monitoring and evaluation) from the 2010-11 review of RME and AP Category of projects.

Background: In 2013, the Council requested a framework for habitat research and monitoring to support evaluation of the effectiveness of habitat projects. Although some products and updates were provided over the years, the analytical framework was never completed. At the July 2017 meeting, the Council directed staff to work with the region's fish and wildlife managers and BPA to develop a tributary habitat monitoring strategy. In 2017 and 2018 staff held a series of webinars and workshops, and developed a

preliminary strategy based on the outcomes from those meetings and review by the region.

Building from that effort, Council, BPA and NOAA-Fisheries staff formed the Columbia Basin Research, Monitoring and Evaluation steering team to develop an integrated Research, Monitoring and Evaluation strategy that meets multiple basin needs. There is strong support from the region's fish and wildlife managers for the three entities to work together to develop a single strategy that will guide project monitoring across the Basin.

The Columbia Basin Habitat Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy is being developed in three phases.

- Phase 1: Develop draft strategy (May 2018 – August 2019)
- Phase 2: Collaborate with the region's fish and wildlife program project sponsors and managers to improve and advance strategy content (August 2019 – March 2020)
- Phase 3: Finalized strategy for use in implementation (2020)

The draft strategy was released on September 10th, and on September 12th a Webinar was conducted to review the draft staff strategy. There are also several in-person workshops planned to facilitate dialogue and discussion with the region and assist the fish and wildlife managers as they review and help revise the draft strategy.