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Northwestern Division



Overview:

FCRPS Adaptive Management Implementation Plan (AMIP) September 15, 2009

Background: The Obama Administration undertook an extensive effort to review the 2008 FCRPS Biological Opinion (BiOp). The process included listening to the views of the parties to the litigation, as well as those of agency and independent scientists, and a consideration of the points raised in a May 2009 letter from U.S. District Court Judge James A. Redden. The Administration determined that the science underlying the BiOp is fundamentally sound, but there are uncertainties in some predictions regarding the future condition of the listed species. As a result, the Administration has developed an “insurance policy for the fish” as part of the BiOp. A key to this “insurance policy” are contingency measures to be implemented in case of a significant decline in fish abundance. The plan improves on efforts to track and detect climate change and its effects on listed species and other uncertainties that could emerge over the 10-year life of the biological opinion. This Adaptive Management Implementation Plan (AMIP) was filed with Judge Redden on September 15, 2009.

Obama Administration Conclusions: As implemented through the AMIP, the 2008 BiOp is biologically and legally sound, is based on the best available scientific information, and satisfies the ESA jeopardy standard. The BiOp is the result of extensive regional collaboration and reflects great regional consensus. With this BiOp Implementation Plan, the Administration hopes to broaden this support so that we can put the last decade of litigation behind us. It is time to get to work implementing fish protections, working with our state and tribal partners.

Highlights of the AMIP – An Insurance Policy for the Fish

Accelerated & Enhanced Actions to protect the species. These include commitments to additional estuary actions under a new agreement with the State of Washington, efforts to control predators and invasive species, and biologically-based changes to spring and summer spill.

Enhanced Research & Monitoring to improve the certainty of the information needed for decision making, and to address uncertainties or the potential for unanticipated changes. Improvements include:

- Expanding adult status and trend monitoring to better understand fish populations;
- Expanding Intensively Monitored Watersheds (IMWs) to monitor the effects of climate change;
- A new Life-cycle model to evaluate contingent actions; and
- Enhanced research on predators, invasive species and potential reintroduction.

Specific Biological Triggers for Contingencies which are linked to declining abundance of listed fish at odds with BiOp expectations. The triggers, if tripped, would activate rapid or long-term actions to address significant declines in the abundance of naturally produced salmon and steelhead. A **Significant Decline Trigger** will result in implementation of Rapid Response contingency actions. An **Early Warning Indicator** will focus attention on possible problems to come, and may result in implementation of Rapid Response contingency actions, if deemed necessary.

Contingency Actions. Rapid Response Actions, which are short-term contingencies to improve fish survival, include additional hydro operations, increased predator controls, certain harvest controls, and safety-net hatcheries. **Long-Term Contingency Actions** are measures taken across “all Hs,” including lower Snake River dam breaching as a contingency of last resort.

Regional Collaboration & Independent Scientific Review to continue the partnerships with states and tribes, to provide for ongoing scientific input and to ensure transparent reporting on progress.

For more information on the Adaptive Management Implementatin plan:
http://www.salmonrecovery.gov/Biological_Opinions/FCRPS/2008_biop/index.cfm_



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Figure 1: Refined Adaptive Management Implementation Provisions

KEY

- FCRPS 2008 BiOp Actions
- Refined Adaptive Management Processes & Actions

