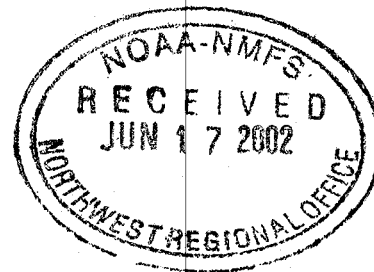




UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10

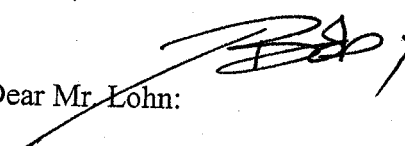
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

JUN 11 2002



Reply To Attn Of: ECO-087

D. Robert Lohn
National Marine Fisheries Service
Northwest Region
7600 Sand Point Way N.E.
Building 1
Seattle, WA 98115


Dear Mr. Lohn:

Please find enclosed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Fiscal Year 2001 Progress Report for the Columbia Basin Salmon Recovery Strategy as a part the 2000 National Marine Fisheries Service Biological Opinion on the Federal Columbia River Power System. The EPA has responsibility, with delegations and support to states and tribes, for water quality and habitat improvements through the Clean Water Act. The Columbia Basin Recovery Strategy provides a broad strategy consistent with Clean Water Act activities currently being conducted by the states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho and Columbia Basin Tribes. Our accomplishments can be summarized in the following areas:

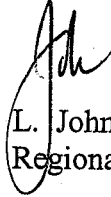
Technical Support - EPA has provided technical and scientific support to federal agencies, states and tribes through the development of a one dimensional temperature model for the Columbia/Snake Mainstem that will provide a critical foundation for future implementation decisions for the Columbia and Snake River Mainstem. This temperature model is a vital addition to state of the art knowledge of the temperature in the Columbia and Snake River system.

Commitment to Community Based Support - EPA has placed an emphasis on providing community based support for local watershed efforts. As such, EPA Region 10 has community based staff located in LaGrande, OR; Prosser, WA; and Yakima, WA, who work with the community to develop local solutions for environmental problems. This unique location provides specialized support for TMDL efforts in the Grande Ronde Basin, Umatilla Basin, and the Walla Walla Basin.

Support to States and Tribes for TMDL Development and Implementation - EPA has continued to provide support to the states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho to continue ongoing TMDL water quality improvement planning and water quality improvement projects to improve water quality throughout Columbia Basin tributaries. These water quality improvement plans are being developed over the next ten year period are expected to be completed by 2012. The states have the lead in water quality improvement implementation effort.

The enclosed Progress Report provides a more detailed description of the progress made. Please direct questions or requests for further information to Mary Lou Soscia, EPA Region 10 Columbia River Coordinator, (503) 326-5873.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'L. John Iani', is written over the typed name.

L. John Iani
Regional Administrator

Enclosure

Progress Report - EPA-Columbia River
May 28, 2002

EPA Initiatives

- EPA negotiated with the other federal agencies and the Council on Environmental Quality an unprecedented agreement within the 2000 FCRPS Biological Opinion to efficiently integrate ESA and CWA implementation efforts. As a follow up EPA provided a draft framework to the action agencies for the Water Quality Plan called for in the Biological Opinion to address CWA.
- EPA worked closely with the other Columbia River federal agencies in the Federal Caucus and the Federal Regional Executive Forums to provide a unified federal voice for Columbia River decisions.
- EPA worked with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service to develop an agreement to streamline Section 7 consultations and other ESA/CWA integration actions.
- In 2000, EPA and the states of Oregon, Idaho, and Washington, in coordination with the Columbia Basin Tribes, initiated the Columbia/Snake Mainstem Total Maximum Daily Load to establish load allocations for dissolved gas and temperature for the Columbia and Snake River Mainstem. The TMDL effort is expected to conclude by early 2003.
- EPA developed a one dimensional temperature model for the Columbia/Snake Mainstem that will provide a critical foundation for future implementation decisions for the Columbia and Snake River Mainstem. This temperature model is a vital addition to state of the art knowledge of the temperature in the Columbia and Snake River system.
- Using this model, EPA provided scientific and technical analysis to regional Columbia River managers to assist in critical decisions in the 2001 power emergency. EPA's analysis was intended to provide support helping to understand the water quality implications of various river management decisions.
- EPA has continued to provide support to the states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho to continue ongoing TMDL water quality improvement planning and water quality improvement projects (see Attachment A) to improve water quality throughout Columbia Basin tributaries. These water quality improvement plans are being developed over the next ten year period are expected to be completed by 2012. The states have the lead in water quality improvement implementation efforts.
- Region 10 has identified the Columbia River Basin as a priority focus for future EPA budget decisions.
- EPA Region 10, working with the National Marine Fisheries Service, has proposed guidance for state and tribal temperature water quality standards. These proposed guidelines are intended to integrate Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act

requirements focusing on temperature criteria. These proposed guidelines are currently in a public review process.

Implementation of All-H Strategy

- EPA participated in the development of the Conservation of Columbia Basin Fish -Basin Wide Salmon Recovery Strategy (All H Paper) to ensure coordination of Endangered Species Actions with ongoing and future water quality efforts in the Columbia Basin.
- In December 2000, EPA Region 10 offered watershed technical assistance to the Northwest Power Planning Council in December 2000 in the sub-basin approach. This technical assistance offer is built on EPA's experiences in watershed approaches throughout the U.S.
- In July 2001, EPA offered watershed technical assistance to the Bonneville Power Administration to support sub-basin process and integrate Clean Water Act TMDL activities.

Commitment to Community Based Support

- EPA has placed an emphasis on providing community based support for local watershed efforts. As such, EPA Region 10 has community based staff located in LaGrande, OR; Prosser, WA; and Yakima, WA, who work with the community to develop local solutions for environmental problems. This unique location provides specialized support for TMDL efforts in the Grande Ronde Basin, Umatilla Basin, and the Walla Walla Basin.

Attachment A - Examples of the types of projects

Example of the Types of EPA Clean Water Act Funded Projects

- Riparian, wetland and in-stream projects - riparian fencing, planting
- Riparian and wetland protection - forest practices, urban model codes, agricultural plans, conservation easements
- In-stream habitat (log jams, wood placement, stream barbs)
- Tide gate replacement
- Wetland enhancement and restoration
- Reconnecting streams and flood plains (dike removal, diversion into old meanders)
- Agriculture - no-till, drip irrigation, reduced nutrients and pesticides, growing alternative crops (e.g. hybrid poplars)
- Forestry
- Upland landscape management - Affecting hydrology, delivery of sediment, nutrients, bacteria, pesticides road surveys, culvert replacement
- Urban - low impact development/minimizing effective impervious surface

CWA Projects in Mid and Lower Columbia ESU's

Umatilla Basin

- Buckaroo Creek - Grazing system, riparian planting, restoration plan for ecosystem function - \$21,625
- Implementation of Agriculture Water Quality Plan under SB 1010 (riparian work, sediment reduction, monitoring, education) \$25,000
- Sediment reduction and improved soil permeability/ vegetative condition through direct seeding (no-till) wheat - 6 operators, 960 acres - \$44,200
- Sediment reduction and improved soil permeability/vegetative condition through direct

- seeding (no-till) wheat - 20 operators, 4,000 acres \$56,500
Butter Creek enhancement - floodplain reconnection feasibility - \$26,250

Fifteen Mile Watershed

- Sediment reduction and water conservation (direct seeding/no till, terraces, riparian vegetation, irrigation improvements, offstream water development - \$60,000

Lower Deschutes Basin

- Implementation of Agriculture Water Quality Plan under SB 1010 (riparian work, sediment reduction, monitoring, education) \$22,500

Upper South Fork John Day

- Monitoring (macroinvertebrates, habitat, chemistry) for effectiveness of grazing practices, check dams, riparian restoration - \$8,800

Middle Columbia

- SWCD technical assistance for farm plans, riparian work - \$9,800

Walla Walla Basin

- Education, data gathering, preliminary implementation priority setting for TMDL - \$19,700

Lower Columbia Basin - Critical wetland protection and restoration - \$35,600