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August 4, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fish and Wildlife Committee Members

FROM: Lynn Palensky, Program Development Manager
Jim Ruff, Mainstem Passage and River Operations Manager

SUBJECT: Challenges and Responses to Extreme Heat and Drought Conditions:
Fish and Wildlife Agency Briefings

BACKGROUND:

Presenter: Lynn Palensky to Introduce Matt Boyer, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, Paul Kline, Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game, Tom Rien, Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, Dan Rawding, Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, Ann Setter, Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Ritchie Graves, NOAA Fisheries.

Summary: Agency representatives will provide an overview of their agencies' responses, challenges and real-time adaptive management to our region's record extreme high temperatures and low water conditions.

Relevance: The current low streamflow and warm water conditions are affecting the entire region; and hitting migrating cold water species such as salmon the hardest. It effects nearly every aspect our program work.

Workplan: This presentation is not specifically tracked in our Division's work plan, but the agency representatives will discuss how they are addressing the impacts of this summer's warm and low water conditions on fish and ecosystem functions, which are addressed in our fish and wildlife program.

Background: Due to the meager snowpack this past winter, early snowmelt and runoff, and extremely warm weather, nearly all of the West is experiencing abnormally dry conditions, with drought emergencies declared in California and three of the four Northwest states. While precipitation in the upper Columbia River Basin is close to normal, river conditions for fish have been abnormally warm and flow volumes have been far below normal in the mainstem.

State fisheries and water management agencies have reduced or halted fishing, reduced or halted water withdrawals and taken other actions in the Columbia River and its tributaries to protect fish and wildlife and maintain minimal water supply conditions for domestic and agricultural purposes. At this meeting state and federal fisheries and water-management representatives will brief the Council on current conditions and responses to the extreme conditions.

More Info: Data on current weather and river conditions is available on the website of the Northwest River Forecast Center [here](#).