

Section 8 - Budget and implementation

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8. Budget and Implementation

8.1 Budget Planning

In 1995, the Congress and the Administration agreed to a funding commitment for Bonneville's fish and wildlife obligations. The budget agreement covers the years from 1996 to 2001 and establishes an overall spending obligation of \$252 million on average for fish and wildlife projects, in addition to commitment of flow measures and river operations to implement the 1995-99 National Marine Fisheries Service Biological Opinion for the federal hydropower system.

In September 1996, the involved federal agencies signed a memorandum of agreement for management and accounting of Bonneville's fish and wildlife funds. The Council and tribal fishery managers participated in the development of these provisions. The Memorandum of Agreement recognized regional involvement and prioritization of available Bonneville funds.

Under the MOA, the BPA F&W budget is divided into three general categories, each with its own process for making funding decisions. It is not the intent of the MOA to supplant these existing decision processes, but to ensure that they are accountable and that decisions are coordinated. The purpose of the MYIP is to be the vehicle for this coordination and accountability. The Annual Work Plan lays out the specific projects to be funded in the upcoming FY. This section describes the development of the Annual Work Plan based on the MYIP.

8.1.1 MOA Budget

The funding for fish and wildlife activities under the MOA is provided through two sources: Congressional appropriations, which are then reimbursed in whole or in part by Bonneville from power sale revenue, and funding directly provided by Bonneville from its power sale revenues. Congressional appropriations fund the activities of the Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Bonneville revenues directly fund the Northwest Power Planning Council and the implementation activities administered by the Bonneville Fish and Wildlife Division.

The Memorandum of Agreement anticipated that funding for Congressionally appropriated activities would continue to be provided through the federal budget and appropriations process and that coordinated planning and prioritization would occur through regional consultations in the development of agency budget requests. This will allow the region to evaluate priorities within the reimbursable budgets and also between the agency budgets and Bonneville's direct program budget. Because the Bonneville Fish and Wildlife Budget Agreement is generally a fixed amount, increases in one program's budget may have to be offset by reductions in another. Bonneville's fish and wildlife costs are conventionally divided among three accounts:

1. Direct program expenses from Bonneville's power sale revenues.
2. Reimbursements to other agencies for their Columbia River Basin fish and wildlife activities. This category includes portions of the budgets of the Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Northwest Power Planning Council.

3. Repayment of funds borrowed to finance capital construction projects (such as hatcheries or dam bypass facilities).

1. Expenses: “Expenses” refers to the funds Bonneville spends to implement the Council’s Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program (the program) for such activities as fisheries research, predator control, hatchery management, and habitat projects. Since 1993, Bonneville’s expenses have also included costs for “reasonable and prudent alternatives” established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service Biological Opinions (biological opinions). These measures are largely, but not completely, consistent with the Council’s program. Expenses are paid from Bonneville’s annual power sales revenues.

Within Bonneville’s direct program, the Council provided further guidance in its Program amendments of 1995. Measure 2.2F.1 called for Bonneville to allocate not less than 15 percent of its fish and wildlife project budget to resident fish projects and 15 percent to wildlife projects, leaving 70 percent of the budget available for anadromous fish projects. This “70-15-15” allocation was used beginning in the Fiscal Year 1996.

2. Reimbursables: Bonneville reimburses other federal agencies for their operating and maintenance costs for fishery activities associated with the federal hydroelectric system. These include some activities that are not part of the Council’s program. Included are: the Corps of Engineers’ fish transportation system, fish passage research, and juvenile passage systems. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Lower Snake River Compensation Plan hatcheries and habitat restoration activities (separately enacted by Congress) and the Bureau of Reclamation’s Leavenworth Hatchery (originally constructed to mitigate impacts of the Grand Coulee Dam). The NPPC also develops its budget and submits it to BPA for reimbursement.

3. Capital Repayments: Bonneville annually repays to the U.S. Treasury interest and principal on fish and wildlife construction projects built by the Corps, Bureau of Reclamation, or Bonneville’s fish and wildlife division. These are semi-permanent facilities whose costs are financed over time. When the Corps builds a facility, such as bypass systems at the dams or fish ladders, the funds are appropriated by Congress in the annual energy and water appropriations bill. Upon completion of the project, its total costs including interest accrued during construction are added to Bonneville’s total repayment obligations for the dams. The total costs are reduced proportionate to the federal hydro system’s share of each project’s multiple purposes. At Lower Monumental Dam, for example, hydroelectricity is assigned 94 percent of the project purposes. The remaining benefits are allocated to navigation and flood control. A fish ladder installed at the dam will have 94 percent of its costs assigned to Bonneville for repayment. Bonneville’s average share of dam modification costs in the Columbia River Basin is 73 percent.

Bonneville also finances the costs of construction projects under the Council program. Examples include tribal hatcheries, the large irrigation screens in the Yakima Basin, and tributary fish passage projects. Borrowing for these projects is authorized by Congress under a total “borrowing authority” for transmission and fish and wildlife projects. No separate appropriation is required, but Bonneville must balance its borrowing against the projected needs within the

overall cap on borrowing authority. When power sales revenues are high, Bonneville may choose to finance construction costs directly from revenues and avoid adding to its debt.

When thinking about capital repayment costs, it is useful, though vastly oversimplified, to consider the example of adding the payments for a kitchen remodeling to the base mortgage payments on a house. Bonneville must repay the costs for the hydroelectric system's assigned share of each dam. When a fish facility is added to the dam, Bonneville's annual payments for the dam increase.

The base budget for each MOA account is displayed in Table 8-1 below.

Table 8- 1 Bonneville fish and wildlife funding plan by fiscal year for the term of the MOA

<u>DIRECT EXPENSES</u>	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	96-'01 Avg
Expenditures Plan	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
Expenditure Amount Available ²³	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	
<u>REIMBURSABLE</u>	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	
Expenditures Plan ²⁴	\$39.772	\$40.054	\$42.961	\$44.294	\$46.485	\$48.255	\$43.637
Expenditure Amount Available	40	40	40	40	40	40	
<u>CAPITAL INVESTMENTS</u>	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	
Expenditures Plan	\$73	\$87	\$106	\$118	\$129	\$156	\$112
Expenditures Amount Available	\$112	\$112	\$112	\$112	\$112	\$112	
All figures in thousands							

8.1.2 Capital Budget - Annual Decision Process

This section describes the current processes for identifying priorities for construction projects funded by Congressional appropriations. The potential new projects are described in Section 3, the Mainstem Construction Work Plan. In each year's federal budget cycle, the Administration

²³ In addition, \$27 million per year in capital funding (borrowing) will be provided by BPA for the Direct Program. The interest and amortization for this is reflected in the Expenditures Plan for the Capital Investment category.

²⁴ The excess of actual expenditures over the Expenditure Amount Available will be funded from the Capital Investments category in accordance with Section 6b(2) of the agreement.

prepares a request for new and continuing construction projects for fish passage at the Columbia and Snake River dams. The Administration's request is based on an identification of needed work by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Administration submits its budget request for the next fiscal year to Congress in late January, which requires the Corps' project selection and budget preparation to be conducted during the year before. For example, the Corps' regional office will be preparing budget requests for Fiscal Year 1999 during the spring and summer of 1997.

The Corps has recently expanded regional participation in its budget preparation and project selection process. The Corps uses the System Configuration Team to review project proposals and recommend priorities for project selection. Section 3.4.1 of this workplan describes the System Configuration Team and its process for project review in more detail; the significant role it plays is to review the measures called for in the National Marine Fisheries Service hydropower system Biological Opinion and recommend projects for implementation. The System Configuration Team also considers projects called for by the Northwest Power Planning Council and the tribal *Spirit of the Salmon* plan, but the Corps looks for agreement with the National Marine Fisheries Service that the projects selected for funding comply with Endangered Species Act requirements.

Once the Corps has developed regional project selection priorities, it forwards the regional recommendations to the Department of the Army and the Office of Management and Budget for inclusion in the President's Budget. The process for preparing the Administration budget is kept internal to the Administration and information about decision making is not shared with the public. The Memorandum of Agreement for Bonneville's fish and wildlife budget did establish a specific exception to this policy to allow the regional Corps' budget recommendation to be reviewed by interested regional parties for comment to the Administration.

The Administration's budget request is reviewed and revised in the Congressional Appropriations process. In the past, the appropriations process has been the primary forum for regional efforts to revise or redirect the budget for mainstem construction projects. In the 1980s, for example, the region's congressional delegation supported specific direction for construction of juvenile bypass screens at the dams. In the past two years Congress has also included restrictions for funding of John Day Dam reservoir drawdown planning until the National Marine Fisheries Service provides scientific justification of drawdown.

After Congress provides appropriations to the Corps, the Corps considers further adjustment in project schedules and funding resulting from changes in construction schedules or across-the-board funding reductions required of the Corps. In such cases, the Corps again consults with regional parties through the System Configuration Team.

These steps are outlined in Figure 8-1.

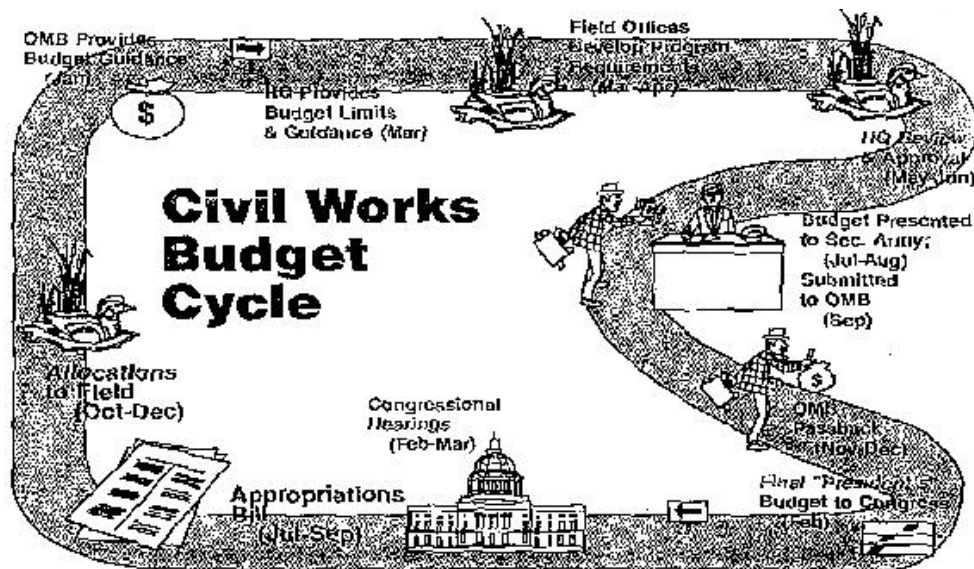


Figure 8- 1 Civil works budget cycle

8.1.3 Reimbursable Budget - Annual Decision Process

The annual funding of reimbursable operations and maintenance costs is also conducted through the federal budget and appropriations process. Unlike the capital construction program, there is not currently an established regional review process for prioritizing the reimbursable activities.

However, under the Memorandum of Agreement for Bonneville fish and wildlife funding, the opportunity is provided for regional review and comment on the budgets for these activities. The involved federal agencies are initiating discussions on how to provide this review and also to provide quarterly accountings for their expenditures.

Figure 8-1 provides a generalized scenario of the federal budget process which the capital investment and federal reimbursement projects follow.

8.1.4 Direct Budget - Annual Decision Process

The Multi-Year Implementation Plan presents a conceptual foundation or framework that will serve to inform the process of annually reviewing and prioritizing activities for implementation (Annual Implementation Work Plan). The conceptual foundation is not yet complete, however, and will be improved upon over time as a result of further consideration and consultations with the ISAB and others. Each section of the MYIP also addresses ecological objectives, current activities, future activities, key policy issues, and costs for anadromous fish, resident fish, and wildlife. These have begun to be integrated to form the heart of the Multi-Year Implementation Plan. Ultimately, strong relationships should be evident between the conceptual foundation, ecological objectives, and priorities.

Several steps must be taken to develop the Annual Implementation Work Plans from these materials.

Step 1. Allocate budget

The CBFWA members and caucuses should make a preliminary allocation of the BPA direct budget among the areas of emphasis and review budget overlap among sections of the MYIP. Figure 8-2 provides details of this process and Figure 8-3 presents a proposed schedule.

Step 2. Review ongoing projects and identify needed new work

BPA will collect updated technical and cost information on all current projects. The fish and wildlife managers should explicitly relate ongoing projects under all parts of the MOA to the framework, identifying the specific plan element that a project will implement. This step will serve as a screen for the current relevance of ongoing activities. The managers should note how well the ongoing activities serve their identified role in the framework, flag those whose relevance could be heightened by redirecting some actions, and identify those that do not appear to relate to the framework.

At the same time, the managers will identify additional activities that are consistent with the framework and are needed to fully address specific needs and objectives. New proposals for additional work may be needed and will be identified in the annual plan.

BPA will collect information on new proposals to implement the additional work outlined above on these focused and fairly limited parts of the program. Prospective contractors will be asked to submit preliminary proposals or a “Request for Proposals” will be issued. The managers, with concurrence of the NPPC and ISAB, should develop project review criteria and make them available to all prospective contractors.

Step 3. Review proposals

Technical teams will review detailed information for new proposals and ongoing projects. The technical teams will evaluate the extent to which proposals address objectives that have been identified, both for ongoing and new projects.

The technical teams will prioritize ongoing and new projects within appropriate categories based on the above criteria, and allocate the available funds among them to create draft priority lists of projects.

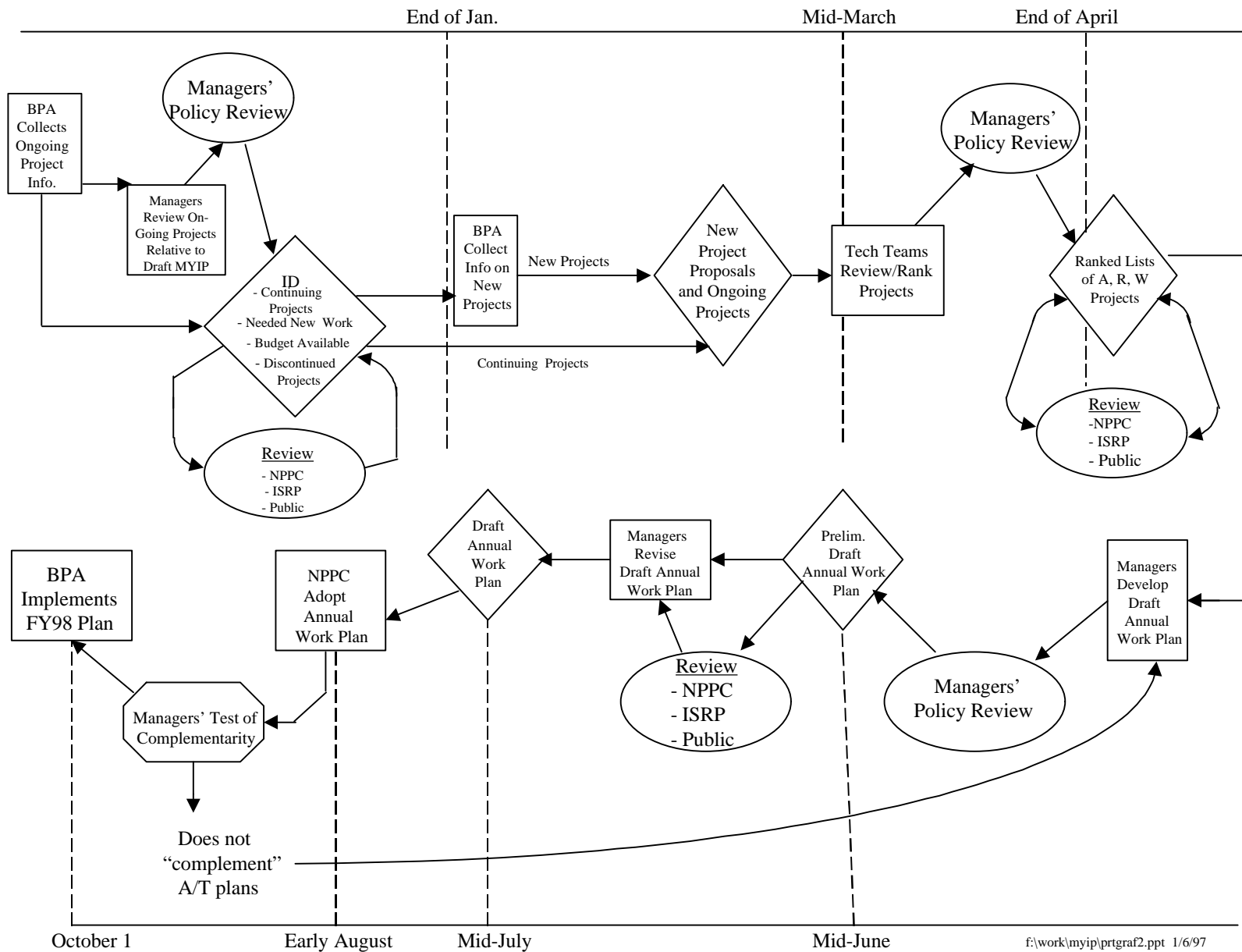


Figure 8- 2 MYIP process schematic

Step 4. Scientific, Policy, and Public Review.

The ISAB and/or the ISRP will have an opportunity to review the Multi-Year Implementation Plan and its framework, criteria, opportunities for new work, and the list of projects proposed for the upcoming fiscal year. In addition, the NPPC and the public may review and comment on the same materials. All CBFWA meetings held in conjunction with this process are open and materials are available to the public.

The fish and wildlife managers may review materials for policy consistency at any step in this process.

The NPPC may have work products reviewed for cost-effectiveness.

Annually, the fish and wildlife managers will report on implementation of the previous year's work plan, including monitoring and evaluation results and their implications for the Multi-Year Implementation Plan.

Step 5. Draft Work Plan for Direct-Funded Projects.

After considering input provided during the review process (Step 3), the fish and wildlife managers will compile a draft work plan outlining the projects and their budgets to be funded from the Direct portion of BPA's budget under the MOA. The NPPC and the public will review the draft plan. The ISRP will also have the opportunity to review the plan. The managers will make necessary revisions and the NPPC will consider it for adoption as a part of the overall annual work plan.

Multi-Year Implementation Plan While this work plan was being developed, the estimated costs for current and proposed projects were collected from available sources. These budgets will be further reviewed and revised during the prioritization process. (**Note: This summary is extremely preliminary and unreviewed.**)

Table 8- 2 Budget summary by major activity category

Summary includes both Bonneville-funded projects and Congressionally appropriated programs that are reimbursed from Bonneville power sale revenues. These summaries reflect initial estimates and will be revised during the review process.

Title	FY97	FY98	FY99	FY00	FY01
Mainstem Construction					
Mainstem Survival Improvement (BPA)	158,600	548,200	592,200	592,200	567,200
COE Appropriations Scenarios:					
Base Plan	25,996,000	35,468,000	24,890,000	3,060,000	200,000
New MOA Investment	71,247,000	71,969,000	79,690,000	83,263,000	44,113,000
Drawdown Option	0	0	0	180,000,000	180,000,000
In-River and Bypass Option	0	0	0	50,000,000	90,000,000
Transportation Option	0	0	0	112,812,000	112,812,000
Mainstem Operations					
COE Operations and Maintenance	22,852,000	23,777,000	24,883,000	26,067,000	27,146,000
Watershed Restoration and Production					
Habitat Projects	13,161,252	17,457,051	10,158,667	9,008,026	5,283,968
Tributary Passage Projects	8,687,111	13,014,872	12,389,019	11,144,781	4,567,118
Model/Focus Watersheds	1,604,394	4,799,352	3,867,250	3,863,294	3,783,894
Captive Broodstock	1,894,532	1,986,604	1,784,604	1,589,604	1,594,604
LSRCP Production - BPA Funds	1,280,000	743,000	767,000	791,000	815,000
LSRCP Production - Appropriations	12,300,000	13,400,000	13,300,000	14,100,000	14,700,000
Yakima Production	10,998,362	5,493,678	2,526,120	2,254,360	2,309,240
BOR Production (Leavenworth)	1,069,057	1,167,520	1,224,646	1,385,578	1,348,457
Umatilla Production	4,220,000	2,340,700	2,465,362	2,596,104	2,207,050
Hood River Production	1,913,000	653,000	683,000	714,000	745,000
Northeast Oregon Production	2,600,000	4,200,000	4,200,000	3,200,000	2,200,000
Salmon River Production	842,793	1,400,000	850,000	575,000	575,000
Nez Perce Production	6,660,000	4,325,000	2,215,000	1,920,000	2,000,000
Other	384,800	1,373,815	1,527,359	1,583,255	1,611,666
Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation					
Gas Supersaturation RME	2,058,000	3,966,000	3,739,000	882,000	750,000
Mainstem RME	6,852,002	12,248,366	10,892,169	8,489,281	6,653,091
Marking RME	7,956,294	8,871,403	6,968,438	5,554,570	5,486,904
Modeling RME	2,733,200	3,690,300	3,556,000	3,508,400	
Habitat/Natural Production RME	3,607,969	4,461,171	4,547,971	4,262,971	2,963,671
Other RME	2,652,302	2,748,320	2,525,419	2,108,000	2,130,000
Ocean/Estuary RME		8,025,255	8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000
Hatchery RME	9,935,632	12,893,907	12,057,431	12,009,257	10,440,082
Harvest RME	900,000	3,400,000	3,400,000	3,400,000	3,400,000
Resident Fish Projects					
(Incomplete as of 11/1/96)	18,054,000	15,127,000	14,508,000	14,813,000	13,449,000
Wildlife Projects					
Current Planning Budget	14,728,000	14,728,135	15,515,880	15,177,328	15,683,306
Coordination					
General Coordination	2,408,000	2,951,488	3,063,297	3,177,355	3,301,671
NPPC (MOA Formula)	3,993,000	3,960,000	4,000,000	4,000,000	4,000,000

Title	FY97	FY98	FY99	FY00	FY01
Bonneville Project Management					
Bonneville Administrative Costs					
Predation Control	4,000,000	4,200,000	4,400,000	4,600,000	4,800,000
Law Enforcement	4,457,000	4,819,740	4,838,390	4,857,870	4,878,246
Other Basinwide	375,000	275,000	275,000	275,000	275,000

8.1.5 Annual Work Plan

The fish and wildlife managers will compile the annual work plans from the three budget-setting processes for the three budget accounts under the MOA. These are being assembled now and are not ready for inclusion.

8.1.6 Budget Tracking

The MOA provides some guidance regarding budget tracking and program accountability. These requirements can be met through modifications of the current Quarterly Review process established by the NPPC program to monitor implementation of the program.

8.2 Major Policy Issues

1. The Bonneville budget agreement expires in 2001. Whether the agreement should be extended is an issue and would involve the full range of issues negotiated in the development of the current agreement. These issues turned around limiting Bonneville's financial obligations for fish and wildlife protection, mitigation, and enhancement, as well as how Bonneville's funding is planned, allocated, and managed. The level of future funding will, of course, also be an issue should an extension be sought. Because the funding agreement was established through a provision of the 1996 Energy and Water Appropriations Acts, revisions or extension would likely be addressed through congressional legislation, either as part of future appropriations acts or as separate legislation. If broader legislation amends the Northwest Power Act it will likely encompass funding for Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program funding. Such legislation is likely to be drafted in the coming year as a result of the comprehensive regional review of energy deregulation and Bonneville's power sale marketing and transmission rules.

Additionally, Bonneville's fish and wildlife costs will increase in part because of rising repayment obligations as mainstem construction projects are completed. The Bonneville fish and wildlife funding agreement anticipated that these costs would rise from \$73 million in Fiscal Year 1996 to \$153 million in Fiscal Year 2001. These costs are fixed once construction projects are completed. Consequently, the increases in annual repayment obligations must be projected as additional construction projects are planned. If future Bonneville fish and wildlife budgets do not provide for increased budgets for these repayments, available funds for so-called "discretionary" programs, primarily implementation of the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program, will be reduced. This funding issue must be addressed at the time Bonneville's statutory obligations are proposed to be amended or when the current funding agreement is proposed to be extended.

2. These workplans primarily address projects funded by Bonneville either directly or as reimbursements to the federal Treasury. As described above, Bonneville directly funds implementation of the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program and the measures required by relevant

Biological Opinions for species (Snake River salmon and Kootenai River sturgeon) listed for protection under the Endangered Species Act. Bonneville reimburses the federal Treasury for operation and maintenance of Congressionally appropriated fish and wildlife activities of the Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Lower Snake River Compensation Plan), and the Bureau of Reclamation (operation and maintenance of the Leavenworth Hatchery complex).

Other activities are funded to assist Columbia Basin fish and wildlife activities but are not reimbursed by Bonneville. Examples are the Mitchell Act hatchery and habitat activities (funded by Congress through the National Marine Fisheries Service) and Forest Service habitat restoration activities. This funding is not currently coordinated with Bonneville funded activity, and so priorities for the use of these funds are separately established.

Coordination of this funding with Bonneville-funded activities would require new agreements to plan and prioritize available funds under common fiscal and biological management goals. At present, there is no direction to more closely align these activities for mutual support. In recent years several actions have occurred:

A. The National Marine Fisheries Service sponsors occasional federal agency coordination meetings to focus on anadromous fish activities. These meetings have been primarily information-sharing sessions and have not yet resulted in coordinated planning. The final Recovery Plan could address improved coordination.

B. Administration budgets have proposed that the Mitchell Act programs be funded by Bonneville. This would reduce unreimbursed federal contributions to salmon measures in the Columbia River Basin and potentially reduce discretionary funds available for implementation of the Council's program if the funds are not provided above the current Bonneville funding agreement. Congress would have to address these issues in legislation to transfer Mitchell Act funding responsibility.

C. The Council has sought improved federal and state coordination in its recent Program amendments. There is no administrative barrier to such coordination, and improvements would occur through management direction by the involved federal agencies and regional parties.

3. The Bonneville budget agreement anticipates that Bonneville can replace from its own funds lower-than-anticipated Congressional appropriations for mainstem construction projects. There is congressional authority for direct funding but it has only been used in limited instances. In the negotiations of the Memorandum of Agreement for Bonneville fish and wildlife funding, Administration officials expressed reluctance to expand Bonneville's ability to directly fund mainstem construction activities separately.

The Corps of Engineers must obtain Administration approval to use Bonneville direct funding for mainstem construction projects. If the region prioritizes construction projects beyond

Congressionally appropriated levels, Administration and probably Congressional approval must be obtained. There is no current action to obtain this approval.

If such a funding arrangement is provided it would need to address several issues to ensure that Bonneville's financing is equivalent in annual repayment costs to the current repayment of congressionally appropriated construction funding:

- A. The share of project costs not allocated to Bonneville's funding responsibility must be recovered from the federal Treasury.
- B. Bonneville's borrowing authority for fish and wildlife construction projects must be expanded or otherwise addressed. The existing borrowing authority (an amount authorized by Congress and drawn upon by Bonneville as needed) is not sufficient to finance construction projects above the existing level. Bonneville must draw upon its borrowing authority when it directly funds construction projects. It does not when Congress appropriates construction funds to the Corps of Engineers.
- C. Unless repayment terms for Bonneville direct funding are equivalent in schedule and interest, the costs for construction projects could be greater than if they were Congressionally appropriated.

These issues will need resolution once a regional decision is made to seek an accelerated construction schedule for mainstem passage improvements or if Congress does not appropriate sufficient funds to established priorities. Without such a provision, the construction schedule will slow to the pace allowed by available funds.

4. Should any of the currently reimbursable activities (such as the Lower Snake Compensation Plan budget or the operation and maintenance of Corps of Engineers facilities) be directly funded by Bonneville? In contrast to the issue of borrowing for construction costs, this question addresses the annual costs reimbursed by Bonneville. These activities are also appropriated by Congress.

The Bureau of Reclamation is awaiting Administration approval for Bonneville direct funding of its operation and maintenance of the Leavenworth hatchery complex. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is seeking a similar agreement to fund operations and maintenance of its Lower Snake River Compensation Plan facilities. These discussions assume that Bonneville has the authority to fund these activities directly.

Major questions for resolving this issue include:

- A. Ensuring that Bonneville funding is limited to the current hydropower share of the costs. This is most significant with Corps of Engineers operations and maintenance.
- B. Whether direct funding of these activities would subject them to regional prioritization. Currently, once Congress appropriates funding of these activities, Bonneville repayment is

nondiscretionary. This question involves the separate statutory authority for these activities, particularly the Lower Snake River Compensation Plan. The question is a complicated one, probably requiring additional definition of the level of activities legally mandated for funding by Bonneville or, alternatively, available for reallocation to other regionally prioritized activities.

5. The Memorandum of Agreements anticipates that the current budget prioritization process will incorporate all categories of Bonneville's fish and wildlife expenditures. Apart from the issues of financing and consistency with statutory obligations, the planning of these activities occurs on separate schedules. The planning for Bonneville's directly funded programs occurs immediately before the beginning of the fiscal year. The planning for congressionally appropriated activities, at least at the regional level, occurs at least a year ahead so as to be submitted for inclusion in the President's budget.

The Memorandum of Agreement committed the federal agencies to share regionally developed budgets and to attempt to incorporate these schedules. At present, the involved federal agencies have had only initial discussions of how to improve budget coordination. The Council has expressed a general expectation that the regional prioritization process should expand to incorporate Congressionally appropriated activities, but has not identified a mechanism to do so. If such coordination is to improve for Fiscal Years 1998 and 1999, a means to do so must be agreed upon as soon as possible.

8.3 Public Information and Involvement

Information will be disseminated to the public about the Multi-Year Implementation Plan, annual work plans, and annual progress in achieving the planned objectives.

8.3.1 Information about the Multi-Year Implementation Plan

Approach: To inform and involve the interested and general public about the Multi-Year Implementation Plan, the following means will be employed: Electronic and news media notification of key opportunities for public involvement; release of public documents; briefings of key constituencies; and regional meetings to determine public concerns and opinions.

Objectives: To educate and inform the public and to obtain public input about the implementation of fish and wildlife restoration and potential effects on the region's diverse natural and cultural heritage and its economic and energy future. Because regional ratepayers and federal taxpayers are investing millions of dollars in restoration, they can rightfully expect to have an opportunity to learn about and be involved in implementing fish and wildlife restoration.

Summary of Current Activities: The meeting schedule and minutes of the multi-year planning steering committee are available on the InterNet via the Northwest Power Planning Council's homepage or by phone and fax from NPPC. A summary of the multi-year planning effort is also available from NPPC and other agencies.

Several other information efforts funded through fish and wildlife restoration dollars are the NW Fishletter, an electronic publication by NW Enernet News Service of Energy News, and the TMT homepage. These activities are insufficient.

Summary of Future Activities: The Multi-Year Implementation Plan or its chapters will be made available to the public through the offices of NPPC and its Internet homepage. A news release will summarize its purpose, contents, and how to receive a review copy. Fish and wildlife managers will conduct consultations with key constituents, i.e. those groups or groups of individuals that have a direct interest in fish and wildlife restoration, such as those in the fishing, energy, and aluminum industries, and those who have demonstrated an ongoing interest in fish and wildlife restoration, such as environmental and conservation groups and watershed councils. In addition, three or four public meetings will be held in the Columbia Basin region.

The briefings and meetings will not only inform participants about the Multi-Year Implementation Plan and the upcoming annual work plan, but will also serve to identify the concerns and needs of interest groups and constituents, and will help identify other entities and players that will be important in the successful implementation of fish and wildlife restoration.

Cost: A contractor will be employed to assist in scheduling and preparing for the briefings and public meetings.

Seven weeks, 20 hrs. a week @ \$50.00 = \$7,000.00

(Staff from the fish agencies, tribes, CBFWA, and NPPC will also have to devote time to accomplish the above objectives.)

8.3.2 Information about the Annual Work Plans

Approach: To inform and involve the interested and general public about each year's annual work plan, the following means will be employed: Electronic and news media notification of key opportunities for public involvement; release of public documents; briefings of key constituencies; and annual regional meetings to determine public concerns and opinions.

Objectives: To educate and inform the public about and to obtain public input for proposed annual fish and wildlife restoration activities. Because regional ratepayers and federal taxpayers are investing millions of dollars in restoration, they can rightfully expect to have an opportunity to learn about and be involved in implementing fish and wildlife restoration.

Summary of Current Activities: Describe annual prioritization process and its public input notification and involvement features.

Summary of Future Activities: In addition to current activities related to the annual prioritization process, fish and wildlife managers will conduct briefings with key constituents on the annual work plans and progress on multi-year implementation. Key constituents are those groups or groups of individuals that have a direct interest in fish and wildlife restoration, such as those in the fishing, energy, and aluminum industries, and those who have demonstrated an ongoing interest in fish and wildlife restoration, such as environmental and conservation groups

and watershed councils. In addition, there will be public meetings in the Columbia Basin subregions.

The briefings and meetings will not only inform participants about the upcoming annual work plan, but also the results of monitoring and evaluation. The public information and involvement activities will serve to identify the concerns and needs of interest groups and constituents and will help identify other entities and players that will be important in the successful implementation of fish and wildlife restoration.

Public information and involvement for the annual work plans will adhere to a schedule coordinated with annual work plan development and with monitoring and evaluation results and reports.

Cost: A contractor will be employed to assist in scheduling and preparing for the briefings and public meetings.

Ten weeks, 20 hrs. a week @ \$50.00 = \$10,000.00, depending on the annual work plan process and schedules. (Staff from the fish agencies, tribes, CBFWA, and NPPC will also have to devote time to accomplish the above objectives.)

8.3.3 Annual Public Progress Report on Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Restoration

Approach: Annually or biannually a progress report will be published and disseminated to the public. The report will describe how well federal, tribal, and state fish and wildlife agencies-- and others with contractual responsibilities for fish and wildlife restoration--carried out the previous year's work plan objectives. The report will also include monitoring and evaluation results and their implications for the Multi-Year Implementation Plan.

The audience for the document is the regional policy-makers, members of Congress, and the interested general public. The document, therefore, will minimize use of jargon yet provide sufficient detail so that both decision-makers and the public are able to discern the extent of progress, and the nature of problems, and to make or participate in decisions about improvements and future direction.

The fish and wildlife agencies, the tribes, and NPPC will select representatives to form an editorial board to oversee the development and dissemination of the annual report. In addition to mailing the document to Congressional and regional decision-makers and the interested public, dissemination will include announcing and explaining the document in a news release and at a news conference and briefings.

Objectives: The document's purpose is threefold: to assist decision-makers and members of Congress; to provide accountability to the public and the ratepayers; and to educate members of the public about fish and wildlife restoration. The future of our region's water and biological resources are in the balance; millions, even billions, of dollars are at stake: The public has a right to know how its money is being spent for fish and wildlife restoration and whether it is being spent effectively.

Summary of Current Activities: No such comprehensive document that describes Columbia Basin fish and wildlife activities and their results currently exists. There are numerous annual reports, including the Northwest Power Planning Council's annual report to Congress; the Fish Passage Center's annual fish migration data report; Oregon and Washington fish departments' *Status Report: Columbia River Fish Runs and Fisheries*; and a new document, *StreamNet: Report on the Status of Salmon and Steelhead in the Columbia River Basin--1995* produced by Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) in collaboration with federal, state and tribal agencies.

Summary of Future Activities: As appropriate, the above reports and other information will be brought together to produce an annual or biannual public progress report on Columbia River fish and wildlife restoration. The document will be published and disseminated as described in the above sections.

Costs: There will be costs.