



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Department of Fish and Wildlife

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May 24, 2004

Judi Danielson, Chair
Northwest Power and Conservation Council
851 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 1100
Portland, OR 97204-1348

Subject: Support for and approval of Walla Walla Subbasin Plan

Dear Chair Danielson:

Walla Walla County has been working for over a year with others involved in our subbasin to develop the Walla Walla Subbasin Plan. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) has provided significant guidance throughout the process, from policy-level impacts across two states to discussion of specific subbasin plan language. A public review draft of the Walla Walla Subbasin Plan was distributed on April 12, 2004, with the public comment period closing on April 23, 2004. Public comments have been addressed in and responses appended to this plan.

On May 4, 2004, the Water Resource Inventory Area 32 Planning Unit recommended approval of the Walla Walla Subbasin Plan. The County agrees with the Planning Unit's recommendation and hereby submits the subbasin plan for review by the Northwest Power & Conservation Council. This plan represents a joint effort on behalf of local stakeholders to identify priorities for aquatic and terrestrial species habitat restoration and protection. These priorities are scientifically-based and take into account local opportunities and issues of concern. While ODFW agrees with the majority of information provided in the plan, areas of disagreement have been noted and will be addressed by ongoing discussions in the appropriate forum.

The ODFW approved this plan to guide the expenditure of Bonneville Power Administration project funding through the Northwest Power and Conservation Council for the next several years. This plan is provided with the recognition that additional refinements and scientific understanding is needed. New information and plan implementation over time will likely result in updated priorities and strategies. The ODFW looks forward to the opportunity for further refinement of the Walla Walla Subbasin Plan and the benefits that will be achieved through its implementation.

Sincerely,

Kevin L. Blakely
John Day Watershed Manager