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Tribes, federal agencies reach agreement on salmon

Three Columbia River Basin Tribes and three federal agencies today announced that they have reached a ten-year agreement on operations to meet ESA, treaty and Northwest Power Act requirements for Columbia and Snake River fish.

The federal agencies will provide approximately \$900 million over 10 years to continue existing programs and to implement new projects with the Tribes. Most of this money would be provided by BPA. Because of the mix of existing and new projects, it is not yet clear how much of the \$90 million per year represents an increase over current funding levels nor what the impact will be on BPA ratepayers.

PNWA Executive Director, Glenn Vanselow, said, "We hope this agreement ends the unproductive debate on dam breaching and gets down to solving real, on-the-ground problems for fish."

Among the provisions, the agencies and Tribes agreed to four major provisions of interest to the PNWA membership:

- The parties will meet to discuss the benefits or detriments of operating John Day at Minimum Operating Pool. They agree that operating John Day at MOP is a contingency action which could be considered after a comprehensive review scheduled for 2015.
- The Tribes will not support in any manner ESA, Power Act, Clean Water Act or Administrative Procedures Act lawsuits against the federal agencies regarding the FCRPS or Upper Snake BiOps;
- The Tribes agree not to request additional fish or wildlife funding from BPA during the term of the agreement; and
- The Tribes agree that dam breaching will not occur during the term of the agreement. In addition, the Tribes will not advocate for breaching dams covered by the FCRPS or Upper Snake River BiOps during the term of the agreement. There is a provision that allows the Tribes to advocate for dam breaching after 2017 if the results of the 2015 performance review demonstrate that Snake River ESUs are not improving.

The agreement is among the Bonneville Power Administration, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation (the federal agencies) and the Umatilla, Warm Springs and Yakama Tribes. Neither the original plaintiffs, led by National Wildlife Federation, nor the Nez Perce Tribe or the State of Oregon are parties to the agreement.

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About PNWA: The Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (PNWA), founded in 1934, represents ports, towboat companies, steamship operators, grain growers, forest products manufacturers, energy providers and other public and private sector interests throughout the Pacific Northwest. PNWA also represents the Inland Ports and Navigation Group (IPNG), a coalition of navigation interests who are interveners in the FCRPS Biological Opinion lawsuit. You can learn more about PNWA at www.pnwa.net

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