
PART I - ADMINISTRATIVE

Section 1. General administrative information

Title of project

Electronic Fish And Wildlife Newsletter

BPA project number: 9800401

Contract renewal date (mm/yyyy): 10/1999 **Multiple actions?**

Business name of agency, institution or organization requesting funding

Intermountain Communications

Business acronym (if appropriate) _____

Proposal contact person or principal investigator:

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NPPC Program Measure Number(s) which this project addresses

1.2A, 1.2C, 3.3

FWS/NMFS Biological Opinion Number(s) which this project addresses

Other planning document references

Short description

Delivers by email to policymakers, stakeholders, and the public a weekly electronic newsletter containing objective, summary information about Columbia Basin fish and wildlife issues

Target species

Columbia Basin fish and wildlife

Section 2. Sorting and evaluation

Subbasin

Systemwide

Evaluation Process Sort

CBFWA caucus	Special evaluation process	ISRP project type
Mark one or more caucus	If your project fits either of these processes, mark one or both	Mark one or more categories

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anadromous fish	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multi-year (milestone-based evaluation)	<input type="checkbox"/> Watershed councils/model watersheds
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resident fish	<input type="checkbox"/> Watershed project evaluation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information dissemination
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wildlife		<input type="checkbox"/> Operation & maintenance
		<input type="checkbox"/> New construction
		<input type="checkbox"/> Research & monitoring
		<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation & management
		<input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife habitat acquisitions

Section 3. Relationships to other Bonneville projects

Umbrella / sub-proposal relationships. List umbrella project first.

Project #	Project title/description

Other dependent or critically-related projects

Project #	Project title/description	Nature of relationship

Section 4. Objectives, tasks and schedules

Past accomplishments

Year	Accomplishment	Met biological objectives?
1998	provided weekly, objective information related to fish & wildlife policymaking in the Columbia R. Basin using e-mail delivery system	coordination of information assists policymakers & public in building and implementing effective fish and wildlife program
1999	delivering same service and established reputation as information source fair to all interests	(see above)
	increased subscriber circulation	

Objectives and tasks

Obj 1,2,3	Objective	Task a,b,c	Task
1	provide weekly, objective, summary information related to fish & wildlife policymaking in Columbia R. Basin	a	reporters attend meetings, conduct telephone and personal interviews, read and summarize reports and other documents

	using e-mail delivery system		
		b	coverage of following agencies: NWPPC, NMFS, CBFWA, Tribes, state fish & wildlife, Congress, Administration, other agency meetings
		c	accurately portray positions discussed at meetings, include diverse reactions to topics discussed
2	provide quality customer service to subscribers and interested individuals	a	provide "feedback" feature allowing readers to respond to newsletter content & monthly interactive reader forums
		b	provide names and contact information for sources used in preparing newsletter
		c	respond positively to subscribers seeking more information about topics covered in newsletter and assist in any technical difficulties
		d	conduct readership survey to monitor customer satisfaction
3	market newsletter to increase circulation	a	write press releases, make phone contacts, put notices in journals and other newsletters
		b	encourage subscribers to forward newsletter to others through email

Objective schedules and costs

Obj #	Start date mm/yyyy	End date mm/yyyy	Measureable biological objective(s)	Milestone	FY2000 Cost %
1	10/1999	9/2000			86.00%
2	10/1999	9/2000			7.00%
3	10/1999	9/2000			7.00%
				Total	100.00%

Schedule constraints

Completion date
9/2000

Section 5. Budget

FY99 project budget (BPA obligated): \$96,000

FY2000 budget by line item

Item	Note	% of total	FY2000
Personnel	Editor, reporter, correspondents, administrative support	%85	129,250
Fringe benefits			
Supplies, materials, non-	office overhead	%0	1,200

expendable property			
Operations & maintenance	Telephone	%1	3,000
Capital acquisitions or improvements (e.g. land, buildings, major equip.)			
NEPA costs			
Construction-related support			
PIT tags	# of tags:		
Travel	coverage of meetings, conferences in Columbia Basin	%7	12,000
Indirect costs			
Subcontractor			
Other	email delivery & website posting	%3	5,000
TOTAL BPA FY2000 BUDGET REQUEST			\$150,450

Cost sharing

Organization	Item or service provided	% total project cost (incl. BPA)	Amount (\$)
Intermountain Communications	office overhead, telephone, internet	%1	3,000
(same)	equipment	%7	12,000
Total project cost (including BPA portion)			\$165,450

Outyear costs

	FY2001	FY02	FY03	FY04
Total budget	\$157,975			

Section 6. References

Watershed?	Reference
<input type="checkbox"/>	

PART II - NARRATIVE

Section 7. Abstract

The goal of *THE COLUMBIA BASIN BULLETIN: Weekly Fish and Wildfire News (CBB)* is to enhance stakeholder and public understanding of regional fish and wildlife policymaking by providing -- in a weekly electronic mail format -- regularly delivered, objective, summary information about policymaking proceedings and documents. The Bulletin responds to the 1994 Fish and Wildlife Program (Sections 1.2A,

1.2C, 3.3), which stresses the need for information dissemination, public involvement and cooperation among all parties involved in fish and wildlife restoration.

The CBB was launched in June, 1998 under a BPA contract as a revised version of past efforts to provide summary electronic information related to fish and wildlife policymaking in the Columbia River Basin to fish and wildlife policymakers, the media and the general public. This project changed the nature of the newsletter from a Web-based product to an electronic mail delivered product. It also expanded the amount of information delivered and the frequency of delivery.

Methods used to gather information include attendance at meetings, telephone interviews, and face-to-face interviews. CBB writers also utilize research reports, studies, policy letters, memoranda and other documents.

As a result, CBB provides readers: an understanding of the scope of technical information used in policy decisions; an understanding of the multiple perspectives included in decision-making; a presentation of various positions addressed in the decision process; and a presentation of the political and technical constraints incorporated in decisions. The electronic newsletter provides effective dissemination of information for policymakers and the public.

The CBB is to be judged on its quality, its utility to its audience, and number of subscribers, which has doubled since the launch date.

Section 8. Project description

a. Technical and/or scientific background

Efforts to protect and enhance Columbia River Basin fish and wildlife populations involve complex policy initiatives and restoration activities that policymakers, stakeholders and the interested public find difficult to track. Yet, because of the inter-relationships and interactions of management actions throughout the Basin, it's vital that policymakers, stakeholders, and the interested public are able to keep up with the range of meetings, policies, and materials related to fish and wildlife issues. Effective information dissemination plays a key role in the coordination and success of fish and wildlife restoration efforts. The production of a weekly electronic newsletter to provide summary information about fish and wildlife issues important to Columbia River Basin fish and wildlife policy development meets this need.

The Columbia Basin Bulletin is a revised version of past efforts to provide summary electronic information related to fish and wildlife policymaking in the Columbia River Basin to fish and wildlife policy makers, the media and the general public. Previous versions of the newsletter used a combination of electronic mail notification and posting of information on the World Wide Web.

This project changed the nature of the newsletter from a Web-based product to an electronic mail delivered product. It expanded the amount of information delivered and the frequency of delivery. Due to the controversial nature of fish and wildlife policy making and the fact that the newsletter is supported with public funds, the CBB brought to the project a dedication to avoid bias and the perception of bias.

b. Rationale and significance to Regional Programs

Under 1.2A of the 1994 Fish and Wildlife Program, the Northwest Power Planning Council stresses the need for public involvement and cooperation among all parties involved in fish and wildlife restoration.

For example, the Council notes, "In developing the Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program, the Council must deal with the Columbia River and its tributaries as a system. This system touches a broad range of human activities: hydropower production, navigation, flood control, agriculture, recreation and many other land and water development activities. Opportunities for *improved coordination and cooperation*, as well as for increased conflict, are enormous. Building a fish and wildlife program that

properly accounts for these activities requires the broadest possible involvement of the public and affected interests.” (Page 1-4)

The Council, says the Program, “is required to consult with a variety of groups in the Northwest and to maintain comprehensive programs for public participation.” (Page 1-5)

Under 1.2C, the Council notes, “Ultimately, the successful recovery of salmon, steelhead, resident fish and wildlife populations depends less on legal authority than on cooperation. Only through the committed and enthusiastic participation of all affected parties will a full recovery be achieved.”

The Council, scheduled to take amendments for its Program in 1999, stresses in 1.2C the importance of recommendations or modifications received from outside parties and “an extensive public comment period . . . which includes public hearings in each of the four states and consultations with interested parties. During the development of the initial program and the subsequent amendment proceedings, public comments resulted in thousands of pages of testimony from groups and individuals.”

Under 3.3, the Council Program stresses the need to develop a “coordinated information system” that is “essential to the efficient collection and dissemination of information produced as a result of this program.” While this section focuses on research, data, stock status, etc., the principle of information-sharing among affected parties in the Basin extends to all aspects of fish and wildlife restoration activities.

The Columbia Basin Bulletin is a logical component of the Council’s mandate to provide information that facilitates public involvement and improves dissemination and coordination of information. With the CBB, policymakers and the public each week are kept posted on the most significant developments related to fish and wildlife policy activities in the Basin and directed to websites, documents and e-mail addresses offering more information on specific topics.

In addition, the Columbia Basin Bulletin responds to the need of federal and state agencies to involve the public in the various processes related to fish and wildlife restoration. The CBB keeps policymakers, stakeholders, and the public aware of regional hearings and information meetings, public comment periods, congressional hearings, conferences, workshops and other public activities.

c. Relationships to other projects

The primary relationship The Columbia Basin Bulletin has with other projects is its service as an information clearinghouse for others working on fish and wildlife projects in the Columbia Basin. The CBB complements and collaborates with other projects by receiving and distributing important information -- in effect, serving as a link among project sponsors.

The audience for CBB includes:

- Members and staff of the Northwest Power Planning Council
- Staff and customers of the Bonneville Power Administration
- Members and staff of the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority
- Members and staff of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
- Members and staff of federal, state, and tribal fish and wildlife agencies
- Members of Congress and their staffs
- Staff of public and private electric and natural gas utilities in the Pacific Northwest
- Staff and members of various river-user organizations and groups
- Staff and members of public interest organizations that follow Northwest fish and wildlife

policy

- Pacific Northwest news media
- Staff and members of scientific and economic advisory bodies

The CBB works with all these entities in gathering and disseminating information related to Basin fish and wildfire activities and projects under the Council program.

d. Project history (for ongoing projects)

The Columbia Basin Bulletin is a revised version of past efforts to provide summary electronic information related to fish and wildlife policymaking in the Columbia River Basin to fish and wildlife policymakers, the media and the general public.

Previously, the Fish and Wildlife Program funded Northwest Fishletter, a web-based product posted about every other week. In September 1997, the Northwest Power Planning Council recommended that:

“the Council, Bonneville and the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority form a team to assess current information sources, identify information needs, and develop a proposal for a coordinated system to meet those needs, including a proposal for a competitive selection process to select the contractor to develop and maintain the system.”

Following the recommendation, the Council approved more specific guidance, an interagency committee developed a Request for Proposal, and BPA issued a RFP regarding publication of an electronic newsletter covering development and implementation of fish and wildlife policy in the Columbia Basin. The RFP called for an electronic information service that would be primarily delivered by e-mail to subscribers, with archive editions posted at the Council’s website.

Under a competitive bid process, the interagency evaluation team selected Intermountain Communications as the firm to provide the service for \$96,000 from April, 1998 to April, 1999. In approving Program projects for Fiscal Year 1999, the Council and BPA decided to extend the contract from April 1999 to September 30, 1999 in order to place the project on the same prioritization schedule as other Program-funded projects.

In June, 1998 Intermountain Communications launched The Columbia Basin Bulletin: Weekly Fish and Wildlife News (Project No. 98-04-01). An initial e-mail subscriber list of 600 persons doubled to over 1200 in just a few months. The subscriber list continues to grow with “subscribe” far outnumbering “unsubscribe.”

Each week, using one part-time editor/reporter (Bill Crampton) and a pool of freelance writers, Intermountain Communications delivers a complete, objective news summary of key events related to fish and wildlife issues in the Columbia River Basin.

e. Proposal objectives

The objectives of The Columbia Basin Bulletin are:

- 1) Provide weekly, objective, summary information related to fish and wildlife policymaking in the Columbia River Basin, using an e-mail delivery system.
- 2) Provide quality customer service to subscribers and interested individuals.
- 3) Market the newsletter to increase circulation.

f. Methods

Each week, the editor discusses with writers throughout the Basin the key events that need to be covered and makes a decision on how best to use reporting, writing, editing resources for that week. As much as possible the editor aims for the CBB content to reflect the geographic diversity and scope of issues which makes up fish and wildlife restoration efforts in the Columbia River Basin.

Due to the controversial nature of fish and wildlife policy making and the fact that the newsletter is supported with public funds, every effort is made by the editor and writers to ensure fairness of coverage and avoid bias and the perception of bias.

1. a.) Reporters use traditional journalistic methods of gathering information. Reporters must attend meetings, conduct telephone and face-to-face interviews, and read and summarize reports and other documents.

b.) Reporters must be responsible for coverage of the following agencies:

-- Cover Northwest Power Planning Council meetings and activities, including advisory panels.

-- Cover National Marine Fisheries Service meetings and activities related to the 1995 Biological Opinion for wild Snake River salmon, other biological opinions, and listings under the Endangered Species Act.

-- Cover Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority activities.

-- Cover activities of Columbia River Basin Indian tribes related to fish and wildlife policymaking.

-- Cover state fish and wildlife agency meetings and activities related to the Columbia River

Basin.

-- Cover other federal agency meetings related to fish and wildlife policy in the Columbia River

Basin.

-- Cover congressional and Administration activities related to fish and wildlife policy in the

Columbia River Basin.

-- Cover conferences, workshops, key personnel changes, reports, studies, memoranda, letters,

legislation, statistics on fish counts, recovery project costs and results, and research related to the Columbia River Basin.

c.) Reporters must:

-- Accurately portray positions discussed at meetings

-- Include in coverage diverse reactions to documents, policy initiatives and other items covered.

2. a. - e.) The CBB provides quality customer service in the following ways:

-- Provide a "feedback" feature allowing readers to respond to CBB content.

-- Sponsor through email format a monthly interactive reader forum devoted to Columbia Basin fish and wildlife issues.

-- Provide names and contact information for sources used in preparing CBB.

-- Respond positively to subscribers seeking more information about topics covered in the CBB.

-- Provide assistance to subscribers having technical difficulties with e-mail delivery (which is

rare).

-- Conduct readership survey to monitor customer satisfaction with content and delivery

methods and assess usefulness of information.

3. Market the newsletter to reach readers both inside and outside fish and wildlife policy circles by:

a.) sending press releases about the CBB, making phone contacts, and placing notices in journals, other publications, and on the internet;

b.) encourage subscribers to forward the CBB to other potential interested parties.

g. Facilities and equipment

The facilities and equipment for this project are: offices of the editor and writers; computers; phones; and fax machines.

h. Budget

Intermountain Communications is proposing the BPA budget for this project increase from \$96,000 a year to \$150,450, of which \$5,000 is an optional component regarding email delivery of the newsletter and posting it on the website.

Currently, each week the newsletter is delivered to the Council staff, which uses the Council's computer system to deliver the newsletter. (See Section 10) Council staff also posts the CBB on the Council's website. The Council staff has handled all arrangements with the electronic mail server that distributes the newsletter. This arrangement requires that Intermountain Communications relies upon Council staff availability to deliver the product, post it on the Web, and handle other technical issues related to distribution.

Intermountain Communication is willing to take responsibility for product delivery. The \$5,000 line item includes responsibility for delivery through email and the posting of CBB on an Intermountain Communications website. That additional cost would also cover the ability of Intermountain Communications to scan and post documents referred to in The Columbia Basin Bulletin.

Personnel:

The FY2000 budget reflects an increase in hourly rates and hours worked per week of all personnel except Administrative Assistant. The increase is based on inflation, the track record of The Columbia Basin Bulletin, and the writers' increased skills and experience as natural resource reporters. The increased work week will allow The Columbia Basin Bulletin to expand the scope of coverage as policymakers tackle such important initiatives as the "1999 Decision," the multi-species framework and attempts to write a "unified plan," the completion of the Lower Snake Feasibility Study, and the Council opening its Fish and Wildlife Program for revisions.

Senior Editor - supervise and produce coverage of Columbia Basin fish and wildlife policymaking. Edit and prepare copy for distribution. Supervise all operations. Coordinate with NWPPC to assure efficient electronic delivery of product.

Editor/Reporter - produce daily news stories on Columbia Basin fish and wildlife policymaking for weekly distribution. Edit copy.

Correspondents - produce news stories and perform editing when requested.

Administrative Support - bookkeeping, contract administration, clerical

Senior Editor	\$35/hr @ 30 hrs/week	(47 wks)	\$49,350
Editor/Reporter	\$30/hr @ 30 hrs/week	(47 wks)	42,300
Correspondents	\$30/hr @ 20 hrs/week	(47 wks)	28,200
Administrative Support	\$20/hr @ 10 hrs/week	(47 wks)	<u>9,400</u>
	TOTAL		129,250

Supplies:

Office Overhead - shared office space and supplies with Intermountain Communications.

Office Overhead \$25/week **1,200**

Operations and Maintenance:

Telephone - shared telephone and internet expenses with Intermountain Communications; all telephone use for reporters and correspondents doing CBB business.

Telephone **3,000**

Travel:

Attend policymaking meetings throughout the Columbia Basin; includes: airfare, mileage, lodging, food.

Travel **12,000**

Other:

Product delivery through email and the posting of CBB on an Intermountain Communications website
e-mail delivery & web site posting **5,000**

TOTAL \$150,450

Section 9. Key personnel

Bill Crampton is president of Intermountain Communications and serves as Senior Editor (30 hours per week) for The Columbia Basin Bulletin.

Crampton has been a Northwest journalist for over 20 years, with many awards for reporting, editing, and editorial writing. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Washington (1977) and a master's degree in American History from Washington State University (1984). Under a fellowship, Crampton attended the University of Maryland for one year (1985), where he completed coursework for a doctorate in American History.

Crampton has worked as a reporter and editor for daily newspapers in Montana, Idaho, Alaska and Washington. His "beats" have included school boards, local government, environment, Alaskan Native issues, agriculture and business. For six years, he served as Editor of the East Oregonian in Pendleton, Oregon, where much of his writings focused on natural resource issues. In addition, Crampton has extensive experience as a supervisory editor guiding daily news coverage. He is experienced in managing news budgets.

In February 1997, Crampton's company, Intermountain Communications, launched *The Northwest Salmon Recovery Report*, a print newsletter which provides in-depth news and analysis of Columbia Basin salmon recovery issues. Crampton serves as editor and publisher of the NSRR.

Section 10. Information/technology transfer

The Columbia Basin Bulletin's information is distributed by e-mail to subscribers and posted at <http://www.nwppc.org>. Intermountain Communications intends to develop and distribute marketing materials -- flyers, brochures, press releases -- to inform those interested in fish and wildlife issues about the Columbia Basin Bulletin.

Congratulations!