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From: Jeromy Jording - NOAA Federal <jeromy.jording@noaa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 2:17 PM
To: Stuart Ellis
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Subject: U.S. v. Oregon research request: John Day adult steelhead migration study

Stuart, (current *U.S. v Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee Chair)

I have received the details of the research proposal the *U.S. v. Oregon* Policy committee discussed for inclusion in the 2020 management cycle's use of available research impacts. Specifically it outlines leveraging the existing network of acoustic receivers in the John Day Pool and will supplement this network with additional receivers, in order to test adult steelhead, captured and acoustic tagged at Bonneville Dam in the Adult Fish Facility (AFF), for migration routes. The work in the AFF will be fully integrated with CRITFC sampling activities.

Processing and collecting data from each fish will ensure compatibility and utility to CRITFC's ongoing monitoring. This will boost CRITFC sample sizes, which provide fishery management data (1f and 2c on p 43 of the *U.S. v. Oregon Management Agreement*, III-F-2 on p 52 of the *US v. Oregon Management Agreement*).

The research project will add acoustic tags in tall-dorsal adipose intact steelhead (dorsal height used to exclude un-clipped hatchery origin adults) that are < 78 cm to target adults returning to the John Day River. Adult steelhead that do not meet these criteria will be sampled per CRITFC's direction using their protocol, but will not be acoustic tagged for this study. Recaptured adults originally PIT tagged in the John Day basin will also be tagged with acoustic transmitters and integrated into the CRITFC sampling pool. A proposed "tiered" approach to acoustic tag distribution will reserve 20 tags for PIT tag recaptures (adults that were originally PIT tagged as juveniles in the John Day basin), and allocate 230 (or more if additional funding is located) for tagging of unmarked wild steelhead in proportion to the arrival timing distribution of John Day adults.

Acoustic tag deployment timing will mirror the arrival timing distribution of John Day adults, which will be predicted from 15 years of John Day adult PIT tag returns (n = 2,676). CRITFC will use genetic stock identification and sibship analysis (from 2017 brood samples we collected throughout the John Day basin) to assign tagged adults to population groups. ODFW estimates 13% of the tall dorsal adipose-intact steelhead PIT tagged at the AFF in 2017 ultimately ended up in the John Day basin.

Assuming the standard adult trapping mortality rate of 0.01, a maximum acoustic tagging sample size of 300 wild adults would create an estimated 3 mortalities. This impact would represent 0.00006 of the A Index wild count at Bonneville for return years 2015-2017 (mean 47,317), or 0.00008 of the 2016-2018 spawning year John Day River natural origin spawner abundance (mean 4,707) if 13% of the tagged adults were John Day origin.

According to the Incidental Take Statement (ITS) of the 2018-2027 *U.S. v. Oregon* harvest biological opinion fishery mortalities will be kept to a minimum, but are subject collectively to annual incidental take limits. For steelhead Distinct Population Segments (DPS), the limit is 0.3%.

I have also reviewed the information provided from email correspondence from yourself, Tim Sipple (WDFW) and Jeff Whisler (ODFW) indicating when combined with other research activities during the 2020 management cycle, all activities that are expected to be carried out would be consistent with the level of incidental take specified in the ITS in the 2018-2027 *U.S. v. Oregon* harvest opinion (NMFS 2018). See the following table:

Summary of proposed 2020 <i>U.S. v. OR</i> RME activities impacting summer steelhead			
Activity	Agency	potential mortalities	
		wild A-Index	wild B-Index
AFF sampling	CRITFC	1	1
John Day steelhead gastric acoustic tagging	ODFW	12	0
Cathlamet pound net	WDFW	15	2
total		28	3
impact rate		0.084%	0.214%
preseason forecasted abundance		33,300	1,400
allowed impact rate		0.30%	0.30%
allowed mortalities		99.9	4.2

All other sampling activities that may affect other ESA-listed activities will be assigned the regular AFF sampling activities. NMFS still expects other protocols to be followed, and will expect a reporting of this research activity to be included in the 2020 post season report (due May of 2021), including results, accounting of all mortalities, and findings from this additional research. A copy of this email onsite may be utilized to act as sufficient ESA authorization consistent with the adherence to the ITS in the 2018-2027 *U.S. v. Oregon* harvest opinion (NMFS 2018).

If you have any further questions please feel free to contact me, and pass this email to those that may need it.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jeromy Jording

U.S. v. Oregon harvest opinion lead

Jeromy Jording

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