**Double-crested Cormorant Management Plan**

1. **PROJECT INFORMATION**

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| **P2 Identifier** | 399072 |
| **Project Manager (PM)** | Robert L Winters (NWP, 503-808-4738) |
| **Technical Lead (TL)** | Kris Lightner (NWP, 503-808-4748) |
| **Biologist/Coordination** | Kris Lightner (NWP, 503-808-4748) |

1. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this project is to comply with NOAA Fisheries 2014 Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) Supplemental Biological Opinion. NOAA Fisheries has identified management of avian predators, including DCCO, as an important component of the overall program to improve the status of ESA-listed salmonid species. The FCRPS BiOp called for the development and implementation of a management plan to increase survival of juvenile salmonids in the Columbia River. To meet this objective, the Corps’ primary actions include reducing the population of DCCO nesting on East Sand Island to no more than 5,380 to 5,939 nesting pairs by 2018 and modification of terrain on East Sand Island to reduce the availability of nesting habitat.

1. **BACKGROUND**

The DCCO colony on East Sand Island has increased from 100 pairs in 1989 to approximately 15,000 pairs in 2013; this colony consumed on average approximately 11 M juvenile salmonids yearly. The Corps’ management plan includes two phases to reduce the DCCO population on East Sand Island to no more than 5,380 to 5,939 nesting pairs by 2018. The Corps is the Action Agency under the FCRPS BiOp responsible for implementing the DCCO management plan. The Corps, in cooperation with the USFWS, completed an Environmental Impact Statement that evaluated a range of alternatives to accomplish the reduction of the DCCO population (Alternative C-1) and annually applies for a Migratory Bird Treaty Act Depredation Permit from USFWS. Management actions include a four year culling and egg oiling program (Phase I) to reduce the DCCO population on ESI followed by terrain modification of ESI to reduce the availability of nesting habitat to support no more than an average of 5,600 breeding pairs (Phase II).

1. **STATUS & ISSUES**

* The Corps is completing its third year of implementation of the Double-crested Cormorant Management Plan
* The Corps expects to complete Plans&Specs and award a construction contract for Phase II terrain modification in FY18, with construction work occurring at the end of the breeding season in 2018 (FY19).
* In 2016, Audubon Society of Portland et al. filed a lawsuit against the Corps, USFWS, and USDA-Wildlife Services in order to stop implementation of the Double-crested Cormorant Management Plan. Judge Simon granted summary judgment in favor of the federal defendants on all claims except one, and he left the DCCO plan and Record of Decision in place while the FCRPS action agencies prepare the programmatic/regional EIS (which is currently in development).

1. **SCHEDULE & COST**

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| **YEAR** | **COST** | **MAJOR ACTIVITIES** |
| **FY17 Actual Obligation** | $831,641 | Submit permit renewal request to USFWS. Continue implementing the Management Plan. Complete a Design Documentation Report (DDR) and begin Plans and Specifications (P&S) for Phase II terrain modification |
| **FY18**  **PBUD** | $3,500,000 | Continue implementing the Management Plan, including submittal of permit renewal request; initiating management actions (as warranted and permitted); monitoring the DCCO colon on East Sand Island and other colony sites throughout the estuary. Complete P&S and award a construction contract for Phase II terrain modification. |

1. **PHOTOS & DRAWINGS**