

## COLUMBIA RIVER CORMORANT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), Portland District is the Federal land manager of East Sand Island, and is currently considering management alternatives to reduce the double-crested cormorant predation on Columbia River basin juvenile salmonids listed under the Endangered Species Act. The management alternatives will be studied in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act.

At the April 2013 meeting, Project Manager Ms. Sondra Ruckwardt, provided an informational briefing on the proposed action to the Salmon Advisory Subpanel and indicated that the project was scheduled to provide a draft EIS in the summer of 2013 with a public comment period that would likely span the Council's September meeting in Boise. The draft EIS was not released in 2013 and at the September 2013 Council meeting, the Council directed Council Executive Director Donald McIsaac to send a letter requesting the review be timed to coincide with the Council's April 2014 Council meeting in Vancouver, Washington (Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 1).

The ACOE announced plans to release a draft EIS on May 22 with a 45-day public comment period that would encompass the June 2014 Council meeting and this agenda item was scheduled accordingly. However, the draft EIS was not released on May 22 and was not available at the time the June Briefing Book was distributed. The tentative ACOE plan at this time is to release the draft EIS on June 19 with a 45-day comment period. This schedule would require the Council to develop final comments and recommendations at the June 2014 Council meeting with almost no review time. The ACOE reports that the document may be available up to a week earlier than the formal release date of June 19. Council staff will continue to work with the ACOE to maximize Council review time and will send out supplemental materials as soon as they are available.

Additional background material on the project can be found at the following webpage: <http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/Missions/Currentprojects/CormorantEIS.aspx>.

### **Council Action:**

**Provide Comments to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.**

### **Reference Materials:**

1. Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 1: September 30, 2013 letter from Dr. McIsaac to Ms. Ruckwardt regarding the Council request on the content and review of the draft EIS on cormorant predation on juvenile salmonids.
2. Agenda Item D.2.a, Supplemental Attachment 2: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Report
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Develop Comments on the Cormorant Management Plan for Submission to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Mike Burner

PFMC  
05/30/14