



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
MARINE FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

April 30, 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chris Oliver
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

FROM: Erika Feller *Erika Feller*
Chair, Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee Endorsement of the final
Phase I Report of the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force

On behalf of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC), I am very pleased to transmit the final Phase I Report of the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force. This report, *A Vision for Salmon and Steelhead; Goals to Restore Thriving Salmon and Steelhead to the Columbia River Basin*, is the culmination of an extensive process which characterizes the shared qualitative and provisional quantitative goals for Columbia Basin salmon and steelhead of the 28 member Task Force, which represents a diversity of stakeholders and managers from across the Columbia Basin.

Salmon and steelhead are a major cultural icon for the entire region and are woven into the lives and cultures of many communities throughout the Columbia River Basin. Salmon and steelhead and the Columbia Basin ecosystem have been central to tribal culture, ceremony, and subsistence for thousands of years, and their abundance was a key factor for the region's settlers hundreds of years ago. Now greatly diminished from massive runs and historical abundances estimated at between five and 16 million fish each year, we urgently need to recover salmon to healthy and harvestable levels for social, cultural, and ecological reasons.

The qualitative and provisional quantitative goals in this report reflect the strong commitment and collaborative, unprecedented effort of all CBP Task Force members to provide future generations with healthy and abundant salmon runs across the Columbia Basin landscape. Their vision is:

A healthy Columbia River basin ecosystem with thriving salmon and steelhead that are indicators of clean and abundant water, reliable and clean energy, a robust regional economy, and vibrant cultural and spiritual traditions, all interdependent and existing in harmony.

The report reflects the sense of urgency that Task Force members feel to help the Columbia Basin's people, salmon, communities, and wildlife that rely upon this ecosystem and its natural resources.



MAFAC members have been extremely pleased with the phase 1 work completed and have previously (June 2018) unanimously approved extending the term of the Task Force from January 2019 through the end of January 2021 to conduct the second phase of the work. The aim of the second phase is comprised of scenario planning to help establish integrated goals for long-term conservation and harvest/fishing of salmon and steelhead to support collaborative regional and local efforts amongst Columbia Basin partners. We have been very pleased with the collaborative process established by the Task Force in Phase 1. The momentum and working relationships that were established will be essential for the successful completion of Phase 2. MAFAC will report on this work when it is complete.

Once reviewed, we recommend sharing this report with appropriate stakeholders. MAFAC also wants to express its continued commitment, support and availability to facilitating these processes as requested and needed and will continue the ongoing engagement throughout the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force's phase 2 until completion.

Finally, MAFAC wishes to thank NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region leaders for having the wisdom to be creative and aspirational, for the work of their dedicated staff, and for making the initial request to bring together the diverse parties throughout the basin for this important unprecedented work.