

(This peer review plan was posted on Reclamation's Peer Review Agenda on 9/11/2019; review was ongoing at time of posting.)

## **Peer Review Plan**

### **Anderson Ranch Water Quality Model**

Date: 2/1/2019

Originating office: Bureau of Reclamation, Pacific Northwest Region, 1150 N. Curtis Rd. Suite 100, Boise, ID, 83706

Reclamation roles:

Director or delegated manager: Lorri Gray, Regional Director, Pacific Northwest Region, Bureau of Reclamation

Peer Review Lead: Jennifer Cuhacian, Civil Engineer, Pacific Northwest Region, Bureau of Reclamation

Subject and Purpose:

The Anderson Ranch Water Quality Model (CE-QUAL-W2) has been developed to support exploration of water quality conditions under various reservoir operations and hydrologic conditions. The model will be used to evaluate operational flexibility under existing ESA limitations (as identified in the USFWS 2005 and 2014 Biological Opinions) and the potential water quality impacts resulting from the proposed Lease of Power Privilege (Cat Creek Project) and the proposed Anderson Ranch Dam raise (part of the Boise River Feasibility Study). The purpose of this Peer Review Plan is to facilitate expert review of the calibrated model and provide feedback as to perceived limitations and potential improvements.

Impact of Dissemination:

Under Reclamation Policy CMP TRMR-30 Peer Review of Scientific Information and Assessments in fulfillment of the Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review (70 FR 2664-2677) and implementation of the Information Quality Act (Pub. L. 106-554) the science informing the USJRBSI is determined to be a highly influential scientific assessment. Data provided from the Anderson Ranch Reservoir Water Quality Model could be considered influential for several assessments including: *Proposed* Anderson Ranch Dam raise and associated Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act compliance; *Proposed* Lease of Power Privilege – Cat Creek Project; *Proposed* Elmore County - inter basin water diversion; and the 2005 Bull Trout Biological Opinion - identifying project effects on federally listed species and critical habitat associated with the Incidental Take Statement providing Endangered Species Act protections for Boise Project operations (2005 – 2034). Subject matter experts involved with the assessment have performed an Internal Peer Review. The nature of this project, familiarity with the model used, and background in interpretation of model results requires a specific type and level of expertise. Internal staff availability with the necessary qualifications to conduct a peer review and that are not extensively involved with the study is extremely limited. The level of peer review that is needed for this highly influential scientific assessment should come from an External Peer Review.

Peer Review Scope:

*(This peer review plan was posted on Reclamation's Peer Review Agenda on 9/11/2019; review was ongoing at time of posting.)*

The scope of this peer review will include review of the model documentation, review of model files, testing of the calibrated model, and recommendations for improvement. Peer reviewers will be asked to consider potential limitations of the calibrated Anderson Ranch Water Quality Model with respect to evaluating operational flexibility under existing ESA limitations (as identified in the USFWS 2005 and 2014 Biological Opinions) and potential water quality impacts resulting from the proposed Lease of Power Privilege (Cat Creek Project) and the proposed Anderson Ranch Dam raise (part of the Boise River Feasibility Study).

Reviewers are to provide comment solely on the scientific information being reviewed, and not on any agency decision or policy.

#### Timing of Review:

The review period is expected to be March 1-30, 2019. The final Peer Review Report is expected to be available on the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Peer Review public website by September 30, 2019.

#### Methodology of Review:

The peer review will be conducted by individuals. The identities of the reviewers will be disclosed in the final Peer Review Report. Review findings/comments from reviewers will be summarized together, rather than attributed to individual reviewers. The peer review process will not provide opportunities for public participation.

#### Number of Peer Reviewers:

It is anticipated that 1-2 peer reviewers will be utilized.

#### Reviewer Selection Process:

The peer reviewers will have at least 10 years' experience with expertise in water quality and water quality modeling using CE-QUAL-W2. Peer reviewers will have education, professional experience, and peer recognition in their field, and will have contributed to their field. Peer reviewers will be selected by Reclamation staff based on their ability to meet the Peer Review Scope and the required expertise identified above. Reclamation staff will assure that peer reviewers do not have a conflict of interest. The public will not be asked to nominate peer reviewers.

#### Delivery of findings:

The peer review team member(s) will submit a report of their findings to the Peer Review Lead by the end of the review period. At a minimum, their report will include a brief description of their findings and recommendations in a comment matrix. The report will be provided digitally to the Peer Review Lead.

#### Response to Peer Review:

At the conclusion of receiving peer review comments, the Peer Review Lead will submit a final Peer Review Report to Reclamation's peer review website (<http://www.usbr.gov/main/qoi/peeragenda.html>). This report will summarize the findings of the peer review and list the comments provided by the reviewers, as well as Reclamation's response to the comment, actions the agency will undertake regarding the comment, and reasons the agency believes those actions will satisfy any key concerns or recommendations.

Federal Register Notice: Federal Register notices will not be provided announcing the formation of a peer review team and completion of the final report.

Applicability of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA):

*(This peer review plan was posted on Reclamation's Peer Review Agenda on 9/11/2019; review was ongoing at time of posting.)*

This peer review is not subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) because reviewers are being asked to provide individual reviews on the subject matter. Reclamation is not seeking consensus advice from the reviewers as a group.

Agency contact:

Jennifer Cuhaciyán

Civil Engineer

Pacific Northwest Region

Bureau of Reclamation

[jcuhaciyán@usbr.gov](mailto:jcuhaciyán@usbr.gov)

(208) 378-5271