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Memo

To: AMWG Members

From: Mary Orton, in behalf of the Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning:

Kerry Christensen
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Wayne Cook
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Randy Peterson
Bob Winfree

Kurt Dongoske
Leslie James
Andre Potochnik
Jerry Zimmerman

cc: TWG Members

Date: March 25, 2002

Re: Recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning on issues referred by AMWG

The AMWG, at its January 2002 meeting, approved 54 Management Objectives that they believe provide a thorough and well-balanced direction for the Adaptive Management Program and the river ecosystem. Also at that meeting, the AMWG asked the Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning (AHCSP) to do four things to complete the strategic plan:

1. Develop a process and timeline for prioritization,
2. Develop a process and timeline for completion of Information Needs and Management Actions,
3. Develop a process and timeline for identification of which MOs are in and which are out of the AMP, and
4. Consider the addition of a new Management Objective 7.3: Maintain suitable water quality in GCD releases to meet downstream Management Objectives.

This memorandum outlines the AHCSP's recommendations to the AMWG on these four issues. These recommendations were reviewed with the TWG at its February meeting, and input from TWG members was incorporated in the recommendations.

You will consider these recommendations at your meeting in April. If you have any questions or concerns about these recommendations, please contact Mary Orton before the meeting at 602.426-9866 or mary@maryorton.com, so she can attempt to resolve them and save time at the meeting.

Issue 1: Development of a process and timeline for prioritization.

The AHCSP agreed that the purpose of the prioritization exercise is to give direction to the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center (GCMRC) in development of its Strategic Plan and annual workplan. Given that, the AHCSP agrees that the result should be a list of the Information Needs in SEQUENCE order, so that GCMRC knows what the AMWG feels should be accomplished first.

However, the Core Monitoring INs should not be included in the sequencing, as they must be continued. Recommendations about EINs would generally be made in connection with recommendations to undertake an experiment or MA to which the EINs relate. Management Actions cannot be sequenced at this time, because the MA section of the Strategic Plan has not been written yet.

The AHCSPP recommends the following process:

- A. At the May TWG meeting, TWG members will hear a presentation from GCMRC that provides information about resource status and trends. This presentation will include the status of achieving the goals in the strategic plan and the expectations outlined in Table II-7 of the EIS, and will address how close we are to achieving those goals. The presentation will also include what the GCMRC recommends as the next step, and the level of urgency of that step.
- B. Next, the TWG will use a “paired comparisons” exercise to put the Research Information Needs (RINs) and Support Information Needs (SINs) in sequence order. The paired comparisons exercise is one in which the group decides, two at a time, which IN should be addressed before the other. There will be discussion before each decision, so that TWG members can learn from each other about how and why they are making their decisions. The result is a list of RINs and SINs in sequence order.

Because there are almost 200 RINs and SINs, the TWG will not have time to put all of them in sequence order during the meeting. They will put only 20 to 30 RINs and SINs in sequence order, based on a sample taken from all goals. After the meeting, TWG members will receive a questionnaire that will aid them in putting the remaining RINs and SINs in sequence order, based on the sequence framework they developed during the meeting. TWG members will assign the remaining INs a numerical score to indicate sequence order, for example, from 1 to 20, with 1 being first in sequence.

- C. The results of the questionnaire will be compiled and the results given back to the TWG. If there are INs addressed in the questionnaire about which the group does not agree, they may continue the paired comparisons exercise to resolve those issues at the next TWG meeting. When all the RINs and SINs are in sequence order, the group will review the result for fatal flaws – does the result have any fatal flaws that need to be corrected? These might be violations of legal requirements, putting something early in the sequence that can't be determined until later, etc.
- D. These results will be sent to the AMWG for approval at its next meeting.
- E. After the AMWG acts, the GCMRC will use the approved list of RINs and SINs in sequence order to produce its Strategic Plan, which will include the Information Needs that will be addressed during the next 5-year period; and its annual workplan, which will include the Information Needs that will be addressed during the coming year. If, during the process of developing its Strategic Plan or annual workplan GCMRC believes that a lower-ranked IN either needs to be addressed first, or in conjunction with other INs needs to be addressed through a combined RFP, they will bring this recommendation with the accompanying rationale to the TWG for review.
- F. The GCMRC Strategic Plan and annual workplan will be sent to AMWG for approval, after review by the TWG.

The AHCSPP recommends that this process of putting INs in sequence order as guidance for the GCMRC should occur periodically, because as conditions change, so will the desired sequence order.

Issue 2: Development of a process and timeline for completion of Information Needs and Management Actions.

Information Needs: The Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning recommends that the TWG, at the meeting after the May meeting, identify the Information Needs around which it does not have consensus, and approve the rest. The approved INs will go to the AMWG for approval at its next meeting. Those INs that have not been approved are subject to further discussion between GCMRC and TWG. They will go to the TWG for approval, and then to the AMWG for final approval at its next meeting.

Management Actions: The Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning recommends that after the sequencing exercise is completed, the GCMRC and the TWG jointly develop the Management Actions for recommendation to the AMWG.

Issue 3: Development of a process and timeline for identification of which MOs are in and which are out of the AMP.

The AHCSPP believes that all MOs and INs that are approved by the AMWG are “in” the AMP. The question that needs to be asked is, “Is this activity appropriate for funding by power revenues?” For example, if it were decided that a particular activity was not appropriate for funding by power revenues, another agency could fund that activity in its budget, or GCMRC could attain funding from outside the AMP (appropriated dollars, grants, etc.) to accomplish that activity.

The AHCSPP agreed that MOs do not need to be determined to be in or out of the AMP before sequencing, since all MOs and INs approved by AMWG are in the program.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning recommends the following process for identification of which MOs are inappropriate for funding by power revenues:

1. The Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning will develop a list of criteria that make power revenue funding inappropriate for an MO.
2. The TWG, at its May meeting, will consider and refine that list of criteria, and then use it to develop a list of MOs that should be funded by other revenues.
3. In both these cases, the AHCSPP recommends using a simple process, similar to what we have used many times: give people time to think about the question, generate a list, then discuss each item and come to a consensus.
4. That list of MOs, with the criteria used to generate it, will go to the AMWG for approval in July.

Issue 4: Consideration of the addition of a new Management Objective 7.3. Maintain suitable water quality in GCD releases to meet downstream Management Objectives.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning was not able to come to a consensus on this item in the time it had before the February TWG meeting. The members anticipate that it will be identified during the TWG discussion of INs as an item that needs further discussion.