

**Columbia River Implementation Project
Policy Advisory Group – Draft Charter**

Group Title: Columbia River Water Resources Program Policy Advisory Group

Purpose: Create a forum for Ecology to talk with stakeholders about key Columbia River water resource management issues and for stakeholders to build understanding of one another's perspectives and identify areas of common interest.

Specific Objectives / Charge:

- Help Ecology identify policy issues associated with implementing a new water resource management program for the Columbia River.
- Provide Ecology with a full range of perspectives on policy choices and priorities.
- Assist Ecology in setting criteria for funding of storage and conservation projects and provide a full range of perspectives on potential projects sent forward from the Conservation and Storage Advisory Group.

Governance and Decision Making:

- All parties have equal representation and equal participation.
- An executive committee of no more than 4 people selected by the Group will help Ecology coordinate meetings and assist with setting meeting agendas and leading meeting discussions. Executive committee duties may rotate over time.
- Consensus outcomes are not required; where the Group does not reach consensus, the full range of perspectives will be carried forward as input to Ecology. If the Group determines to seek consensus on certain points, consensus is defined as an outcome everyone on the Group can live with and support.
- Meetings will be facilitated and summary discussion points, recommendations and action items from meetings will be documented by a neutral third party.

Expectations of Participants:

- Participants will make every effort to attend meetings. If an alternate is needed, the alternate will be briefed prior to meetings and able to participate. Ecology will be notified of alternates in advance, to facilitate meeting planning.
- Participants will represent their own personal views and expertise and the perspectives of their "home" organizations; this means participants are responsible for coordinating with their constituencies to bring perspectives forward.
- Collaborative problem solving depends on mutual respect and careful listening among participants and on active participation by all. Meetings will be conducted in a respectful atmosphere where all parties seek to foster trust and understanding.
- Participants will strive for honest and direct communication and a focus on interests and needs rather than positions. Participants will allow for open discussion and the right to disagree, and will look for opportunities to find common interests, agreements, and solutions.
- Participants will focus on clarifying their own views and interests; they will refrain from characterizing the views of other participants especially in conversations with the press.

Meeting frequency:

- First meeting August 18, 2006.
- Subsequent meetings, monthly until the final EIS is distributed (February 2007) and quarterly thereafter.

Who sets the agenda: Ecology in consultation with the executive committee.

Relationship to the Programmatic Columbia River Environmental Impact Statement

On May 5, 2006, Ecology published a scoping notice for a programmatic environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Columbia River Water Resources Program. Public meetings on EIS scoping were held at four locations in late May, and the comment period on EIS scoping closed on June 5, 2006. Ecology will publish a draft EIS in late 2006 and a final EIS in February 2007. As part of their work helping Ecology to identify policy issues associated with implementing the Columbia River Water Resources Program, and in providing Ecology with a full range of perspectives on policy choices and priorities, the Policy Advisory Group will discuss issues that also are addressed in the EIS and will influence the draft and final EIS; however, because of timing, the Policy Advisory Group may not deliberate on every issue addressed by the EIS.