

APPENDIX V- LETTER TO MICHELLE DEHART (FPC) FORMALLY REQUESTING THAT THE FPC PROVIDE US WITH THE CSS'S SAR ESTIMATES INCLUDING SMOLT SURVIVAL ABOVE THE TOPMOST DAM.

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Revenue Canada Business Number: 85245 0519 RT0001
DUNS: 247365385

18 Sept 2019

Re: Provision of CSS SARs data

Dear Ms DeHart:

As you will be aware, the FPC's published CSS studies report annual survival primarily from the topmost dam back to the topmost dam. This excludes smolt survival in the migration segment from hatchery release or upstream tagging site to the topmost dam for most populations (and particularly the Snake River). Over the past several years Kintama has requested three or four separate times via Dr Christine Petersen (our BPA Contracting Officer) that the FPC provide smolt to adult survival data (SARs) for the entire life history.

To date there has been no provision of this survival data, although your staff indicated several times that they will look into the request.

The FPC criticized a recent manuscript of ours partly because of the apples to oranges nature of the comparison of SARs calculated using PIT tags in the Columbia River basin and CWTs used elsewhere on the west coast of North America. This is problematic for my group because although you have criticized this difference, it is the mainly the lack of data from the CSS on upstream survival that is one of two major causes of discrepancy between the CWT

and PIT tagging methods. (The other being lack of harvest data in PIT tag SAR estimates). As a result it is the PIT tag estimates that are anomalous because of the exclusion of upstream smolt and adult survival.

Your staff suggested to Dr Petersen that our request would be a lot of work. It is unclear why this would be so troublesome. We had initially planned to simply do the extractions ourselves, but found that there is insufficient detail in the CSS reports for us to know exactly what tagging groups the CSS use and exclude in creating their SAR estimates. As a result, if we simply do the SAR estimation ourselves the criticism may then simply shift that we have failed to exactly replicate what tagging groups your group uses.

As a result, I am requesting that the FPC provides the SAR data directly, using the data filters you use for the CSS report. Specifically, we are looking for SARs estimates that span the complete migration history from smolt release (from the hatcheries or traps) back to the hatchery or spawning grounds as adults for all the populations that have 'Overall' SARs reported in the CSS annual reports (Appendix B in the 2016 version, specifically Tables B1-B49, B51-100, B103-105). The data we need are for hatchery and wild steelhead, and yearling and subyearling hatchery and wild Chinook from the Snake and upper and mid Columbia rivers.

**Kintama Research Services Ltd., 4737 Vista View Cr, Nanaimo, B.C. Canada, Tel:
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18 Sept 2019

The SARS currently reported in the CSS reports are from dam to dam so tributary mortality above the dams is excluded for both smolts and returning adults. Our goal here is to capture and credit to freshwater as much of the survival losses as is practicable. If the FPC only has survivals from smolt release until adult return to the most upriver dam (i.e. excluding mortalities of returning adults from the top dam to hatchery &/or spawning ground), we will use those instead.

We note that the FPC has some limited portions of the data we are seeking publically available on their website, but it would be much cleaner for our analysis to have the entire dataset from one source. We will also need a citation for the data source so that we can publish it (a “personal communication” from you or a senior member of your staff will be fine if necessary).

This request is being sent via email and registered letter.

Sincerely,

David Welch, Ph.D.



President, Kintama Research Services Ltd. david.welch@kintama.com

c.c. Dr Christine Petersen, BPA

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**From:** Petersen,Christine H (BPA) - EWP-4 <chpetersen@bpa.gov>  
**Sent:** April 3, 2020 1:56 PM  
**To:** David Welch <David.Welch@Kintama.com>  
**Subject:** RE: Fish Passage Center email...

Oh, sorry for slow response.

Yes – Michele asked for the contract details although I don’t recall if there was a new letter or email asking for it, beyond the public email. My coworker Katie McDonald dug around and found the email where she had sent over a legally truncated version of the contract that omitted your personal info and also one or two work elements that weren’t pertinent to what she was asking for. This had been sent January the year before and we had held a meeting with an attorney about it.

Christine

**From:** David Welch <[David.Welch@Kintama.com](mailto:David.Welch@Kintama.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 1, 2020 3:37 PM  
**To:** Petersen,Christine H (BPA) - EWP-4 <[chpetersen@bpa.gov](mailto:chpetersen@bpa.gov)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Fish Passage Center email...

Christine—

Attached is the email Michelle de Hart sent out to various organizations after I formally requested she provide the data we needed. In it Michelle says that she will respond to Kintama, which we never received... she wrote to the agencies, but never back to Kintama. (*“The FPC will respond to the Welch letter and will once again request the BPA/Kintama contract work elements and deliverables.”*).

Do you know whether Michelle wrote back to BPA asking for the contract details? She certainly has never responded to me at all.

David

**David Welch**

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**From:** Petersen,Christine H (BPA) - EWP-4 [[chpetersen@bpa.gov](mailto:chpetersen@bpa.gov)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 02, 2019 9:12 AM  
**To:** David Welch  
**Subject:** FW: Kintama Letter  
**Attachments:** KintamaLetter-091919.pdf

Hi David

This letter may warrant no response, and may be the documentation needed to show we don't have access to hatchery to hatchery PIT based SARs. A little weird to CC all the agencies. I will talk with Jody Lando or maybe Ben Z tomorrow.

Christine

Sent from Workspace ONE Boxer

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Michele Dehart [mdehart@fpc.org](mailto:mdehart@fpc.org)>

Date: Oct 1, 2019 3:50 PM

Subject: [EXTERNAL]

FW: Kintama Letter To:

[adam.j.storch@state.or.us](mailto:adam.j.storch@state.or.us), [Erick.S.VanDyke@coho2.dfw.state.or.us](mailto:Erick.S.VanDyke@coho2.dfw.state.or.us), [tucker.a.jones@state.or.us](mailto:tucker.a.jones@state.or.us),  
[lort@critfc.org](mailto:lort@critfc.org), [otr@critfc.org](mailto:otr@critfc.org), [LESR@critfc.org](mailto:LESR@critfc.org), 'Christine Golightly'  
 <[GOLC@critfc.org](mailto:GOLC@critfc.org)>, [ED.Bowles@state.or.us](mailto:ED.Bowles@state.or.us), [lance Hebdon <lance.hebdon@idfg.idaho.gov>](mailto:lance.hebdon@idfg.idaho.gov),  
[tim.copeland@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:tim.copeland@idfg.idaho.gov), [Daniel.Rawding@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Daniel.Rawding@dfw.wa.gov), [tweitwmt@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:tweitwmt@dfw.wa.gov),  
[Michael.Garrity@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Michael.Garrity@dfw.wa.gov), [Steve.Haeseke@fws.gov](mailto:Steve.Haeseke@fws.gov), David Swank  
 <[david\\_swank@fws.gov](mailto:david_swank@fws.gov)>, [ritche.graves@noaa.gov](mailto:ritche.graves@noaa.gov), [jayh@nezperce.org](mailto:jayh@nezperce.org), [zpenney@critfc.org](mailto:zpenney@critfc.org)  
 Cc: Jerry McCann <[jmccann@fpc.org](mailto:jmccann@fpc.org)>, Brandon Chockley <[bchockley@fpc.org](mailto:bchockley@fpc.org)>, Erin  
 Cooper <[ecooper@fpc.org](mailto:ecooper@fpc.org)>, Gabriel Scheer <[gscheer@fpc.org](mailto:gscheer@fpc.org)>, Bobby Hsu  
 <[bobbyhsu@fpc.org](mailto:bobbyhsu@fpc.org)>, "Petersen, Christine H (BPA) - EWP-4" <[chpetersen@bpa.gov](mailto:chpetersen@bpa.gov)>

Hello:

This is just a heads up, to pass along a recent certified letter received by the Fish Passage Center from David Welch, Kintama Research Services. This letter is related an article by Welch et al, developed under contract with BPA, submitted for publication in the online journal PLOS. The article titled, "The coast-wide collapse in marine survival of west coast Chinook and steelhead: slow moving catastrophe or deeper failure?". The article was posted on a biological sciences archive page, for non-peer reviewed articles, called bioRxiv. The analyses developed under BPA contract was attached to recommendations by Welch to the NW Power Planning Council amendment process.

The BPA COTR on this contract is Christine Petersen and Welch has copied her on this letter. Some of the statements by Welch in this letter, do not comport with the documentation of emails from Christine Petersen, BPA, to the Fish Passage Center in 2017, in which Ms. Petersen states that BPA is interested in SARs from release to uppermost dam for the 2017 Biological Assessment. SARs from point of release to upper most dam, are not a component of CSS analyses or study design. The FPC does not generate these SARs and Ms. Petersen was advised accordingly in 2017 and advised that this request would represent a significant amount of new work. When the FPC was asked to review the Welch analyses, 2019, the BPA contract, including deliverables and work elements was requested, to understand the hypotheses that BPA contracted Kintama to pursue. The Kintama contract, work elements, deliverables, was not provided.

**(KRS Comment:** Our registered letter to Ms Dehart made the point that the CSS actually does calculate the above-dam survival because they needed this value in order to remove this value from their calculation of survival from release to adult return (SAR). In any event, we never received any response to our request (despite Ms Dehart contacting these individuals and stating that she would respond to us). The email exchange that we had with Dr Petersen is attached. Although we do not explicitly state it in this particular email exchange that we have no objection to the FPC being made privy to the details of our contract, we did so in other correspondence).

The FPC provides all data and analyses completed in FPC, CSS and SMP projects to the public. SARs from point of release, traps, etc...are not generated as part of these projects. The FPC will respond to the Welch letter and will once again request the BPA/Kintama contract work elements and deliverables.

**(KRS Comment:** Actually, this statement is incorrect, and the distinction is important. We found it was not possible to recreate the CSS' SAR estimates because the tag release groups they chose to include or exclude

from their analyses is unavailable. The FPC often criticize other groups' results by arguing that the fish used in those analyses were "unrepresentative". However, because the FPC/CSS do not make the details available for how their own analyses are produced, it is not possible to actually determine whether the underlying details are reasonable. More transparency seems called for, as well as an end to claims that data are unrepresentative" without actually showing that (a) this is true and (b) that the suggested distortion is meaningful.

Fortunately, it was during the process of trying to establish whether we could actually recreate the CSS analysis after we were stonewalled in our direct request that we discovered that harvest levels were large and variable, not small and negligible as the FPC assumed. Given that this error alone likely invalidates much of the FPC's past SAR analyses, this point may now simply be moot).