

Emergency TMT Call

August 21, 2000 2:00 p.m.

An emergency TMT call was initiated by the Corps of Engineers at the request of Bonneville Power Administration at 1400 hours, 21 August 2000 because of a 2000 MW deficit for the last half of August.

Participating on the call was Cindy Henriksen of the Corps of Engineers (COE), Greg Delwiche and Scott Bettin of the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), Jim Nielson of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Kim Fodrea of the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), Paul Wagner and Chris Ross of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Marv Yoshinaka of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Jim Litchfield representing Montana, Christine Mallette of the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Department, Ed Bowles of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Also participating was Michelle DeHart of the Fish Passage Center, Kyle Martin of the Columbia Region Intertribal Fish Commission (CRITFC), Brian Marotz of Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks. Others from the COE included Gayle Lear, Clare Perry, Vern Parry, Scott Boyd, Ruth Abney, and Dick Cassidy.

Greg Delwiche described the emergency as a situation lasting for at least the next 10 days as an energy problem, not a capacity problem. It is caused by the lack of water resources and fuel resources. Currently, natural flows are 80 % of normal and there has been a significant reduction in natural flows in Canada. Very hot conditions in Canada have depleted the remaining snowpack. Shaping peaks is not the issue. It is a Northwest energy problem, not a just a California energy problem. Consequently, the problem will affect BPA's ability to meet firm load. There is a need for 30 KCFS (1500 MW) in the Columbia system to meet load requirements.

BPA cannot rely on the market as a resource because California is in a deficit. BPA is buying power in some instances from California. Delwiche didn't know the situation with the private utilities. The net position for sales to California through September is that there will be a low level import from California.

WNP2 has a leaking seal and is running at only 60% of capacity, consequently this causes a 500MW deficit. It will be running at 60% of capacity through August. The leak will not be repaired until some time in September, said Delwiche.

There is 1 and 1/2 feet of augmentation water left at Grand Coulee; Arrow is at 1438.9 feet; BPA is getting as much water out of Canada as they can. BPA will be trying to get an autumn provisional draft agreement, but there is a possibility the Canadians will not agree to one. Henriksen asked how many megawatts are we short. Delwiche responded that it was 2000 MW; 500 MW is because of WNP2.

Delwiche suggested proposed remedies, saying that this type of situation during August may occur over the next few years. BPA does not feel that they cannot fully buy there way out. The proposed remedies suggested by BPA are:

- purchases provide partial remedy;
- reservoir draft;
- voluntary conservation, such as DSI available is over 50 to 100MW and a press release coordinated through the state governors' offices;

Delwiche proposed five reservoir actions in August:

- Grand Coulee: draft to 1278;
- Albeni Falls: draft to 2061;
- Dworshak: full load, no spill through August, drafting an additional 2 feet (drafting to 1518 feet);
- Hungry Horse: no action, the water is too far to get to the Columbia to be useful for shaping. Shaping would have to be coordinated with Montana;
- Libby: no increase in flow;

Delwiche proposed three spill actions:

- John Day: end the last 3 days of testing and go to 0 spill;
- TDA: drop from 40% to 30% spill around the clock;
- Bonneville: 24 hour spill at 50 KCFS.

Addressing the other alternatives, Delwiche indicated that:

- voluntary conservation: they can get 100MW curtailment from industry, but there is no interruptible DSI load available.
- Banks Lake is at elevation 1565 due to a higher fill rate over the weekend;
- Kim Fodrea suggested get more spill reduction rather than looking at drafting Grand Coulee to 1278 feet. She was concerned about refilling to 1283 by the end of September. Michelle DeHart indicated that the BiOp has specified spill levels and that spill should not take the bulk of the hit.
- Kim Fodrea suggesting operating outside the 1 % efficiency range. DeHart indicated that such an action increases fish mortality.
- without the proposed spill reductions and additional drafts from other projects, Grand Coulee would have to draft to elevation 1274 to meet the firm loads.

BPA stressed that the proposed actions needed to be started soon. Wagner, Yoshinaka, and Nielsen all supported the BPA proposal because the burden was shared by all parties.

Cindy Henriksen indicated that the responsibility went beyond the scope of the TMT and that the Corps needed further internal discussion before agreeing to this proposal. The TMT then discussed the consequences of not implementing the proposal. Rolling blackouts are possible by Wednesday, said Delwiche, with the conclusion that rolling blackouts would be considered before cutting DSI. Delwiche also said there were no curtailable loads in the Northwest. Fodrea added that Reclamation wants an assurance of provisional draft from Canadian projects prior to drafting Coulee below 1280 feet,

Henriksen also said that at this time she can not agree to draft Albeni Falls below 2062 feet in August. A Dworshak operation of full powerhouse (no spill) through August, drafting to 1518 was possible but she wanted to check with the project for health and safety issues. Kyle Martin suggested that the Corps also discuss with the Nez Perce Tribe. The General would have to approve the Bonneville and The Dalles operations since they were being requested for a ten day duration, rather than only six hours.

Ed Bowles of Idaho said that he did not like any of the options. The region seems to be willing to run the system for a power emergency but not so for a fish emergency. He felt that as long as the burden was balanced, the propose operation was acceptable, but not to look for fish manager support.

Delwiche asked that the COE discuss the situation with their management and that the group reconvene at 1630 hours. The COE and BOR also decided to hold an off-line caucus.

Henriksen wanted to know whether NMFS and USFWS agreed with the proposed solution to the emergency. Paul Wagner of NMFS and Marv Yoshinaka both indicated that they were satisfied that the actions provided closure and that the burden was equitable.

Delwiche indicated that the impetus for immediate action was to minimize the impact to Grand Coulee.

Since the TMT was unable to reach consensus, it was agreed to reconvene at 4:30 on August 21.

Reconvened Emergency TMT Call 21 August 2000 4:30

The Emergency TMT call concerning a late August Northwest energy emergency reconvened at 1630 hours on 21 August 2000.

Participating were: Cindy Henriksen (COE), Greg Delwiche and Scott Bettin of BPA, Kim Fodrea (BOR), Paul Wagner and Chris Ross (NMFS), Marv Yoshinaka (USFWS), Jim Nielsen (WDFW), Jim Litchfield (Montana), Kyle Martin and Bob Heinith (CRITFC), Richelle Harding (Rohr and Associates representing mid-Columbia PUDs). Also in attendance were: Gayle Lear, Scott Boyd and Dick Cassidy of the COE.

Cindy Henriksen spoke with General Carl Strock and agreed to some reservoir draft and three spill changes. The COE could agree to reservoir draft at Albeni Fall to elevation 2062, but further discussion would be needed to draft below that elevation. Dworshak could be changed to a no spill condition, but the COE would have concern about drafting below elevation 1520 feet. Implementation of The Dalles and Bonneville spill changes was acceptable.

Kim Fodrea could not agree to any operation for Grand Coulee. She felt that she could reach an agreement if Albeni Falls were drafted to 2061 feet and Dworshak was drafted to 1518, and there were additional spill reductions.

Jim Nielsen felt that the equitable plan was becoming inequitable. He saw an effort to reduce spill and to reduce draft of reservoirs. Chris Ross felt that the 95 and 98 BiOp covered this type of emergency.

Delwiche felt that with the present commitment from the COE, only 25% of the deficit was covered with this type of decision. He felt that reservoir drafts were needed to cover the rest of the deficit.

Bob Heinith asked if BPA had considered mitigation for this action. Delwiche indicated that they were dealing with the emergency at hand and had not yet discussed mitigation measures.

At the conclusion of the call, BPA indicated it would continue to work with the COE concerning Albeni Falls issues and Grand Coulee will continue on its present operation until Wednesday, 23 August 2000. BPA was 1500 MW short; they will purchase one third and the rest will come from hydropower. The Corps agreed to reduce spill at The Dalles and Bonneville and to stop spill at Dworshak as soon as possible.