

SYSTEM OPERATIONAL REQUEST: #2000-35

- *The following State and Federal Salmon Managers have participated in the preparation and support this SOR: Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the National Marine Fisheries Service.*

TO: **Brigadier General Strock** **COE-NPD**
 William Branch **COE-Water Management**
 Cindy Henriksen **COE-RCC**
 Doug Arndt **COE-P**
 Col. Randall J. Butler **COE-Portland District**
 Lieut. Col. W.E. Bulen, Jr. **COE-Walla Walla District**
 J. William McDonald **USBR-Boise Regional Director**
 Judith Johansen **BPA-Administrator**
 Greg Delwiche **BPA-PG-5**

Marvin S. Yoshinaka

FROM: **Marv Yoshinaka, Chairperson, Salmon Managers**

DATE: **December 4, 2000**

SUBJECT: **Bonneville Dam Tailwater**

SPECIFICATIONS: **Maintain a minimum tailwater elevation of 12 feet at Bonneville Dam.**

JUSTIFICATION: **Fluctuating tailwater elevations at Bonneville Dam have resulted in varying depths at the Ives Island gauge 1 and gauge 2. The fluctuations have apparently resulted in dewatered redds and pre-spawning mortality of listed chum salmon. Limiting tailwater elevation at Bonneville Dam to no less than 12 feet will allow for some stabilization of present conditions.**

The fishery agencies (USFWS, ODFW and WDFW) have repeatedly advised the Action Agencies of the inadequacy of the present conditions (see SORs # 2000-32, 33 and 34). The Action Agencies have chosen not to implement the recommendations of SORs 2000-32, 33 and 34 for higher flows from Bonneville to more fully utilize the mainstem spawning area at Ives Island for chum, and have instead chosen to allow higher nighttime flows to keep daytime flows lower. We recommend that the daily average flow be used to maintain the 12-foot minimum tailwater rather than utilize reverse load factoring with higher flows at night. This 12-foot tailwater is proposed as a stopgap measure to provide some stability to water levels at Ives Island under current operations.

The most recent field observations show that an additional 216 new chum were observed in the Hamilton slough area actively digging redds. Eighteen chum and six redds were seen in the channel between Ives and Pierce Islands, while thirty chum were observed in Hamilton Creek (26 of those at the mouth of the spring channel). Field crews have reported that the I-205 seep area is presently out of water (0830 hours on December 4, 2000). This is an area where up to 40

fish have been observed, and those fish can be seen swimming immediately offshore of the seep area.

It is imperative that the tailrace at Bonneville be stabilized immediately until further analysis can be conducted regarding the flows and tailrace levels necessary to protect fish and redds present at this time.

257-00.doc