

COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

MEETING NOTES

July 17, 2002

**CORPS OF ENGINEERS NORTHWESTERN DIVISION OFFICES – CUSTOM HOUSE
PORTLAND, OREGON**

TMT Internet Homepage: <http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/TMT/index.html>

FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY NOTES ON FUTURE ACTIONS

Facilitator: Donna Silverberg

The following notes are a summary of issues that are intended to point out future actions or issues that may need further discussion at upcoming meetings. These notes are not intended to be the “record” of the meeting, only a reminder for TMT members.

Updates:

The purpose of today's meeting was to discuss the 2003 Water Management Plan. As promised, Rudd Turner gave a quick update on river operations. Dworshak was at elevation 1593.7' today and discharging 13.7 kcfs. Total dissolved gas has remained below the 110% level for the past week. Updated SSARR models are posted on the TMT web page.

Action: TMT members agreed to hold outflows at Dworshak to 13.8 kcfs maximum until next week, unless the 110% gas cap is reached.

The Salmon Managers are looking to discuss Grand Coulee shaping and swapping possibilities. Tony Norris offered the BOR's perspective on some alternative options to consider. The Salmon Managers will discuss these options and respond to Tony as soon as possible.

WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN (WMP) WORK SESSION:

TMT received a list of issues and questions to consider for today's work session on the WMP. The issues focused on the purpose, level of detail, decision criteria/characteristics and format of the plan.

Purpose:

Prior to the meeting, the Action Agencies shared their thoughts on the purpose of the WMP. The following purposes were discussed:

- To reach agreement among regional managers on the FCRPS
- To tell the reader how the Action Agencies intend to implement the 2000 BiOp requirements
- To provide guidance to in-season management
- To provide clarity to interested parties
- To enable longer term planning by reducing last minute decision making wherever possible
- To highlight BiOp system operation requirements
- Through review and discussion, to identify differences in approach to managing the FCRPS

- A place to account for shifts in operations based on new research, forecasted fish migrations, weather and other conditions (such as forecasted fish status)
- To identify any changes to Biological Opinions' operations based on Progress Reports

Generally, positive feedback was given to the Action Agencies for their work in developing the WMP. Some TMT members would like more of a consensus process that is clearly articulated in the Plan. The need for review, analysis and discussion of the WMP was stressed, which could be incorporated into a “lessons learned” session that includes a review of the past year’s research. Other “lessons” learned, such as chum operations, could piggyback with a research and WMP review sometime in late spring or early fall.

Level of Detail:

While there was a suggestion for a “one-stop shopping” Plan, the group agreed that some information should be put into appendices to keep the body of the document from being too detailed and to help ease reference checks. The group agreed to put the following information into appendices:

- Ramp rates for Libby and Hungry Horse
- Water quality issues including QA/QC and calibrating instruments
- The Spill Priority List strategy
- A summary of project elevations
- A timeline for river operations.

The group also agreed that there are some operations that occur annually that are not BiOp related – but should be accounted for in a planning document. Those measures that are not part of a Biological Opinion that will be included in the WMP are:

- Vernita Bar
- Spring Creek releases
- Tribal fishery operations
- Canadian operations that are known

These measures will be clearly marked in the table of contents, noted in a paragraph at the front of the document, and possibly listed in an appendix.

Scott Boyd asked that comments and suggestions for improvement of the WMP be shared with him, Tony Norris or Suzanne Cooper. The group will revisit suggestions to the WMP at the next TMT meeting, July 24. The Action Agencies will try to have a new WMP draft out for the August 21 TMT meeting.

A “WMP and Chum Data Review” meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 3 from 1-4 pm.

Next TMT Meeting, July 24:

Agenda Items (in addition to usual discussion items):

- TMT schedule
- Follow-up suggestions to WMP
- Spring Creek release discussions

Meeting Minutes

1. Greeting and Introductions

The July 17 Technical Management Team meeting was chaired by Rudd Turner of the Corps and facilitated by Donna Silverberg. The following is a distillation, not a verbatim transcript, of items discussed at the meeting and actions taken. Anyone with questions or comments about these minutes should call Turner at 503/808-3935.

2. Water Management Plan Work Session.

Turner began by updating the group on current operations at Dworshak; outflow continues at 13.8 Kcfs, with inflows in the 5 Kcfs-6 Kcfs range. The current SSARR shows a project elevation of 1529 feet on August 31, if a flat discharge of 13.8 Kcfs is maintained through that date; this will leave approximately 150 KAF for release in September. Dissolved gas levels below the project continue to be below the waiver standard, Turner added. After a brief discussion, the TMT recommended that the action agencies continue to release 13.8 Kcfs from Dworshak until further notice.

Scott Boyd explained that the purposes of the Water Management Plan include reaching agreement among the action agencies on operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System to implement the 2000 BiOp, to provide guidance to the in-season management process, to provide clarity to interested parties, to enable longer-term planning by reducing the need for last-minute decision-making, and to highlight BiOp system operational requirements. He said the Corps' hope is that, by starting the process now, it will be possible to finalize the 2003 WMP by early September, as called for in the BiOp.

The discussion then turned to TMT recommendations as to the specific contents of the 2003 Plan. These comments and suggestions included the following:

- In general, NMFS felt that the content of the 2002 WMP plan was adequate; however, charts detailing the ramp rates at each project, as well as the 2003 Spill Priority List, would be welcome additions as appendices.
- The TMT Guidelines should be a stand-alone document.
- The 2003 Water Management Plan should lay out the planned Spring Creek hatchery release operation, the Vernita Bar operation and the tribal fisheries operations.
- All non-BiOp operations should be detailed in the introduction to the 2003 Plan.
- A time-frame for flow augmentation events would be helpful.
- A list of planned Canadian operations would be a useful addition to Table 3.
- Project data – seasonal elevation targets, powerhouse capacities, planned outages – would be a useful appendix to the 2003 Plan.

Boyd asked that any further suggestions as to the contents of the 2003 Water Management Plan be submitted to him at the next regularly scheduled TMT meeting on July 24.

After that, he said, I will incorporate the comments received into a final draft of the 2003 Plan in time for presentation at the August 21 TMT meeting. Another Water Management Plan work session was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, September 3.

TMT ATTENDANCE LIST

JULY 17, 2002

Name	Affiliation
Rudd Turner	COE
David Wills	USFWS
Donna Silverberg	Facilitation Team
Ron Boyce	ODFW
Paul Wagner	NMFS
Scott Bettin	BPA
Tony Norris	USBR
Karl Kanbergs	COE
Scott Boyd	COE
Tina Lundell	COE
Dick Cassidy	COE
Robin Harkless	Facilitation Team
Suzanne Cooper	BPA
Chris Ross	NMFS
Shane Scott	WDFW
Steve Pettit	IDFG
Kyle Martin	CRITFC