

**TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM
MEETING NOTES
August 15, 2002
CORPS OF ENGINEERS NORTHWESTERN DIVISION OFFICES – CUSTOM HOUSE
PORTLAND, OREGON**

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

1. Greeting and Introductions

The August 15 Technical Management Team meeting was chaired by Karl Kanbergs 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 Kanbergs at 503/808-3941.

2. Bonneville Spillway Test.

Dennis Schwartz of the Corps led this presentation. He reminded the group of the recent presentation to the TMT on this subject; he said he has been asked to talk about the near-field testing in association with the Bonneville spill test, which the Corps would like to begin on August 24 and end on September 4. Schwartz went through the background for the summer spill test at Bonneville, explaining that the proposed timing of the test has to do with the fact that flow conditions during this period are expected to be conducive to testing the flow deflectors at a low tailwater elevation, and because juvenile passage is expected to be at a very low ebb in late August.

Schwartz distributed handouts detailing historic passage information at Bonneville, as well as the near-field test schedule and design. He noted that while the near-field test instruments are being deployed on August 24 and 25, several hours of zero spill will be required. Schwartz said there are 12 three-hour test blocks in all; total spill during these test blocks will range between 9 feet of total gate opening, or about 20 Kcfs spill (under Test Blocks A and B) to 100 Kcfs spill (under Test Block L). Again, said Schwartz, our goal is to minimize the impacts of the test on juvenile passage.

The TMT devoted a few minutes of discussion to the proposed near-field test, as well as the historic juvenile passage information provided by the Corps; Schwartz noted that, according to the Fish Passage Center, more than 99% of both the yearling and subyearling chinook runs have already passed Bonneville. Schwartz said Tom Lorz of CRITFC, Shane Scott of WDFW and Gary Fredricks of NMFS have all agreed that the fish impacts of the test would be minimal.

Ron Boyce replied that there will still be some fish in the system through the end of the month; he said Oregon feels it is important to protect the tail of the run, which consists mainly of juveniles from some of the weakest upriver stocks. For that reason, he said, Oregon would prefer that the near-field test be deferred until September, if possible. Schwartz replied that the Corps' concern about postponing the test is the lack of support, among the action agencies, for continuing spill for fish passage past August 31; there are also permitting concerns. In general, he said, a lot of coordination would be required to move this spill test into the post-August 31 period, and there probably isn't enough time to accomplish that coordination in the short period remaining before the planned start of the test.

In response to a question from Scott, Schwartz said the first night of the test would be a major departure from the current 75 Kcfs day/spill to the gas cap at night spill operation. He added, however, that due to low flows in the Lower Columbia and the minimum generation requirement at Bonneville, it hasn't been possible to spill up to the gas cap at that project for some time.

In response to a question, Steve Pettit said IDFG is willing to support the recommendation of the downriver salmon managers on this issue. Schwartz said he will return to the Corps and BPA and report that the salmon managers would prefer to move the test into September. Scott Bettin said BPA is unwilling to move the test into September, given the fact that screens are still in place, most of the fish are being transported, and it is likely that

only a handful of juvenile fish would be affected. Boyce replied that the BiOp stipulates that the spill program continue through August 31; you could make the argument that only X number of fish would be affected about any number of BiOp RPAs. The BiOp is a package, not just a series of individual actions, he said.

Kanbergs and Schwartz noted that, with flow in the lower river receding, water conditions are not expected to be conducive to the test if it is delayed a week; while the test would impact a certain, indeterminate number of juveniles in late August, the overall goal is to optimize flow deflector performance and, ultimately, the spill program at Bonneville, which will have long-term benefits for juvenile fish passage at that project.

The discussion continued in this vein for some minutes. The group discussed the possibility of moving the higher-spill test blocks to the beginning, rather than the end, of the test period; Schwartz said he will investigate that possibility, because there is some flexibility in terms of the order of the test blocks.

Ultimately, Pettit said he would hate to see the test deferred a year; Boyce agreed that it is up to the action agencies to decide whether or not to proceed with the test as planned – they have heard our concerns, he said, but those concerns are not strong enough to cause us to elevate this issue to IT. David Wills concurred, reiterating that the salmon managers would like to see the Corps move as many of the high-spill test blocks as possible to the early part of the test. Understood, said Schwartz, although I do know there are some concerns about the fact that, if we go from high spill to lower spill, there is a delay while the stilling basin clears before the next block can proceed. Schwartz added that he will email a revised version of his handout to Kanbergs for distribution to the TMT membership. [\(As of 08/20/02, there has been no revision, but a summary of spill volumes, as a separate new spreadsheet, was received and forwarded to TMT\).](#)

3. End of Fish Spill and Minimum Pool Operations at Ice Harbor, Little Goose and Lower Monumental.

Rick Pendergrass asked when the TMT would like to see these projects released from MOP and when spill should end. I think the salmon managers have clearly expressed their position that spill should end on August 31 at midnight, Paul Wagner said. With respect to the end of the MOP period at the Lower Snake projects, Chris Ross said the BiOp says that this should occur once low numbers of juveniles are present, to raise pool elevations over the sills of the adult passage facilities. The planned outage at Lower Monumental beginning August 24 (resulting in total outflow of 5 Kcfs from Lower Monumental for three 12-hour periods) gives us a chance to fill the pool at that project, Ross said; we would recommend that MOP end at Lower Monumental and Little Goose on August 24. [\(As of 08/20/02, the extent and duration of the Lower Monumental outage is not verified. Any changes to this schedule will be provided to TMT as soon as possible\).](#)

Ultimately, the TMT declined to make a recommendation on this issue at today's meeting. In response to a question, Scott Boyd said he can ask that the action agencies will make operation in the top foot of the pool elevations a soft constraint. After a few minutes of discussion, it was agreed that the TMT participants will discuss this topic within their agencies and will come to next week's TMT meeting prepared to make a decision on the end of MOP at the three Lower Snake projects.

4. Dworshak Operations/New System Operational Requests.

On August 13, the action agencies received SOR 2002-07. This SOR, developed and supported by the Nez Perce Tribe, IDFG, USFWS, NMFS, CRITFC and WDFW, requests the following specific operations at Dworshak:

- Continue to provide the current discharge rate of 13.8 Kcfs through August 24
- Provide 12 Kcfs outflow August 25 through August 31
- Provide 10 Kcfs outflow September 1 through September 10
- At the end of the test period, begin to ramp project discharge down at the standard project ramp rate (no greater than 1 foot per hour at the Peck gauge) until the minimum outflow of approximately 1.4 Kcfs is achieved.
- Discharge water temperature during this operation will be maintained at approximately 48 degrees F.
- If the provision of the 200 KAF for the test appears to require a draft below elevation 1517, FPAC and TMT will reconvene to reconsider the operation.

Greg Haller went through the details of this SOR, the full text of which is available via the TMT website. Kanbergs said that, based on the most recent SSARR run, this proposal would not use up the entire 200 KAF available after September 1; that means we should be able to implement this operation without drafting Dworshak below elevation 1520, he said. That would certainly be the Nez Perce's preference, Haller said, although we did agree to provide the three feet of flexibility below elevation 1520 if necessary. In response to a question from Kyle Martin, Kanbergs said the Corps would be willing to provide an extra day of 10 Kcfs outflow if inflows to Dworshak continue to be higher than expected.

Ross suggested that the action agencies draft Dworshak to elevation 1520, then ramp down. The 1520-foot elevation was one of the sideboards, Martin agreed. After a few minutes of additional discussion, it was agreed to set a TMT conference call for 3 p.m. Monday, September 9 to discuss the end of the Dworshak operation.

I guess what I'm hearing is that the TMT recommends that SOR 2002-07 be implemented as written, Silverberg said. No TMT objections were raised to this statement. Boyce said Oregon has developed a letter expressing ODFW's lack of concurrence with this operation, but will not more actively oppose it.

[Boyce's Comments via email, August 14, 2002](#)

"For inclusion into the TMT minutes, I wanted to clarify Oregon's position on SOR 2002-07 (attached) regarding August and September Dworshak operations. We fully support the proposed evaluation in September (Biological Opinion RPA Action 34) to determine the benefits of cool water releases from Dworshak in September on adult and juvenile passage. However, we do not support the proposal to reduce discharge from Dworshak in August (nor did we support the reductions that occurred in July by not initiating augmentation earlier in the month) to accommodate the September study. We believe the Biological Opinion contemplates conducting the September evaluation using additional water from Dworshak above the volume earmarked for July and August flow augmentation for juvenile migrants. Summer (July-August) flows in the Snake this year will average only 38 kcfs, substantially below the minimum Biological Opinion flow target of 50 kcfs. Based on NMFS' survival data (NMFS Section 7 Consultation White Papers) these low flows and any further reduction in flows proposed in the SOR will result in extremely low survival rates of ESA listed juvenile fall chinook. As stated in the Biological Opinion and confirmed by modeling done by both the Corps and CRITFC, there would be little risk to spring flows and refill by drafting Dworshak below 1520 ft in September to get the full 200 kaf for the study. Thanks for your consideration and look forward to working with TMT on these important issues."

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6. Current System Conditions.

Libby is releasing 17 Kcfs, as per the recently-negotiated Libby-Duncan swap, Kanbergs reported. (End of August target elevation is 2442.2 feet, reflecting the negotiated swap. Flows will be adjusted as needed based on ongoing modeling.)

7. Recommended Operations.

Recommended operations were detailed earlier in today's meeting.

8. 2002 Spill Accounting.

This topic was not discussed at today's meeting.

9. October Spill Test at The Dalles.

Wagner said NMFS has been discussing the possibility of a 38,800 MW-hour spill program at The Dalles this October, to gather data that will allow the training walls at that project to be planned and built in 2004. If the information isn't collected this year, Wagner said, training wall construction will have to be deferred until 2005. We've discussed the need for this spill with Bonneville, Wagner said, and their answer is no. It's still no, said Rick Pendergrass; due to BPA's financial condition, we're scrutinizing all such requests, and we can't justify funding it outside of the normal spill season. In BPA's view, he said, this test could be accomplished just as well during the normal spill season next August. Wagner replied that NMFS' preference would be to conduct the test in October, when no juveniles are present.

We knew BPA's response coming in, said Wagner; I was asked, then, to shop for spill reductions during the season that would allow The Dalles training wall spill test to go forward this October. We have heard that there will likely be some reduction in the planned spill program at Bonneville at the end of this month, due to the near-field test at that project, he said; we'll have some megawatt-hours available there, in terms of a tradeoff. Pendergrass noted that spill is more valuable in October than it is in August; therefore, there would need to be more than a 38,800 MW-hour reduction in August spill to allow NMFS' proposed The Dalles spill program to go forward in October.

Wagner said he has developed a spreadsheet showing the reductions in BiOp spill that would need to occur at John Day and Ice Harbor, starting August 16 (tomorrow) at John Day and August 24 at Ice Harbor, to allow the October spill program at The Dalles to proceed; he said this spreadsheet has been distributed to the other salmon managers. Wagner said it is NMFS' position that these reductions in BiOp spill be implemented so that The Dalles October test can proceed

Pendergrass noted that BPA is looking very closely at risk and risk management; he said he and Bettin will need to elevate this decision upwards within the BPA organization before he can say whether or not it will be possible for the action agencies to implement this operation.

Pettit said Idaho is concerned that the action agencies and NMFS are asking the TMT to make a policy decision about curtailing a BiOp operation; this isn't necessarily a precedent we want to set, he said. We should be asking IT to make this decision, he said, but at this time, Idaho does not support the spill swap. Kyle Martin said that CRITFC does not support the swap either. Boyce said Oregon feels that any reduction in the BiOp spill program should be avoided at all costs this year; he suggested that the action agencies use spill mitigation funds from 2001 to help fund the October test at The Dalles. Essentially, he said, we need to look at other ways to fund the test besides reductions in measures that provide immediate benefits to in-river migrants. Wills said the Fish and Wildlife Service concurs, noting that BPA's financial problems are outside the concerns of BiOp implementation. Scott said that, while NMFS' idea may be biologically sound, and may yield a net benefit, FPAC was not generally supportive of NMFS' proposal.

Bettin said he and Pendergrass will shop the NMFS proposal internally at Bonneville; if the swap is within the realm of possibility, he said, we will convene a special IT meeting tomorrow afternoon to decide this issue. It was so agreed.

10. Little Goose Doble Testing.

Kanbergs reminded the group of last week's discussion of the upcoming Little Goose double test -- a four-day test beginning August 19, with 12 hours of testing each day. During the test, Little Goose will be able to release only 5 Kcfs through the powerhouse. Additional units will be available during nighttime hours, but some additional spill may be required to get back to MOP, Kanbergs said. We would prefer to go out of MOP during the day, then spill at night, he explained.

We should be able to recover by the next morning, given the fact that we would fill the Little Goose pool by only about 1.9 feet, Pendergrass said; BPA would prefer to generate with that water, rather than spilling it. Would the TMT rather increase spill during the day at Little Goose, or store the water and release it at night, increasing

flow and velocity during nighttime hours? Kanbergs asked. In response to a question, Kanbergs said that, if the water is ponded, then released at night, it would result in nighttime flows of approximately 50 Kcfs in the Lower Snake; if we spill it all during the day, the result would be approximately 20 Kcfs of spill, plus the 5 Kcfs powerhouse discharge.

After a brief discussion, Kanbergs said he will email the details of the two potential operations during the double test to the other TMT participants later this morning; the salmon managers and action agencies will then reach a decision later this afternoon. (A decision was reached to go out of MOP during the day, and generate more at night, with highest releases between 2000 and 2400 hrs.)

11. Next TMT Meeting Date.

The next meeting of the Technical Management Team was set for Wednesday, August 21. A special TMT conference call to discuss the end of the Dworshak operation was set for 3 p.m. Monday, September 9. A special TMT meeting to discuss the Water Management Plan and chum operations was set for 9 a.m. September 3, subject to confirmation later. Other face-to-face TMT meetings were set for September 11 and September 25. Meeting summary prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.

TMT ATTENDANCE LIST

August 15, 2002

Name	Affiliation
Karl Kanbergs	COE
Tony Norris	Reclamation
Kyle Martin	CRITFC
Shane Scott	WDFW
David Wills	USFWS
Ron Boyce	ODFW
Paul Wagner	NMFS
Rick Pendergrass	BPA
Tina Lundell	COE
David Benner	FPC
Jacqueline Abel	Facilitation Team
Mike O'Bryant	Columbia Basin Bulletin
Russ George	WMCI
Mary K. Scullion	COE
Chris Ross	NMFS
Ruth Burris	PGE
Dick Cassidy	COE

Laura Hamilton	COE
Colin Beam	PPM
Scott Bettin	BPA
Margaret Filardo	FPC
Jiong Ji	Avista
Steve Pettit	IDFG
Greg Haller	NPT