

COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

MEETING NOTES

August 21, 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: Jacqueline Abel

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.

Lower Monumental Spillway Repairs:

Everett Wright of the COE's Walla Walla District reported on the status of these repairs and the current schedule for completion. The underwater work will take place through the first week of November; the concrete work between November 15 and the end of November; and the completion of all work to happen no later than February 13, 2003.

The Dalles October Spill Test – IT Update:

Paul Wagner provided a summary of the results of two IT conference calls to resolve this issue, which was elevated to IT from TMT last week. IT agreed to: (1) proceed with the Bonneville flow deflector test and credit that spill reduction toward the swap; (2) curtail daytime spill at John Day for the last two 30/30% spill days, 28 – 29 August; and (3) end daytime spill at Ice Harbor on 25 August. Details of those calls and the agreement reached are contained in the IT conference call notes of August 19.

Libby/Canada Swap Update:

Rudd Turner reported that Libby's elevation is expected to be 2442.3 ft. by the end of August, as was agreed to in the negotiations for the swap. Rudd alerted TMT members that there have been some concerns about possible impacts downstream of Duncan and in the reservoir; however, no request has been made to change the operation.

End of Spill and MOP:

The end spill for this year will be at midnight on August 31, minus the daytime spill curtailments at John Day and Ice Harbor, as agreed to at IT and described above.

BPA proposed August 24 for the end of MOP and TMT discussed various approaches this issue, before deciding on the following:

Action:

A 2-foot operating range will be authorized at Ice Harbor and Lower Monumental by adding 1 foot to MOP or MOP+1 until 6 AM on August 25, effective immediately. Pools will then return to MOP or MOP+1 until midnight August 29, which is when the Lower Monument outage will occur. MOP or MOP+1 operation will end for the year at Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, and Little Goose at midnight on August 29. MOP+1 will remain in effect at Lower Granite until the fall. In addition, a minimum spill of 20 kcfs and 4 hours duration is requested at Ice Harbor, to last until the end of the spill season, August 31.

Action:

COE agrees in concept to the action above, but will need to do some additional analysis. Rudd will contact TMT if this analysis indicates this operation will not work for the COE.

Operational Request SOR #2002 C-9

Kyle Martin of CRITFC presented this SOR, regarding operation of the Lower Columbia Pools for the Autumn Treaty Fishery. He stated that hard system constraints, along with stable flows and pool elevations, are some of CRITFC's main interests. In response to questions, he stated that it is the tribes' policy to ask that Bonneville Pool be operated at 77, not 76.5, with that 1/2 foot making a difference to those fishing from platforms.

Action:

The COE responded that it would operate Bonneville pool to a hard constraint of 75 – 76.5 feet elevation during the periods requested. As to the pools at The Dalles and John Day, the COE will work with BPA with CRITFC's request in mind, but there will not be hard constraints or teletypes issued for these two pools. The COE agreed to do what it can to cooperate with what it acknowledged is an important fishery for the tribes.

Emergency Action List:

The latest draft of the Emergency Action List is on the TMT website. Scott Bettin has consulted with Chris Ross about this, and they propose that this be used for the rest of August.

Water Management Plan Draft:

Rudd walked TMT members through the draft of the 2003 Water Management Plan.

Ron asked when the appropriate time would be for developing the specifics about the Spring Creek Hatchery release? There was discussion that this should be part of the fall/winter update, which could be started at the work session for the plan, scheduled for September 3. Members agreed to the following TMT schedule and next steps to enable the AAs to finalize the 2003 Water Management Plan by the end of September:

- Sept. 3 from 9 AM – Noon (not at 1 PM, as previous notes indicated). Initial comments on draft plan to be discussed at 9 AM, as well as presentations on chum and start of the fall/winter update for 2003. USF&WS will have a presentation at 10 AM, and Oregon will also try to present its data at that time. This meeting will be facilitated and have an official note taker.
- Sept. 6 – written comments are due to the AAs
- Sept. 11 – discussion of comments with AAs at TMT; discussion of data presented by Oregon, if it is not available on Sept. 3

Action:

Ron will check on whether Oregon wants a written response to their comments and get back to Rudd on this.

Action:

Since this document is a pdf file on the website, the COE will send it out to TMT members in Word.

Operational Request from U.S. Geological Survey:

The USGS submitted a request for on and off operation of turbine 1 at McNary Dam to study effects on water temperature at the turbine intakes and fish collection system. After discussion, TMT agreed to implement this as described by USGS in their "specifications of request", with one change. Under the fish protective measures, item #1 will be changed, so that states: "Tests will not be conducted if water temperatures in the fish collections system exceed 72 degrees F for three consecutive hours. The McNary Project Biologist may also decide to stop tests before that time."

Action:

The details of the 24 hour minimum notification by USGS for conducting the tests will be worked out between USGS and the COE and BPA.

Future Meeting Schedule (revised):

- Tuesday, Sept. 3, from 9 AM to 12 noon (not at 1 PM, as previous notes indicated). Work session on Water Management Plan and start of fall/winter update, including chum; see details under Water Management Plan section above.
- Monday, Sept. 9 at 3 PM, conference call on Dworshak operation
- Sept. 11 & 25, from 9 AM to 12 noon, regular TMT face-to-face meetings
- October meeting dates were discussed with final decisions on those meeting dates to be made Sept. 11. Oct. 9 and 23 were suggested, but some members have conflicts for Oct. 23.

September 11 TMT Meeting, Agenda Items:

- Discussion of comments on Draft Water Management Plan (Due to COE Sept. 6)
- Continuation of chum presentations and discussion, if needed
- Update on Dworshak
- Presentation by BPA on financial decisions (Scott Bettin added this after the meeting)
- October meeting dates

Meeting Minutes

1. Greeting and Introductions

The August 21 Technical Management Team meeting was chaired by Rudd Turner of the

Corps and facilitated by Jacqueline Abel. 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. Lower Monumental Spillway Repair Update.

Everett Wright from the Corps' Walla Walla District reported that in-water work on the Lower Monumental stilling basin repairs has now begun; an underwater video survey revealed a variety of debris that had been pulled into the basin or out of the eroded areas. It took about two weeks to remove 49 cubic yards of rock material from the stilling basin, said Wright, a 16-inch vacuum pipe was used to pull the material directly off the bottom and into a barge. Turbidity didn't seem to be much of a problem, he added, noting that one erosion hole had penetrated through all five feet of concrete and seven feet into the bedrock below.

The contractor has now moved into the basin with his drilling barge, said Wright, and has conducted an initial hydrographic survey to get a feel for exactly what the situation is now. He added that there was only a few hours of involuntary spill at the project this year. The contractor is going to be drilling anchor bars next; some 600 are needed, each drilled 10 feet into bedrock. That process will continue until the first week in November, at which point the contractor will start setting forms in Bays 2 and 3. The erosion is worst in Bay 2. Concrete will be poured on November 15, he said; the area to be repaired is about 75 by 85 feet. The forms will be placed and concrete poured in Bay 7 during the last week in November. That will give us a month of curing before winter flows increase to the point that some spill might be necessary, Wright said.

During the last week in December, the contractor will drill relief drains through the concrete, said Wright; these will give us added assurance that the repairs will hold up. He went on to describe the upcoming deflector work at Lower Monumental's Bay 1 and 8; the first order of business is to extend the pier noses on Piers 1 and 7. The contractor will then prepare the surface for deflector installation in November; various bulkheads will need to be set up, and deflector construction will proceed right up to the end of the in-water work window on February 13.

In another month, we'll have a lot more information, he said; however, almost all of the repair work will be conducted underwater, so there won't be much to see from the surface.

3. The Dalles October Spill Test Update.

Paul Wagner briefed the group on the IT/TMT conference calls of August 16 and 19, at which the participants attempted to reach agreement on how to cover the cost of an October spill test at The Dalles. Ultimately, the decision was to reduce daytime for seven days at Ice Harbor and two days John Day later this month, Wagner said; nighttime spill will continue at both projects through August 31.

4. Libby/Canada Swap Update.

Turner said Libby is operating to draft to elevation 2442.3 feet by August 31, 3.3 feet

above its usual 2439-foot end of summer elevation. That elevation is equivalent to the total ksfd flow of the swap, Turner explained. Libby is releasing 17 Kcfs, an operation that will continue through the end of August. There are no issues from the U.S. side of the swap, Turner said; however, there are some concerns in the Duncan area about recreation impacts and potential low-level flooding. We haven't received a request to change the terms of the swap, however, Turner said. The fire at Libby didn't impact the swap? Ron Boyce asked. No, Turner replied.

5. End of Spill and MOP.

TMT has determined that spill will end on August 31, said Scott Bettin; at our last meeting, we discussed the possibility of ending MOP on August 24. That's correct – we talked about doing it in conjunction with the powerhouse and transmission line outage at Lower Monumental, Wagner said. That test has now been moved to August 30, Bettin said; we would like the flexibility to go outside of MOP for that test.

With respect to Ice Harbor spill, Wagner said minimum spill at the project has been as low as 5 Kcfs for extended periods due to the low flows in the Lower Snake. There has been some discussion of implementing a 20 Kcfs minimum, he said, because 5 Kcfs spill does not yield optimal biological conditions – 20 Kcfs spill is the minimum to create adequate egress conditions for fish. Rather than an extended string of 5 Kcfs spill, he said, we've been talking about going to zero spill for some hours to store water to create 20 Kcfs spill blocks. Once the project reaches minimum pool, he said, we would begin to store again.

That type of pulsing operation makes it very difficult to maintain pool elevations within one foot of MOP, Bettin said, unless you want the pulses to be smaller -- for that reason, it would be helpful if we could go outside of MOP. TMT agreed to implement a 20 Kcfs minimum spill pulsing operation tonight and tomorrow at Little Goose; it was further agreed that the project operators can go to MOP +2 in Ice Harbor and Lower Monumental pools for the next 48 hours, effective immediately, in order to provide a larger pulse of spill.

TMT members then returned to a discussion of Ice Harbor spill, specifically duration of spill, and agreed that a minimum four-hour duration for the 20 kcfs spill would be best. Pettit said it takes an hour or two for a flow net to become established in the forebay and for fish to respond to it, also to set up and have good downstream egress conditions.

We talked about the end of lower Snake MOP at yesterday's FPAC meeting, Wagner replied; it was agreed to end MOP in conjunction with the Lower Monumental line outage, which has now been moved to August 30. We would probably need to go outside of MOP only on August 25, Bettin said, in order to have some additional shaping ability. It was so agreed; the action agencies will have one additional day of MOP+2 operation at Ice Harbor; the projects will then return to MOP operation, with MOP ending at 0001 hours August 30. It was further agreed to implement a four-hour minimum on the 20 Kcfs spill blocks at Ice Harbor; Turner stated that the Corps can agree in principle with the proposed operation, but will run some further analysis to ensure that such an operation is feasible and won't cause flow problems in the Lower Snake. He agreed to get back with TMT later in the day if there are issues with implementing the operation.

6. Fall Treaty Fishing.

Kyle Martin distributed SOR 2002 C-9 covering three weeks of Zone 6 fall treaty fishing. The SOR requests the following specific operations:

- August 28, 6 a.m. through August 31, 6 p.m.
- September 4, 6 a.m. through September 7, 6 p.m.
- September 11, 6 a.m. through September 14, 6 p.m.
- Bonneville Pool: operate pool within one foot of full pool (msl elevation 77-76)
- The Dalles (Celilo) pool: operate pool within one foot (msl elevation 159.5-158.5)
- John Day pool: operate the pool within one foot (msl elevation 264.5-263.5)
- Maintain flows through all Zone 6 pools at a near constant rate. Fluctuate no more than +/- 10 Kcfs from the beginning of the fishery to the end of the fishery.

This SOR is available via the TMT website; please refer to this document for full details.

Martin said CRITFC would like the action agencies to implement full, stable pools at Bonneville, The Dalles and John Day as a hard constraint, rather than a soft constraint, this fall; with 429,000 adult fall chinook forecast to return past Bonneville this year, the third-largest escapement since 1948, this year's fishery is of particular importance to the tribal fishers, and any disruption due to fluctuating pool elevations would be especially undesirable.

Bettin asked why CRITFC continues to ask that Bonneville to be operated to a full pool elevation of 77 feet, rather than 76.5 feet, which is the project's official full pool. It's CRITFC policy, Martin replied; that extra half-foot makes a difference to the platform fishers.

Turner replied that the Corps will provide its usual operation; Bonneville pool will be maintained between elevation 75.0 feet and 76.5 feet during the hours of the fishery, as a hard constraint. At the other two pools, as in the past, we will do our best to implement the requested pool elevations, but will not issue a teletype to that effect, Turner said. The flow constraint requested will be difficult to implement, due to changes in Grand Coulee and Dworshak operations beginning September 1, he said. The flow restriction at John Day will not work for us, Bettin said; we need more flexibility than the +/- 10 Kcfs flow band the tribes are requesting.

Again, anything the action agencies can do to minimize pool fluctuations during the fishery would be much appreciated, Martin said. We recognize the importance of this fishery to the tribes, Turner said, and will do our best to keep the pools stable.

In response to a question from Bettin, Martin said CRITFC does not plan to develop any additional SORs for the tribal fishery this fall; if escapement is greater than forecast, CRITFC will likely issue additional fishing permits during the planned three-week tribal fishery. Martin noted that the tribes have provided two weeks of lead time on this SOR, partly in appreciation for the good fishing conditions provided by the action agencies during the 2002 spring treaty fishery.

7. Emergency Action List Update.

We met after the TMT meeting two weeks ago, and discussed the most recent draft of the emergency action list, Bettin said; the list was subsequently distributed for comment, and the only comment we received was from Chris Ross, saying the list looked good to him. Bettin noted that because the list will be in effect for only one more week, the need for it is essentially over for this year. If something comes up that affects chum or chinook spawning, Bettin said, we'll reconvene to discuss that. Essentially, he said, we just wanted to check the box that the emergency action list has been finalized this year; the list is already being implemented.

8. Water Management Plan Draft.

The draft 2003 Water Management Plan is available now for review and comment, said Turner; this document is a meeting handout and also is available via the TMT homepage. The group spent a few minutes going through this document at today's meeting; offering a variety of clarifying questions and comments. It was agreed that a more detailed discussion of the 2003 Water Management Plan will take place at the special TMT meeting on September 3; Turner requested that the other TMT participants review the draft 2003 WMP and come to that meeting prepared to provide detailed comments. He also asked that any written comments be provided by September 7, so that they can be incorporated into a new draft of the Water Management Plan.

Turner noted that the action agencies hope to finalize the 2003 WMP by the end of September, and to finalize the fall/winter update to the plan by mid-November. The group also devoted a few minutes of discussion to the additional information and personnel needed at the September 3 meeting, in particular, the chum experts from the various agencies who will need to attend.

9. New System Operational Requests.

CRITFC's SOR 2002 C-9 was discussed earlier in today's meeting. On August 1, the action agencies also received an SOR from Ken Tiffan of the U.S. Geological Survey, requesting an on and off operation of McNary Dam's Turbine 1 to study the effects on water temperature at the turbine intakes and fish collection system. Essentially, this SOR requests 12-hour blocks of on and off operation of Turbine 1 during the period of August 22 through September 9, on days when the test criteria (minimal wind, maximum daily air temperatures between 90 and 100 degrees F, no testing if water temperatures exceed 72 degrees F, no testing if juvenile salmon mortality exceeds 3% in the fish collection system) are met.

Dennis Rondorf, USGS, went briefly through the specifications of and justification for this SOR, the purpose of which is to study the water temperature effects of Turbine 1 operation. We need to understand the dynamics of how warmer water moves through the turbine and gatewell and into the fish collection system, Rondorf said; we have chosen this period because the number of juvenile fall chinook moving through the system is low, while temperatures are high. Rondorf also described the temperature monitoring system that has been set up to collect data during the test. Bettin noted that the test would require a change to the unit priority laid out in the fish passage plan.

Wagner noted that the fish passage plan reflects what is known, so far; we need more information if we're to cure the McNary temperature problems, hence the need for this test, he said. Bettin said Bonneville has conditionally approved the test with the understanding that it will not cause spill; Rondorf replied that, to the best of his knowledge, this test will not cause spill.

The group discussed the specifications and fish protection measures associated with the test. It was agreed that a single, instantaneous reading of 72 degrees is too conservative a measure at which to shut down the test, if useable data is to be obtained; rather, three consecutive hours of water temperatures at or above 72 degrees F will be the criteria, unless the project biologist decides to terminate the test sooner. Ultimately, the TMT recommended that the McNary water temperature test be allowed to proceed, with the understanding that the project biologist will monitor the situation closely and make the determination about when conditions require the test to be shut down.

10. Current System Conditions.

Wagner reviewed the current status of the migration, beginning with combined subyearling chinook indices at Lower Granite: about 1,000 fish per day, currently, lower at Little Goose and Lower Monumental. The surprise is the index at McNary, he said; we've seen daily counts of up to 70,000 subyearling chinook during the past week. The counts are lower at John Day, The Dalles and Bonneville. With respect to the adult migration, said Wagner, we're into the fall chinook passage season, and have been seeing counts in the 1,000 fish-per-day range at Bonneville. Adult steelhead passage is on the upswing at Lower Granite, Wagner said; at Ice Harbor, there was a huge upswing in adult steelhead passage yesterday, with more than 2,500 fish passing the project.

Wagner added that water temperatures in the Lower Snake River have been amazingly low this summer; Steve Pettit observed that air temperatures have been much lower than usual at night.

Moving on to reservoir operations, Turner said daily flow at Bonneville has ranged between 139 Kcfs and 179 Kcfs over the past week. At McNary, last week's average flow was 148 Kcfs, with an average of 139 Kcfs forecast this week. Day-average flows at Lower Granite were 34 Kcfs yesterday; for the week ending August 18, the average was 32 Kcfs, with an average of 31 Kcfs forecast for this week. The current Dworshak elevation is 1550.6 feet; the project continues to release 13.8 Kcfs, with inflows continuing with surprising strength in the 3 Kcfs-4 Kcfs range. The August 31 elevation at Dworshak is now forecast to be 1534.8 feet. The plan is to reduce Dworshak outflow to 12 Kcfs for the period of August 25-31, Turner said, followed by 12 days at 10 Kcfs outflow, or until elevation 1520 is reached. In other words, we plan to continue to operate Dworshak as agreed last week, he said.

As was reported earlier in the meeting, Libby is releasing 17 Kcfs, with inflows in the 7 – 8 Kcfs range; the August 31 elevation at that project will be just over 2442 feet, Turner said. Albeni Falls continues to operate in the 2062-foot range, with 12.2 Kcfs outflow. In response to a question, Turner said Albeni Falls is not expected to draft significantly until mid-September.

Tony Norris said the current elevation at Grand Coulee is 1281.6 feet; the project is releasing 100 Kcfs. At Hungry Horse, we're releasing 6 Kcfs; project elevation is 3549 feet, currently, with a forecast elevation of 3545.3 feet on August 31. That means we'll have 116 KAF of extra water left in the project on August 31, he said. In response to a question, Norris said the final water supply forecast for The Dalles shows 100 MAF, 101% of average. Brownlee actually drafted slightly last week, Norris added. In response to a question, Bettin said the power system continues to operate smoothly.

With respect to water quality, Turner said TDG levels in the system are settling down; there were only a couple of exceedences over the past week. Water temperatures, as reported previously, continue to be lower than usual for this time of year.

11. Recommended Operations.

Recommended operations were detailed during the previous agenda item.

12. Next TMT Meeting Date.

The next face-to-face meeting of the Technical Management Team was set for Wednesday, September 11. Another meeting, to discuss the 2003 Water Management Plan and the 2002/2003 chum operation, was set for 9 a.m. September 3. A conference call to discuss the end of the Dworshak operation was also set for 3 p.m. Monday, September 9. It was agreed that the TMT will continue to meet every two weeks during October, with meetings tentatively set for October 9 and 23. Meeting summary prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.

TMT ATTENDANCE LIST

August 21, 2002

| Name | Affiliation |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Steve Pettit | IDFG |
| Jacqueline Abel | Facilitation Team |
| David Wills | USFWS |
| Shane Scott | WDFW |
| Scott Bettin | BPA |
| Colin Beam | PPM |
| Tony Norris | USBR |
| Scott Boyd | COE |
| Ron Boyce | ODFW |

| | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Rick Pendergrass | BPA |
| Kyle Martin | CRITFC |
| Paul Wagner | NMFS |
| Rudd Turner | COE |
| Russ George | WMCI |
| Richelle Harding | D. Rohr & Associates |
| Eugene Rosolie | |
| Maria Van Houten | UBS |
| Everett Wright | COE |
| Craig Sprankle | USBR |
| Suzanne Cooper | BPA |
| Lance Elias | PPL |
| Tim Heizenrater | UBS |