

COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

April 21st, 2004

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.

Status of Hanford Reach:

Chris Carlson, Grant County PUD, reported on the weekly average flows at Hanford Reach for April 12-18th. Miscommunication between the PUD and BPA led to the operation going outside the flow band constraints. Chris offered that it would be helpful if the PUD received 24-hour notice for week day operations and 48-hour notice for weekend operations. The PUD will make best efforts to improve the operation for the rest of the season. BPA also noted that they will make best efforts to improve operations.

Mid-Columbia Flow Objectives (SOR 2004-5 modified):

Cindy Henriksen, COE, reported that SOR 2004-5 presented by the salmon managers at the April 14th TMT meeting was modified to include their oral request for: daily average flow of 110 kcfs at Priest Rapids, and nighttime spill at Bonneville up to the gas cap ("at least" 75 kcfs.) The salmon managers requested that the action agencies increase flows at Bonneville at night, which have been holding steady at 75 kcfs, when possible without exceeding the gas cap. The COE agreed to make every effort to meet the request. John Wellschlager, BPA, will look at the operation and notify TMT by the end of tomorrow (4/22) whether they agree to implement nighttime spill above 75 kcfs at Bonneville. BPA reiterated from last week their response to the 110 kcfs flow at Priest Rapids to be a weekly, not daily, average.

McNary Operations Outside 1%:

The salmon managers are in the process of reviewing the information presented by BPA and the COE at last week's TMT meeting, and expect to provide comments at the April 28th TMT meeting. Steve Haeseker, USFWS, reported that monitors from the smolt monitoring program observed distinct differences in patterns of descaling during operations outside 1% vs. operations within 1%. Mark Smith, Walla Walla COE, will look further into this observation and will follow-up with TMT next week. BPA's Kim Fodrea reported that after re-evaluating the numbers presented at the last TMT meeting, the projected revenue gain of operating the non-test units at McNary outside 1% is much lower this year than previously expected, so BPA has decided to withdraw the proposal to remove the 1% constraint at McNary for this year.

ACTION: The salmon managers will continue their review of the proposal and monitoring plan and respond with comments at the next TMT meeting, April 28th. They will use the information from the monitoring plan/proposal presented at the last TMT

meeting, along with other data, to inform decisions in future years about operating outside 1% at McNary. It was clarified that the COE previously had agreed to implement the salmon managers' SOR 2004-2, requesting that operations at the non-test units do NOT go outside 1% efficiency at McNary, until/unless a change in the decision occurred. Because BPA has withdrawn its proposal, the COE will continue to implement the SOR this year. BPA will respond to Idaho's request from last week for information on the '94-96 passage years.

Dworshak Operation in April:

Subsequent to the April 14th TMT meeting, the COE found new information including that the mid-month water supply forecast was lower than the forecast presented at TMT, so did not release 9.5 kcfs out of Dworshak as planned. Instead, 7.4 kcfs was released last week. The COE updated the volume prediction graphs with the new forecast to predict available flow augmentation through the end of June. In light of the new data and a request from Idaho and Nez Perce to conserve water now for May and June, the COE plans to release ~6.6 kcfs this week through the end of April, and continue to monitor and manage the operation as new information is available. The salmon managers agreed with the COE's current operating plan, and noted that their goal is to fill the reservoirs for June.

WMP Spring/Summer Update:

A draft spring/summer update will be available at the next TMT meeting, April 28th. The COE's Scott Boyd expressed a hope to have a "final update" completed two weeks after that.

Lower Snake Spill Decision:

Cindy Henriksen reported that the COE decision on Lower Snake spill, made after regional discussions at TMT and IT, was distributed and linked to the TMT web page on Monday, April 19th. The decision was to: continue spill at Lower Granite and Little Goose until April 23rd; implement a modified spill study at Lower Monumental based on recommendations from SRWG; allow up to 18 days of spill at Lower Monumental; and initiate spill for three days at Lower Monumental prior to the start of the study. Marvin Shuttles reported that the SRWG recommends a bulk vs. no spill test at Lower Monumental, starting at 6am on April 30th and ending at 6am on May 14th. The salmon managers who prefer BiOp spill recommended that, in addition to the test, the COE should implement nighttime spill (6pm-6am) using the large gate opening for six days prior to the start of the study (April 24th start if the above spill study schedule is implemented).

ACTION: The COE will distribute further information on the spill study when available to be certain that the nighttime spill requested for prior to the study is scheduled to begin at the appropriate time/date.

System Status:

Reservoirs: Libby is at elevation 2406' and filling. The COE is expecting a tier one sturgeon operation; the COE and USFWS are scheduled to meet and discuss the sturgeon operation on Tuesday, April 27th. Libby remains on the cusp of possible refill. Grand

Coulee is at elevation 1271' and drafting. Drum gate maintenance at the project will not be completed this year in order to assure refill. It was noted that there is a risk involved in not doing the annual maintenance, and the BOR will plan to do it next year. The COE provided graph data on Priest Rapids and Lake Roosevelt elevations as requested; TMT will review Priest Rapids flows next week.

Fish: High numbers of yearling chinook were observed at Lower Granite, trending upward at the dam as well as at Little Goose. The spring migration is in an early stage and underway. Steelhead numbers are picking up, with ~30,000/day observed at Lower Granite, not yet seen at Little Goose or Lower Monumental. Trends appear to be similar to previous years. Adult chinook numbers are in line or exceeding the 10 year average, with 10,000 observed at Bonneville on April 16th and 12,500 observed yesterday. Seining catches at Ives Island are showing record numbers of chum juveniles. Adult numbers are low. Chinook are still emerging; so far numbers are high. Cindy LeFleur reported that WDFW is currently gathering information about timing of runs for different stocks of spring chinook, which could inform future operations decisions.

Next Meeting, April 28th, 9am:

Agenda Items:

- Hanford Reach/Mid-Columbia Flows
- Report on Bonneville Nighttime Spill to Meet TDG Cap
- Salmon Managers' Comments on McNary 1%
- Spring/Summer Update Draft
- Specifics on Lower Monumental Study
- System Status Reports