

**TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM
CONFERENCE CALL NOTES
May 12, 2004
COE RESERVOIR CONTROL CENTER - CUSTOMS HOUSE
PORTLAND, OREGON
COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM**

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 May 3-9th. Discharge ranged from 107-137 kcfs, with a 121.1 weekly average. End of emergence occurred on May 10th, so the PUD started operating toward 400 temperature units on May 11th. End of emergence was slightly later than most years, but not out of the ordinary.

Mid-Columbia Flows:

The QAdjust model was updated with the May final water supply forecast. The model showed that to meet Priest Rapids flow objectives of 135 kcfs in May, the project would operate at an average of 91 kcfs in June (lower than last week's projections) to allow refill at Grand Coulee by June 30. The STP model projected a slightly different result, with Priest at 135 kcfs through June 5th, then down to 100 kcfs average through the rest of June. The numbers of fish at Rock Island have increased significantly. TMT will revisit this issue next week.

Final WMP Spring/Summer Update:

The spring/summer update will be posted on the TMT web page. Scott Boyd, COE, reported that some new numbers were included to finalize the document, and that no new comments were received as of today.

TMT Guidelines:

No additional comments were made to the TMT guidelines. The final document will be posted on the TMT web page, as an appendix to the WMP.

System Status Review:

Reservoirs: Grand Coulee is at elevation 1273.7'. Hungry Horse is at 3542.75' and expecting to refill by the end of June. Libby is at elevation 2419', releasing minimum outflows and filling slightly. The COE and USFWS are engaged in preliminary discussions about a sturgeon pulse operation. The USFWS expects to have an SOR out for discussion at the 5/19 TMT meeting. Dworshak is at elevation 1575', with outflows ranging from 2.2-4 kcfs. Outflows may be reduced *slightly* on Monday to ensure refill by June 30.

Water supply: The May final forecast shows: Lower Granite April-June at 61% of normal; Grand Coulee April-August at 84% of normal; and The Dalles at 73% of normal.

Fish status: Spring chinook have hit their peak migration, with 800,000/day counted at Lower Granite last week and this week down to ~100,000/day. Steelhead numbers were at 500,000 early in the week, then reduced to 250,000/day. It is likely that the steelhead numbers will continue to decline, but there is a slight chance for an increase in numbers. The total adult size projection has been further reduced from last week to 189,000. It is unclear yet why the numbers are so much smaller than previously expected.

Water quality: Spill has stayed below the gas caps, save for a few minor exceedances in The Dalles forebay and one at Camas/Washougal.

SOR C-2:

Kyle Martin, CRITFC, presented an SOR for a treaty fishery May 11-14th, requesting that Bonneville, The Dalles and John Day pools hold steady and within 1' from full. The SOR included information on the number and location of the nets. The COE will operate Bonneville at 1.5' hard constraint, and 1' soft constraint. The Dalles will not be held to a 1' hard constraint, but typically operates within about a 1' range at a lower elevation. The John Day pool will be operated at the BiOp recommended 1.5' range.

IT Update:

A TMT conference call was held on Friday, May 7th, to discuss operations for a very high number of migrating fish in the Snake River and approaching Little Goose. At the end of the conference call there was not a consensus about the best operation due to a contingency on revenue-neutrality. Dave Wills, USFWS, requested that the issue of a revenue neutral requirement be raised to the IT level. The group agreed to the following question for IT:

Do adaptive management decisions for possible improved fish survival that are not identified in any 'plan' require a constraint of revenue neutrality in order to be implemented? Does the policy level want the technical team to make this type of decision?

IT members met on Tuesday, May 11th, to discuss this issue. The outcome of that discussion was that for the future, revenue-neutrality should not be a constraint, but that in unique situations such as the one described above, operations should be managed to benefit fish and be 'cost effective'. TMT should not make trade-offs for fish protection measures, since this occurs in other plans and processes. There was disagreement on whether this was an 'emergency'. TMT was encouraged to work through FPOM and TMT to resolve technical issues. The IT representatives concluded that this particular situation was handled appropriately.

TMT Meeting Schedule:

A conference call will be held on **Wednesday, May 19th from 9-11am**. Agenda items include:

- Priest Rapids Flows
- Hanford Reach Status
- Sturgeon SOR

The next face-to-face TMT meeting will be held on **Wednesday, May 26th, from 9am-noon**. An agenda will be circulated and posted on the TMT web page prior to the meeting.

1. Greeting and Introductions

The May 12 Technical Management Team conference call was chaired by Cindy Henriksen 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 Henriksen at 503/808-3945.

2. Status of Hanford Reach Operations.

Chris Carlson said that, for the week ending May 9, average flows at Priest Rapids ranged from 107 Kcfs to 137 Kcfs; the week-average flow was 121.1 Kcfs. The flow band ranged between 30 Kcfs to 40 Kcfs. On May 3, the flow band was exceeded by 17 Kcfs; on the other days, flows were within or very close to the flow band. What was driving the spike in flows we saw on Monday, May 10? Kyle Martin asked. I'm not sure what happened upstream, Carlson replied – inflows were higher than expected, and Priest Rapids was full – we had more water than we could pass through the powerhouse.

Carlson noted that the end of emergence occurred on May 10; the count toward 400 temperature units that will mark the end of the fish protection program started on May 11. Once that is achieved, the 2004 flow fluctuation restriction and fish protection operation will end. In response to another question from Martin, Carlson said that, in 2003, the end of emergence occurred on April 27; in 2002, on April 25; in 2001, on May 10, and in 2000, on May 2. We're a little later than normal this year, in other words, Carlson said.

3. Mid-Columbia Flow Objectives.

Henriksen said the Corps has updated its Q-Adjust run to include the May final water supply forecast. She noted that, in trying to meet 135 Kcfs at Priest Rapids in May, the run shows an average flow of only 91 Kcfs at Priest Rapids in June, as Grand Coulee refills. This is significantly lower than the average June flow shown in the last Q-Adjust run, she said, and we wanted to be sure the TMT was aware of this. And that's holding 135 Kcfs at Priest Rapids through May 31? Chris Ross asked. Correct, Henriksen replied. Ross noted that the STP run shows flows of about 100 Kcfs at Priest Rapids in June. It could be that the STP run has a slightly different shape to it, Julie Ammann replied. John Wellschlager noted that when BPA ran this scenario, it assumed a monthly average flow at Priest Rapids of 131 Kcfs in May, given the fact that the 135 Kcfs flow target didn't

kick in until the second week in May. Ammann agreed that the 4-5 Kcfs difference between the BPA and Corps runs might come out in June.

So this is essentially a heads-up for the TMT, so that they can discuss the Priest Rapids operation and make any adjustments they feel necessary? Silverberg asked. Correct, Henriksen replied. We'll obviously talk about this issue next week at FPAC, said David Wills, and will update the TMT at its May 19 meeting.

4. Final Spring/Summer Update.

Scott Boyd said Wills had provided the only additional comments to the spring/summer update; those comments were incorporated and the final spring/summer update is now available via the TMT website. Any additional comments will be added to the web page, he said.

5. Final TMT Guidelines.

Silverberg said no additional comments have been received on the TMT guidelines; she suggested that the group agree to make the guidelines final so that they can be posted to the website. We can always modify them later if necessary, she said. Martin said he had contacted Keith Kutchins at the Shoshone-Bannock tribes to see whether the Sho-Bans want to appoint a TMT representative; he has not yet received a reply. No TMT objections were raised to designating the TMT guidelines as final, and posting the guidelines as an appendix to the annual Water Management Plan on the TMT homepage.

6. Status of Operations/May Final Water Supply Forecast.

Norris said Grand Coulee is at 1273.7 feet, currently; Hungry Horse is at 3542.75. Will Hungry Horse be filling into June? Ross asked. Yes, Norris replied. Hungry Horse is currently releasing 4.5 Kcfs-5 Kcfs during the week and less on the weekend. Henriksen said Libby is at elevation 2419 and releasing minimum outflow, filling somewhat. We have been discussing the sturgeon operation with the Fish and Wildlife Service, she said. We expect to bring a draft SOR to TMT next week, said Wills. The May final water supply forecast at that project is 4.9 MAF, which means a sturgeon pulse of 800 kaf above minimum flow, probably beginning in late May, Henriksen said. After the sturgeon operation is complete, she said, we need to decide whether to reduce outflow to the bull trout minimum until flow augmentation begins some time in July, or to try to maintain a flat flow to avoid a double peak.

Moving on, Henriksen said Dworshak is currently at elevation 1575, with outflow in the 2.2 Kcfs-4 Kcfs range. The May final Dworshak water supply forecast is 2.1 MAF; we're expecting that we will need to reduce Dworshak outflow in order to refill by June 30, she said, probably beginning on Monday, May 17. Ross asked whether it would be possible to delay that reduction in Dworshak outflow and begin refill at Dworshak on May 20; that would be preferable from a fish migration standpoint, he said. We'll update the storage volume graphs to see what can be done, Henriksen replied. She noted,

however, that the planned reduction in Dworshak is small – to about 3.5 Kcfs as a week-average, rather than 4 Kcfs. That works, said Wagner.

Henriksen said the Lower Granite April-July water supply forecast is down to 13.5 MAF, from 15.6 MAF in the April final. The May final forecast was 50.8 MAF for the April-August period at Grand Coulee, 84% of average; at Lower Granite, 61% of average. The May final forecast at The Dalles is 68.4 MAF, 73% of average. Bear in mind that the January final water supply forecast was in the 95-98% of average range across the basin, said Henriksen, so this represents quite a significant reduction.

With respect to fish passage, Wagner said the peak of the spring chinook migration has now passed Lower Granite; we're now seeing about 100,000 yearling chinook per day pass that project. The steelhead outmigration peaked at about 500,000 fish per day four days ago at Lower Granite; they are now down to about 250,000 fish per day, although steelhead numbers could still spike again if we see another increase in flow. With respect to adult passage, Cindy LeFleur said it is not a pretty picture; the run size has been downgraded from 200,000 upriver spring chinook at the mouth of the Columbia to 189,000. That's about half the pre-season estimate, she said. We don't know where the fish are and why they didn't show up, she said – everyone is wondering the same thing. About 2,000 adult chinook per day are passing Bonneville, currently, she said.

Wellschlager said there is no change to report in the status of the power system. Jim Adams added that there is little to report with respect to water quality, currently; there have been just a few minor exceedences, because overall river flows are low. Most projects are unable to spill to the gas caps, he said, because there simply isn't enough total river flow.

7. CRITFC SOR C-2.

On May 7, the action agencies received SOR 2004 C-2 from the CRITFC tribes. This SOR requests the following specific operations:

- For the period Tuesday, May 11, 6 a.m. through Friday, May 14, 6 p.m.
- Bonneville pool: operate pool within 1 foot from full pool (msl elevation 76.5-75.5)
- The Dalles (Celilo) pool: operate the pool within 1 foot (msl elevation 159.5-158.5)
- John Day pool: operate the pool within 1 foot (msl elevation 264.5-263.5)

Kyle Martin went through the details of this SOR, the full text of which is available via hot-link from today's agenda on the TMT homepage. He noted that 114 of the 227 nets deployed last week were in Bonneville pool; 71 were in The Dalles pool and 91 were in John Day pool. For that reason, he said, we hope the Corps will do whatever it can to keep pool elevations stable at all three sites and meet the requested elevations.

We have already issued a teletype to keep Bonneville pool within 1.5 feet as a hard constraint and 1 foot as a soft constraint, said Henriksen; there is a fairly narrow

operating range at The Dalles, the project at which we have been meeting CRITFC's requested operating range the highest percentage of the time, and the operating range at John Day is 262.5 to 264 feet. The elevation requested by CRITFC at John Day is actually somewhat higher than the range specified in the BiOp, she said. The group discussed why the planned operating elevation is different than that requested by CRITFC; in response to a question, Martin said the most important priority, from CRITFC's perspective, is stable pool elevations. If you can keep the pools stable and at the elevation we requested, that would be optimum, he said. In response to a question from Wellschlager, LeFleur said the tribal harvest from last week's fishery totaled about 3,200 fish.

8. Other.

A. Outcome of Issue Elevated to IT. Silverberg said the TMT had asked the IT to weigh in on the question elevated at Friday's TMT meeting (read the statement); the answer was that revenue neutrality should not be the constraint, but that the TMT should attempt to find fish-neutral or fish-beneficial but cost-effective operational alternatives. The IT was not supportive of the TMT making operational tradeoffs among different listed species, she said, such as trading spill at the Snake River projects for spill at one of the Lower Columbia projects. There was not complete agreement that Friday's situation was an emergency, she said; however, there was general support for the idea of letting project biologists do their jobs. The IT also asked TMT to work with FPOM to develop protocols and guidelines for use in similar unique situations in the future. She added that the IT had encouraged the action agencies to include the cost of the upriver fish themselves, in terms of habitat, hatchery and other funding investments, in the assessment of cost effectiveness. Wellschlager said BPA's position is to consider such operations on a case-by-case basis.

8. Next TMT Meeting Date.

The next meeting of the Technical Management Team was set for Wednesday, May 19. Meeting summary prepared by Jeff Kucehle, BPA contractor.

**TMT PARTICIPANT LIST
May 12, 2004**

Name	Affiliation
Donna Silverberg	Facilitation Team
Paul Wagner	NOAAF
Russ Kiefer	IDFG
Ron Boyce	ODFW
Chris Ross	NOAAF
Robin Harkless	Facilitation Team

Cindy Henriksen	COE
John Wellschlager	BPA
Scott Boyd	COE
Laura Hamilton	COE
Maria Van Houten	
Jim Adams	COE
Tim Heizenrater	PPM
Dave Ryan	PPM
Russ George	WMCI
Mike O'Bryant	CBB
Tine Lundell	COE
Kyle Martin	CRITFC
Tony Norris	USBR
David Wills	USFWS
Cindy LeFleur	WDFW
Bruce MacKay	Consultant
Caroline Fitzgerald	COE
Nic Lane	BPA
Ruth Burris	PGE
David Benner	FPC
Margaret Filardo	FPC
Chris Carlson	GCPUD
Lee Corum	PNUCC
Richelle Beck	D. Rohr & Associates
Tom Le	PSE
Hanna Miles	PSE