

COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

March 22, 2006 Meeting

FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY NOTES ON FUTURE ACTIONS

Facilitator: Donna Silverberg

Notes: Robin Harkless

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.

Priest Rapids Operation

Russell Langshaw, Grant County PUD, provided an update on Priest Rapids protection flows over the past two weeks. Information requested at the last TMT meeting about the duration of time outside band widths was not available today, but will be at the next meeting. The weekly average flow for March 6-12 was 100.8 kcfs; the band width was not met on March 9 due to an increase in flows late that day. The weekly average for March 13-19 was 88.2 kcfs; the band width was not met on March 14 due to an operator error. The PUD is working to improve communication as well as educate the individual dispatcher to minimize future band width deviations at the project. A comment was made that the band width deviations (fluctuations) are detrimental to the fish, and there is frustration that the operation is not as tight as it could be. Russell said the PUD shares this frustration and is working to improve the situation. Real-time information on Priest Rapids flows can be found at www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/report/projdata.htm. At this point, the PUD expects to begin weekend protection flows around the first weekend in April.

ACTION: Russell will include timeframes for all deviations from band width constraints in his briefings to the TMT at future meetings.

Hydrophone Installation on the Snake River

Materials have not been delivered to Walla Walla District on time to do hydrophone installation work on the Snake River prior to spill. The COE is having internal discussions about potential impacts to spill on the Snake River. Cathy Hlebechuk, COE, will share information with TMT as it is available.

John Day Transformer Update

Don Faulkner, COE, shared that a ground fault occurred on March 2 at John Day. Tests have revealed more extensive damage to the transformer than previously thought. Replacement 'bushings' will allow the COE to do further damage analysis tests, and more will be known in the next month. A question was asked about whether the transformer could be replaced. It is possible, and at this point, the experts say it would not be as feasible or efficient to replace than to repair damages to the transformer.

Don shared that the current thinking is that late summer is the EARLIEST that 2 of the 4 units could be functioning and there is a possibility none will be back by then. Don noted there are a lot of rumors floating around about when the units will be back. There will be an update and presentation to TMT by the John Day project on the analysis at the April 5 TMT meeting.

Flow Augmentation Volumes

Cathy Hlebechuk shared the STP flow augmentation forecast for Dworshak April-July, based on the March final water supply forecast. With a 30-70% confidence, the flow augmentation is forecasted at 876-1240 kaf. HYSSR/ESP models will be available at the next TMT meeting.

Update/Recommendation on The Dalles Spill

John Wellschlager, BPA, reported that there is a very small likelihood that flows would reach volumes great enough to impact 40% spill operations at The Dalles during wire rope replacement work in April and May of this year, based on historically similar conditions.

The salmon managers requested that, in the unlikely event that an operation is required that deviates from the BiOp, the action agencies implement offset spill by extending spill at John Day by a couple hours or more so long as TDG levels are not exceeded. After a caucus, the action agencies said they do not support providing any offset spill. They could spill 40% at The Dalles through bays other than 1-4, rather than reduce spill in the unlikely event that river flows exceed that which could be spilled through bays 1-4 during wire rope replacement work. Hourly spill percentages for The Dalles can be found on the COE's website.

MOP Operations

Cathy Hlebechuk noted that the court ordered the start of spill on the Lower Snake to be on April 3. BPA requested the Action Agencies discuss this further before finalizing the date. Cathy said she would e-mail the salmon managers after a final determination had been made. The salmon managers said they needed this information before submitting their request for MOP implementation

It was noted that a new consideration this year will be for Lyons Ferry fall chinook hatchery fish, who were ESA-listed in June 2005. The first release of these fish is the end of March, putting them in the Lower Snake in early April during the start of spill and MOP operations.

ACTION: After receiving confirmation of start of spill date, the salmon managers will discuss fish needs this year relative to MOP operations, and will develop an SOR and discuss it with TMT prior to the start of spill (April 3).

ACTION: Paul Wagner, NOAA, offered that transportation operations this year are planned to begin on April 20. He will clarify and share more specifics about this at the 4/5 TMT meeting.

Status of the BiOp Remand

A quarterly report will be shared with Judge Redden on April 3; TMT will receive a presentation on this report at the April 5 TMT meeting.

Water Management Plan

Language from the salmon managers on the Emergency Protocols will be inserted in the Fall/Winter update, per coordination between Cathy Hlebechuk (COE) and Paul Wagner (NOAA), and the WMP Fall/Winter Update will be finalized at the 4/5 TMT meeting. The latest draft of the full Plan will be posted on the TMT web page later this week. The COE is working on a draft Spring/Summer Update.

Operations Review

Reservoirs – Grand Coulee was at elevation 1253'. Hungry Horse was at 3527'. Libby was at elevation 2407', with a 2404' end of March target, releasing 9 kcfs. Dworshak was at 1530' and releasing 1.5 kcfs to reach an end of March shifted elevation of 1532.4' (without the shift, the target was 1509.1'). Ice Harbor flows have averaged 51 kcfs since March 1. Bonneville flows have averaged 165 kcfs. There will be no shift at Brownlee this year; the current elevation is 2031' and targeting 2036.5' end of March, outflows were 33 kcfs.

The Spill Implementation Plan will be available on the web as an appendix to the Fish Passage Plan, and also included in the Quarterly report to the judge.

Fish – Paul Wagner reported that adults are starting to show up in the system, but very few at this point. Typically they arrive around the 3rd week in April.

Power system – The system is setting up for spring spill operations.

Water quality – Four TDG gauges are being installed at Little Goose and Lower Monumental.

TMT Meeting Schedule

TMT meetings are scheduled for April 5 and 19. These dates are subject to change. Check the TMT web page for updates.

Wednesday, April 5 agenda items include:

- Priest Rapids update
- Update on hydrophone installation on the Snake River
- HYSSR/ESP Runs
- John Day Transformer presentation/update
- BiOp Remand quarterly report presentation
- Finalize WMP Fall/Winter Update – Emergency Protocols
- Seal Lions report
- Operations update