

# COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

## TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

April 12, 2006 Conference Call

### FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY NOTES ON FUTURE ACTIONS

Facilitator: 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.

#### **BON PH2 Corner Collector**

Dennis Schwartz, COE, updated TMT on antenna testing at the Bonneville PH2 corner collector. The dry test was expected to be completed as soon as the afternoon of April 12 and no later than close of business on April 13. Current in-flow conditions were in the 340-360 kcfs range at Bonneville, and the project was releasing 140-150 kcfs. Dennis shared the latest survival information, which showed a 2% difference with the corner collector closed. A comment was made that these estimates did not include latent mortality and that this is an important aspect of survival. Juvenile passage numbers were in the thousands and increasing. The electronics performance readings were very good, better than anticipated.

The COE was congratulated on its hard work toward completing the test. They noted there will be follow-up tests and that the data from the detection device should be available in the next two weeks.

UPDATE: Dennis sent the following update email to TMT on 4/13: *I am please to announce that the B2CC testing is finished and the Corner Collector has been cleared to return to service for the 2006 Fish Passage Season. The Bonneville crew will be opening the B2CC after 0800 this morning. Thanks to all for your support of this major milestone. Brad Peterson of Digital Angel (Antenna Electronics On-site Manager) will be summarizing the testing results from this past week and I will be forwarding them on to you in the near future. If you have any questions please feel free to call or e-mail me.*

#### **The Dalles Dam Spillway Limitations**

Current status: The COE sent an email to TMT describing a reduction in spill at The Dalles on 4/11 due to problems with research equipment. Cathy Hlebechuk, COE, reported that currently, spill bays 1-6 were each operating at 21 kcfs out during the day and bay 7 was available at night. (It was clarified during the discussion that the wire rope testers would not be affected by having bay 7 in use, so the bay was available during the day time hours as well.) The spill cap was at 130 kcfs and likely to reduce to 125 kcfs to address TDG at the Bonneville forebay.

A vortex suppression test at bay 6 was postponed until flows drop. Instead, researchers wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to do studies of fish injuries during high flow through bays 4 and 6, which would not require an alternative operation at the project.

SOR 2006-4: Russ Kiefer, IDFG, shared that the salmon managers submitted this SOR recommending that alternative fish protection measures be provided in the event that structural difficulties in the system require an operation that deviates from the best biological operation for fish. He acknowledged that due to involuntary spill and TDG issues in the river, the specifications of the SOR were not likely to be met. However, he encouraged TMT to consider the concepts provided in the request for future situations that may arise so that real-time adjustments could be made. The specific request was that if sufficient fish protection measures could not be met at The Dalles during wire rope replacement, the action agencies provide 25% spill at John Day (in hourly increments).

The COE responded that their policy position is to not provide make up spill in this or other similar situations. NOAA offered that they supported getting ahead of issues, but did not sign on to the SOR because the current conditions in the system had addressed the operation requested, so this was a non-issue for NOAA. BPA responded that they do not support implementing the SOR, and added that involuntary spill is already providing a benefit to the fish.

The salmon managers accepted the response from the action agencies and NOAA. They would like to see more flexibility and requested further discussion with the COE on its policy position. A comment was made that 30% is the minimum amount of beneficial spill at John Day stated in the Fish Passage Plan, not 25%. The salmon managers noted this and will make the change for the future.

Finally, the action agencies asked for clarification from the salmon managers on their preferred operation in the event that 40% spill through The Dalles spill bays 1-6 could not be met during wire rope replacement. The salmon managers would prefer spilling through bays 1-6 rather than spilling 40% through alternative bays.

### **Default Operations During High Flows**

Cathy Hlebechuk, COE, reminded TMT that the action agencies default operation during high flows is to operate outside 1% rather than exceeding 125% TDG at any of the projects. This could become an issue at Bonneville. NOAA offered their support for the preference for now. They would like to see weekly data that monitors incidences when projects are operated outside 1%, and use the information to engage in further discussion on the issue with the TMT.

**ACTION**: BPA will discuss internally what type of information they could provide at TMT. An update agenda item relative to this will be added to TMT meetings as appropriate.

### **Updates**

The COE reported that Lower Granite deployed EGS today (4/12) which may require shutting off the RSW for one to two hours for safety reasons. The COE also reminded TMT that John Day and Lower Monumental spill patterns may be changed to provide safe navigation. TMT will continue to receive updates on changing spill patterns at future meetings.

### **TMT Meeting Schedule**

Wednesday, April 19 agenda items include:

- Priest Rapids update
- HYSSR/ESP runs
- WMP Spring/Summer update
- Operations review: spill, chum numbers, Upper Snake flow augmentation

## Technical Management Team Conference Call Notes

April 12, 2006

### ***1. Greetings and Introductions.***

The April 12 TMT conference call was chaired by Cathy Hlebechuk and facilitated by Donna Silverberg. The following is a summary (not a verbatim transcript) of the topics discussed and decisions made at this meeting. Anyone with questions or comments about these notes should contact Hlebechuk at 503-808-3936.

### ***2. Bonneville 2 Corner Collector Antenna Testing Update.***

We met last week and discussed the extended corner collector outage to allow the testing of the new high-flow PIT detector antenna, said Dennis Schwatz. We wanted to do a check-in today, he said; it looks as though we'll be able to finish our dry testing by later today or tomorrow, if we can drop the tailwater elevation slightly. We may be able to open the corner collector as early as 5 pm tonight; the worst-case scenario would be close of business tomorrow.

With respect to current fish passage and river conditions, total flow at Bonneville is about 340 Kcfs, with 150 Kcfs spill. With the corner collector open, survival would be 98 percent; with it closed, survival is about 96 percent. That being said, juvenile fish numbers at Bonneville yesterday were about 1,000 and increased to about 6,000 fish today. With respect to electronics performance, earlier this week they tested the ST tag, and got much better readings than they thought they would., they have also tested the STT tag, the new tag that will be in the river next year, and are getting really excellent readings, even in the middle of the grid, Schwartz said. We're seeing 100 percent detection when the fish are perpendicular to the grid, he said.

Russ Kiefer said the State of Idaho is fine with the time needed for the Corps to finish this work. He raised a concern about latent mortality associated with powerhouse passage, noting that the survival estimates Schwartz had quoted were for direct survival only. Schwartz said that as soon as the corner collector is operational, he will inform Hlebechuk.

### ***3. The Dalles Dam Spillway Limitation.***

Hlebechuk said she had sent out an email regarding the reduction in spill while the Corps was trying to retrieve some research equipment; The Dalles is currently spilling 21 Kcfs each through bays 1-6, 126 Kcfs total. The spill cap, as of last night, is 130 Kcfs, said Jim Adams. We're expecting the Bonneville forebay to start gassing up, so we may be lowering the spill cap at The Dalles to 125 Kcfs tonight. We expect that to persist for several days, he said. The Corp briefly described the vortex testing at The Dalles, which has now been delayed until total river flow recedes somewhat, to about 240 Kcfs total river flow and 72 Kcfs spill.

With respect to bay 7, said a Corps representative, we think we can begin spilling through bay 7 now without impacting contractor operations. In other words, bay 7 is now available for spill. It's sort of a moot point, given the fact that the spill cap is 130 Kcfs, and we can spill 126 Kcfs through bays 1-6. No TMT objections were offered to opening bay 7 for spill. The Corps noted that bay 8 should be finished by early next week; work on bay 9 should be completed early the week of April 24.

Prior to today's meeting, the salmon managers submitted SOR 2006-4. This SOR, supported by IDFG, ODFW, WDFW, the Nez Perce Tribe, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, USFWS and CRITFC Fisheries, requests the following specific operations:

- In the event that daily flows at The Dalles Dam exceed 360 Kcfs in the next several weeks, add hours to the John Day Dam daily spill period to maintain mainstem juvenile passage survival through the Lower Columbia River. This specification assumes that Spillway 7 is back in operation by April 10. However, if Spillway 7 is not available, the specification should be implemented when flow exceeds 315 Kcfs.

Please refer to the full text of this SOR, available via hot-link from today's agenda on the TMT homepage, for additional details and justification.

We don't want to violate the TDG standards in the river, said Kiefer, but the main point of the SOR is that when mechanical difficulties prevent us from providing the spill volumes called for in the BiOp, then the TMT needs to seek other means of providing equivalent biological benefits. When we thought the spill gates at The Dalles might limit spill operations, if the TMT agreed with our concept, we thought it might be possible to implement this adjustment in real-time, Kiefer explained. Basically, we wanted to submit this SOR as contingency, even though it now appears even more unlikely that this situation could occur.

Hlebechuk said it is the Corps' policy position to not provide makeup spill – I just wanted to get that on the record, she said. John Wellschlager said Bonneville agrees with the Corps; he noted that there is considerable involuntary spill in the system, currently, so both sides are already getting what they want. Still, in the future, if fish protection measures are limited by mechanical problems, we would like the door to be open to discuss this type of offset, Wagner said.

The action agencies asked the salmon managers what their preferred operation would be if it is not possible to spill 40 percent of total river flow through bays 1-6 at The Dalles during wire rope replacement. The salmon managers replied that they would prefer spilling less than 40 percent of total river flow through bays 1-6 rather than using additional bays to achieve 40 percent of total river flow.

#### ***4. Default Operations During High Flows.***

Hlebechuk said it is the action agencies' policy to operate outside of 1% peak efficiency during periods of high flow, rather than exceeding 125 percent TDG at any of the projects. This could become an issue at Bonneville in 2006. Wagner said NOAA Fisheries is willing to endorse this approach, at least for now, but would like to see weekly data during period of operation outside 1 percent. This information would be used to inform discussions during subsequent TMT meetings. Wellschlager said BPA will discuss, internally, what types of information could be provided to TMT. It was agreed that the TMT will revisit this issue at it arises during the runoff season.

#### ***5. Updates.***

The Corps reported that deployment of EGS today may require them to shut off the Lower Granite RSW for a couple of hours. It was also noted that the spill patterns at John Day and Lower Monumental may need to be changed if navigation safety concerns arise.

**6. Next TMT Meeting Date.**

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

**TMT Participant List  
April 12, 2006**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Shane Scott	Contractor
Margaret Filardo	FPC
Tom Le	PSE
Robin Harkless	Facilitation Team
Mike Buchko	Powerex
David Wills	USFWS
Tony Norris	USBR
Russ Kiefer	IDFG
Kyle Dittmer	CRITFC
Lance Helwig	COE
Richelle Beck	D. Rohr & Associates
Dennis Schwartz	COE
Cathy Hlebechuk	COE
Scott Bettin	BPA
Paul Wagner	NOAAF
John Wellschlager	BPA