

## **Proposed Change in 2007 Summer Spill Operation at McNary Dam**

### **2007 Fish Operations Plan (FOP)**

The FOP states that the spring spill operation at McNary is a 40% spill level for 24 hours/day from April 10 through June 30, 2007. The summer spill operation extends from July 1 through August 31, 2007, alternating between 40% spill and 60% spill, also for 24 hours/day. This is to accommodate a summer spill study at the project. Spill conditions will alternate between 40% and 60% in two day blocks. The operational details are contained in Table 3 of the FOP and in the McNary Dam section on pages 16 & 17. The FOP also states that the spill duration for testing will be from late June until August (tentative). The dates of testing will be dependent on the size of fish, fish availability, and the number of treatments needed for testing with final dates coordinated through the Studies Review Work Group (SRWG).

- Summer research operations: 40% spill 24 hours/day vs. 60% spill 24 hours/day. Continue to evaluate Prototype Temporary Spillway Weir (PTSW) performance. The spill will be alternated in two day blocks, which will be randomized through the test period.
- Objectives of the biological test are twofold:
  1. Estimate passage and survival rates of subyearling fall Chinook salmon under two treatments of project operations.
  2. Characterize juvenile salmon behavior in the forebay of McNary Dam under two treatments of project operations.
- Spill pattern during the biological test: Spill pattern details were identified using the general model by Corps staff and representatives of the regional fisheries agencies and tribes. Test spill patterns are provided in Appendix 1 of the FOP. A single spill pattern will be tested at the 40% and 60% spill levels.

### **Change to the FOP**

The Action Agencies plan to implement summer spill operations at McNary Dam starting on June 20 rather than July 1, 2007. This will result in starting the 40% vs.60% spill comparison earlier than stated in the FOP. This change will result in an additional 5 days of the higher 60% spill level than under the FOP. This test operation applies only to summer.

### **Rationale for Change**

The actual 2007 subyearling Chinook salmon migration timing is earlier than was anticipated when the FOP was prepared in early spring. Therefore, this change in dates is necessary so that the subyearling Chinook passage and survival study results will be representative of the experience of the population at large and to allow a more rigorous evaluation of the effects of the two spill levels on passage and survival. The potential need to adjust test dates due to run timing was described in the FOP.

### **Coordination**

Changes to the research plan were coordinated with the Regional Forum Studies Review Working Group (SRWG). This change is supported by the SRWG representatives from the Corps, ODFW, CRITFC, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS, and BPA in order to conduct the summer study during the main portion of the subyearling Chinook salmon outmigration. IDFG and WDFW representatives stated that they were not available to study the issue carefully, but both indicated they would not object if the other agencies were in agreement. The proposal also was

presented to the Regional Forum Technical Management Team (TMT). TMT members did not raise any objections to the change. The Corps has coordinated the spill change described above with the signatories to the 2007 Agreement and no objections have been raised.