

COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

November 7, 2007 TMT Meeting

FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY NOTES ON FUTURE ACTIONS

Facilitator: Robin Gumpert

Notes: Erin Halton

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.

Autumn Treaty Fishing

Kyle Dittmer, CRITFC, reviewed a summary of 2007 Autumn Treaty Fishery pool operations sent to TMT members on 11/6. He noted that there was 97% compliance at Bonneville dam with respect to the 1-foot hard constraint band requested by CRITFC for the six weeks of treaty fishing, with no major reports of incidence.

Please see the TMT website for a full version of the memo from CRITFC.

Action/Next Steps: Jim Adams, COE, said that the summary would be posted as a link to the agenda for today's meeting as soon as possible.

Official Minutes/Facilitator Notes

The facilitator notes and official meeting minutes from the 10/24 TMT meeting were posted, and with no further comments or edits, were finalized during today's meeting.

(Update: Russell Langshaw submitted an edit to the 10/24 notes following the meeting; the revised notes were sent out to the full TMT distribution list on 11/8.)

TMT Year End Review Agenda

Donna Silverberg, DS Consulting, referred TMT members to a revised TMT Year End Review agenda, posted as a link to the web. She clarified that the intent of the year end review is to reflect on 2007 operations, discuss lessons learned from management actions, and decide where changes should be made for 2008. She reminded TMT members and other meeting participants of the need to RSVP to DS Consulting, to be included in the lunch count and the list of attendees for the staff at Robert Duncan Plaza. The group discussed a few minor adjustments to the agenda and clarifications were made regarding the focus of the presentations.

Action/Next Steps: The Facilitation Team will revise the agenda and distribute the "final draft" version to the full TMT distribution list. The agenda will also be posted as a link to the TMT website.

Chum Operations

Paul Wagner, NOAA, reported that not many chum had yet been observed in the area near Ives Island. Robyn MacKay, BPA, said that tailwater elevations near Ives Island would be held as steadily as possible around the clock, as conditions allow.

Action/Next Steps: Tailwater elevations near Ives Island will be in the range of 11.3-11.7', with a target of 11.5', beginning the evening of 11/9. This item will be on the agenda for the 11/21 TMT conference call. *[Supplemental: In the event that surplus inflows at Bonneville Dam result in an inability to maintain target tailwater elevations, these surplus waters will be shaped during nighttime hours (1900-0700 hrs.) These flows will be shaped in time blocks of 4 hours or less as a soft constraint. This operation was coordinated between the COE and Paul Wagner, Chair of the Salmon Managers.]*

Snake River Zero Generation

Robyn MacKay, BPA, referred TMT to a chart linked to the agenda that showed the number and duration of occurrences of zero generation for the four Snake River Projects. From December 2006-February 2007, there were 69 occurrences, with 25 in the month of December. Paul Wagner, speaking on behalf of FPAC, noted that zero flow at Snake River projects has been debated since the late 1970's and an understanding was developed that it may be allowable [during winter months] when few if any fish were passing. Robyn MacKay, BPA, responded that a benefit is provided by zero nighttime flow by providing additional early morning generation to help meet daytime peak load constraints. Paul Wagner said that an SOR submitted in 2005 best describes the "few fish criteria" recommended for that year, and that for this season, zero generation may be signaled sometime in the range of mid-December to January 2008; criteria for its commencement will be determined at an upcoming TMT meeting. Jim Adams, COE, noted that no adult fish ladder maintenance was scheduled for anytime in December 2007, as it was last year. He said maintenance is scheduled to begin in January. It was clarified that video passage counts will continue through 12/15 at Lower Granite Dam and through 12/31 at McNary Dam; results are posted on the COE website within three days. TMT members thanked Robyn for providing the review of 2006-'07 zero flow.

Action/Next Steps: This will be on the agenda for the 11/21 TMT meeting, with more discussion on whether fish passage video could be enhanced and a check-in on criteria to be used for the 2007-'08 season.

Vernita Bar

Russell Langshaw, Grant County PUD, referred TMT to a document linked to the agenda that showed an 11/4 survey counted 29 redds in the 39-50 kcfs elevation range, signaling the initiation of spawning. One redd was observed in the 55-60 elevation range. Langshaw clarified that the Vernita Bar spawning zone is a 2-mile stretch, with PUD counts conducted within a half mile area near the bar.

Action/Next Steps: Counts will be ongoing over the next few weeks, and Langshaw will provide TMT with an update at the 11/28 TMT Year End Review meeting.

2008 Draft Water Management Plan

Jim Adams, COE, said the draft 2008 WMP was in a "holding pattern" until the next draft BiOp is released, with anticipated edits that will reflect new operational criteria. He noted that the COE does have an internal, revised draft that will be posted for further

revisions/comments. Russ Kiefer, ID, made a request to also have a redlined draft Fish Passage Plan (FPP) posted in order to coordinate commenting on draft 2008 documents.

Action/Next Steps: FPOM will be discussing draft 2008 documents at their next meeting on 11/13. The COE will post a revised redlined version of the draft 2008 WMP likely by the TMT meeting on 11/21, with FPP posting coordination anticipated from the COE district office.

Operations Review

Reservoirs – Grand Coulee was at elevation 1287.95' with drafting expected to support chum. Hungry Horse was at elevation 3532.08', with outflows at 2.0-2.1 kcfs and meeting Columbia Falls minimums. Libby was at elevation 2434.93' with inflows of 3.5-4.5 kcfs, outflows at 4.5 kcfs, and an end of December elevation target of 2411'. Albeni Falls was at elevation 2055.49' with inflows in the range of 7.5-10.5 kcfs and outflows of 14 kcfs. Dworshak was at elevation 1516.48' with inflows just under 1 kcfs and outflows of 1.5 kcfs. 7-day average flows at Lower Granite were 17.5 kcfs, McNary averaged 90 kcfs and Bonneville averaged 100-101 kcfs.

Fish – Paul Wagner, NOAA, reported that monitoring ended at Lower Granite and Little Goose on 11/1; overall yearling Chinook counts were very low, and sub yearling Chinook counts had seen a slight increase near the end of October. Adult counts were winding down near Bonneville, with steelhead passage also nearing the end of the season. Fall Chinook total passage count at Lower Granite was near 10,000, which was near the expected range and slightly above the 10-year average. Cindy LeFleur, WA, said that she would provide a summary on run counts at the TMT year end review.

Power system – No report.

Water quality – No report.

Other - Burbot Operations

Jim Adams, COE, provided an update to TMT, clarifying that a draft SOR regarding a temperature operation for Burbot is currently under review and will be forwarded to TMT as soon as it is received by the COE.

Next TMT Meeting: Conference Call on 11/21, 9-noon

Agenda items will include:

- Chum Operations
- 2007 Snake River Zero Flow
- 2008 Draft WMP
- Burbot SOR
- TMT Year End Review Prep
- Operation review

**Columbia River Regional Forum
Technical Management Team Meeting
November 7, 2007**

1. Welcome and Introductions

Today's TMT conference call was chaired by Jim Adams and facilitated by Robin Gumpert, with representatives from COE, BPA, NOAA, USFWS, BOR, CRITFC, Idaho, Oregon and others attending in person or by phone. The following is a summary (not a verbatim transcript) of the topics discussed and decisions made during the meeting. Anyone with questions or comments about these notes should give them to the TMT chair or bring them to the next meeting.

2. Autumn Treaty Fishing Report

Kyle Dittmer (CRITFC) gave a report on this year's treaty fishery:

- The Bonneville pool had an overall compliance rate of 97% with CRITFC elevation requests, a 4% increase over last year's treaty operations.
- The Dalles pool had 83% compliance, a 21% increase over last year.
- The John Day pool had 69% compliance, a decline of 30% since last year.

The fishing effort was focused this year mainly on the John Day pool, which held 45% of tribal nets throughout most of the fishing season, Dittmer noted. CRITFC will continue sending the COE its net flight reports with the hope that the COE will focus on meeting elevation requests in locations with the greatest usage. Pool fluctuations during the treaty fishery were:

- Bonneville: 0.2 to 1.2 feet (similar to last year)
- The Dalles: 0.3 to 2.7 feet (a little higher than last year)
- John Day: 0.2 to 0.7 feet (not much fluctuation)

Dittmer contacted the Hood River CRITFC law enforcement office to find out whether there were any specific problems with the tribal fishery this year. He has not been informed of any. Wagner asked which forecasts seem to be most accurate. That changes every year, Dittmer said.

{Supplementary note: Cathy Hlebechuk sent Dittmer an e-mail as follows, indicating he will need to update his % of compliance numbers.

I'm sorry I didn't notice this before but it appears the peak elevation at The Dalles and John Day are not correct. The normal range at TDA is 157' - 160' (3 feet, not 1.5 feet) and at JDA is 262.5 - 264' (not 263' - 264.5'). If CRITFC used the peak elevations and operating ranges shown on the memo, both CRITFC and Corps "% of compliance" will need to be adjusted accordingly.}

3. Review Meeting Minutes

There were no comments on either the facilitator's notes or the official minutes for the October 24 TMT meeting. Both are therefore considered final.

4. TMT Year End Review Agenda

Donna Silverberg distributed copies of the draft agenda for the November 28 TMT year-end review. There was general agreement that the agenda is packed, so each presentation should be no more than 5-10 minutes. The main purpose of the review is to identify issues that warrant further discussion and assign them to subsequent TMT meeting agendas.

The year end review will be held at Robert Duncan Plaza. Anyone who does not regularly attend TMT meetings and wants to attend the year end review should contact the COE and ask to be included on the security clearance list.

The facilitators will revise the agenda based on today's discussion and send it out again to TMT members. The discussion today covered several issues:

2007 water and runoff patterns. Cathy Hlebechuk (COE) will address this at the year end review.

Dworshak spring and summer operations and temperature/TDG variations. Jim Adams (COE) and Greg Haller (Nez Perce) will speak. Because these two topics are linked, they should be covered in conjunction with each other, Adams said.

Navigation issues and MOP operations. Cathy Hlebechuk asked TMT what kind of information they want presented. Review a summary of operations that deviated from the MOP process, looking at what changed and why, David Wills (USFWS) suggested. Include alternatives the tow boaters devised that worked, Wagner suggested. A report directly from a tow boater representative would be desirable. Focus on navigation issues where we had to adjust Bi-Op operations, including the lessons learned, Kiefer suggested.

Vernita Bar operations. Rick Kruger (Oregon) asked, what is TMT's stake in this operation? Does TMT make any decisions? The issue is transparency not decisionmaking, Wagner said. TMT has influence on these operations because conditions at Vernita Bar are a vital aspect of basinwide fish production.

Emergency spill operations. During passage season at Lower Monumental, fish were delayed in the forebay, and emergency spill appears to

have been beneficial, Wagner said. He will investigate getting one of the researchers to address this topic.

Transport operations. Wagner will work with the COE to find a speaker.

Impact of TDG management on fish passage. FPAC will handle this topic. Shane Scott (NWRP) asked what the purpose of this discussion will be. We'll cover what we did last year for TDG management and how that affected Bi-Op operations for fish passage, Wills said.

Mechanical issues and scheduled outages. The goal here is for maintenance to be scheduled at a time that is least disruptive to fish, Kiefer said. He wants discussion of how to do a better job of handling mechanical failures in ways that don't impede TMT's ability to follow through on planned fish protection measures. Donna Silverberg suggested focusing the discussion on specifics that occurred in 2007, saving comparisons with other years for another meeting. FPAC will take the lead on this topic.

Reservoir operations. John Roache (BOR) asked, should this discussion start with SOR-2007-1, or an overview of operations throughout the year? Start with the SOR and accompanying concerns that drafting Coulee would get ahead of flow needs for chum and flood control, Wagner said. [He asked for a seasonal forecast, with flows provided, the reservoir drafting rate and final outcome.] Roache and Tony Norris (BPA) will work together to address this topic.

Bonneville operations. Silverberg suggested moving Spring Creek operations to Bonneville operations, so there are now two subtopics, Spring Creek and chum. Wagner agreed that's a good idea.

Adaptive Management Team (AMT). This team was formed in response to Oregon's and Washington's requirement in their waivers of state water quality standards that management of the forebay monitors to 115% TDG be investigated, Shane Scott (NWRP) said. The focus should be on closing the gap between expectations of fish managers regarding spill vs. regulatory spill requirements, Wagner said. For example, last year there was a 5-day delay between actions at the project and their downstream effects, which resulted in spill decisions that were in accordance with forebay requirements but had negative impacts on fish. This problem won't be solved in the year end review, he emphasized. There's disagreement in the region on this issue, Shane Scott said. FPAC will take the lead in the year end review.

5. Vernita Bar

Russell Langshaw (Grant Co. PUD) gave an update. Last weekend, 29 redds were counted between the 36 and 56 kcfs elevations, which establishes the initiation of spawning in that zone. One redd was counted in the 55 to 60 kcfs

zone, which means another 4 redds are needed above 50 kcfs elevation to set the initiation of spawning in that zone. Another redd count will be conducted this weekend. An aerial survey counted 2,540 redds in the Hanford reach, with approximately 25% of those in the Vernita Bar area, which extends for approximately 2 miles from the spawning grounds south of Vernita Bar to about a mile upstream of the bar. Langshaw will provide a report on Vernita Bar operations at the year end review.

6. Chum Operations

Not many chum have been spotted below Bonneville Dam, but flows have been almost too low for that, Wagner said. Chum are definitely in the area. The plan is to provide a steady tailwater elevation ranging from 11.3-11.7 feet at Ives Island beginning November 9 or 10, as conditions allow. Coulee will be drafting to maintain a tailwater elevation targeted at 11.5 feet round the clock, Robyn MacKay (BPA) said. If additional water needs to be moved through the system, it would be pulsed at night. That would be the exception, not the rule, unless the current dry conditions change. TMT will revisit this issue at its next conference call November 21.

7. Snake River Zero Nighttime Flow

Robyn MacKay (BPA) introduced the document attached to this item on the TMT agenda. Typically the Snake River projects may go to zero generation in the December-February time frame. Last year, that occurred 25 times, Tony Norris (BPA) said, with the fewest occurrences at Ice Harbor Dam. The periods of zero generation usually last for 6 hours and occasionally for only 2 or 3 hours at a time, most frequently during the week after Christmas.

{Editor's note: Going to zero generation is authorized in the project's Water Control Manuals when few fish are present.}

Paul Wagner inquired whether data from video counts will be used to check project criteria, or will it be calendar driven? Video counting will continue at McNary through December 31 and at Lower Granite through December 15, Adams said. Both cameras will operate during the day, from 6 am to 4 pm at Lower Granite, and 4 am to 8 pm at McNary. The numbers from these counts are being posted to the COE website. TMT will revisit this issue at its next conference call November 21.

Jim Adams pointed out that the COE has a draft fish passage facility maintenance schedule, with maintenance starting no earlier than December 31.

8. 2008 Draft Water Management Plan

The WMP currently linked to the TMT website is based on the 2004 Bi-Op, Adams said. It needs revision based on the 2007 Bi-Op released just a few days

ago. Adams suggested that any WMP discussion be delayed until the November 21 conference call, by which time the updated version should be available.

Kiefer and Kruger asked to see the changes in one “track changes” version instead of multiple versions which are hard to follow.

9. Operations Review

a. Reservoirs. Grand Coulee is at elevation 1,287.95 feet and holding steady, Roache said. It will start drafting to meet chum flows this weekend, so the elevation can be expected to drop unless there’s rain.

Hungry Horse is at elevation 3,532.08 feet, discharging 2.0-2.1 kcfs to meet the Columbia Falls minimum.

Libby is at elevation 2,434.93 feet, with inflows of 3.5-4.5 kcfs and outflows of 4.5 kcfs. The December 31 flood control target is 2,411 feet. The only way the flood control elevation would be higher is if the water supply forecast in December is less than 95% of normal. The maximum possible target elevation is 2,426.5 feet on December 31.

Albeni Falls is at elevation 2,055.49 feet at the Hope gage, with daily average inflows of 7.5-10.5 kcfs and outflows of 14 kcfs. The target elevation for November 20 is 2,055 feet.

Dworshak is at elevation 1,516.5 feet, with inflows of just under 1 kcfs and steady outflows of 1.5 kcfs. The 7-day inflow average at McNary is 90 kcfs, at Lower Granite 17.5 kcfs, and at Bonneville 100-101 kcfs.

b. Fish. Smolt passage is about to end for the year, Paul Wagner (NOAA) reported. The smolt monitoring program at Lower Granite and Little Goose stopped on October 31. There was a bump in subyearling passage at Lower Granite of up to 500 fish per day, which is typical for this time of year. PIT tag detections will continue for another month to 6 weeks, but sampling will end for the year.

Adult passage is also winding down, with around 20 fall Chinook per day at Bonneville. Wild steelhead passage is ending, although steelhead passage at Ice Harbor has been exceeding all establish criteria at around 335 fish per day. The total number of fall Chinook for the year was around 10,000.

c. Power System. There is nothing to report, Robyn MacKay said.

d. Water Quality. There is nothing to report, Jim Adams said.

e. Other. Kiefer asked if there will be an SOR for Kootenai River burbot this year. We're expecting a draft SOR from the tribes on temperature operations at Libby, but don't know when it will arrive, Adams said. This issue will be covered on the November 21 conference call.

10. Next Meetings

There will be a conference call on November 21, including chum operations, Snake River zero nighttime flow, the 2008 WMP, the burbot SOR, regular operations review, and the year end review agenda. This meeting summary was prepared by consultant and writer Pat Vivian.

Name	Affiliation
Jim Adams	COE
Robyn MacKay	BPA
Paul Wagner	NOAA
Russ Kiefer	Idaho
Tony Norris	BPA
Dave Wills	USFWS
Rick Kruger	Oregon
John Roache	BOR
Donna Silverberg	DS Consulting
Cathy Hlebechuk	COE
Shane Scott	NWRP
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