

COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

September 10th, 2008 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.

Review of Minutes/Agenda

The 8/22, 25th, 26th and 27th official meeting minutes/facilitator notes had been posted to the web.

Action/Next Steps: TMT requested one more week to review the minutes/notes and will send edits to the COE/facilitation team by 9/17. If no comments are received, they will be considered final. Any changes made will be tracked and shared with all via email.

Autumn Treaty Fishing SOR #2008-C8

Kyle Dittmer, CRITFC, referred TMT to SOR 2008-C8 posted as a link to the TMT agenda. Dittmer reviewed the dates and elevation requests for Bonneville, The Dalles and John Day pools. The request was for 1' elevation constraints for all three pools from 9/9-12. Dittmer noted the exceptional job the COE has done in holding the pools fairly steady last week, with 602 total nets amongst the three pools. The COE inquired if the 1' constraint request for Bonneville pool was for the top 1' of the pool, or within a 1' near the top of the pool; CRITFC responded that they generally prefer the top, but if the operation is coordinated ahead of time the 1' constraint does not have to be at the top of the pool.

Action/Next Steps: The COE planned to operate Bonneville pool under a 1' soft / 1.5' foot hard constraint. The Dalles pool will operate under a 1.5' soft constraint (158-159.5') and a 3' hard constraint (157.0-160.0 feet); special emphasis will be placed on meeting the soft constraint at The Dalles during the evening hours. The John Day pool will be operated under a 1.5' hard constraint (262.5-264'). Dittmer will share any requests for additional treaty fishing operations as soon as possible.

Dworshak Operations Update

Steve Hall, COE, reported that Dworshak hit its end of August elevation target of 1535' at 0400 hours on 9/1. The COE implemented the Nez Perce /Dworshak Board plan for providing 200 kaf flow augmentation as discussed during the 8/27 TMT meeting. Outflows were currently at 5 kcfs, with two small units in undershot mode; temperatures were in the range of 47-48°, meeting the Dworshak Hatchery recommendation. On 9/13

or 9/14 the COE planned to step outflows down to 2.4 kcfs and hold until the pool's elevation reaches 1520', likely on 9/20.

Timing for End of MOP at Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose, and Lower Granite

The Salmon Managers acknowledged that the criteria had been met for lifting MOP at all of the Lower Snake River projects. Tom Lorz, speaking on behalf of the Salmon Managers, provided the Action Agencies with preferences for lifting of MOP operations: wait to lift MOP until the end of the Dworshak flow augmentation operation, around 9/20. When MOP is lifted, stagger refill starting with Lower Granite, then Little Goose, Lower Monumental and Ice Harbor.

Action/Next Steps: The Action Agencies said they will consider the Salmon Managers' preference as they move into end of MOP/project refill operations.

Libby/Arrow Swap Accounting

Robyn MacKay, BPA, referred TMT members to documents regarding accounting of the Libby/Arrow swap posted as links to the agenda. She provided an explanation of how the 60 kfsd was delivered, given the shifts in forecasted/actual precipitation and flows. Libby met its end of August elevation target of 2441.7' and the swap was flow neutral. MacKay clarified that the storage is expected to be returned to Canada by December, once Libby reaches its flood control elevation.

Operations Review

Reservoirs: Libby was at elevation 2441.3', with inflows of 6.4 kcfs and outflows of 6 kcfs. According to the latest STP, Libby will likely maintain outflows of 6 kcfs until 9/30, then drop to 4.5 kcfs. Albeni Falls was at 2062.2' and was passing inflows; the project will draft to an elevation of 2061.5-2062' by 9/30 [Hlebechuk clarified after the TMT meeting that the project will be drafted to about 2061']. Dworshak was at elevation 1524', with inflows of 1 kcfs and outflows of 5 kcfs. Regarding summer flow objectives, McNary's objective was 200 kcfs and actual flows were 173 kcfs. Lower Granite's objective was 52.5 kcfs and actual flows were 32.5 kcfs. {*Supplemental Note: The summer seasonal average flow at Lower Granite was miscalculated and reported at the meeting as 32.5 kcfs. The actual seasonal average flow was 57 kcfs*} Grand Coulee was at elevation 1281.1', targeting a minimum elevation of 1283' by the end of September. Hungry Horse was at elevation 3538.3' with 4kcfs discharge.

Fish: Dave Wills, USFWS, reported that juvenile passage numbers at McNary, John Day, and Bonneville were declining to 400-800 per day. Cindy LeFleur, WA, said that adult Chinook at Bonneville are stronger than pre season forecast average, with 50,000 added to the forecast total. Upriver brights and Coho are also tracking above predicted levels. Rich Domingue, NMFS, reminded TMT that the NMFS Science Center website provides data on fish survival relative to ocean conditions.

Power System: Nothing to report at this time.

Water Quality: Nothing to report at this time; Jim Adams, COE, reported that an Adaptive Management Team meeting was held on September 9th and that there is a draft technical document posted on the WADOE webpage. Interested parties may review the document and provide comments to the States by 10/6. The report can be found here: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/tmdl/ColumbiaRvr/ColumbiaTDG.html>.

10/1 Face to Face Meeting

Agenda items will include:

- Finalize notes/minutes
- Scheduling Year End Review
- Operations Review

**Columbia River Regional Forum
Technical Management Team Meeting
Sept. 10, 2008**

1. Introduction

Today's TMT meeting was chaired by Jim Adams (COE) and facilitated by Robin Gumpert (DS Consulting) with representatives of BOR, Washington, Idaho, CRITFC, COE, BPA, USFWS, NOAA and others participating. The following is a summary (not a verbatim transcript) of the topics discussed and decisions made at the meeting. Anyone with questions or comments about these notes should provide them to the TMT chair or bring them to the next meeting.

2. Review of Meeting Minutes

The deadline for comments on facilitator's notes and minutes for all meetings through Aug. 27 is Sept. 17, after which they will be considered final. Send any comments to the facilitation team.

3. Autumn Treaty Fishing

Kyle Dittmer (CRITFC) reported on SOR 2008-C7 which CRITFC submitted to the Action Agencies a week ago. The SOR requested 1-foot maximum elevation bands from 76.5-75.5 feet at the Bonneville pool; 159.5-58.5 feet at The Dalles pool; and 264.5-263.5 feet at the John Day pool.

CRITFC's run forecast has recently been updated to more than 210,000 fall Chinook and 316,000 steelhead at Bonneville Dam. Last week's net flight found over 602 nets, of which 32% were in Bonneville pool, 25% in The Dalles pool, and 43% in John Day pool.

Dittmer thanked the COE for keeping elevations within 1 foot at Bonneville and only 0.7 feet at The Dalles and John Day. That degree of elevation stability makes for good fishing. Hlebechuk asked whether future operations should be within the top foot; Dittmer said that's a general preference. The pool can be at a lower elevation as long as fluctuations remain within a 1-foot band.

The COE has a spill gate maintenance operation scheduled for Sept. 22-25, which will require the pool to be near the bottom elevation during daytime hours, Adams said. BPA needs an elevation band; it can be a bottom elevation band, Robyn MacKay said. This year, the fisheries are lasting only a week at a time, as opposed to last year's 2-3 week fisheries, Dittmer said. Therefore the maintenance operation might not have a major impact on tribal fishing. Catch efficiency tends to go down at the end of the season, with fewer fish in the river.

In response to SOR 2008-C7, the COE will operate Bonneville Dam within a soft constraint of elevation 75.5-76.5 feet and a hard constraint of 75-76.5 feet. The Dalles Dam will operate within a soft constraint of 158-159.5 feet and a hard constraint of 157-160 feet, its normal operating elevation. There will be special emphasis on meeting the soft constraint during evening and nighttime hours. John Day Dam will operate within its usual hard constraint at this time of year, elevation 262.5-264 feet. Adams wondered whether the SOR was requesting an elevation of 264.5-263.5 was correct since the normal operating range at John Day at this time of year was 262.5 ft to 264.0 ft. Dittmer said he would double-check on that.

A dam on the Big White Salmon River (Condit Dam) is scheduled for removal in 2009, Dave Wills (USFWS) reported. Part of the determination by FERC and NOAA was a recommendation that listed fish be intercepted and transported so dam removal doesn't silt over their spawning grounds. This year workers will practice transportation techniques on hatchery fish, an operation that might benefit from having a steady pool elevation, Wills pointed out.

4. Dworshak Operations

Dworshak pool reached its target end of August elevation at 4 am on Sept. 1, Steve Hall (COE) reported. The current operation is to step down flows per the Dworshak board, which manages the 200 kaf on behalf of the Nez Perce Tribe. Dworshak operations stepped down from full powerhouse to 8.2 kcfs on Sept. 5; then again to 5 kcfs on Sept. 9. One more reduction is planned to 2.4 kcfs on the evening of Sept. 13. That release rate will continue until the reservoir reaches elevation 1,520 feet, currently forecasted to occur on Sept. 20. The reservoir elevation is 1,523.8 feet, with two small units operating in undershot mode. The plan is to drop down to one small unit on Sept. 13. Dworshak outflow temperatures are 46.5-48 degrees F, which is within the range needed for Spring Creek Hatchery. TMT will revisit Dworshak operations at its next meeting on Oct. 1.

5. Timing for End of MOP at Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose and Lower Granite

The Salmon Managers discussed ending MOP operations at yesterday's FPAC meeting and recommended moving Lower Granite from MOP to MOP+1 at the adult collection facility, Tom Lorz (CRITFC) said. The biological recommendation (not elevated to a system operational request) is to continue MOP operations at least until the end of Dworshak flow augmentation on Sept. 20. If feasible, the Salmon Managers prefer that upstream reservoirs go off MOP first, starting with Little Goose, Lower Monumental and Ice Harbor, while flow augmentation continues at Lower Granite.

All fish counts are presently declining, Dave Wills reported. The criteria for ending MOP say the operation should continue until natural cooling occurs and low numbers of juvenile migrants are present at Little Goose, Lower Monumental and Ice Harbor dams. Current passage numbers at Lower Granite are around 200-400 fish per day, and in the double digits at Little Goose and Lower Monumental dams. The temperature of Lower Granite tailwater is 62.5 degrees F, which is fairly cool. Due to an agreement that conditions for ending MOP have already been satisfied, the Salmon Managers presented their input as a biological recommendation, not a request.

There was general agreement that if MOP operations end before the Dworshak flow augmentation does, the Salmon Managers prefer that the process be staggered starting with Little Goose Dam. There was also general agreement that MOP operations can be removed from further 2008 TMT agendas.

6. Libby/Arrow Storage Swap Follow-up

Robyn MacKay (BPA) presented an after-the-fact accounting of the Libby/Arrow swap. She showed TMT three documents linked to today's agenda, including data and a detailed written account. The swap was completed and 60 ksf was stored in Libby and released from Arrow. However, the releases occurred from a different place than expected. Canadian storage was expected to end the month 59.9 ksf below the TSR, but after-the-fact, ended only 26.1 ksf below the TSR. Without the swap, the Canadian reservoir elevations would have ended August 34 ksf above the TSR, which amounts to the 60 ksf that was delivered. Reasons for the difference were higher inflows than forecast over the week end, a reduction at Duncan due to downstream issues and a content difference due to conversion factors. These differences would have occurred without a swap and resulted in Canadian storage ending higher than expected. Therefore, full amount of the swap was delivered.

Libby elevation ended on target at 2,441.7 feet. The water will be returned between now and the end of December.

7. Operations Review

a. Reservoirs. Dworshak is at elevation 1,524 feet with inflows of 1.0 kcfs and outflows of 5 kcfs. Libby is at elevation 2,441.3 feet, with inflows of 6.4 kcfs. Outflows are down to 6 kcfs, which will continue through the rest of September, when outflows will drop to 4.5 kcfs.

Albeni Falls will start drafting in the middle of September. Current elevation is 2,062.2 feet. The winter elevation target will be set in September.

Seven day average inflows at Lower Granite are 31.8 kcfs. The summer objective was 52.5 kcfs, with a seasonal average of 32.5 kcfs. {*Supplemental*

Note: The summer seasonal average flow at Lower Granite was miscalculated and reported at the meeting as 32.5 kcfs. The actual seasonal average flow was 57 kcfs} Seven day average inflows at McNary are 95.8 kcfs. The summer objective was 200 kcfs and the seasonal average was 173 kcfs. Seven day average inflows at Bonneville are 105 kcfs.

Grand Coulee is at elevation 1,281.1 feet, with an end-of-September minimum elevation target of 1,283 feet. Hungry Horse is at elevation 3,538.3 feet, discharging 4 kcfs.

b. Fish. Subyearling counts at Lower Granite, Little Goose and Lower Monumental are declining, Dave Wills said. Passage counts at McNary, John Day and Bonneville are around 4-800 daily, also trending downward.

Adult fall Chinook passage at Bonneville is stronger than Washington's preseason forecast and greater than average, Cindy LeFleur (Washington) said. Spring Creek Hatchery and upriver bright forecasts have both been increased by 25,000 fish. Summer steelhead passage is also above average. Coho passage is way above average at Snake River dams. Fall Chinook season is scheduled to continue until Sept. 16.

Outmigrating juveniles stand to benefit the most from good ocean conditions this year, Dave Wills reported. Positive effects start at the bottom of the food chain and work their way upward. NMFS is producing a series of indices for correlating ocean conditions at the time of outmigration and fish survival, Rich Dominique (NOAA) reported. NMFS has growing confidence in its ability to predict fish survival based on ocean conditions. All runs will probably reap the rewards of good conditions over the next few years. While it's risky to predict how long these conditions will last, current indications are that the La Nina weather trend will continue for another year, a positive sign.

c. Power System. There was nothing to report today.

d. Water Quality. There was nothing to report today; water temperatures and TDG levels are all low. A draft technical document prepared by the Adaptive Management Team is available for comments via the Washington State website. Comments are due Oct. 6, 2008. The AMT formed in response to a request by Oregon to investigate the possibility of discontinuing the use of forebay gages to set spill caps. The Implementation Team has been receiving quarterly updates on the AMT's work as it develops. When things are more definite, TMT will receive a briefing as well.

9. Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled TMT meetings will be Oct. 1 and Oct. 22, continuing every 2 weeks after that. The TMT year-end review was tentatively set for Dec. 4, 2008. This summary prepared by consultant and writer Pat Vivian.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Jim Adams	COE
Robyn MacKay	BPA
Kyle Dittmer	CRITFC
Scott Boyd	COE
Kevin Grode	COE
Bob Diaz	PPM
Laura Hamilton	COE
Tina Lundell	COE
Don Faulkner	COE
Ruth Burris	PGE
Dave Wills	USFWS
Cathy Hlebechuk	COE

Phone:

John Roache	BOR
Cindy LeFleur	Washington
Russ Kiefer	Idaho
Tom Lorz	CRITFC
Barry Espensen	CBB
Tim Heizenrader	Centaurus
Russ George	WMC
Richelle Beck	DRA
Steve Hall	COE Walla Walla
Scott Bettin	BPA
Rich Domingue	NOAA