

Zero Generation in the Snake River

The COE LWG water Control Manual states on page 8-2, “From December to February, “zero” minimum project discharge is permitted on a limited basis. Under an agreement between the Corps of Engineers and the fishery agencies, zero river flow is allowed for water storage during low power demand periods (at night and on weekends) when there are few, if any, actively migrating anadromous fish present in the Snake River... Water stored under zero river flow conditions may maximize power production from the Columbia River basin system, but zero river flow operations are not recommended at Lower Granite when fish are actively migrating in the Snake River.”

In Winter 2003/2004, and again in 2005 (SOR 2005-22), the Salmon Managers recommended the following criteria to define what is meant by “few” migrating adults.

Salmon Managers Recommended Criteria for Zero Generation in the Snake River

1. The number of adults migrating per day is defined as the number of upstream counts minus the number of downstream counts.
2. A three-day moving average will be used to determine if the few migrating adult criterion has been met.
3. “Wild” and “total” returns will be calculated separately. Only one of the categories is necessary to show that more than a few adults are migrating.
4. The run to date is defined as the cumulative number of adult steelhead in the “wild and “total” categories passing Lower Granite Dam since June 1st of the return year.

The few migrating adult criterion trigger will be defined on a sliding scale outlined in the following table. The table applies to both “wild” and “total” categories of returning adult steelhead.

Run to date>#	Run to date≤ #	Few criteria< #
0	30,000	10
30,000	60,000	20
60,000	100,000	35
100,000	150,000	50
150,000	200,000	65
200,000	250,000	80
250,000		100