

COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

Conference Call

May 17, 2010

FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY NOTES

Facilitator: Erin Halton

Notes: Christa Leonard

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.

Dworshak Operations – SOR 2010-02

Paul Wagner, on behalf of the Salmon Managers, reported as follow up to the 5/12 TMT discussion that the latest RFC data indicated inflows at Lower Granite would reach flows of 100 kcfs if SOR #2010-02 were to be implemented beginning May 19th. Wagner said that the Salmon Managers had discussed this item and recommended that the SOR be implemented beginning at 0001 hours on May 19th. Steve Hall, COE, referred TMT to links posted to the agenda; he noted that the actual conditions have not proven to be quite as wet as forecasted and said that flows may just barely meet 100 kcfs with implementation of the SOR. Hall added that flows are picking up, but not quite at the rate predicted in the latest RFC forecast. Steve Barton, COE, said that the predicted timing of the flow peak has been fairly stable and that for maximum benefit, the dates of May 19-21 would best suit the intent of the SOR. TMT members also discussed the aspect that Wagner sent Idaho Power an email informing them of this week's proposed operation.

Wagner clarified that if it became clear during the course of the operation that Lower Granite inflows would be over 100 kcfs, the Salmon Mangers would support backing off Dworshak outflows for the third day of the operation. TMT members also discussed the current temperature at Dworshak, which was in the range of 42-44°F. Dave Wills, USFWS, stated that anything between the current temperature and 47-48°F would be acceptable from the Dworshak Hatchery's perspective. Barton acknowledged that TMT has a conference call scheduled for 5/19 and suggested that updated flow information could be part of the discussion; he also suggested that for the sake of coordination with project operators/schedulers, the operational direction could be as follows:

- Operate Dworshak outflows at full powerhouse for three days beginning at 0001 hours on 5/19. If during the course of the operation it becomes reasonably prudent to assume that inflows at Lower Granite will exceed 100 kcfs, the Action Agencies will scale back Dworshak outflows such that Lower Granite inflows will not exceed 100 kcfs.
- Any changes in outflows will be made near midnight, and the COE will coordinate with ID regarding Dworshak temperatures.

A poll was conducted on the SOR as stated above:

- OR: ok
- ID: ok
- WA: ok, appreciate discussion of how to best meet intent of the SOR
- CRITFC/Umatilla Tribe: ok
- USFWS: ok
- NOAA: ok
- BOR: ok
- BPA: ok
- COE:ok

Action/Next Steps: The COE will implement the SOR as stated above. This item will be on the agenda for the 5/19 TMT call.

Ice Harbor Spill Levels – SOR 2010-03

Russ Keifer, ID, reported that since last week's meeting, he had heard from other TMT members that there would not be consensus on implementing SOR 2010-03. As such, Kiefer withdrew submittal of the SOR.

Libby Update: The COE stated that TMT members could expect an email if it was determined that the VarQ flow start date were to be set for anything other than the May 19th date discussed at last week's TMT meeting.

The next TMT meeting will be: 5/19 – conference call at 9:00 am.

Agenda items will include:

- Libby Operations Update
- Priest Rapids Update
- Dworshak Update
- Treaty Fishing Update

Columbia River Regional Forum
TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM OFFICIAL MINUTES

May 17, 2010

Notes: Pat Vivian

1. Introduction

Today's TMT conference call was chaired by Steve Barton (COE) and facilitated by Erin Halton (DS Consulting). Representatives of the USFWS, COE, CRITFC, NOAA, BOR, Idaho, BPA, Washington, FPC and others attended. This summary is an official record of the proceedings, not a verbatim transcript. Anyone with questions or comments about this summary should provide them to the TMT chair or bring them to the next meeting.

2. Review Meeting Minutes for April 28, May 5 and May 12

Review of meeting minutes and facilitator's notes was postponed until the next regularly scheduled TMT conference call May 19.

3. Dworshak Operations – SOR 2010-02

Paul Wagner (NOAA) reported on FPAC's consensus yesterday regarding Dworshak operations, absent representation from the Nez Perce Tribe. FPAC recommended that the Action Agencies proceed with this SOR to release full powerhouse (presumably 10 kcfs) of flow augmentation from Dworshak for 3 days beginning at midnight May 18 and continuing through May 21.

Steve Hall (COE Walla Walla) walked TMT through the COE's presentation on Dworshak operations, beginning with the third link to this item on today's agenda. Attachment C compares projected inflows at Lower Granite with and without a pulse from Dworshak. Without the pulse, it appears that inflows would peak at around 97 kcfs then recede. With the pulse from Dworshak, it appears that inflows would peak at just under 105 kcfs.

The modeling presented in Attachment B identifies a disparity of 5-10 kcfs between actual and forecasted conditions, with the forecast showing slightly wetter conditions or about 5 kcfs higher inflows than are occurring, Hall noted. This tendency toward overprediction means that inflows at Lower Granite are unlikely to go above 100 kcfs even with a pulse from Dworshak. While actual inflow volume could deviate from the forecasts, it's clear the peak at Lower Granite will occur May 19-20, making May 19-21 an ideal time for implementation of SOR 2010-02.

A potential source of unpredictability in the Dworshak operation is Idaho Power's operation of Hells Canyon Dam, Karl Kanbergs (COE) noted. The COE modeling presented today assumes Hells Canyon will pass inflows until May 18, then spill modestly (about a foot elevation) throughout the rest of the week.

Discussion turned to the Salmon Managers' caveat that flow augmentation be curtailed if inflows go above a daily average of 100 kcfs at Lower Granite. TMT considered what the triggers would be for ending full powerhouse releases from Dworshak. There was general agreement that Dworshak flow augmentation should only be cut if it's clear that inflows as a daily average will go above 100 kcfs at Lower Granite, not as an hourly reading. Idaho Power is already aware of the request for Hell's Canyon to pass inflows during the Dworshak operation, via an email from Wagner, so Barton suggested that TMT members hold off on further communication with them until after the Dworshak operation is complete.

Dam operators and power schedulers will need clear directions for implementing this SOR, Tony Norris (BPA) emphasized. TMT agreed that flow augmentation might be curtailed on May 21 if it's reasonable to conclude by the close of business on May 20 that Lower Granite inflows would be more than 100 kcfs as a daily average that day, based on midnight-to-midnight definition of a day. If that appears to be the case, the Action Agencies will scale back Dworshak flows on May 20 accordingly, with 100 kcfs as the targeted daily average. TMT will revisit this issue in its May 19 conference call and possibly schedule a follow-up call May 20 to make a final decision regarding Dworshak releases.

Due to ramping rates, the increase in flows is planned to occur within 2 hours beginning at midnight, Hall said. If a decision is made to cut Dworshak releases on May 21, that change will also occur at midnight in order to avoid impacting salmon fishing.

TMT turned to water temperature management at Dworshak reservoir. The current temperature of releases is 42-44 degrees F, Hall reported. Unit 1 is running in overshot mode, while units 2 and 3 are running in undershot mode. Hall asked whether these units should be switched into overshot mode. After discussion, TMT decided not to advise changing units 2 and 3 into overshot mode yet. Dave Wills (USFWS) advised not letting releases get any colder than they are now. He has not received any recent requests from the Dworshak hatchery for temperature management. The current temperature at Orofino gage is around 50 degrees F, Russ Kiefer reported. Kiefer advised saving cool water for later in the summer. In terms of motivating steelhead to migrate, cooler is generally better, Wagner said. NOAA would be comfortable with having the COE and Idaho coordinate temperature management and report back to TMT May 19.

TMT reached unanimous agreement on the Action Agency proposal to implement this SOR by beginning full powerhouse operations at Dworshak at 0001 hours on May 19 and continuing through May 21, with the caveat that flows from Dworshak would be scaled back as needed to target 100 kcfs inflows at Lower Granite. TMT members gave their views for the record:

- **Oregon** – No objection.
- **Idaho** – Favors the proposed operation.
- **Washington** – Supports the SOR and efforts to make it happen.

- **CRITFC** – No objection.
- **BOR** – No objection.
- **NOAA** – Supports the SOR.
- **BPA** – No objection.
- **COE** – Supports the SOR.
- **USFWS** – Supports the SOR.

4. Ice Harbor Spill Levels – SOR 2010-03

This SOR requesting flat spill at Ice Harbor in an effort to increase adult return rates was withdrawn by its sponsor. Idaho was thanked for submitting an innovative request that drew strong although not unanimous support.

5. Libby Operations

At the May 12 TMT conference call, May 19 was identified as the date by which 260 added kaf would likely be stored in Libby reservoir, and releases will revert from minimum flows to VARQ flows of 14.5 kcfs, Barton recalled. If that date is pushed further into May, the COE will inform TMT via email, unless the switch will occur after May 21. TMT will revisit Libby operations May 19.

5. Next Meeting

The next TMT meeting will be a conference call May 19 to discuss Dworshak and Libby operations, Priest Rapids flow objectives, treaty fishing, and review of meeting minutes. TMT will meet next in person May 26 at the Spring Creek Hatchery.

Name	Affiliation
Rick Kruger	Oregon
Doug Baus	COE
David Wills	USFWS
Steve Hall	COE Walla Walla
Steve Barton	COE
Tom Lorz	CRITFC
Paul Wagner	NOAA
Karl Kanbergs	COE
John Roache	BOR
Russ Kiefer	Idaho
Barry Espenson	CBB
Margaret Filardo	FPC
Tony Norris	BPA
Charles Morrill	WDFW