

COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

September 22, 2010 Conference Call

FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY NOTES ON FUTURE ACTIONS

Facilitator: Erin Halton

Notes: Robin Gumpert

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.

Libby Operations

The COE convened an unscheduled TMT call to discuss September operations at Libby. Karl Kanbergs began with a report on recent increased inflows (14 kcfs) to the project due to a strong rain event that had occurred in the Kootenai basin earlier this week. Libby was currently operating 9 kcfs outflows. This increased precipitation was an unusual and unpredicted event, and had not been accounted for in the forecasting for operations at Libby. Kanbergs said the project was tracking behind modeled operations to reach a target elevation 2439' by the end of September, per the FCRPS BiOp. In addition, he reported on behalf of the project that fluctuating flows were negatively impacting the channels in the area.

Kristian Mickelson, COE, referred TMT to graphs linked to the TMT agenda, showing two operating scenarios for managing the excess water. Scenario “1” depicted an operation holding at 9 kcfs until the project reached 2439' (around the first week of October), then gradually ramping down to get to one unit, 4.5 kcfs. Scenario “2” depicted an increase to 12 kcfs today through the end of September with a goal of reaching 2439' by 9/30, then ramping down to 4.5 kcfs.

The following bullets summarize questions, discussion and comments from participants on the call:

- Maintaining stable flows would be biologically more beneficial than targeting a project elevation by the end of the month.
- A gradual ramp-down is also important from a biological standpoint. The COE shared that the daily ramp down rates at Libby would be as follows: 9 kcfs; 6.5 kcfs; 5.5 kcfs; 4.5 kcfs.
- With few juveniles migrating in-river, targeting 2439' would be of less value than maintaining stable habitat conditions up river. The BiOp supports the best biological operation (in season management over targets when it is the better biological choice).
- What would be the impacts to December operations at Libby? The COE Seattle District responded that this operation would have no impact on December

operations, since December operations are guided by the December water supply forecast.

- Appreciate the flexibility being used by the COE to seek TMT input for the best operation, even if it requires a deviation from the RPA requirements in the BiOp.

The discussion showed a leaning toward operating to Option “1”, holding the project at 9 kcfs until reaching 2439’ – not by the end of September – and then gradually ramping down to 4.5 kcfs. The COE requested specific polling on the proposed operation, and the following bullets summarize the poll:

- Montana – Prefer Option 1 as it preserves the stable river environment as best as possible given the conditions. Minimizing the period between draw down and transition to ramp up for power generation is also a benefit.
- Oregon – No objection to Option 1; defer to NOAA on this issue.
- Idaho – No preference; no objection to Option 1 (or any other operation decision made by the COE).
- Washington – Not present on today’s call.
- CTUIR – No objection to Option 1.
- Colville – In favor of supporting the needs expressed by Montana.
- Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes - No objection to Option 1.
- Kootenai Tribe of Idaho - (*see Note below)
- Nez Perce – Not present on the call.
- USFWS – Supports Option 1.
- NOAA – Supports Option 1 as a biologically sound operation.
- BPA – Supports Option 1 and holding 9 kcfs until ready to ramp down.
- BOR – Supports Option 1. Hungry Horse is experiencing a similar issue with above normal precipitation and higher inflows

*Note: Sue Ireland, Kootenai Tribe, sent a follow up email re: this issue:

“To the TMT and interested parties - I apologize that I did not look at this email in time to participate in the conference call but I would to support what Greg Hoffman wrote in his email below and also to support a flat flow of 9 kcfs or lower until the end of the month.”

Planned Operation: Karl Kanbergs, COE, said that the COE will coordinate with the Nez Perce Tribe and make a decision around the operation later this afternoon. The COE will send an email notification with the decision to TMT by the end of the day. TMT will revisit this item at their next scheduled meeting on 9/29.

TMT members expressed appreciation to the COE for bringing TMT in to the discussion about how to move forward on this operation, and all participants were thanked for making themselves available for the call on such short notice.

Columbia River Regional Forum
TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM OFFICIAL MINUTES

September 22, 2010

Notes: Pat Vivian

1. Introduction

Today's unscheduled TMT conference call was chaired by Karl Kanbergs (COE) and facilitated by Erin Halton (DS Consulting). Representatives of the COE, Colville Tribe, NOAA, USFWS, Idaho, Montana, BOR, Umatilla Tribe, Oregon, Salish-Kootenai Tribe, BPA, FPC, CRITFC 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 give them to the TMT chair or bring them to the next meeting.

2. Libby September Operations

Faced with more runoff than predicted due to a late weekend storm, the COE convened today's TMT call on very short notice to discuss management of Libby outflows. In order to meet the FCRPS BiOp elevation target of 2,439 feet in Libby reservoir by the end of September, the COE estimated that outflows would have to increase to 12 kcfs starting today.

TMT was essentially asked whether it would be worth missing the BiOp elevation target in order to stabilize Libby outflows for the sake of minimizing negative biological impacts on the river reach below Libby Dam. The discussion centered around two alternatives, with graphs linked to today's agenda. Alternative 1 (Figure 1) proposes holding Libby releases at 9 kcfs until elevation 2,439 feet is attained, estimated by October 3 - 9. Alternative 2 (Figure 2) depicts an attempt to reach the BiOp elevation target of 2,439 feet on September 30 by ramping up now to 12 kcfs. Both alternatives include a ramp down to one unit best efficiency (about 4.5 kcfs) after the 2439 foot elevation is reached, following establish hourly and daily ramp rates.

All TMT members involved either supported Alternative 1 or voiced no objection to it:

- **Montana** – Supports Alternative 1. Expressed appreciation for the COE's analysis and consultation with TMT on this.
- **Idaho** – No objection to Alternative 1.
- **Salish-Kootenai Tribe** – Not present during call; later they emailed COE in support of Alternative 1.

- **Colville Tribe** – Supports Alternative 1.
- **USFWS** – Supports Alternative 1.
- **Oregon** – No objection. Oregon was neutral on the operation.
- **NOAA** – Supports Alternative 1. Echoed Montana’s appreciation for the COE’s willingness to modify BiOp operations when meeting the RPA would be detrimental to the river environment.
- **BOR** – Supports Alternative 1.
- **BPA** – Supports Alternative 1.
- **Nez Perce** – Not present on call; COE conferred with them afterward and they voiced no objection to Alternative 1.
- **Umatilla** – No objection.

Later in the day the COE indicated to the group that they will implement Alternative 1 and keep TMT informed of Libby operations as needed.

3. Next Meeting

The next TMT meeting will be in person September 29. The agenda will cover treaty fishing, the draft Water Management Plan, Dworshak operations, Libby operations, and the usual operations review.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Karl Kanbergs	COE
Doug Baus	COE
Steve Smith	Colville Tribe
Rich Dominigue	NOAA
Dave Wills	USFWS
Russ Kiefer	Idaho
Brian Marotz	Montana
Jim Litchfield	Montana
John Roache	BOR
Tom Lorz	Umatilla
Ron Boyce	Oregon
Joe Hovenkotter	Salish-Kootenai
Jason Flory	USFWS
Kristian Mickelson	COE
Erik Volkman	BPA
Dave Benner	FPC
Margaret Filardo	FPC

Kyle Dittmer	CRITFC
Carolyn Fitzgerald	COE
Greg Hoffman	COE
Scott Bettin	BPA
Scott English	COE