

COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

December 22, 2010 Conference Call

FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY NOTES

Facilitator/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.

Chum Operations

TMT members held a conference call to discuss the status of chum spawning and operations at Bonneville. Paul Wagner, NOAA, reviewed the posted spawning survey information, which included data through the 12/13 survey. In addition, he shared that he and others joined the crew for a survey on 12/17 to investigate the impact a 48-hour higher tailwater elevation (due to excess precipitation in the system) had on spawning chum. No redds were observed at higher levels than had been seen earlier in the year, and three new redds were discovered. Paul said FPAC had discussed on 12/21 and there were no objections, pending no new observed redds, to transitioning to incubation operations which would require just a day time minimum tailwater elevation of 12.2 feet, with no night time constraint.

A question was asked about what minimum tailwater could be used to support the majority of the spawned chum, to which Paul suggested GPS data could provide the answer to this question.

Action: Paul will gather and share the GPS data with TMT and have it posted to the TMT web page.

Given this new information (that a tail water elevation of 12.2 feet should provide adequate protection to established redds and spawning appeared to be complete+), salmon managers discussed and those present (Idaho, USFWS, NOAA) on today's TMT call raised no objection to moving to incubation operations.

Action/Planned Operation: With that, the COE planned to issue a teletype later today reflecting the end of chum spawning operations and transition to incubation—with a change in operation to a minimum day time elevation of 12.2 feet.

Next TMT Meeting

The next TMT meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 12 at 9:00 am. The meeting will likely be held at NOAA Fisheries – details will be posted in the coming weeks.

Columbia River Regional Forum
TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM OFFICIAL MINUTES

December 22, 2010

Notes: Pat Vivian

1. Introduction

Today's TMT conference call was chaired by Doug Baus (COE) and facilitated by Robin Gumpert (DS Consulting). Representatives of BPA, the COE, BOR, USFWS, Idaho, NOAA 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. Chum Operations Update

Chum spawning survey results are posted on the TMT page for December 14, when survey crews observed 5 live and 7 dead chum, Paul Wagner (NOAA) reported. There have been two additional surveys since December 14. A December 17 survey documented the effects of higher flows and runoff below Bonneville. In response to unexpected precipitation and high flows, there was a decision to maintain an around-the-clock operation of 18.5 feet for 48 hours or longer, while acknowledging the risk that chum might spawn at higher elevations during that time. The December 17 survey, however, found no evidence that spawning occurred at high elevations. A couple of recently created redds were visible but fully submerged at a tailwater elevation of 12.2 feet, putting them in at around 12 feet elevation.

The crews' opinion is that spawning is nearly done, Wagner said. The Salmon Managers agreed at FPAC yesterday that if the December 21 spawning survey – the last of the season – found no more live chum in the area, spawning would be declared done. Yesterday's count of 1 fish was not, in Wagner's opinion, sufficient to change course on that plan. Discussion turned to identifying the lowest possible elevation that would protect the majority of chum redds. The newest redds are in the range of 12 feet elevation below Bonneville; Wagner said a tailwater elevation below 12.2 feet would most likely keep them inundated. There was discussion of using a GPS map of the chum redds to help establish an actual minimum elevation for chum incubation. Wagner suggested that TMT plan on discussing the GPS findings in January.

TMT members present today – **USFWS, NOAA, Idaho and BPA** – had no objections to transitioning to a chum incubation operation of 12.2 feet minimum elevation below Bonneville. The **COE** will send a teletype to the project operators specifying that a minimum tailwater elevation of 12.2 feet will be maintained for chum incubation. Karl Kanbergs (COE) noted that the minimum tailwater

elevation could be dropped, based on the GPS data on redd locations. Wagner will follow up with TMT via email when the GPS data become available.

3. Other – Lake Pend Oreille Operations

On December 17, the IDFG officially declared an end to kokanee spawning in the gravel beds of Lake Pend Oreille, Russ Kiefer (Idaho) reported. This year brought a substantially stronger return of adults spawning in the clean gravel beds. With spawning done, there is no further need to maintain Lake Pend Oreille within a half-foot of its minimum control elevation of 2055 feet through January 1, as requested in the SOR submitted by IDFG and USFWS regarding winter operations of Lake Pend Oreille. Operational flexibility can increase to the 1-foot range at this time.

4. Next Meetings

TMT will meet next on January 12 and again on January 26, pending further discussion among TMT members regarding potential schedule conflicts. Gumpert will follow up with TMT members on the January meeting dates.

Name	Affiliation
Tony Norris	BPA
Scott Bettin	BPA
Doug Baus	COE
Barry Espenson	CBB
Karl Kanbergs	COE
John Roache	BOR
Alex Cibarra	Grant PUD
Richelle Beck	DRA
Tom Le	Puget Sound Energy
Russ George	WMC
Rob Allerman	Deutsch Bank
Glen Trager	Iberdrola
Ruth Burris	PGE
Mike Shapley	Snohomish PUD
Dave Wills	USFWS
Russ Kiefer	Idaho
Paul Wagner	NOAA
Laura Hamilton	COE
Scott English	COE