

**COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT  
TEAM**

April 27, 2011 Conference Call  
FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY NOTES  
Facilitator: 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.*

**Dworshak Operations Update**

Steve Barton, COE, reported that, per the salmon manager recommendations and agreement reached at the 4/20 TMT meeting, the COE had increased outflows from Dworshak to full powerhouse + 2 kcfs spill to help increase inflows at Lower Granite. The project was currently at elevation 1451.5' with inflows around 10.8 kcfs. Steve Hall, Walla Walla District COE, shared that the project would reach a constraint if drafted to elevation 1449' – this would require the project to disconnect the docks on the upstream face of the project as the connector cables would be exposed at that elevation and at risk for damage. The COE would continue the current operation but wanted everyone to be aware of this potential constraint; the COE will need to back off to passing inflows if the project reaches elevation 1450' and until the reservoir comes back up. Steve said the change could happen as soon as the upcoming weekend.

Dave Statler, Nez Perce Tribe, asked about the target elevation at Dworshak. Steve Hall said the end of April target is 1471' but will be well below that elevation. That said, the COE is confident that with the existing and accumulating snow pack, refilling the project will not be a problem even if while implementing the current operation. The COE will continue to monitor the project and conditions closely and make necessary adjustments as needed to meet all requirements. Steve also said the current operation would not delay the timing for refill.

**SAR Data Update**

Russ Kiefer, Idaho, shared corrected SAR data he had reported on during the 4/22 TMT conference call: CSS estimates for wild Snake River steelhead from the migratory year 2006 were as follows: Transported – 1.31; uncollected spillway and turbine – 1.54; and bypassed – 0.60. This correction will be made to the 4/22 Official Meeting Minutes as well.

**Lower Monumental Involuntary Spill**

Steve Barton, COE, brought this issue to TMT to close an administrative loop from last week's TMT discussions on SOR 2011-02 re: spill patterns at Lower Monumental. While the COE's decision not to implement the SOR had been elevated by Oregon and would be further discussed at the RIOG and Senior Hydro Teams later this week, Steve wanted to poll TMT members on their level of support for implementing a uniform spill pattern during involuntary spill – either when the system is at full load or lack of load causing involuntary spill. This would be a change to the current Fish Operations Plan and

therefore needed to be regionally coordinated and described in a memo submitted to the court. The change would be for this year only, at this point.

**Consensus:** All TMT members present were supportive or did not object to the COE's proposal: *Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Nez Perce, CTUIR, Colville Tribe, USFWS, NOAA, BPA, BOR.*

**Action/Next Steps:** The COE will email the proposed operation to all sovereigns to provide one last opportunity for comment. With no objections, language will be submitted to the court to the effect that during times of involuntary spill including lack of load or lack of turbine, Lower Monumental will switch to a uniform spill pattern. Actual operations will be coordinated between the COE, the project and BPA. Steve noted that any change in spill pattern would be for a period of days rather than hours. He also said given the near term forecasts, this change was not likely occur over the next 10-day period.

Rick Kruger, Oregon, provided an update on the dispute resolution process for addressing SOR 2011-02. The RIOG was scheduled to meet at 1:00 pm today (4/27) and this item had been added to the agenda. The likely next step will be for the Senior Hydro Team to develop a briefing paper to frame up a policy question for sending back to the RIOG. The Hydro Team chair, NOAA's Ritchie Graves, was working to convene that meeting on Thursday, 4/28, at 1:00 pm. Rick said this meeting was not open to the public.

**Action:** Robin Gumpert, Facilitator, will send the RIOG Hydro Dispute Resolution Procedures and Point of Contact List to TMT members so they can get up to speed on the process and connect with their Senior Hydro Team representatives prior to Thursday. TMT will follow up on this issue at their next TMT meeting.

### **Initiation of Juvenile Transportation**

Doug Baus, COE, reported that, with no objections nor alternative recommendations from the salmon managers, the COE planned to begin transportation on May 1 consistent with the FOP to begin such operations 'no later than May 1'. Lower Granite will begin collection at 0700 on 5/1, with transportation beginning on 5/2; collection will begin at Little Goose on 5/5 with transport on 5/6; and collection at Lower Monumental will begin on 5/8 with transport on 5/9.

### **Spring Creek Hatchery Release**

Dave Wills, USFWS, reported that the second and final Spring Creek hatchery release was scheduled for 5/4. Given the high flows and observations from the first release, Bonneville was requested to switch to the lower end of 1% turbine efficiency at 6:00 pm on 5/4 to accommodate safe passage of the arriving fish. This would continue for four days until the bulk of the fish had passed. At that time, the project will check passage numbers to determine whether to end the constraint. Doug Baus, COE, said the COE planned to coordinate and implement the request as described. Dave Wills will report on the outcome of the release and operation at the next TMT meeting.

### **Priest Rapids Flow Target**

John Roache, Reclamation, said he heard the request last week from the salmon managers to maintain 135 kcfs Priest Rapids flow targets beyond April when Grand Coulee will cease drafting and begin refill. With the flows and warming temperatures forecasted, John said he thought this was a reasonable request. He asked for feedback from TMT members:

- NOAA – Appreciate Reclamation’s responsiveness; supportive of the plan
- USFWS – Supports the plan
- Oregon – Supports the plan
- Washington – Supports the plan
- Montana – Supports the plan
- Idaho – Supports the plan
- CTUIR – Supports the plan
- Nez Perce – Supports the plan
- Colville – Concern for ferries remaining out of service as a hardship to many locals – hope to get the levels up enough to run the ferry as soon as possible. No objection at this point.
- COE – Support the plan
- BPA – Concur with the plan

### **Next TMT Meeting, May 11, 9:00 am Conference Call**

Agenda Items include:

- Follow up on SOR 2011-02 dispute resolution process
- Dworshak Operations Update
- Transportation Operations
- Spring Creek Hatchery Release Report
- Vernita Bar Update
- Operations Review
- Other?

**Columbia River Regional Forum**  
**TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM OFFICIAL MINUTES**

**April 27, 2011**

Notes: Pat Vivian

***1. Introduction***

Today's TMT conference call was chaired by Steve Barton, COE, and facilitated by Robin Gumpert, DS Consulting. Representatives of the COE, NOAA, Oregon, Washington the Nez Perce Tribe, Idaho, Montana, BPA, USFWS Colville Tribe and others attended. This summary is an official record of the proceedings, not a verbatim transcript. Any questions or comments should be directed to the TMT chair.

Russ Kiefer, Idaho, reported that the SARs estimates he'd quoted incorrect numbers for wild Snake River steelhead during Friday's conference call regarding SOR 2011-02, uniform spill at Lower Monumental. The corrected SARs from the CSS report are: 1.31% for transported fish, 1.54% for spillway- or turbine-passed fish, and 0.60% for bypassed fish.

***2. Dworshak Operations Update***

Last week discharges were increased from Dworshak to augment flows into Lower Granite, which were 95.5 kcfs yesterday, Barton reported. Dworshak forebay, currently at elevation 1,451.5 feet, was continuing to discharge full powerhouse at 11.8 kcfs this morning. Inflows have picked up to 10.9 kcfs.

Steve Hall, COE, reported on the near-term outlook for this operation. Inflows are expected to pick up to 12 kcfs from where they currently hover between 8-11 kcfs. The reservoir elevation is close to 1,449 feet, at which point the COE has to disconnect the cables from the docks on the upstream face of the dam to prevent damage. The problem could arise as soon as this coming weekend. If the elevation drops to 1,449 feet, the COE will ramp down outflows by 1-2 kcfs so that the project is passing inflows. However, that will not be necessary if the forecasted precipitation and temperature increases boost inflows and forebay elevation. The COE will track this situation closely. At present, there appears to be plenty of water available in the form of snow pack to refill the reservoir while continuing to release a few cfs during the refill operation.

Russ Kiefer, **Idaho**, and Paul Wagner, **NOAA**, voiced no objections to that operation. Dave Statler, **Nez Perce Tribe**, asked whether earlier discharges will result in Dworshak refilling later. No, Hall replied, the reservoir will refill more rapidly. When inflows drop below powerhouse capacity, the COE will manage outflows to top off the reservoir. A drop in inflows below powerhouse capacity has long been considered the trigger for topping off the reservoir. TMT will revisit this issue at its next meeting on May 11.

### ***3. Lower Monumental Involuntary Spill***

With SOR 2011-02 being elevated to RIOG this afternoon, Barton asked TMT to consider the COE's proposed spill pattern for managing gas levels from involuntary spill at Lower Monumental this year. Last year, the operation switched to a uniform pattern during involuntary spill conditions to minimize TDG.

The COE's proposal this year differs from the 2011 spring FOP in that it applies to involuntary spill in general, whether from lack of load or lack of turbine capacity. Therefore, a poll is required and the court must be notified of the change. The poll was limited to involuntary spill for this year only:

- **NOAA** – No objection to the proposed operation
- **Washington** – No objection
- **USFWS** – No objection
- **Oregon** – No objection
- **Idaho** – Supports the operation
- **Montana** – Supports the operation
- **Colville Tribe** – Supports the operation
- **Nez Perce Tribe** – No objection
- **BPA** – No objection
- **BOR** – No objection

The COE will poll any sovereigns not present on today's call and, hearing no objections, issue a teletype to establish protocols for switching to the uniform pattern when conditions due to lack of market or turbine capacity indicate that uniform spill will be needed to control gas at Lower Monumental for at least 3 days. The reason for the 3-day limit is that switching patterns more often puts wear and tear on the spill gates, Barton said. The trigger will be when flows are headed for more than 140 kcfs for a few days. The 10-day forecast doesn't suggest this limit will be reached any time soon.

Rick Kruger, Oregon, urged TMT, particularly the Salmon Managers, to brief their senior hydro technical team representatives for a 1 pm meeting tomorrow. The RIOG dispute resolution process calls for the senior hydro technical team to frame the policy question regarding disposition of SOR-2011-02. Richelle Beck, DRA, asked whether senior hydro technical team meetings are open to the public; they are not. TMT will revisit this issue at its next meeting May 11.

### ***4. Initiation of Juvenile Transportation***

Hearing no objections today, the COE plans to move forward on TMT's recommendation at the April 20 meeting to initiate transportation on May 1, Doug Baus reported. This is in accordance with the 2011 spring FOP, which specifies that transport will be initiated at Lower Granite Dam no earlier than April 20 and no later than May 1. Transport will start up to 4 days and up to 7 days after the Lower Granite Dam start date at Little Goose and Lower Monumental dams, respectively. There were no objections, so collection for transport at Lower Granite will begin at 7 am May 1.

### ***5. Spring Creek Operation***

The first release of the year went quickly and well, thanks to high flows and good coordination, David Wills, USFWS, reported. The same operation at the lower end of 1% turbine efficiency is being requested for the second release of the year, planned for 6 pm on May 4. There were no objections.

### ***6. Priest Rapids Flow Target***

Last week on April 20, the Salmon Managers requested that BOR maintain a flow objective of 135 kcfs at Priest Rapids until the initiation of refill, John Roache, BOR, recalled. There was concern that flows would drop off once the drafting of Grand Coulee ends. At the beginning of April, Priest Rapids flows well exceeded 135 kcfs, with Grand Coulee drafting a foot a day to meet its April 30 flood control elevation. At this point, it seems reasonable to keep Priest Rapids at 135 kcfs, especially with temperatures warming. Roache asked whether there were any objections to keeping Priest Rapids at 135 kcfs flows after Grand Coulee stops drafting.

- **COE** – No objection
- **NOAA** – Supports the operation
- **Idaho** – Supports the operation
- **Washington** – No objection
- **Oregon** – Supports the operation
- **Montana** – Supports the operation
- **USFWS** – Supports the operation
- **CRITFC** – Supports the operation
- **Nez Perce Tribe** – Supports the operation
- **Colville Tribe** – No objection, although the loss of ferry service at current flows is causing hardship for tribal members
- **BPA** – Supports the operation

Hearing no objection, the BOR will continue to provide 135 kcfs flows at Priest Rapids while coordinating the operation with the Colville Tribe and other local stakeholders.

## **7. Next Meeting**

The May 4 TMT meeting was canceled due to a schedule conflict with FFDRWG, so the next regular TMT meetings will be on May 11 (meeting or call to be determined based on agenda items) and in person on May 18.

<b><i>Name</i></b>	<b><i>Affiliation</i></b>
Paul Wagner	NOAA
Rick Kruger	Oregon
Charles Morrill	Washington
Dave Statler	Nez Perce
Russ Kiefer	Idaho
Jim Litchfield	Montana
Scott Bettin	BPA
David Wills	USFWS
Doug Baus	COE
Sheri Sears	Collville Tribe
John Roache	BOR
Laura Hamilton	COE
Karl Kanbergs	COE
Scott English	COE
Doug Baus	COE
Steve Hall	COE
Shane Scott	PPC
Dave Benner	FPC
Rob Allerman	Deutsch Bank
Russ George	WMC
Tara Kelly	JP Morgan
Barry Espenson	CBB
Greg Lawson	Thompson Reuters
Ruth Burris	PGE
Richelle Beck	DRA
Bill Rudolph	NW Fish Letter
Mike Shapley	Snohomish PUD
Tom Lorz	CRITFC