

# COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

## TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

May 11, 2011

### 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.

#### Notice

It was announced that the next TMT meeting, on 5/18, will be held at BPA in Room 122. Anyone who wants to attend in person was advised to email Tony Norris at [ranorris@bpa.gov](mailto:ranorris@bpa.gov) to be added to the security list.

#### Performance Standard Testing at John Day

This agenda item was added during the meeting. Doug Baus, COE, and Brad Eppard, Portland District COE, shared that the current performance standard testing at John Day, using a four day spill treatment block of 30% for 2 days and 40% for 2 days, was underway. The latest STP forecasts showed flows increasing to levels that would not allow the COE to spill at 30% at the project next week. Given this, they proposed shifting the treatment schedule to allow for more testing at 30% this week (beginning tonight and continuing with this block through 5/17) followed by 40% testing next week and continued alternating treatments throughout the rest of the test. Given that the test was not designed to be a comparison of the two treatments, rather to test an equal number of treatments, the COE believes there will be no adverse effects to using this alternate schedule, given there would still be equal blocks for each treatment. Brad did acknowledge that the 30% treatment would not be tested during the latter part of the run.

TMT members present – Washington, Montana, NOAA, BOR and BPA – did not raise any specific objections to this proposed operation; some members said they would need to confer with their offices and would like another opportunity to respond.\*\*

**Action:** Doug Baus, COE, sent an email to TMT immediately following today's meeting that outlined the COE's proposed operation for John Day performance standard testing and asked TMT members to respond with any questions, comments, or objections to the proposed action by 12:00pm on Friday, 5/13. The email said parties not responding will be assumed to not object.

Brad Eppard also planned to coordinate via email with FPOM and bring this issue to a SRWG meeting on Friday, 5/13, to be sure the information and planned operation is shared with all interested regional parties.

\*\* Upon further regional coordination, and with no objections, the COE agreed to implement the following test schedule:

May 9 2000 Hours 40%  
May 11 2000 Hours 30%  
May 13 2000 Hours 30%  
May 15 2000 Hours 40%  
May 17 2000 Hours 30%  
May 19 2000 Hours 40%

The treatments continue in this 30%/40% pattern for the remainder of the test.

### **Vernita Bar Update**

Russell Langshaw, Grant County PUD, shared an update on the Hanford Reach and Vernita Bar operations. Mean temperatures had reached 945 temperature units from the end of spawning. The program was projected to end on June 20. Russell said this year's operations were going well and that there had been no exceedances since his last report to TMT on 4/22. The mean daily discharge was around 150 kcfs for the two weeks he presented, and the upcoming weekend would be the last for higher weekend flows. Russell said with the shorter duration between minimum and maximum flows, not as many samples were collected, and he suggested the operation was good in terms of minimizing stranding and entrapment. He will share another report with TMT at the 6/2 meeting.

### **Spring Creek Release Update**

Doug Baus, COE, reported that operations to support the second Spring Creek Hatchery release (of 4.6 million juvenile Fall Chinook) began on May 4 and were expected to conclude on May 12. Mortalities and descaling were reported to be very low and the operation this year has gone well. The USFWS will be invited to share a summary report on the outcome of the operations at the 6/1 TMT meeting.

### **Dworshak Operations Update**

Doug Baus, COE, and Steve Hall, Walla Walla District COE, updated TMT on Dworshak operations. The project had been providing flow augmentation per TMT request and was now refilling, currently releasing 2.5 kcfs. This discharge might increase if high flows continue to enter the system. Per BPA's request, the flows were currently being shaped to support morning heavy load hours. Inflows have come up dramatically in the last few days and some low lying snow stations were showing melt and runoff. Warming expected later this week will likely tip off higher inflows with more areas producing runoff. TMT will receive another update on Dworshak operations at the 5/18 TMT meeting.

### **SOR 2011-02 COE Summary of Decision on Lower Monumental**

Doug Baus, COE, referred TMT to the link on today's agenda for this item. The link contained the COE's summary of decision on SOR 2011-02, with appendices: the SOR, Sr. Hydro Team Briefing Memo and RIOG paper. Without regional consensus on the SOR, the COE decided not to implement the request. However, given no objections, the

COE will implement an alternative operation brought to TMT and also discussed at the Sr. Hydro Team and RIOG team meetings. It is as follows:

Switch from the Bulk to Uniform pattern at Lower Monumental Dam when either:

- A) flows exceed turbine capacity plus Fish Operations Plan (FOP) spill (occurs at ~140 kcfs); or
- B) when spill over the FOP specified amount is required due to lack of market spill at any flow level. If either of these conditions is likely to occur for 3 or more days, the Corps will use the Uniform spill pattern instead of the Bulk spill pattern as specified in the 2011 Spring FOP.

Doug concluded by saying the COE would monitor conditions closely and notify TMT if the above conditions were met and a change to the spill pattern at Lower Monumental was made.

#### **Other: Spill Priority List**

Doug Baus, COE, reported that he sent a revised spill priority list to TMT members earlier today and asked members to review it and send any concerns or objections to him by 3:00 pm on Friday, 5/13. He said the changes made were based on previous discussions and coordination with TMT members; the main change was the addition of a "Level 2" list for TDG levels at 122%.

**Action:** Doug will post the list on the TMT page for review by all. Paul Wagner, NOAA, said he would coordinate with FPAC on this issue and respond to the COE by Friday.

#### **Next Meeting, 5/18 Face to Face at BPA:**

Agenda items include:

- May Final Water Supply Forecasts
- Dworshak Operations
- Libby Operations
- Spring Creek Hatchery Release Report
- Operations Review
- Other?

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

**May 11, 2011**

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, BOR, Washington, NOAA, COE and others attended. (Several TMT members were absent from TMT today to attend a workshop on delayed mortality.) This summary is an official record of the proceedings, not a verbatim transcript. Any questions or comments should be directed to the TMT chair.

Next week's TMT meeting on May 18 will be held at BPA headquarters in room 122. Prospective attendees should email Tony Norris at [ranorris@bpa.gov](mailto:ranorris@bpa.gov) so he can put their names on the security list.

***2. Performance Standards Testing at John Day Dam***

Baus reported the latest STP forecast indicates it will be difficult for the COE and BPA to achieve the 30% spill treatment associated with the John Day spill test in the near future. This item was added to today's agenda so the COE could propose an alternative operation that could help achieve additional 30% treatments.

Brad Eppard, COE Portland, explained the proposal. The current study design calls for two treatments alternating between 30% and 40% spill in four-day blocks, or two days per treatment. In an effort to obtain as many 30% spill treatments as possible before there is a significant increase in inflows at John Day Dam, the COE proposed to keep spill at 30% on May 13, effectively swapping a 40% spill period with a later 30% spill period that is scheduled to begin when higher flows are expected. Under the current schedule, tonight spill at John Day will drop to 30% and rise to 40% again on May 13, when the COE proposes to keep it at 30%. Another 40% block scheduled to start May 15 would be kept at 30%. The next 40% block would start May 17. The goal of this plan is to test an equal number of treatments throughout the season and capture enough 30% spill data to satisfy the precision requirements associated with BiOp survival estimates.

Paul Wagner, NOAA, asked what tradeoffs are involved in deviating from the random study design. Because the two treatments are not being compared, the COE did a systematic, not randomized, schedule that switches spill levels every two days. Because this is a BiOp performance test, the COE is soliciting comments from the region on its proposal.

**NOAA, Washington and Montana** expressed no initial objections but wanted to reserve final judgment until they could consult with internal and local experts. **BOR** and **BPA** had no objections to the proposal. Baus will contact TMT members who were not on the call today. He asked TMT members to notify him by 12:00 pm on May 13 if there are any objections. This comment deadline will allow the COE to prepare for the switch at 8 pm on May 13. FPOM will discuss this issue tomorrow, and SRWG will discuss it on Friday.

### ***3. Vernita Bar Update***

Russell Langshaw, Grant PUD, reported that the protection flow operation is 945 temperature units from the end of spawning, with another 450 TUs to go. Protection flows are projected to end on June 20.

Langshaw presented three figures attached to today's agenda that document program results since he last reported to TMT. There have been no exceedances since then, and the average daily delta is 42 kcfs. From March 29 to April 28, the average daily delta constraint was 54.3 kcfs, and from April 28 to May 9, it was 51.4 kcfs, with a mean daily discharge of 152.5 kcfs. This weekend is the last of four weekends with higher minimum flows to help minimize stranding and entrapment, the main goal of the program. This year's program appears to be very successful. Langshaw will give TMT another update at the June 1 TMT meeting.

### ***4. Spring Creek Hatchery Update***

Doug Baus reported for Dave Wills, USFWS, who could not join today's call. On May 4 the hatchery released 4.6 million juvenile fall chinook. The Bonneville special operation began at 6 pm on May 4 and will continue until 5 pm, May 12. Overall, mortality and descaling rates have been very low. There will be a follow-up report after the operation ends.

### ***5. Dworshak Update***

Dworshak is currently refilling and discharging 2.5 kcfs, Baus reported. Outflows were lowered to 2.5 kcfs on May 8 when COE analysis showed the project was bumping up against its 95% confidence interval of being able to refill, Steve Hall, COE Walla Walla, explained. The COE could ramp flows up again later in the season if precipitation continues to be heavy. However, at this point the forebay elevation is around 30 feet below its normal flood control refill curve.

Paul Wagner asked why the 2.5 kcfs is apparently being shaped with higher flows during some hours. BPA requested some load shaping into the early morning heavy load hours, Hall replied. Charles Morrill, Washington, asked what the expectations are for snowpack and water accumulation in the basin. Inflows to Dworshak rose dramatically in response to rainfall over the weekend, Hall

said. Some of the low-lying stations in the Clearwater basin show that snowmelt is beginning, with the higher stations not showing snowmelt yet. Large inflows are anticipated when melting begins in earnest. Hall will give TMT another report on Dworshak operations at the May 18 TMT meeting.

## ***6. Lower Monumental Involuntary Spill: COE Summary of Decision on SOR 2011-2***

Baus introduced TMT to substantial documentation of the COE's decision not to implement SOR 2011-2. The documents are linked to today's agenda, including a RIOG briefing paper and notes from their May 2 discussion of the Salmon Managers' request.

Without regional consensus on the SOR, the COE decided not to implement the request. However, given no objections, the COE will implement an alternative operation brought to TMT and also discussed at the Sr. Hydro Team and RIOG team meetings. It is as follows: Switch from the Bulk to Uniform pattern at Lower Monumental Dam when either: A) flows exceed turbine capacity plus Fish Operations Plan (FOP) spill (occurs at ~140 kcfs); or B) when spill over the FOP specified amount is required due to lack of market spill at any flow level. If either of these conditions is likely to occur for 3 or more days, the Corps will use the Uniform spill pattern instead of the Bulk spill pattern as specified in the 2011 Spring FOP.

Gumpert observed that this was TMT's first trial of the new dispute resolution process through RIOG and it appears to have gone well. The COE will continue to monitor forecast information and real-time conditions for the triggers to begin this operation at Lower Monumental.

## ***7. Modifications to the Proposed Spill Priority List***

This item was added to today's agenda at the request of Doug Baus. This morning he emailed all TMT members the COE's proposed modifications to the spill priority list. He will also post the modified list to the TMT website.

Baus requested that TMT members notify him by 3 pm, May 13, if they have any questions or objections to the modified spill priority list. The COE is looking to implement the modified list, which incorporates recommendations made by TMT, on May 13. Baus pointed out that it introduces a new TDG category of 122%, midway between 120% and 125%.

## ***8. Next Meeting***

The next TMT meeting will be on May 18 at BPA headquarters. Topics on the agenda include a follow-up report on the Spring Creek Hatchery release, a Dworshak operations update, the modified spill priority list, water supply

forecasts, Libby operations, juvenile passage on the Snake River, water quality, and the usual operations review.

<b><i>Name</i></b>	<b><i>Affiliation</i></b>
Doug Baus	COE
Tony Norris	BPA
John Roache	BOR
Charles Morrill	Washington
Glen Trager	Iberdrola
Paul Wagner	NOAA
Russ George	WMC
Doug Vine	Thompson Reuters
Rob Allerman	Deutsch Bank
Laura Hamilton	COE
Kim Johnson	COE
Scott English	COE
Gunnar Leffler	COE
Richelle Beck	DRA
Tara Kelly	JP Morgan
Christine xx	Cargill
Brad Eppard	COE Portland
Mike Shapley	Snohomish PUD
Russell Langshaw	Grant PUD
Ruth Burris	PGE
Scott Bettin	BPA
Alex Cibarra	Grant PUD
Brian Marotz	Montana
Steve Hall	COE Walla Walla
Tim Heizenrader	Centaurus