

# COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

May 25, 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.

### **Operations Review**

Steve Barton, COE, updated TMT on water conditions and reservoir operations. Vancouver was very near flood stage (15.8' – flood stage is 16'), and The Dalles and Bonneville were being operated at 480 kcfs or higher to maintain flows and manage available storage. An additional ½” of precipitation was expected to fall on the west side of the Basin, indicating Vancouver would stay at or above flood stage by 1/2 foot to a foot later in the week; with the residual runoff and remaining high elevation snowpack, Steve said Vancouver will likely stay above flood stage through May and well in to June.

Preliminary forecasts show end of month flows at The Dalles would increase to 500-510 kcfs. The Snake has also come up, with 200 kcfs discharge out of Lower Granite and Grand Coulee filling rapidly to help manage discharge at The Dalles.

### **The Dalles Navigation Lock**

As follow up from the Friday, 5/20 unscheduled call, Steve Barton shared that the navigation lock at The Dalles went out of service as planned on Tuesday morning, 5/24. An official diagnosis of the duration of the outage was not yet known, though the presumption at this point was that it would be for four days as was discussed last week. Transportation was suspended for now as per TMT agreement.

TMT members discussed the need to revisit this issue and explore alternatives if it is determined that the navigation lock would need to be out for longer than 4 days. Oregon's Ron Boyce suggested that the high flows in the system would support keeping the fish in-river. Idaho's Russ Kiefer said he would need to factor in the duration of the outage. It was determined that TMT should revisit this issue if new information would require a change to the operation discussed last week. (See the **Next Steps** item below).

### **Little Goose Power Outage**

Steve Barton also reported that an investigation at Little Goose revealed serious issues with the transformer and as such, repairs began on T1 on 5/24. The project was removed from the spill priority list as the repairs required a full powerhouse outage except for one unit at the project. The schedule for bringing the project back on was as early as Friday afternoon, 5/27, and as late as Sunday, 5/29.

Tim Dykstra, COE, said adults were moving through Little Goose at consistently high passage rates, an encouraging sign that the outage was not posing a detriment to their passage. He also suggested that collection of fish, if the projects are back on line and flow conditions are adequately safe for barges, would begin at Little Goose on Saturday, 5/28, at 7:00 am.

Charles Morrill noted and thanked the COE for initiating 24 hour hazing at the Lower Monumental Dam Juvenile Fish Facility Bypass Outfall to reduce predation by Pelicans and Tim Dykstra confirmed this change. When the Dept. of Agriculture hazers are not on site at the outfall, COE technicians will continue to haze pelicans at the outfall.

### **Next Steps**

Steve Barton will email TMT with an update on the navigation lock outage schedule, and the COE's plan forward. A tentative conference call was scheduled for Thursday, 5/26 at 2:30 pm as needed if conditions are such that the plan/operation agreed to by TMT (begin collection of fish and resume transportation at Little Goose on 5/28) is no longer feasible and alternatives need to be explored.

The TMT web page will post the agenda with call-in information; and, if cancelled, will be noted at the top of the agenda prior to the meeting.

### **June 1 TMT Face to Face Meeting**

The next face to face TMT meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 1 at 9:00 am. The meeting room at the COE is not available and the facilitator is working with TMT members to find an alternative space. The location of the meeting will be posted on the agenda on the TMT web page.

The agenda will be developed over the next week. Suggested agenda items should be shared with Steve Barton, Doug Baus or Robin Gumpert.

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

**May 25, 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, USFWS, Idaho, Washington, BPA, BOR, CRITFC/Umatilla, 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.

***2. Operations Review – Reservoirs***

Barton reported that Vancouver is at 15.8 feet and flood stage is 16 feet, which the Columbia is likely to exceed later this week by half a foot to a foot. To cope with historic inflows and runoff and an expected 0.5 inches of precipitation on the west side of the basin, the COE has been operating The Dalles to a maximum discharge of 480 kcfs. Precipitation has been above normal through May and more is expected. With all of these factors at work, the COE expects to be managing flood control space into June.

Summary plots for individual projects and for the Snake system are linked to this topic on today's agenda. Ron Boyce, Oregon, asked about flow projections on the Columbia. The COE expects flows to increase at The Dalles up to 500-510 kcfs toward the end of May and into June, according to a preliminary estimate, Barton replied.

Paul Wagner, NOAA, asked about the Snake system. It was discharging up to 200 kcfs last night, with the latest forecast remaining around 220 kcfs for the next week. The near term forecast for Lower Granite is 225-230 kcfs, dropping to 190 kcfs toward the end of May, but flows are expected to rise again in June. Charles Morrill, Washington, asked whether these flow projections assume average precipitation. The inflow forecast for the next 3 days at Lower Granite is based on the near term forecast, but beyond that it relies more on modeling than human forecasting, Barton replied. Ruth Burris, PGE, asked whether the entire Coulee operation is oriented to keeping flows at the target discharge of 480 kcfs; Barton said yes. Mary Mellema, BOR, underscored the COE's message that all reservoirs are operating primarily now for flood control.

***3. The Dalles Navigation Lock Outage***

A major purpose of today's call was to follow up on the effects of the navigation lock outage on transportation, which TMT discussed at length in a conference call May 20. Barton told TMT he hadn't heard yet whether the gear

box inspection will lead to a longer outage than 4 days. That information should be available this afternoon.

Coinciding with the navigation lock outage at The Dalles is a powerhouse outage at Little Goose (see agenda item 4 below). The line out of the Little Goose powerhouse can reliably be expected to return to service any time from May 27-29.

Barton proposed that TMT reconvene only if it appears that either outage will suspend transport operations for more than the 4 days TMT assumed in its May 20 discussion of The Dalles. High flows could also suspend transportation.

#### ***4. Little Goose Dam Powerhouse Outage***

The Little Goose powerhouse is out of service due to grounding issues, Barton reported.

The best-case scenario is a return to service of the powerhouse on the evening of May 27, Tim Dykstra, COE, reported. This would dovetail with the best-case scenario for return to service of the navigation lock at The Dalles. In the best case, it would make sense to resume collection for transport as early as 7 am on May 28, but due to high inflows collection will probably start on May 30 with the first barge leaving June 1.

The Little Goose outage could last until May 29, but any longer would be unlikely. The good news is adult passage, with 3,270 spring Chinook passing on the first day (May 24) of the outage and more than 500 adults passing this morning. -

Basically, Barton said, three things could impede transportation – the navigation lock outage at The Dalles, the powerhouse outage at Little Goose, or excessive flows. If any of these occur, TMT would basically have the same two options: barging fish to The Dalles forebay or letting them migrate in-river. Barton indicated the COE's intent is to resume the normal juvenile transportation operations as soon as operationally possible and inflows allow.

Ron Boyce said **Oregon's** perspective is that transporting fish to The Dalles isn't an option. Letting fish migrate in river isn't necessarily bad at these flows. The bypass should be used. Russ Kiefer said **Idaho's** perspective will depend on whether juvenile transportation is delayed for another 2 days or 2 weeks.

TMT tentatively scheduled a meeting for 2:30pm on May 26. The intent of this meeting was for the COE to provide TMT members with an update should any new information change the current plan to resume normal juvenile transportation operations as soon as possible contingent upon: 1) the resumption

of normal operations of the The Dalles navigation lock and Little Goose powerhouse and, 2) inflows at Snake River collector projects at levels needed to provide safe navigation conditions for juvenile transportation barges.

[TMT was notified via email this meeting was canceled on May 25 at 3:43pm because the updated information on the status of repair work at The Dalles navigation lock did not substantively change the COE's plan to resume the juvenile transportation operation as soon as possible as discussed during today's TMT meeting.]

### **5. Next Meeting**

The next TMT meeting will be in person on June 3, location to be advised.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Paul Wagner	NOAA
Charles Morrill	Washington
Scott Bettin	BPA
Mary Mellema	BOR
Steve Barton	COE
Ron Boyce	Oregon
Tim Dykstra	COE
Tim Heizenrader	Centaurus
Russ George	WMC
Gunnar Leffler	COE
Margaret Filardo	FPC
Dave Benner	FPC
Rob Allerman	Deutsch Bank
Bruce McKay	consultant
Jim Litchfield	Montana
David Wills	USFWS
Doug Vine	Thompson Reuters
Scott English	COE
Doug Baus	COE
Richelle Beck	DRA
Shane XX	Capital Power
Ruth Burris	PGE
Tom Lorz	CRITFC/Umatilla
Bill Rudolph	NW Fish Letter
Russ Kiefer	Idaho