

COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

February 8, 2012

Facilitator's Summary

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.

February Final Water Supply Forecasts

Doug Baus, USACE, presented the February final forecasts (linked to today's agenda item on the TMT page). The forecast for Grand Coulee April-September was 60,912 kaf (95% of average); for The Dalles April-August was 84,454 kaf (91% of average); and for Lower Granite April-September was 20,713 kaf (86% of average). He also reported on Libby April-August, which showed 5.713 MAF, and Dworshak April-July, showing 2.50 MAF. John Roache added the Hungry Horse May-September official forecast, which was 1,781 kaf (97% of average).

Doug also shared SNOTEL information, noting the variability in snow water equivalent across the Columbia Basin, with North Puget Sound at 106% of normal, northern Idaho at 95% of normal and in Oregon the Willamette was 64% of normal.

Doug clarified that the COE's official monthly forecast is that which is issued by the NW River Forecast Center on the 4th working day of each month.

Chum Update

Paul Wagner, NOAA, shared a chum redds map depicting locations of the redds at different elevations. According to the map red dots indicate redds that would be dewatered at a Bonneville tailwater elevation of 12.0 ft. The map clarified that a group of red dots denoted with a circle are located above a riffle and elevations may not be as accurate, so many of these redds may be covered at a 12.0 ft Bonneville tailwater elevation. Based on these data and the current short and long-term forecasts showing increased precipitation in the region, the Salmon Managers requested that the Corps continue with the current operation of a minimum tailwater elevation of 12.0 ft. during all hours to provide a higher level of certainty that redds will remain watered. Paul added that this operation may also provide some level of protection to redds further downstream near I-205 and Woods Landing. Additionally, they believe continuing the current 12.0 ft minimum Bonneville tailwater operation would not put later spring needs at risk, specifically refill at Grand Coulee.

Action/Planned Operation: With no further questions and agreement from BPA and Reclamation that the 85% probability of refill at Grand Coulee would still be met if the operation continues this week, USACE planned to maintain a 12.0 ft minimum tailwater elevation at Bonneville, and revisit the operation with TMT next week.

Next Meeting, 2/15 Face to Face, 9:00 am

Agenda items include:

- Hanford Reach Update
- Chum Operations Update
- Flood Control Forecasts
- Operations Review

Columbia River Regional Forum
TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM – OFFICIAL MINUTES

February 8, 2012

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 Idaho, NOAA, BPA, COE, BOR, USFWS, Washington, the Colville Tribe, CRITFC and others attended. This summary is an official record of the proceedings, not a verbatim transcript.

2. Update on Water Supply Forecast

Baus gave TMT the latest water supply forecasts for Grand Coulee, The Dalles, Lower Granite, Libby, and Dworshak. These forecasts are all posted on the TMT webpage under Water Control Data, then Flood Control, in addition to being linked to today's agenda.

Water supply forecasts as of February 6 are:

- Grand Coulee (April-September) – 60,912 KAF, 95% of average, (NWRFC)
- The Dalles (April-September) – 89,625 KAF, 91% of average, (NWRFC)
- Lower Granite (April-September) – 20,713 KAF, 86% of average, (NWRFC)
- Libby (April-August) – 5,713 KAF (COE)
- Dworshak (April-July) – 2,504 KAF (COE)
- Hungry Horse (May-September) – 1,781 KAF (BOR), 97% of average

Also linked to today's agenda are the latest SNOTEL site readings from the NRCS, displayed on a map of the region. The following sub-basins demonstrate the range of variability of snow water equivalent in percentages of normal throughout the Columbia Basin:

- North Puget Sound – 106% of normal (highest in region)
- Northern Idaho panhandle – 95% of normal
- Willamette River, Oregon – 64% of normal

Ruth Burris, PGE, asked how the COE selects final forecasts for each month now that the RFC publishes its official forecasts daily. The COE uses the forecast posted on the RFC webpage at close of business on the fourth working day of the month, Baus replied.

3. Chum Update

Paul Wagner, NOAA, gave a status update on the chum redds below Bonneville. A spreadsheet showing the GPS coordinates for redds documented during spawning activity this fall is linked to this item on today's agenda. According to the legend red dots on the map indicate redds that would be dewatered at a 12.0 ft. Bonneville tailwater operation. Although denoted on the map the red dots would be dewatered upon further consultation with WDFW there is a significant number of these redds denoted in a circle that would actually be covered at a 12.0 ft. tailwater.

The redds at the northern end of Ives Island, shown as a circled cluster of red dots on the map, are at elevations from 12.5-13 feet, leaving them potentially exposed by the current 12-foot tailwater elevation below Bonneville. However, a plentiful groundwater supply in this area compensates for the discrepancy.

A detailed review of the data in the table suggests that a tailwater elevation of 11.5 feet would keep most existing redds wet. However, Wagner said, the Salmon Managers prefer to continue the 12-foot operation if it doesn't interfere with an 85% probability of meeting the April 10 flood control elevation at Grand Coulee. The current operation provides a high level of certainty that all redds will remain watered, as well as some additional protection for downstream redds in the Multnomah Falls and I-205 areas that receive combined flows from the Columbia and Willamette rivers.

The Action Agencies gave their views of FPAC's recommendation:

- **BPA** – No objection. Operating to 12 feet will not impact Grand Coulee operations at this time.
- **BOR** – No objection. Maintaining 12 feet of elevation below Bonneville does not impact the probability of meeting the April 10 flood control elevation at Grand Coulee, given current projections. This will be monitored and discussed at future TMT meetings.

Hearing these views, the COE will continue the 12-foot tailwater operation below Bonneville. TMT will revisit the chum operation at its next meeting.

4. Next TMT Meeting

TMT will meet in person February 15 at the COE division office in Portland. The agenda will include the year's opening review of Grant PUD's emergence and sampling program in Hanford Reach, as well as a chum update and the regular operations review.

Name	Affiliation
Russ Kiefer	Idaho
Paul Wagner	NOAA
Scott Bettin	BPA
Doug Baus	COE
John Roache	BOR
David Wills	USFWS
Cindy LeFleur	Washington
Harvey Hall	EWEB
Lisa Wright	COE
Margaret Filardo	FPC
Dave Benner	FPC
Heather Dohan	Puget Sound Energy
Don Tinker	Seattle City Light
Mike Shafley	Snohomish PUD
Russ George	WMC
Bruce McKay	hydropower consultant
Rob Allerman	Deutsch Bank
Sheri Sears	Colville
Ruth Burris	PGE
XX	Chelan PUD
Greg Otting	Merrill
Tom Lorz	CRITFC
Steve Hall	COE Walla Walla
Richelle Beck	Grant PUD