

Columbia River Regional Forum
TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM – OFFICIAL MINUTES

August 8, 2012
Notes: Pat Vivian

1. Introduction

Today's TMT conference call was chaired and facilitated by Doug Baus, COE. Representatives of USFWS, COE, Oregon, NOAA, BPA, BOR, the Colville Tribe, Montana, Idaho, Washington, CRITFC/Umatilla Tribe and others attended. This summary is an official record of the proceedings, not a verbatim transcript.

2. Dworshak Operations

Jeremy Giovando, COE, reported that the recent warm spell is forecasted to continue for the next few days, with temperatures continuing in the upper 90s in the Clearwater and Snake basins. For this reason, the COE has decided not to cut back Dworshak releases for temperature augmentation as previously planned. The current Dworshak releases of 12.5 kcfs will continue most likely through the end of this week. The 10-day outlook calls for cooler temperatures beginning next week.

However, one of the transformers at Dworshak is out of service, which results in an approximate loss of 1-1.5 kcfs generation through the powerhouse. This means more water has to be spilled which hurts operational flexibility. So far the project has spilled within its downstream TDG criteria.

Dave Wills, USFWS, asked what outflow temperatures were being targeted. Giovando explained that, after switching this morning to undershot mode, Dworshak operations will target 44 degrees F outflows in an effort to keep temperatures below 68 degrees F in the Lower Granite tailwater. Giovando cautioned TMT that the cause of the transformer outage is not easily remedied and repairs could take up to 10 days. This situation will limit the cool water available from Dworshak over the next two weeks for temperature management on the Snake.

Russ Kiefer, Idaho, asked how much longer 12-12.5 kcfs outflows can be maintained before the project reaches its end of August elevation target. The hope is that current releases can be maintained until next week, when moderate temperatures kick in and full powerhouse flows will probably suffice for temperature control. TMT will revisit Dworshak operations on August 15 with an update from the COE.

3. Libby Operations Update

The COE has received a request from Montana for an adjustment to the previously coordinated Libby operation, with September releases of 8 kcfs instead of 6 kcfs, Baus reported. Alternative 3, the operation previously chosen by TMT, drops releases based on inflow triggers to 22, 20, 18, 16, 14, and finally 12 kcfs in August, followed by releases of 6 kcfs in September to accommodate Kootenai Tribe sturgeon habitat work.

Joel Fenolio, COE, and Brian Marotz, Montana, described the COE's proposed adjustment to Alternative 3 in response to Montana's request, with comments and decision-making to occur at the August 15 TMT meeting. Alternative 4 uses the same inflow triggers identified in Alternative 3 to step down releases in August, but calls for a more gradual final ramp down (4 days instead of 2) to a higher September outflow (8 kcfs instead of 6 kcfs) to provide conditions more beneficial to the biological productivity in the river. The Kootenai Tribe has indicated that 8 kcfs flows in September would be sufficient to allow their habitat work to proceed. Alternative 4 would not change the end of August elevation achieved by following the inflow triggers (currently projected to be 2452.5 feet based on latest forecasts) and would result in approximately an additional 2.5 feet of draft in September to an elevation of 2450.9 feet by September 30. Releasing 8 kcfs versus 6 kcfs is only for this year. The flow in September during the habitat work, scheduled for 3 more years, is dependent on the construction activity for that year.

TMT members present today gave their views of Alternative 4, which is depicted in a link to today's agenda. Final coordination of Libby operations will occur next week.

- **Oregon** – No objections to implementing Montana's request, even without further discussion.
- **Idaho** – Supports Alternative 4.
- **NOAA** – No objection.
- **CRITFC/Umatilla** – No objection, pending further discussion.
- **Washington** – No objection.
- **USFWS** – No objection.
- **BPA** – No objection.
- **BOR** – No objection.
- **Colville** – No objection.
- **Nez Perce** – Did not participate in today's meeting but was contacted via phone after the meeting and did not object to Alternative 4.

4. Little Goose MOP Operation

Baus gave TMT an update on current conditions at Little Goose Dam and three operational adjustments that have occurred at since TMT last met on July

25. Little Goose outflows are currently 27.9 kcfs, with 11.1 kcfs of spill and a forebay elevation of 633.69 feet. The following three adjustments in Little Goose operations have occurred since the July 25 TMT meeting:

1. On July 28, TMT received email notification regarding an 0.5 ft increase to the LGS MOP range. The new LGS MOP range is 633.5 to 634.5 feet. This increase was made in order to provide safe navigation conditions at the entrance of the LWG navigation lock. During low flow conditions the normal LGS MOP operation range (633-634 feet) does not provide the 15 ft depth requirement over the sill at the entrance of the LWG navigation lock. This is a special low flow operation that is described in the 2012 Fish Operations Plan and was also implemented in 2010. Attachment a. to this item on today's agenda depicts the relationship between projected elevations in the Little Goose forebay and at the Lower Granite navigation lock entrance, and shows that the Lower Granite tailrace elevation has not decreased below 633 feet since the MOP+0.5' operation was implemented at Little Goose.
2. On August 6, the COE implemented a constant spill rate operation at Little Goose in place of the 30% spill rate identified in the FOP. As defined in the FOP, when daily average flow in the Snake River is less than or equal to 32 kcfs, the spill rate at Little Goose will transition from 30% spill to a constant spill rate of 7-11 kcfs (depending on inflows). During this low flow period the Little Goose powerhouse must switch between two units running at the lower end of 1% best efficiency and one unit operating at the upper end of 1% best efficiency in order to provide 30% spill and maintain MOP. Therefore, on August 6, the project transitioned to a constant spill rate of 11.1 kcfs now in light of FOP provisions for low flows on the Snake. The current STP forecast puts Little Goose inflows at 28.9 kcfs on August 31, indicating that a gradual recession of inflows is under way.
3. On August 6, the TSW was closed at Little Goose. As defined in the 2012 Fish Passage Plan, this operation was coordinated through FPOM and implemented when flows at Little Goose decreased below 35 kcfs.

5. Snake River Sockeye Conversion Rates

Russ Kiefer reported that Idaho is beginning an investigation of poor conversion rates this year for PIT tagged Snake River sockeye between Bonneville and McNary dams. The conversion rate for Snake River sockeye appears to be significantly lower than that for mid-Columbia stocks. TMT will revisit this issue as more information becomes available.

6. Next TMT Meeting

The next TMT meeting will be held in person on August 15 at the COE NW division offices in Portland. Agenda topics include an update on Dworshak and Libby operations, as well as sockeye conversion rates if information is available by next week.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Doug Baus	COE
Dave Wills	USFWS
Rick Kruger	Oregon
Paul Wagner	NOAA
Scott Bettin	BPA
Sheri Sears	Colville
John Roache	BOR
Jim Litchfield	Montana
Brian Marotz	Montana
Joel Fenolio	COE Seattle
Tara Kelly	JP Morgan
Jeremy Giovando	COE Walla
Heather Dohan	Puget
XX	PP&L
Margaret Filardo	FPC
Dave Benner	FPC
Steve Hall	COE
Richelle Beck	Grant PUD
Laura Hamilton	COE
Kim Johnson	COE
Karl Kanbergs	COE
Lisa Wright	COE
Russ Kiefer	Idaho
Tom Lorz	CRITFC/Umatilla