

COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

September 19, 2012

DRAFT 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.

Notes Review

TMT reviewed the 9/12 Facilitator's Summary and Official Meeting Minutes. With no suggested edits, the notes were considered final.

SOR 2012-C5

Doug Baus, Corps, reported that an SOR for treaty fishing had been submitted by CRITFC and was being implemented by the Corps for the period 9/18 at 6:00 am through 9/21 at 6:00 pm. Tom Lorz, CRITFC, joined the call later and said it was unlikely that another fishery would occur after this period and that he would have updated numbers around the end of September.

SOR USFWS-IDFG 2012-1

Russ Kiefer, Idaho, presented an SOR for operations to support recovering kokanee populations (a food source for listed bull trout) in Lake Pend Oreille. He reminded TMT that an SOR was submitted last year that requested a two-year operation that aligned with a two-year research project to study operation effects on kokanee. The operation held the pool at the lower, 2051 foot, elevation last year and would put the lake at the higher, 2055 foot, elevation this year. Agreements were reached last year to implement the request, with the caveat that TMT would revisit the recommendation this year with consideration for current conditions. The recommendation is a deviation from the decision tree the stakeholders developed to guide recommendations, and Russ said that the research results could lead to a refinement of the decision tree for future years. He also said that since the operations have been in place, biologists are seeing positive signs of kokanee recovery. He and colleagues Jason Flory, USFWS, and Andy Dux, IDFG, went on to describe some of the specifics of the research and said 'success' would be measured around the stages of incubation to pre-emergence.

TMT members were polled on their level of support for the recommendation:

- Oregon – no objection
- Washington – no objection
- Montana – no objection
- NOAA – no objection
- Nez Perce Tribe – no objection; noted that Lake Pend Oreille is a natural lake and treasured resource. Minimizing fluctuations of lake levels to be more consistent with naturally occurring hydrologic cycle is preferred.
- Colville Tribe – no objection
- CRITFC/CTUIR –not available during this discussion, did not weigh in at the meeting
- Reclamation – supports
- BPA – supports

- Corps – supports

Action/Planned Operation – the Corps planned to implement the SOR.

Dworshak Operations Update

Steve Hall, Walla Walla District Corps, updated TMT that the final steps of releasing 200 kaf per the Nez Perce agreement were underway, and shared a graph depicting the operation. Tony Norris, BPA, added that the Lower Snake projects would be returned to the MOP operating range with the conclusion of this flow augmentation operation.

PSMP

Richard Turner, Corps, reported on the schedule for the Programmatic Sediment Management Plan. The draft EIS is being revised with a modification to include channel maintenance as an action. A draft EIS is scheduled for release in December 2012; the Record of Decision (ROD) is anticipated to be signed in early September 2013; and channel maintenance is still scheduled to occur during the in-water work window of December 2013 - March 2014. Richard responded to TMT questions. He said the dredged sediment will be placed at river mile 116 in a 'ribbon' along the bank. Pacific lamprey are considered in the EIS. A link to the draft EIS will be distributed to TMT when it is available, and TMT members are encouraged to review it.

Operations Review

Reservoirs – Mary Mellema, Reclamation, reported on projects. Hungry Horse was at elevation 3551 feet, with 1.9 kcfs outflows and targeting an end of September elevation of 3550 feet. Grand Coulee was at elevation 1284.2 feet. Lisa Wright, Corps, reported on projects. Libby was at elevation 2449.98 feet with 8 kcfs outflows and 5.3 kcfs inflows. Albeni Falls was at elevation 2061.7 feet, with 6.0 kcfs inflows and 10.3 kcfs outflows. Priest Rapids inflows were 107.6 kcfs. Dworshak was at elevation 1520.1 feet, with 0.8 kcfs inflows and 2.4 kcfs outflows. Lower Granite outflows were 23.9 kcfs; McNary outflows were 122.7 kcfs; and Bonneville outflows were 121.2 kcfs.

Fish – Paul Wagner, NOAA, reported on fish. Adult fall Chinook counts peaked at 18,000/day at Bonneville; total counts at Bonneville were close to the 10-year average. Jacks were still running very high, well above the 10-year average, and 3,800/day at Bonneville. Steelhead counts at Bonneville were 1,700/day. At Ice Harbor, fall Chinook total counts were 18,000; jacks were 8,000; and steelhead were 33,000. Steelhead numbers are below the 10-year average.

Subyearling Chinook counts were 200/day at Lower Granite; less than 10/day at Little Goose; less than 100/day at Lower Monumental; and about 1,500/day at McNary. Descaling at Lower Granite was observed to be higher than usual. The salmon managers communicated this with the project and steps had been taken to address the concern – the project switched from running unit 1 to running units 2 and 3, and they were looking in to trash and debris as a potential cause. FPOM would continue to coordinate on this effort.

Water quality – The new spill priority list will go into effect as discussed at the TMT meeting on August 29, with the conclusion of the Dworshak augmentation operation.

Power – Nothing to report at this time.

October 3 TMT Meeting

Agenda items include:

- 2012 Survival Estimates (*pending*) – NOAA Science Center
- Operations Review

Columbia River Regional Forum
TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM – OFFICIAL MINUTES

September 19, 2012

Notes: Pat Vivian

1. Introduction

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

2. Review August 29 Meeting Minutes

There were no comments on the August 29 facilitator's notes or official minutes today, so both were deemed final.

3. Treaty Fishing – SOR 2012-C5

Baus reported that the COE is currently implementing this SOR, which calls for the typical treaty fishery operation in the three lower Columbia River pools from 6 am, September 18, through 6 pm, September 21. Tom Lorz, CRITFC/Umatilla, said this will probably be the last treaty fishery this year due to allowable take limits on steelhead.

4. Lake Pend Oreille SOR – USFWS/IDFG 2012-1

Russ Kiefer, Idaho, explained that this year's SOR is a continuation of last year's, when the lake level was held down to a lower elevation (2051') so the increasing kokanee adult population would benefit from improved spawning conditions with the lake at a higher elevation (2055') this year. Wave action at the lower elevation cleans the gravel beds, creating good spawning conditions the following winter if the lake is at a higher elevation.

There is a decision tree to facilitate decisions regarding winter elevations of Lake Pend Oreille. The focus was on keeping the lake low in dry years when the extra water would benefit chum spawning and power production. Last year, USFWS and IDFG decided to ask the Action Agencies to keep the lake at a lower elevation in order to facilitate research based on the 2012-2013 winter lake elevation of 2055'.

Lake Pend Oreille will then be held within 0.5' above the MCE to the end of kokanee spawning (monitored by IDFG) or December 31, whichever comes first.

The long term plan is to use the decision tree to maintain a winter elevation range at Lake Pend Oreille of 2051-2055 feet, with a higher elevation in effect for 3 years followed by a lower elevation for 1 year in order to clean the gravel beds. The

cleaning is needed because sediment accumulates from runoff into the lake. After 3 years at the higher elevation, there is enough sediment in the gravel beds to degrade spawning conditions.

Jason Flory, USFWS, Andy Dux, IDFG, and COE staff answered questions from TMT members about the SOR and lake operations. Dave Statler, Nez Perce Tribe, asked how the minimum control elevation is established.

Dux provided details of the egg-to-fry survival study, which started last year with burial of egg boxes at elevation 2051 feet. This will be the second and last year of study, with egg boxes buried in the 2051-2055 foot range and just below it at more than a dozen sites across the lake. Study results will provide insight into the success of kokanee incubation at various elevations. Paul Wagner, NOAA, asked how incubation success will be measured. Dux said the egg boxes are enclosed in mesh screens so the eggs can be counted when they hatch. Charles Morrill, Washington, asked about core sampling and Dux replied that a core sample is taken at each site where an egg box is buried in gravel.

Baus said the Action Agencies plan to implement the SOR as written. TMT members described their level of support:

- **Idaho** – Supports the SOR.
- **Oregon** – No objection.
- **Montana** – No objection.
- **Washington** – No objection.
- **USFWS** – Not present today, but was a signatory to the SOR.
- **NOAA** – Supports the SOR.
- **Nez Perce Tribe** – No objection. Commented that Lake Pend Oreille is a natural lake and a treasured resource. Generally, the fewer departures from natural hydrological influences, the better.
- **Colville Tribe** – No objection.
- **BOR** – Supports the SOR.
- **BPA** – Supports the SOR.
- **COE** – Supports the SOR.

5. Dworshak Operations

Steve Hall, COE Walla Walla, reported that Dworshak is operating to complete the release of 200 kaf of Nez Perce water, with minor adjustments to last month's plan devised by the Dworshak board based on inflow changes. When the 200 kaf has been released, Dworshak flow augmentation will end for the year. Tony Norris noted that as previously discussed at TMT once the Nez Perce water has been released (DWR reaching 1520.0') the Action Agencies will return the Snake Projects to MOP for a short duration prior to the resumption of the authorized pool range. This will demonstrate that any volume of the 200 kaf Nez Perce water that was stored between September 1 and Dworshak reaching 1520.0' was released from the Snake River. The Dworshak reservoir elevation is anticipated to reach 1520.0 feet tonight.

6. Programmatic Sediment Management Plan EIS

Richard Turner, COE project manager, gave an update on the PSMP EIS process and schedule. Initially the goal was to complete the ROD by December, but the EIS has since been modified to include an initial channel maintenance action, which affects the schedule. The overall goal is still to complete the in-water work during winter 2013-14 as previously coordinated at TMT. The draft EIS will be posted online in December and Baus will provide TMT with a hyperlink of the location. The ROD is expected to be signed in early September 2013.

Sheri Sears, Colville Tribe, asked what will be done with the sediment that is dredged from the channel. The habitat at river mile 116 is poor, and depositing the sediment there will help with habitat restoration, Turner replied. Statler requested that the channel maintenance operations include consideration of Pacific lamprey needs.

7. Operations Review

a. Reservoirs. Grand Coulee is at elevation 1284.2 feet, well above the 1283-foot target at end September for kokanee spawning. The elevation is expected to remain around 1283-4 feet through the end of the month. Hungry Horse is at elevation 3551 feet, releasing 1.9 kcfs and on track to reach elevation 3550 feet by the end of September.

Libby is at elevation 2449.98 feet, with inflows of 5.3 kcfs and discharges of 8 kcfs through September 30 to accommodate the Kootenai sturgeon habitat restoration.

Albeni Falls is at elevation 2061.7 feet, with inflows of 6.0 kcfs and releases of 10.3 kcfs. Priest Rapids inflows are 107.6 kcfs. Dworshak is at elevation 1520.1 feet, with inflows of 0.8 kcfs and releases of 2.4 kcfs. McNary outflows are 122.7 kcfs. Lower Granite outflows are 23.9 kcfs. Bonneville outflows are 121.2 kcfs.

b. Fish. Adults: The fall chinook migration at Bonneville is still underway. This week's peak daily count of 18,000 fall chinook was probably the peak for the year. The seasonal count to date is 285,000 fall chinook, less than the 10 year average of

321,000. Daily fall chinook jack counts are still high. 6,200 on 9/15 and averaging around 4,000 per day for the week with a total season count of 83,617 (compared to 53,222 jacks last year). Steelhead are passing Bonneville in the range of 2,000-1,700 fish per day. The seasonal count is low at 207,000 fish vs. a 10 year average of 356,000 fish.

At Ice Harbor, about 1,100-1,300 fall chinook have been passing per day over the past week, with a total season count of more than 25,000 (as compared to 18,000 last year, and a 10 year average of 14,000). Fall chinook jack counts at Ice Harbor are almost 200% of the 10 year average. The seasonal count for steelhead passing Ice Harbor is 47,000. Lower Granite has passed 18,000 fall chinook adults, 8,000 fall chinook jacks, and 33,000 steelhead adults to date.

Juveniles: According to the latest smolt data, passage is winding down with 100 fall chinook passing Lower Granite per day, less than 100 passing Little Goose per day, 1,500 at McNary, 1,100 at John Day, and 1,000 at Bonneville.

Descaling rates at Lower Granite have recently been double what is typical for this time of year, Wagner reported. Baus indicated project staff were quick to respond, shutting down unit 1 and switching to units 2 and 3. Project staff will be raking trash this morning. The COE is investigating the cause of the descaling. Further coordination of this issue will occur via FPOM.

c. Water Quality. There are no water quality issues at present. Lisa Wright, COE, reported that when Dworshak attains elevation 1520 feet and flow augmentation ends, the COE will implement the wintertime spill priority list (BON, TDA, JDA, MCN, IHR, LMN, LGS, LWG, DWR, CHJ, GCL) previously discussed at TMT.

d. Power System. There was nothing to report today.

7. Next TMT Meeting

The next TMT meeting will be in person on October 3. The TMT year end review will be on December 5.

Name	Affiliation
Dave Statler	Nez Perce
Mary Mellema	BOR
Tony Norris	BPA
Lisa Wright	COE
Jim Litchfield	Montana
Paul Wagner	NOAA
Rick Kruger	Oregon
Russ Kiefer	Idaho
Doug Baus	COE
Russ George	WMC

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