

Columbia River Regional Forum
TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM – OFFICIAL MINUTES

November 30, 2012

Notes: Pat Vivian

1. Introduction

Today's TMT conference call was chaired and facilitated by Doug Baus, COE. Representatives of the COE, BOR, BPA, NOAA and others attended. This summary is an official record of the proceedings, not a verbatim transcript.

2. Chum Operations

There was agreement at the last TMT meeting (November 27) to target 12.5 feet elevation for chum spawning below Bonneville, with an operating range of 12.2-12.8 feet during daytime, Baus recalled. However, flows continue to be higher than anticipated at Bonneville, so it has become imperative to increase flows for the chum operation.

The Action Agencies (AAs) therefore proposed a daytime operating range of 13.5-15.5 feet elevation, targeting 14 feet below Bonneville. If tailwater exceeded 15.5 ft during daytime hours it would not set a higher chum protection level and the AA's would still be able to resume operation within 13.5 – 15.5 feet. A higher chum protection level would not be established at a higher elevation because: 1) the current range targets optimal habitat and 14 feet tailwater and 2) it may become increasingly difficult to maintain a chum protection level of greater than 13.5 while not compromising the April 10 forebay elevation at Grand Coulee. The maximum evening tailwater elevation will continue to be 18.5 feet in order to minimize day/night flow fluctuations.

Hopefully, this adjustment will maintain the chum operation until TMT convenes again on December 4, Tony Norris, BPA, said. BPA is concerned about uncertainty in forecasted inflows. The adjustment will most likely allow the AAs to avoid spill at Bonneville through December. Any excess flows that can't be moved at night will be moved during the daytime, Scott Bettin, BPA, noted.

Greg Bowers, COE, suggested shortening the span of daytime hours from 6 am-5 pm to 8 am-4:30 pm in order to pass more water. He asked whether spawning at higher elevation levels is a concern. Paul Wagner, NOAA, indicated the next TMT meeting could be a good time to discuss adjustments to daytime hours and he supported the current operation proposed by the AAs.

Baus noted that Sheri Sears, Colville Tribe, although not present today, has voiced via email the tribe's support for the proposed operation. Baus also noted it will give the AAs additional flexibility to avoid jeopardizing repair work now underway in the Bonneville spillway.

The COE will implement the new chum spawning operating range at Bonneville beginning today, Baus said. TMT will revisit chum operations at its next conference call on December 4.

3. Zero Nighttime Generation at Lower Snake Projects

The trigger for zero nighttime generation on lower Snake River projects is soon approaching, Norris said. He and Wagner conferred on what the exact trigger would be now, based on current flows and the number of wild and steelhead passing per day. Wagner reported the steelhead run to date is 30,000 wild fish and a total of 99,000 fish, wild and hatchery combined.

It was unclear during the TMT meeting if steelhead passage had achieved the triggers established to implement the zero nighttime generation operation. TMT will revisit the trigger for zero nighttime generation on its December 4 conference call.

4. Next TMT Meeting

TMT will meet next via phone on December 4 from 3-4:00pm to discuss chum flows and zero nighttime generation on the lower Snake. The TMT annual review will be held in Portland on December 5.

Name	Affiliation
Doug Baus	COE
Mary Mellema	BOR
Rob Allerman	Deutsch Bank
Scott Bettin	BPA
Tony Norris	BPA
Paul Wagner	NOAA
John Rokowsky	XX
Greg Bowers	COE
Bill Proctor	COE
Laura Hamilton	COE
Margaret Filardo	FPC