

# COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

December 4, 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.*

### **Chum Operation**

Doug Baus, Corps, reminded TMT that the chum operation coordinated last Friday (11/30) was a 13.5-15.5 foot tailwater at Bonneville, targeting 14 feet. He reported that since then, increased inflows will require more operating flexibility for the action agencies to manage the system. To do this, the action agencies proposed to shift the current operation to the following:

1. Continue to maintain the 13.5 minimum tailwater during all hours.
2. Make best efforts to continue to maintain the daytime 13.5 to 15.5 tailwater targeting to 14.0 foot tailwater.
3. If unable to maintain #2 above then pass up to a maximum of 18.5 feet during the nighttime.
4. If unable to maintain #3 above then pass up to a maximum of 18.5 feet during the daytime.
5. If unable to maintain #4 above then operate to full powerhouse plus operation of the B2CC. The goal of this is to avoiding spilling that would delay the spillway repair work that is currently underway.

Doug noted that ongoing repair work on the Bonneville spillway has been coordinated with the region and is a high priority project, so the action agencies are trying to avoid spill at the project which would force the crews to be pulled and delay the repair work. He also added a caveat that the corner collector might need to be turned off if necessary for crew safety reasons. Tony Norris, BPA, added that flows in to Bonneville are currently around 200 kcfs and the tailwater elevation is 17.5 feet.

Paul Wagner, NOAA, said FPAC discussed this, and there were no objections from the salmon managers to the action agencies' proposed operation. They see there are no other options given the high inflows. Charles Morrill, Washington, asked about the action agencies' best read on how long it will take to move the excess water that is current and pending in to the system. The action agencies said they don't know given forecast uncertainty, but it could be through December. He also asked about the potential opportunity to study steelhead movement while the corner collector is turned on for this operation.

**Action:** Scott Bettin, BPA, will check in to this possibility with the project and share information with TMT next week.

**Action:** The Corps shared that work is progressing on the spillway repair. They

will share more information and provide a schedule update during next week's TMT call.

**Operation/Next steps:** The action agencies will implement the operation they described today, until further notice. Everyone will monitor conditions closely and agreed to discuss this issue again during a conference call next Wednesday, December 12 at **8:00 am (NOTE the earlier start time!)**.

**Zero Nighttime Generation on the Lower Snake River Projects**

Tony Norris, BPA, reported that adult passage numbers are not low enough to trigger the start of zero nighttime generation on the Lower Snake River, and Paul Wagner, NOAA, confirmed this with specifics: The 'trigger' is a three-day average count for wild steelhead (currently, the number is 10) and combined steelhead (currently, the number is 35) based on a composite count. The most recent three-day count was 30 wild and 88 combined, so the trigger had not yet been met. Paul also said the composite numbers are approaching 100,000-150,000 which would increase the 3-day average daily count trigger to 50/day for combined steelhead.

**Action/Next Step:** The action agencies will coordinate with NOAA on this operation. Specifically, when the criteria are met, Paul will notify the action agencies and this will trigger them to begin the zero nighttime generation operation. TMT will receive an update during next week's call.

**Wintertime Spill Priority List**

Doug Baus, Corps, said the current list has been posted and is set to expire at the end of December. Today, the action agencies proposed to continue the same spill priority list order beyond December in to 2013, and gave the salmon managers a chance to request a change to the list. TMT will check in on the list next week after the salmon managers have a chance to review and discuss it.

**Next Meeting: Note new time! December 12 conference call 8:00 am**

Agenda items include:

- Chum Operations
  - Current weather conditions and operation
  - Update on spillway repair work schedule
  - Update on potential opportunity to study steelhead movement while CC is being used for operation
  - Plan forward
- Zero Nighttime Flow on Lower Snake River Projects
- Wintertime Spill Priority List

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

**December 4, 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 BPA, NOAA, Washington, the COE, BOR, Salish-Kootenai Tribe, CRITFC/Umatilla Tribe and others attended. This summary is an official record of the proceedings, not a verbatim transcript.

***2. Chum Operations***

Coordination of the chum operation over the past week settled on an operating range of 13.5-15.5 feet elevation in the Bonneville tailwater for chum spawning, with a daytime target elevation of 14 feet, Baus recalled.

Because flows continue to increase at Bonneville, the Action Agencies proposed the following operation.

1. Continue to maintain the 13.5 minimum tailwater during all hours
2. Make best efforts to continue to maintain the daytime 13.5 to 15.5 tailwater targeting to 14.0 foot tailwater.
3. If unable to maintain #2 above then pass up to a maximum of 18.5 feet during the nighttime.
4. If unable to maintain #3 above then pass up to a maximum of 18.5 feet during the daytime.
5. If unable to maintain #4 above then operate to full powerhouse plus operation of the B2CC. The goal of this is to avoiding spilling that would delay the spillway repair work that is currently underway.

Baus noted that if the corner collector is operating it may have to be shut off for short periods in order to facilitate safe transit across the tailrace for the contractor working in the tailrace. The project is currently passing 190 kcfs with a tailwater elevation of 17.5 feet.

Charles Morrill, Washington, asked how long it will take to get rid of the extra water that's coming. Forecast uncertainty makes that a difficult question to answer, Scott Bettin, BPA, replied.

TMT scheduled a conference call at 8 am, December 12, to follow up on the chum operation. At that time, Baus will provide a more detailed update on the spillway repair project. Bettin will also report on operation of the PIT tag detection system at that meeting.

### **3. Zero Nighttime Generation at Lower Snake Projects**

The trigger for zero nighttime generation on lower Snake River projects has not yet been reached, Paul Wagner, NOAA, reported. Based on the 2012 steelhead passage count of 99,850 fish from April 15 to date, the trigger will be 35 fish combined passing Lower Granite, or 10 wild fish as a 3-day average for the past 3 days. At present the 3-day average is around 30 fish. However, Wagner noted that the trigger may change if the total steelhead count exceeds 100,000 fish, which seems likely. At that point, the trigger would rise to 50 fish and 10 wild fish as a 3-day average for the past 3 days.

There was agreement that Wagner will notify the Action Agencies when the trigger for the zero nighttime generation operation has been reached. If that happens before the next meeting on December 12 – which Wagner deemed unlikely – the Action Agencies will notify TMT members via email.

### **4. Wintertime Spill Priority List**

The current wintertime spill priority list is set to expire on December 31, Baus said. In light of the approaching holidays, the COE proposed to extend the same spill order (posted) into January: Bonneville, The Dalles, John Day, McNary, Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental and finally Lower Granite. Baus noted that spill would not actually occur at Bonneville due to spillway repairs underway, although Bonneville appears at the top of the list. He asked the Salmon Managers to begin thinking now about spill priorities and be prepared to provide feedback on this list at the next TMT call December 12.

There was discussion of the point at which spill would have to occur at Bonneville despite the repairs. Current turbine capacity is 200 kcfs right now, plus 5 kcfs for the corner collector, Tony Norris, BPA, replied. Flows in excess of 225 kcfs would therefore result in forced spill at Bonneville.

### **4. Next TMT Meeting**

TMT will meet next via phone on December 12 at 8am. The agenda will include updates on the chum operation, Bonneville spillway repairs and zero nighttime generation on the lower Snake River.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Tony Norris	BPA
Scott Bettin	BPA
Agnes Lut	BPA
Paul Wagner	NOAA
Charles Morrill	Washington
Doug Baus	COE

John Roache	BOR
Greg Bowers	COE
Laura Hamilton	COE
Barry Espenson	CBB
Stu Leavitt	Salish-Kootenai
Bruce McKay	Consultant
Jeff Richter	Energy GPS
Richelle Beck	Grant PUD
Peter Richardson	XX
Tom Lorz	CRITFC/Umatilla