

COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

December 18, 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 week has continued. Based on today's chum surveys, which found 2 dead and no live chum, the action agencies proposed transitioning to a chum incubation operation this Friday, 12/21, with a 13.5 foot minimum tailwater elevation as a hard constraint at Bonneville. Paul Wagner, NOAA, and the salmon managers agreed with this plan forward given the chum counts and flows. With no objections, the Corps said they would issue a teletype to initiate the operation on 12/21. Doug also reported that tests at PH2 were planned for tomorrow to prepare for installation of a Lamprey Passage Structure (LPS). This would likely limit tailwater ranges but would stay within the parameters of the chum incubation operation. It was also noted that a trap at Duncan Creek will be removed tomorrow if possible – and if not possible due to unsafe conditions – a lower tailwater of 11.7 ft will be provided on 12/26 to allow the crew to pull the trap. Charles Morrill, WA, said if all goes well, it should take no more than 3 hours to pull the trap.

Zero Nighttime Generation on the Lower Snake River Projects

Paul Wagner, NOAA, said the steelhead passage criteria for implementing zero night time generation on the Lower Snake projects had not yet been met, but because the Lower Granite ladder was out of service for maintenance (which had been coordinated through FPOM), he coordinated with the action agencies to initiate zero nighttime generation. Russ Kiefer, Idaho, raised concerns about this, saying the planned maintenance should not occur while fish are still passing or disrupt passage, and he and the salmon managers would take this up with FPOM during a scheduled meeting this Thursday, 12/20.

Libby Operations

Tom Lorz, CRITFC/CTUIR, noted the water supply forecasts from the Corps and RFC were divergent to the point of implicating different flood control management scenarios at Libby. He asked the Corps to share their plan. Joel Fenolio, Seattle District Corps, said that with WSF and snow pack, their overall prediction is 102% of normal for Jan. 1. The December 1 Corps' WSF for Libby is 6238 kaf (106% of normal), full draft at the end of December is called for if the WSF is greater than 5900 kaf. Looking ahead, using the parameters for the January forecast, the Corps 'early bird' prediction is showing about 6339 kaf, which also supports continuing to draft to 2411' at Libby in December. Joel also relayed that their meteorologist was predicting two storms over the next week, which will take the water supply even higher – so he felt very comfortable targeting 2411' this year. He added that there is scheduled maintenance (resulting in two units out of service)

at Libby from 1/7 through 3/31 that the Corps will accommodate this year since it has been postponed for the previous two years, and that this is another reason the Corps does not want to relax the end of December draft . Tom Lorz acknowledged the Corps' explanation and said the salmon managers would have preferred the Corps wait at least to see if the two pending storms actually hit.

Next Meeting: January 9, Face to Face 9:00 am

An agenda will be developed early in the New Year.

Happy Holidays everyone!!

Columbia River Regional Forum
TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM – OFFICIAL MINUTES

December 18, 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 NOAA, Washington, BPA, COE, BOR, Idaho and others attended. This summary is an official record of the proceedings, not a verbatim transcript.

2. Chum Operation Update

Baus reported that the COE continues to implement the chum spawning operation as agreed upon at the last TMT meeting, with a tailwater elevation range of 13.5-15.5' below Bonneville while targeting elevation 14'. Given that WDFW conducted a survey today that found 2 dead chum and no live ones, the Action Agencies proposed a transition to the incubation phase beginning December 21. This would set a hard constraint of a 13.5' tailwater elevation below Bonneville. Baus asked TMT members for comments on the proposal.

Paul Wagner said **NOAA** would support it. This year's chum run was early, with no indications of a second wave of fish, as is sometimes seen. Charles Morrill said that **Washington** wouldn't have a problem initiating the incubation phase given current flows.

Baus reported there will be a test tomorrow at Bonneville powerhouse 2 in order to determine if hydraulic conditions will allow for the installation of the lamprey passage structure. While the test is underway, the project will continue to operate within the constraints of the chum spawning teletype. The current tailwater elevation of 18' during daytime hours may decline to 14.5' but will go no lower than 13.5' during testing. Tomorrow WDFW will attempt to pull the trap at Duncan Creek. If that attempt is unsuccessful due to high flows the Action Agencies will lower the Bonneville tailwater down to approximately 11.7' so WDFW may remove the trap on December 26. TMT will revisit the chum operation at its next meeting on January 9.

3. Zero Nighttime Generation on the Lower Snake River Projects

The criteria for initiating the Zero Nighttime Generation Operation at Snake River projects was a 3-day running average of less than 50 combined (marked and unmarked) steelhead and 10 unmarked steelhead passing Lower Granite, Wagner recalled. The latest 3-day running average reported was 70 fish combined, Margaret Filardo, FPC, reported. Although the criteria have not been met, the fish ladder at Lower Granite closed on December 17 for annual

maintenance, which was coordinated through FPOM. The maintenance will continue through February 28.

Russ Kiefer, Idaho, said the ladder closure does not mean the criteria for zero nighttime generation have been met, but this was the date coordinated in a previous FPOM meeting. Russ will express this concern at the next FPOM meeting that is scheduled for December 20. Tom Lorz, CRITFC, noted that historically the ladder is taken out of service on December 20 for 3 months at Lower Granite every year. FPOM may continue the discussion of whether this is the best maintenance schedule.

Scott Bettin, BPA, proposed that under the circumstances, zero nighttime flows begin tonight. **NOAA** and **Idaho** voiced no objection. Today the Action Agencies will inform the Snake River Projects they may implement the Zero Generation Operation between December 18 and February 28, 2013.

4. Libby Operations Update

Lorz pointed out that the COE and RFC forecasts for Libby seem to be divergent, indicating two different courses of action. Joel Fenolio, COE Seattle, reported that the RFC's ESP traces for Libby have been around 90% of average, but snowpack is running from 80-126% of average in the basin. The current draft target is 2411 ft for 31 December. The early bird forecast for January is for 6339 kaf (107% of normal) which calls for drafting to elevation 2409' by 31 January. The current snowpack in the Kootenai Basin is 102% of normal for January 1 and that the Corps forecast of 107% of normal is the most appropriate forecast.

However, two significant storms are expected to pass over the basin in the next week, which could increase volume. The forecast could rise from 6600 kaf to 7000 kaf or higher, which would involve drafting below 2400' at the end of January. Furthermore, two units are scheduled to go offline from January 7-March 31. Current indications are that this could be a wet year. The COE has already relaxed the forecast by about 400 kaf in December. Therefore, the COE does not plan to relax the end of December draft.

Lorz didn't support using the December forecast as an indicator of how deep to draft Libby. He recommended waiting to see what the storms bring this week, and said he's not optimistic this will be a big water year. Given that precipitation was above average in November and December, Fenolio said he had no problem drafting Libby to 2411'. Given today's numbers and the scheduled unit outages, Libby should be required to draft to at least 2409' by end January and possibly to below 2400 ft. If there's no increase in snowpack amounts over the next 10 days, Karl Kanbergs, COE, said, that means there would be no need to draft Libby in January.

5. Next TMT Meeting

TMT will meet next on January 9.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Paul Wagner	NOAA
Charles Morrill	Washington
Scott Bettin	BPA
Doug Baus	COE
Joel Fenolio	coe
Adam Price	COE
Margaret Filardo	FPC
Bruce McKay	Consultant
Russ Kiefer	Idaho
Richelle Beck	Grant PUD
John Roache	BOR
Karl Kanbergs	COE
Tom Lorz	CRITFC