

COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

April 23, 2014

Facilitator's Summary

Facilitator & Notes: Emily Plummer, DS Consulting

The following Facilitator's Summary is intended to capture basic discussion, decisions and actions, as well as 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.

Juvenile Transport

Paul Wagner, NOAA, shared NOAA's recommendation to start juvenile transport on May 1st at Lower Granite, Little Goose and Lower Monumental, with no staggered start date. According to modelling, a May 1st start date at all projects should allow for close to 50% transport of steelhead. It was noted that at the 4/16/14 TMT meeting, there was general agreement from the TMT members present at the meeting for a May 1 start date at all projects (no staggered start), even if the Little Goose navigation lock repairs are completed prior to May 1. It was recognized that this operation does not fully satisfy all partner entities; however, there were no objections or calls to elevate the issue further. Idaho preferred to shut off the surface weir and collect fish later in May. Washington, USFWS, Oregon and the Nez Perce Tribe all agreed that of the options explored to date, their preference would be to start transport at Lower Granite on May 1 and then stagger start dates at Little Goose and Lower Monumental. Paul responded that NOAA's interpretation of the ISAB Review and CSS data does not support a staggered start date given the BiOp spread the risk requirement to transport about 50% of the steelhead; Erick Van Dyke, OR, pointed out that there is disagreement regarding the interpretation of the data.

Dave Statler, Nez Perce, inquired as to if lamprey presence has been observed and recorded in the barges during transport, to which Doug Baus, USACE, replied that he was unsure, but committed to check with Walla Walla District and follow-up with Dave Statler. Dave Wills, USFWS, noted that the majority of projects have screens that redirect lamprey back to the river. Charlie Morrill, Washington, noted that he did not think that any lamprey observations were recorded.

- Dave Statler requested that any lamprey observations in the barge or during release are recorded.

Proposed Operation: To NOAA's proposed operation to begin juvenile transportation operations on May 1 at Lower Granite, Little Goose, and Lower Monumental Dams, TMT members present at the meeting were polled:

ID – no objection

WA – no objection

OR – no objection

MT – no objection

Nez Perce – no objection

USFWS – no objection

BPA – no objection

BOR – no objection

- **Planned Operation:** Doug Baus, USACE, thanked TMT for the effort put into conversations regarding transport and stated that USACE will initiate transport at Lower Granite, Little Goose, and Lower Monumental Dams on May 1st, with no staggered start dates and the first barge departures occurring on May 2nd. Updates will continue to be provided at TMT meetings.

[During the May 7, 2014, TMT Meeting Oregon expressed the following regarding the review of the meeting minutes: The group approved the April 16th, 23rd, and 30th official meeting minutes and Facilitator's Summary pending the following clarification for the April 23rd minutes and summary, noted by Erick Van Dyke, OR: Regarding the spring juvenile transportation operation: OR expressed preference for a May 1st staggered start date (Lower Granite on May 1st, followed by staggered start dates at Little Goose and Lower Monumental). The previous draft of the 4/23 Facilitator Summary had stated that OR did "not object", Erick clarified that at this point in time, OR does not agree with the operation, however, is not going to elevate the issue. Erick also noted that although in the Facilitator's Summary, the

Official Minutes did not state that USFWS also supported a May 1st staggered start date. Dave Wills, USFWS, agreed to review the Minutes and respond to Doug Baus with any necessary changes.]

Little Goose Dam Emergency Lock Outage Bulkhead Storage Operation

Doug Baus, USACE, reported that the Little Goose navigation lock repairs were complete as of April 21st and the lock is back in service. However, due to the unplanned emergency outage, the project was unable to stow the navigation lock bulkhead prior to April 3 when the forebay elevation was lowered to MOP (633-634ft). Stowing the bulkhead is necessary in case of future emergency repair situations, as well as to maintain navigation in the Snake River. Stowing the bulkhead requires that the forebay elevation is raised to 637-638 feet, and as a result, USACE proposed to start raising the forebay elevation on April 27th, raise and hold the elevation above MOP until the bulkhead is stowed, and then return the forebay to MOP. Doug shared that USACE is willing to adjust timing if preferred by TMT, however, will need to start the operation no later than May 31st. Paul Wagner, NOAA, shared that FPAC discussed this operation and recommends that the operation is implemented as soon as possible in order to avoid impacts to yearling chinook and increasing numbers of fish in the system.

- **Action:** Doug noted FPAC preference to start the operation as soon as possible, and stated that although real-time conditions will need to be accounted for, the project will plan to implement the following operation:
1. On April 27th begin increasing the forebay elevation above MOP to target between 637-638ft. This step will take approximately 32 hours.
 2. On April 28th maintain the forebay elevation between 637-638 between 0800-1200 hours while the bulkhead is stowed.
 3. On April 28th at 1300 hours start the 48hour ramp down to return the forebay elevation to MOP.
 4. Continue to coordinate with TMT regarding any date/time changes in the operation.

Doug clarified that Little Goose Dam will maintain the 30% spill level during this operation specified in the 2014 Spring FOP.

The next TMT meeting will be face to face on April 30th at 9:00am; location TBD.

Agenda items include:

- Water Supply Forecast Update
- Vernita Bar Update
- Wanapum Update
- Little Goose Bulkhead Storage Update
- Spring Creek Hatchery Release Update
- Transportation Operations Update
- Other?

Columbia River Regional Forum
TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM – OFFICIAL MINUTES

April 23, 2014
Minutes: Pat Vivian

1. Introduction

Doug Baus, COE, chaired this TMT conference call facilitated by Emily Plummer, DS Consulting. Representatives of Montana, BPA, NOAA, the COE, USFWS, Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Nez Perce Tribe and others participated. This summary is an official record of the proceedings, not a verbatim transcript.

2. Juvenile Transportation

At last week's meeting, TMT established May 1 as the start date for juvenile transportation at all Snake River projects. The plan was to initiate transport at Lower Granite Dam on May 1 without staggering the start dates at Little Goose and Lower Monumental. After reviewing recent data on the relative benefits of transport for various species, Paul Wagner said NOAA recommends sticking with that approach.

The May 1 start date for all three projects wasn't an agreed-upon operation so much as it was the path of least resistance, Russ Kiefer, Idaho, said. Because Oregon and the Nez Perce were not present at the last TMT meeting, it was not a consensus operation although there were no objections.

Today the **Nez Perce, Oregon and Washington** representatives expressed a preference for initiating juvenile transport on May 1 at Lower Granite with staggered start dates at Goose and Monumental. At this time Oregon won't try to elevate a different operation than the universal May 1 start date, Erick Van Dyke said. However, Oregon does not believe this course of action is warranted and disagrees with NOAA's interpretation of the data regarding benefits of transport.

Idaho didn't object to a May 1 start at all three projects, but had proposed an alternative that didn't gain traction: Shut off the spillway weirs later in May so more steelhead could be collected via that route.

Dave Statler asked whether NOAA would object to staggered start dates for juvenile transport on the Snake. Available data indicate that returning fish to the river rarely provides a benefit over fish that are transported, Wagner replied. The purpose of NOAA's recommendation is to achieve the 50% steelhead transport goal stated in the 2014 supplemental BiOp. The ISAB didn't recommend staggered start dates to achieve any objective; NOAA is following ISAB's lead by advocating a May 1 universal start date.

Van Dyke asked whether the 2014 supplemental BiOp prioritizes transport over in-river passage. The BiOp calls for both – transport operations concurrent with spill and flow conditions that benefit in-river migrants, Wagner replied.

Hearing no objections, the COE will begin transport operations on May 1 at LWG, LGS and LMN, with the first transport barges departing on May 2. Statler asked whether lamprey have been observed on the barge when fish are released, and Baus said he will follow up on that with the COE Walla Walla district office. Charles Morrill, Washington, commented that there is no monitoring he is aware of that tracks lamprey occurrence in transport barges.

3. Little Goose Dam Emergency Lock Outage Bulkhead Storage Operation

A description of the Little Goose emergency lock outage bulkhead storage operation is attached to this item on today's agenda. Baus reported the emergency lock repair was completed and the lock returned to service April 21; since then the navigation bulkhead has been tied to the forebay guidewall. In order to float the bulkhead into position to be stowed in its designated slot, the forebay elevation needs to be raised above 633-634' minimum operating pool range to elevation 637-638'. Leaving the bulkhead in its current location (tied to the guidewall) isn't a viable option because the bulkhead could sink if not properly stored, which has happened at other projects. Usually the bulkhead storage operation occurs annually prior to MOP operations that begin on April 3, but the LGS lock outage precluded that step.

Based on these risks, the COE proposed an operation to raise the forebay in order to stow the bulkhead on the morning of Monday, April 28. The following times are estimates and subject to change based on real time conditions.

- From Sunday, April 27, to Monday, April 28, at 0800 hours, the forebay elevation will be increased above MOP (633-634'), targeting 637-638' by 8 am April 28.
- On April 28, from 8 am to approximately noon, the 637-638' elevation will be maintained while the bulkhead is being stowed.
- Beginning at approximately noon April 28, after the stow operation is complete, the forebay elevation will be lowered back to the MOP range 633-634' as quickly as possible within ramp rate limits and other normal constraints. After having raised the pool elevation for the stowing, it will take up to approximately two days to bring the forebay back to MOP.

Baus said the COE is willing to adjust the timing of this operation as long as it occurred no later than May 31. The rationale behind that requirement is the risk of improperly storing the bulkhead potentially affects not only the project but navigation on the Snake.

Baus asked Wagner whether another timeframe between the dates of April 27-May 31 would be preferable. The consensus at FPAC yesterday was to stow the bulkhead as soon as possible, Wagner replied. That recommendation is based on an assumption that waiting longer could cause the operation to impact more fish in the river. FPAC's preference would be to start the operation tomorrow, but if that's too soon a later start date would be acceptable.

David Wills, USFWS, seconded this view but asked for confirmation that BiOp spill (30%) will not change. Little Goose will maintain 30% spill in accordance with the 2014 Fish Operations Plan and return to MOP as soon as possible, Baus replied. The COE will provide an update on this operation at the next TMT meeting April 30.

4. Next TMT Meeting

The next TMT meeting will be in person on April 30, location to be determined.

| Name | Affiliation |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Jim Litchfield | Montana |
| Brian Marotz | Montana |
| Tony Norris | BPA |
| Paul Wagner | NOAA |

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|-----------------|------------|
| Doug Baus | COE |
| David Wills | USFWS |
| Charles Morrill | Washington |
| Bill Proctor | COE |
| Dave Benner | FPC |
| Russ Kiefer | Idaho |
| Erick Van Dyke | Oregon |
| Lisa Wright | COE |
| Laura Hamilton | COE |
| Dave Statler | Nez Perce |