

COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

September 16, 2015

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.

Review of Meeting Minutes

The July 15, 22, 27, 29, 30, August 19 and 26th Official Minutes and Facilitator's Summary were reviewed and approved.

Libby Operations

Joel Fenolio, COE-Seattle, reported on planned operations for Libby. He noted that the project is operating at 6kcfs to meet Bull Trout minimums and construction needs for the Kootenai Tribe's habitat restoration work. The project will hold 6kcfs through the end of September, and then drop down to 4kcfs beginning in October. Currently, the STP shows that 6kcfs out will allow the project to get close to hitting the 2,439ft target in the end of September, however, the forecast may be a bit less dry and elevations may be closer to 2,439.8ft.

Operations Review

Reservoirs

Mary Mellema, BOR, reported the Reclamation projects:

- Hungry Horse midnight elevation was at 3,538.9ft with 2.4kcfs outflows and inflows of 600cfs; the project is drafting to meet the Columbia Falls minimum flows.
- Grand Coulee midnight elevation was at 1,281.5ft, the project has coordinated an end of September elevation target between 1,280-1,285ft with the Colville and Spokane Tribes.

Doug Baus, COE-NWD, reported on Corps projects:

- Libby was at elevation 2,440.3ft.
- Albeni Falls was at elevation 2,062.3ft.
- Dworshak was at elevation 1,521.85ft.
- Lower Granite average outflow was 21.8kcfs.
- Bonneville average outflow was 100.18kcfs.

Fish

Trevor Conder, NOAA, reported on fish. Adult fall Chinook are past the peak, which was around 45,000; the peak was not as high as in 2014. Fall Chinook counts at Bonneville were equal to the 2014 numbers. System wide the adult returns were comparable to 2014 numbers, and above the 10-year average. Trevor noted that the run may have been earlier, however, they are not yet certain. Jack counts at Lower Granite are lower than the 10-year average. Steelhead at Bonneville are slightly behind and lower than the 10-year average at 73%, wild steelhead are doing better with counts at 85% of the 10-year average. Sockeye numbers at Bonneville are similar to 2014 number; however, counts at Wells Dam are well below the 2014 numbers, showing that the Sockeye issues were not isolated to the Snake River system. Similarly, summer Chinook saw record returns to Bonneville and only average returns at McNary.

In regards to juvenile fish, collection counts are down. Trevor shared that a draft transport memo is out for review and will be provided to FPAC upon finalization. He shared the transport estimates: 13.6% of hatchery yearling chinook were transported, along with 11.4% of wild; 13.9% of hatchery steelhead were

transported, along with 12.4% of wild steelhead. In river survival was 39.7%. Transport survival has not yet been calculated. This was the 3rd lowest year for survival since the program started. Trevor noted that this is in part due to low flows at Lower Granite, which resulted in a high proportion of spill, thus more fish moved through the spillway rather than being collected for transport.

Water Quality

Nothing to report.

Power Systems

Nothing to report.

The next TMT meeting will be a conference call on October 6th at 9:00AM.

Columbia River Regional Forum
TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM—OFFICIAL MINUTES

September 16, 2015

Minutes: Pat Vivian

1. Introduction

Representatives of BPA, NOAA, COE, the Nez Perce, Yakama and Colville tribes, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, CRITFC/Umatilla Tribe, USFWS and others participated in today's TMT meeting. Doug Baus, COE, served as chair, with facilitation by Emily Plummer, DS Consulting. This summary is an official record of the discussion, not a verbatim transcript.

2. Review Meeting Minutes – July 15, 22, 27, 29 and 30; August 19 and 26

The facilitator's summaries and minutes for all of these meetings were approved as final.

3. Libby Operations

Joel Fenolio, COE, reported. The plan for Libby Dam is to continue releasing 6 kcfs bull trout minimums through the end of September to support ongoing habitat restoration. The latest STP traces indicate Libby forebay will end the month at approximately 2439.1 ft elevation with 6 kcfs continued releases. However, the actual elevation could be around 2439.8 ft because recent STP runs may be underestimating inflows. Libby releases will be reduced to 4 kcfs at the beginning of October.

4. Operations Review

4a. Reservoirs. Hungry Horse is at elevation 3538.9 ft and currently releasing 2.4 kcfs to support minimum flows at Columbia Falls, Mary Mellema, BOR, reported. With inflows of only 600 cfs, continued drafting will probably be needed to support minimum flows unless there is rain. The Grand Coulee end of September elevation target is in the 1280-1285 ft range, as coordinated with the Colville and Spokane tribes. In October, Coulee will refill to 1285-88 ft elevation by the end of the month.

Albeni Falls midnight elevation on 9/15 was 2062.3 ft, Libby midnight elevation on 9/15 was 2440.32 ft, and Dworshak midnight elevation on 9/15 was 1521.85 ft, Baus reported. Lower Granite 9/15 hourly average outflow was 21.78 kcfs. Bonneville 9/15 hourly average outflow was 100.18 kcfs.

4b. Fish. Adults: Trevor Conder, NOAA, reported. Fall chinook passage peaked at around 45,000 per day at Bonneville; last year's peak was higher (approximately 65,000). However, the 2015 run could be earlier, not larger, than last year's. This year's fall chinook return was predicted to be lower than last year, but the total count of around

587,000 to date is slightly higher than in 2014. The 2015 jack count is quite a bit lower than last year, although it's in line with the 10 year average. Fall chinook counts at McNary are similarly close to those of 2014 and higher than the 10 year average, while counts at Lower Granite are slightly higher than those of 2014. Fall chinook jack counts throughout the system are generally on par with the 10 year average. Charles Morrill, Washington, recalled that summer chinook returned to Bonneville in record numbers, but counts were just average by the time the run reached McNary, which indicates losses due to high temperatures. Scott Bettin inquired if treaty fishing harvest numbers were available but Tom Lorz indicated those numbers were not available at this time.

Steelhead returns to Bonneville are slightly less than last year, about 73% of the 10 year average. Wild steelhead returns are 85% of the 10 year average, so wild steelhead fared better than hatchery steelhead. Sockeye returns to Bonneville are close to those of 2014, but counts at Wells Dam are way below last year. This shows there were problems with high temperatures throughout the Columbia, not just on the Snake River.

Juveniles: Passage is down to 100 fish per day or fewer at each dam. Recently NOAA released a draft memo to the action agencies citing initial transport estimates for 2015. Survival rates and transport percentages were low throughout the system. Lack of inflows led to high spill percentages, and more fish passed via spillways than bypasses where they could be collected for transport. While the BiOp calls for a spread-the-risk strategy of transporting around 50% of juveniles, only 11.4% of wild chinook and 13.6% of hatchery chinook were transported in 2015. For steelhead, 12.4% wild and 13.9% hatchery fish were transported. Yearling survival rates from the Snake River trap to Bonneville were 39.7% for chinook and 36% for steelhead, the third lowest in 17 years. When the transport memo is finalized, NOAA will distribute it to FPAC members.

4c. Water Quality. There was nothing to report today.

4d. Power System. There was nothing to report today.

5. Next TMT Meeting

TMT will meet next in a conference call October 7.

Name	Affiliation
Tony Norris	BPA
Trevor Conder	NOAA
Karl Kanbergs	COE
Scott Bettin	BPA
Doug Baus	COE
Mary Mellema	BOR
Dan Spear	BPA
Dave Statler	Nez Perce
Erick Van Dyke	Oregon

Phone:

Sheri Sears
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