

## COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

October 26, 2016

Facilitator's Summary

Facilitator: Emily Stranz (Plummer), Notes: Tory Hines, 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.*

### **Chum Operation**

Paul Wagner, NOAA, shared an update on chum operations. Presently, no chum have been observed on the spawning grounds downstream of Bonneville Dam, however, three have been counted at Bonneville Dam. The April-August median water supply forecast volume for The Dalles is 90.96 maf (106% of the 10-year average). The NWRFC 10-day forecast is predicting above average temperatures and precipitation over the next six to ten days. The 30-day climate outlook shows a similar pattern of above average precipitation and temperature in the Columbia River Basin. For the 90-day outlook, above average precipitation, likely due to La Niña and average to slightly above average temperatures are predicted.

At Bonneville Dam, tailwater elevation is under 12ft as of 0400 hours. Tony Norris, BPA, noted that they are ready to start the chum operation on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Karl Kanbergs, COE, noted that the project is currently operating under a soft constraint to keep tailwater under 13ft from 0600-1700 hours. Last year's chum operation maintained a 1ft range, 11.5-12.5ft, during daylight hours when possible. Due to constraints at the project, this year's operation will seek to maintain a tailwater range of 11.5-13.0 ft during daytime hours, with nighttime increase up to 16.5ft if needed, with the highest flows occurring at 2400 hours. Paul noted that this year may present challenges due to high flows and powerhouse maintenance issues. Tony acknowledged that there will be less flexibility with the project and periods of spill may be required. Emily Stranz, DSC, checked in with salmon managers asking for any input on the recommended operation. Charles Morrill, WA, and Paul stated that the operation sounds good at this point and the region will continue to pay close attention to the conditions as the season progresses. The group will revisit the chum operation at the next TMT meeting on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

- **ACTION:** The Corps will initiate the official chum spawning operation on Tuesday, November 1, 2016 at 0600 hours. The operation will maintain tailwater elevations of 11.5-13.0 ft from 0600-1700 hours, and increase tailwater up to 16.5ft at night. Additional measures will be in place for operations in case unusually high flow conditions exist. TMT members will follow up on the operation at the November 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

**The next TMT meeting will be a conference call on November 2nd at 9:00am.**

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

**October 26, 2016**  
Minutes: Pat Vivian

***1. Introduction***

Today's TMT conference call was chaired by Karl Kanbergs, COE and facilitated by Emily Plummer, DS Consulting. Representatives of the COE, NOAA, BPA, Washington, Idaho, CRITFC, USFWS, BOR and others participated in the discussion.

***2. Chum Operation***

The purpose of the call was to coordinate the upcoming chum operation and review the latest chum-related information posted to today's agenda. Paul Wagner, NOAA, and Karl Kanbergs presented the attachments.

**2a. Chum Salmon Spawning Ground Surveys 2016-17.** The latest survey on October 12 found no chum spawners, and a survey planned for October 14 was canceled due to high winds.

**2b. Bonneville Dam Adult Salmon Counts.** To date, only 3 chum have been counted at Bonneville Dam.

**2c. Summary of 2015-16 Chum Operation.** A summary of last year's chum operation begins on page 30 of this attachment. Last year, the upper end of the target range for Bonneville tailwater elevation during daylight hours was 12.5 ft; this year it's 13.0 ft (see explanation below).

**2d. NWRFC Water Supply Forecast at The Dalles Dam.** The April-August 2017 water supply forecast at The Dalles is predicted to be 92.96 maf or 106% of average.

**2e. NWRFC Climate Forecast.** The 6-10 day forecast shows the Northwest trending toward above average temperatures with significantly more rain than usual. Over the next 30 days, there's an equal chance of above and below average temperatures and a greater than average chance for higher amounts of precipitation throughout most of the basin. The 90 day outlook shows an equal chance of temperatures and precipitation being above or below average for most of Oregon and Washington. This winter is likely to be wetter than normal, based on development of a mild La Nina effect, as supported by the current 90 day climate outlook (October 20) where northern Idaho and Western Montana have a likelihood of above average precipitation.

**2f. Bonneville Dam Current Hourly Data.** A chart showing Bonneville hourly flow data is linked to today's agenda. Current tailwater elevation is under 12 ft.

The COE will begin the chum operation the morning of November 1, Kanbergs said. Until then, the Bonneville tailwater elevation will be held below 13 ft during daylight hours as a soft constraint (make best efforts in consideration of total river flow) in case chum spawners are present.

Reduced turbine availability and generation limits at the Bonneville 2<sup>nd</sup> powerhouse for various transmission outages and repairs will constrain the Action Agencies' options for moving water for the chum operation this year, Tony Norris, BPA, said. The target operating range for chum will be 11.5-13.0 ft in the tailwater, with excursions of up to 16.5 ft at night if necessary. (Last year's chum operation was 11.5-12.5 ft in the tailwater due to lower water supplies.)

Kanbergs outlined the steps involved in the 2016-17 chum operation:

1. Beginning at 0600 hours on November 1, Bonneville Dam will be operated to maintain a tailwater elevation of 11.5-13.0 ft around the clock, subject to water conditions.
2. If that operation isn't sufficient to pass inflows, releases will be increased at nighttime hours to produce a tailwater elevation of up to 16.5 ft below Bonneville, concentrating the releases at around 2400 hours.

NOAA and USFWS both expressed support for this operation, with close monitoring recommended as spawning season progresses. There will be times when spill is necessary to achieve chum operation objectives, Norris said. The Action Agencies will revisit the chum operation as conditions develop.

### ***3. Next TMT Meeting***

TMT will meet next in a conference call November 2.

| <b><i>Name</i></b> | <b><i>Affiliation</i></b> |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Aaron Marshall     | COE                       |
| Laura Hamilton     | COE                       |
| Karl Kanbergs      | COE                       |
| Paul Wagner        | NOAA                      |
| Tony Norris        | BPA                       |
| Charles Morrill    | Washington                |
| Russ Kiefer        | Idaho                     |
| Tom Lorz           | CRITFC                    |
| Dave Swank         | USFWS                     |
| Chris Runyan       | BOR                       |
| Michael Bryant     | CBB                       |
| John Mayhew        | Puget Sound Energy        |
| Tory Hines         | DSC                       |
| Laura Brewer       | Energy News Data          |