

SYSTEM OPERATIONAL REQUEST: #2003-03

The following State, Federal, and Tribal Salmon Managers have participated in the preparation and support this SOR: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Columbia River Inter Tribal Fish Commission, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Fish and Game, and the National Marine Fisheries Service.

TO:	B. G. Fastabend	COE-NWD
	William Branch	COE-Water Management
	Cindy Henriksen	COE-RCC
	Witt Anderson	COE-P
	Col. Richard Hobernicht	COE-Portland District
	LTC Kertis, Jr.	COE-Walla Walla District
	J. William McDonald	USBR-Boise Regional Director
	Steven Wright	BPA-Administrator
	Greg Delwiche	BPA-PG-5



FROM: David A. Wills, Chairperson, Salmon Managers

DATE: March 18, 2003

SUBJECT: The Salmon Managers listed above are requesting the following fishery operations at Dworshak Dam to coincide with the March 19 and 20 spring chinook release:

SPECIFICATIONS: Beginning March 19, and continuing on March 20, operate the Dworshak Dam power house at a level between 4.5 to 6.5 Kcfs beginning at 5 p.m. and ending at 5 a.m. the following morning.

JUSTIFICATION: Dworshak National Fish Hatchery is scheduling the release of 1,036,000 spring chinook smolts in two releases. The first is on the evening of March 19, the second is on the evening of March 20. This represents the entire production of brood 2001 spring chinook from Dworshak NFH. Evening releases are scheduled to minimize avian predation. The actual release date in March varies from year to year, but is keyed into the hydro-graph and flow conditions of the mainstem Clearwater River. Conditions in the mainstem appear very favorable now, with high flows (17-19 Kcfs) and turbid conditions, which further aid in protecting fish migrating downstream.

Current flow from Dworshak Dam is at the powerhouse minimum of 1.4 Kcfs. The higher flows in the mainstem cause a backwater effect in the North Fork Clearwater, into which the fish are released. In order to move the fish out into the mainstem to take advantage of those higher flows and move on downriver, a higher flow in the North Fork Clearwater is desirable. Current refill rates of Dworshak Dam indicate this operation would have little probability of affecting the April 10 upper rule curve elevation.