

# Standard Operating Procedure For Setting Project Spill Order On the Spill Priority List

Date Finalized: March 3, 2011

## Setting Spill Priority

Throughout the spill season, the Corps Water Quality Team develops a spill priority list that gives the order in which dams should spill in the event of involuntary spill due to lack of market or lack of load. This list may change several times during the spill season depending on river conditions and other circumstances, and are discussed in the TMT regional forum. The Corps considers the following factors in developing the spill priority order:

- Location of Fish: If TDG levels are at or below 120% consider placing projects with the most fish higher on the priority list.
- Location of High TDG: When TDG levels are above 120% with high involuntary spill, put the projects with the most fish lower on the priority list to reduce the number of fish exposed to high TDG levels.
- Location of Fish Studies: Projects conducting special fish studies may be lower on the priority list to preserve study conditions.
- River Reaches: Projects are grouped into three reaches: Lower Snake; Lower Columbia and Middle Columbia. If several projects need to be change priority, then consideration is given to reprioritizing all projects within the same reach.
- Special Operations: Special operations such as maintenance or other project constraints (spill gate availability, discharge limits, and so on) are considered.
- Collector Projects: During low flow periods, place the collector projects (LGS; LWG; LMN; MCN) lower on the priority list to maximize transportation.
- Special Fish Conditions: If unexpected fish conditions, such as disease or a unexpected release, consider moving the project to first place on the priority list if doing so would be expected to alleviate the condition.

It is important that the Corps RCC, Fish Unit is consulted when new spill priority lists are developed and that the proposed spill priority list are discussed in the Regional forum of the Technical Management Team meetings.