

COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

December 14, 2016

Facilitator's Summary

Facilitator: Emily Stranz, 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. He noted that chum counts at Bonneville are at 47, with no additional fish passing Bonneville in the last week. The December 6th chum spawning ground surveys show 22 live fish in the Ives/Pierce Island Complex. So far, it appears that the peak was 125 live on November 15th, followed by 122 on November 22nd. The peak for redds appears to be on November 22nd with 52 redds recorded. The counts have been falling since the end of November and the WDFW Crew thinks that November 15th-22nd was the peak; they are working to get out on another survey for confirmation.

Doug Baus, COE-NWD, noted that pending additional information and coordination with the WDFW crew, the TMT will need to discuss the shift from the spawning operation to the incubation operation. He suggested that ideally, the TMT will be able to determine an incubation elevation at the December 21st TMT meeting. Tony Norris, BPA, shared that the extension of nighttime hours coordinated on November 22nd has allowed the project to manage the flows well. Charles Morrill, WA, thanked the region for implementing the revised operation on November 22nd.

There was inquiry as to what the expected incubation elevation would be. Scott Bettin, BPA, shared that it is typically within 11.5-13.0ft, however, they will need to talk to the WDFW crew to get a better idea of the appropriate range for this year. **TMT will revisit the Chum operation at their December 21st meeting.**

Zero Nighttime Generation of the Snake River Projects

Paul explained that in 2005 an SOR was provided by the Salmon Managers to establish criteria aimed at determining when steelhead passage numbers at Lower Granite are low enough ("few" enough) to shift the Snake River projects to zero nighttime generation. The criteria outlined in SOR 2005-22 has been used to inform the operational shift since then.

The 2016 steelhead run was approximately 94,000, and the wild run was approximately 20,000, which means that the criteria for zero generation are 35 and 10 respectively. The three-day moving average required by the criteria has been met as of December 14th and thus the Snake River projects can shift to the zero nighttime generation operation as needed.

Dave Swank, USFWS, asked if the criteria are a single decision point or if the region can revisit the operation throughout the season. Paul noted that although the fish ladders will be out of service at the end of the year, the region can revisit the decision if fish passage activity picks up. Dave also suggested revising the SOR to clarify that the operation period is from December through February (as stated in the Seasonal Update), not December to February.

→ **ACTION:** If needed, the AA's will implement zero nighttime generation at the Snake River projects beginning 2200 hours on December 14th. This operation will be effective through February 2017.

Dworshak Update

Steve Hall, COE-Walla Walla, shared that the Corps regrets to inform the region that the Dworshak Unit 3 overhaul schedule has been significantly delayed due to unexpected issues. Originally, the unit was scheduled to return to service on May 1st, however, at this point the Corps is anticipating an early July (best case) or mid-late August (worst case) return to service date. The delay is due to a number of issues, including lead paint abatement that took longer than expected.

Tom Lorz, Umatilla, asked if the contractor was going to uphold a 7-day double shift schedule to make up for lost time. Steve replied that they have, or are soon going to a 6-day double shift schedule and that the Corps is doing what they can to ensure that the contractor makes up time where at all possible.

Russ Kiefer, ID, asked how this delay impacts flood control, refill and summer flow augmentation operations. Steve did not anticipate that the delay would significantly impact the flood control or refill operations; however, the summer augmentation operation will be impacted. He suggested that additional modelling and robust discussion at TMT is needed to best minimize the impacts. **TMT will continue discussions on how to best minimize impacts at their January meetings.**

With that, Emily thanked the group for joining the call and the meeting was adjourned.

The next TMT meeting will be conference call on December 21st at 9:00AM

Columbia River Regional Forum
TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM OFFICIAL MINUTES

December 14, 2016
Minutes: Pat Vivian

1 Introduction

Representatives of USFWS, Washington, Warm Springs Tribe, Idaho, BOR, COE, BPA, NOAA and others participated in today's TMT call. Doug Baus, COE, chaired the meeting, with facilitation by Emily Stranz, DS Consulting.

2. Chum Operation

To date, 47 chum have passed Bonneville Dam, a number that's not expected to increase, Paul Wagner, NOAA, reported. As of December 6, WDFW survey crews had spotted 22 live spawners in the I-205 area. As of November 22, they had counted 52 redds. Chum spawning activity has probably peaked, although crews will continue to monitor the area. Another chum survey is planned for today, but it probably will be delayed by snow.

Baus reminded TMT that the chum spawning operation with its daytime and nighttime tailwater elevation restrictions will transition soon to the incubation phase, which only specifies a minimum tailwater elevation. The current operation is successfully maintaining a daytime elevation range of 11.5-13 ft in the BON tailwater for spawning. Charles Morrill, Washington, asked when BPA will conduct its telemetry survey of specific redds. Probably the week of December 21, Tony Norris replied. He and Morrill agreed that an interim elevation could serve as a minimum for the incubation phase until survey data are available. TMT will revisit the chum operation at its next meeting December 21.

3. Zero Nighttime Generation on the lower Snake projects

Every year at this time, TMT revisits this operation, which is based on a 2005 SOR that FPAC submitted to the Action Agencies to establish criteria for "a few" steelhead passing Lower Granite, Wagner recalled. The criteria each year are based on the run size from June 1 to this time of year. This year's count of 94,000 combined hatchery and wild steelhead. This year has been challenging because adult counts have been slow in coming due to staffing limitations associated with weather and issues associated with the Corp transition to a new server. This year's criteria at LWG is a 3 day rolling average of adult steelhead counts less than 35 combined and 10 wild.

LWG adult counts for steelhead as a 3 day rolling average (12/9 to 12/11) was 24 combined and 8 wild.

Counts summarized below.

12/9: steelhead, 16, and; wild steelhead, 3.

12/10: steelhead, 16, and; wild steelhead, 7.
12/11: steelhead, 41, and; wild steelhead, 15.

Based on these counts the criteria has been achieved to implement the operation as described in SOR 2005-22.

Dave Swank, USFWS, asked whether TMT ever revisits the decision to switch to zero nighttime flows. Generally not, but if passage picks up at the ladders during a warmer period, it could be revisited if all maintenance is up to date and the ladders are operating, Wagner said. Migration tends to slow down when water temperatures are below 6 degrees C. Typically at this time of year the ladders are taken out of service, Scott Bettin noted. Swank asked about the specific timing of the zero nighttime generation operation, which is characterized in the SOR as extending from December - February. BPA clarified these dates are the start of December to the end of February. Russ Kiefer, Idaho, recalled that establishing these criteria successfully put an end to circular TMT discussions about what constituted “a few” steelhead passing. Now that the criteria have been met, the Action Agencies will implement zero nighttime flows effective as of 2200 hours today through the end of February.

4. Dworshak Dam Update

Steve Hall gave TMT a heads up that the Dworshak unit 3 rehab has been significantly delayed by a combination of factors, mainly the discovery of lead paint which Andritz hired a sub-contractor to remove. It was time-consuming because the entire work area had to be contained for health reasons. So now the COE is pressing Andritz to finish as soon as possible, and the company is working toward scheduling double shifts 6 days a week in order to accelerate the job. However, rushing can be counter-productive, as the level of precision involved might mean having to redo the work.

TMT will need to have some conversations in January about ways to work around the flow restrictions with unit 3 probably out of service all summer. Instead of a return to service date of May 1, unit 3 probably won't return to service until late summer, possibly as late as end August.

Russ Kiefer said Idaho's biggest concern is the effects this will have on flood control, refill and summer flow augmentation. TMT will need to make some in-season management decisions, and the COE is doing additional modeling to help with that effort, Hall replied. The timing of refill will be challenging, but the biggest concern is potential impacts on summer augmentation flows. TMT will need to focus ways to minimize the impact, using in season management. TMT will revisit this issue in January.

5 Next TMT Meeting

The next TMT meeting will be a conference call on December 21.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Dave Swank	USFWS
Charles Morrill	Washington
Jen Graham	Warm Springs Tribe
Russ Kiefer	Idaho
Mary Mellema	BOR
Doug Baus	COE
Tony Norris	BPA
Paul Wagner	NOAA
Lisa Wright	COE
Steve Burrill	COE
Wayne Jousma	COE
Tory Hines	DSC
Pat Richards	Snohomish PUD
Tom Lorz	CRITFC
Julie Ammann	COE
Sarah Wilson	COE