

## COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

May 26, 2021

DRAFT Facilitator's Summary

Facilitator: Emily Stranz; Notes: Colby Mills

*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. Official minutes can be found on the TMT website: <http://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/agendas/2021/>.*

### **Review Meeting Summaries & Minutes**

TMT members approved the official minutes and summary for the May 12 meeting; the minutes and summary from May 19 will be reviewed at the next TMT meeting.

### **GBT Reporting**

Doug Baus, Corps, reported that the May 17-20 salmonid and native non-salmonid GBT reports are posted to the TMT website. This information is posted for information sharing purposes during the spring spill season as AAs work to manage within state water quality requirements.

### **John Day Dam Operations**

Aaron Marshall, Corps, provided an update (posted on the TMT website) on the 2020 BiOp operation at John Day Dam intended to deter Caspian Tern nesting on Blalock Island. The transition period to minimum irrigation pool (MIP) will begin on June 2. Due to low runoff conditions in the basin, the project will draft down to the MIP by June 5, 10 days earlier than required for the BiOp. The earlier shift to MIP has been coordinated with BPA, NOAA, and USFWS. From June 5 – August 31, John Day will operate from 262.5–264.5 feet. Charles Morrill, WA, noted that the earlier timing may have potential benefits for juvenile fish moving down through the system.

### **Libby Dam Releases for Sturgeon and Bull Trout**

David Bogema, Corps, reported on changes to sturgeon operations at Libby Dam (posted on TMT website). On Monday, due to an emergency transmission line outage, the Corps reduced Libby Dam outflows to 20 kcfs. The project will hold at 20 kcfs until May 30, and then will ramp down to summer flat flows following BiOp ramping rates. The sturgeon operation is projected to end June 4 (2 days later than originally scheduled). David noted that the same sturgeon volume (0.8 MAF) will be provided.

Sturgeon response to the pulse is still being evaluated and updated information will be provided to the TMT when it is available. Greg Hoffman, Corps, noted that the discharge temperature is currently just under 45 degrees F, which is slightly lower than desired (the target temperature to reach for spawning is 50 degrees F). Greg added that the temperature string in the forebay tracks on an hourly/daily basis. This year's operation has been unique in that the selective withdrawal bulkheads are not in operation and thus they are unable to manage the temperature.

### **Grand Coulee Outflows**

Sheri Sears, Colville Tribe, asked the Corps to make best efforts to smooth operations as much as possible when Grand Coulee Dam drops flows for 3 days starting on May 27 to meet refill. Tony Norris, BPA, noted that the STP does not reflect daily operations exactly and that the AAs have flexibility to lower weekend flows to within 80% of the previous weekday average. Also, it is not uncommon for Grand Coulee to drop outflows across the weekend.

**Questions or comments from members of the public:** There were no questions or comments from members of the public.

**The next scheduled TMT meeting is a conference call on June 2, 2021 at 9:00 AM.**

*This summary is respectfully submitted by the DS Consulting Facilitation Team. Suggested edits are welcome and can be sent to Colby at [colby@dsconsult.co](mailto:colby@dsconsult.co).*

**Columbia River Regional Forum**  
**Technical Management Team**  
**DRAFT OFFICIAL MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, May 26, 2021**  
**Minutes: Melissa Haskin, BPA (contractor, FLUX Resources)**

Today's TMT meeting was held via conference call and webinar, chaired by Doug Baus, Corps, and facilitated by Emily Stranz, DS Consulting. See the end of these minutes for a list of attendees.

**1. Review of 5/12 Official Minutes**

The May 12 official minutes and summary were approved with no additional edits.

**2. Weekly Native Non-Salmonids GBT Report**

Baus directed the TMT to a Weekly Native Non-Salmonids GBT Report for May 17-20, available on the TMT website. The data are posted for transparency as the Action Agencies coordinate with Oregon and Washington to meet state water quality requirements. There have been no changes in the criteria that would impact spill operations. In the event there is, the Corps will coordinate with the TMT. The Corps will continue to post GBT monitoring reports to the TMT website under each meeting's agenda through the end of this year's spring spill season.

**3. John Day Dam Operations**

Aaron Marshall, Corps, updated the TMT on John Day Dam operations. As discussed in March, there was a new operation at John Day this year. The new high pool operation aims to deter Caspian tern nesting at Blalock Islands on the Columbia River near the Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge by raising the minimum forebay elevation to 264.5 feet from April 10 to June 1. The normal maximum elevation of 266.5 feet remains in effect. Starting June 2, the pool will begin to transition to its minimum irrigation pool (MIP). It will reach that level by June 5, which is 10 days earlier than required in the 2020 BiOp. This operation was coordinated with BPA, NOAA, the Corps, USFWS, and project staff. The project will remain in MIP through August 31, operating between 262.5–264.5 feet. Charles Morrill, WA, remarked that the earlier timing of may benefit fish, particularly steelhead and sockeye.

**4. SOR Libby Dam Releases for Sturgeon and Bull Trout**

David Bogema, Corps, brought the TMT up-to-speed on Libby Dam operations. A presentation is available on the TMT website. Due to an emergency line outage at the dam, powerhouse capacity has been limited to ~20 kcfs. This will be maintained through May 30. Bogema noted that the overall sturgeon volume will be the same (0.8 maf) due to this modification, but the operation will be extended by two days (to June 4 instead of June 2).

The Corps is evaluating the sturgeon response to this modified operation and will update the TMT as information becomes available.

Greg Hoffman, Corps NWS, noted that at Bonners Ferry, temperatures have not hit 50 degrees F and fish had not yet been detected upstream of Bonners Ferry. Early next week there may be

some movement and change in temperatures due to decreased discharge from Libby Dam, increased air temperatures, and increased tributary inflow

**5. Other**

Sheri Sears, Colville Tribe, noted that the STP forecast shows Grand Coulee flows dipping from 114 kcfs to 86 kcfs on May 27 and remaining there for 3 days, which would put flow at McNary below 200 kcfs. She asked if this forecast is accurate and, if so, if the flows could be flattened out. Tony Norris, BPA, noted that the STP is a single-trace method and thus not reliable, especially in spring when forecasts rapidly change due to runoff and weather. He noted that BPA does have some weekend flexibility to adjust flows to 80% of the previous day’s average. The model could be taking that into account, he noted.

**Today’s Attendees:**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>TMT Representative</b>
Army Corps of Engineers	Doug Baus (Chair), Lisa Wright, Julie Ammann
Bonneville Power Administration	Tony Norris, Scott Bettin, Eve James
Bureau of Reclamation	Joel Fenolio
NOAA Fisheries	Trevor Conder
US Fish & Wildlife Service	Dave Swank
Washington	Charles Morrill
Oregon	Erick Van Dyke
Idaho	Jonathan Ebel
Montana	Brian Marotz
Nez Perce Tribe	Jay Hesse
Umatilla Tribe/CRITFC	Absent
Colville Tribe	Sheri Sears
Warm Springs Tribe	Absent
Kootenai Tribe	Absent
Spokane Tribe	Absent

**Other Attendees (non-TMT members):**

- Corps – Alexis Mills, Aaron Marshall, Dan Turner, David Bogema, Greg Hoffman
- BPA – Melissa Haskin (CONTR, FLUX Resources, Notetaker)
- DS Consulting – Emily Stranz (Facilitator), Colby Mills
- Portland General Electric – Ruth Burris
- Clatskanie Peoples Utility District – Ian Bledsoe
- NPCC – Leslie Bach
- FPC – Brandon Chockley