

## COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

June 8, 2022

Facilitator's Summary

Facilitation Team: Emily Stranz & Colby Mills, 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; it is not intended to be the "record" of the meeting. Official minutes can be found on the TMT website: <http://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/agendas/2022/>. Suggested edits for the summary are welcome and can be sent to Colby at [colby@dsconsult.co](mailto:colby@dsconsult.co).*

**Review Meeting Summaries & Minutes** – TMT Members finalized the official meeting minutes from the May 11 and 18 meetings, and the facilitator's summary from the June 1 meeting. A minor edit was made to the May 18 facilitator's summary in Montana's polling rationale.

**Spill Operations Update** – Tony Norris, BPA, provided an update on BPA's ability to achieve the 8-hour performance standard spill blocks at Lower Granite for adult fish passage. BPA has been storing during the performance standard spill blocks to achieve required spill levels, but high flows and upstream limits at the Lewiston gauge are leading to a lack of storage space in the pool, which has necessitated an interruption in the spill blocks. Yesterday, for example, had 2 of the 8 hours later in the afternoon. BPA anticipates these conditions will persist until Snake River flows drop off (within a couple of weeks). Other projects have been able to maintain the 8-hour spill blocks in the morning and are pooling during those hours. Tony noted that flows are approaching peaks on the Columbia as well, and that lack of market spill is likely in the coming weekend.

### *Questions & Discussion Points:*

- Tom Lorz, Umatilla Tribes/CRITFC, asked if BPA had considered an adaptive management shift in operations at Lower Granite to transition to 30-40% spill during performance standard hours (instead of a 20 kcfs spill target) to help alleviate filling the pool beyond MOP?
  - Tony noted that BPA is following FOP operations and unless there is consensus on a request to change operations based on conditions, they will continue to do so.
- Jay Hesse, Nez Perce Tribe, reiterated previous FPAC recommendations that if 8-hours of performance standard spill (PSS) cannot be achieved in the morning, there is no need to fulfill remaining hours in the afternoon. Trevor Conder, NOAA, commented that morning hours of PSS are important, and NOAA is interested in finding alternative operations before breaking up morning performance hours.
- Erick Van Dyke, OR, noted that from ODFW's perspective, operations have and continue to be operational and power-centric, rather than in the best interest for fish; ODFW does not feel that the PSS is biologically based.
- Tony noted that downstream projects are being driven by operations at Lower Granite and Little Goose. He also noted that any alternative would need to fit with the objective of adult passage and be nimble enough not to cause another problem elsewhere.
- Jay noted that his analysis show that this condition exists when flows are above 100 kcfs (varies based on project); for Lower Granite 125-185 kcfs; Little Goose 103-149 kcfs; and Lower Monumental 132-209 kcfs. Flow projections in those ranges are expected to persist for roughly the next week to 14 days, depending on weather events.

Generally, Fish Managers were interested in exploring options to support both upstream adult and downstream juvenile passage conditions by:

1. Reducing large fluctuations in flows;

2. Limit ponding above MOP as much as possible at Lower Granite, Lower Monumental, and Little Goose; and,
3. Keeping morning 8-hour PSS blocks intact.

The Action Agencies agreed to discuss management options internally and coordinate internally with their policy and legal teams, as a change in operation would be a variation from the Term Sheet and FOP. That said, a change could possibly be implemented and would require support from Salmon Managers along with a clarified recommendation for coordination.

- **ACTION:** The AAs will consider options internally, reaching out to Jonathan Ebel as needed for additional input from FPAC.
- **ACTION:** The TMT will meet on Friday, June 10, at 10:00 AM to revisit options for operations.

**Official Water Supply Forecasts** – Joel Fenolio, Reclamation, reported the official June residual water supply forecast for Hungry Horse Dam. Reclamation is managing the delayed runoff; June through July residual is 1,120 kaf, or 127% of average. April through August and May through September volumes are significantly lower due to well-below average stream flow totals that pushed snowpack and runoff into June. Minimum flows should be peaking at Columbia Falls towards the end of the month (if no significant rainstorms).

Doug Baus, Corps, reported official June water supply forecasts for Corps of Engineers projects:

- **The Dalles:** NWRFC April to August volume forecast is 88 maf, or 99% of average;
- **Lower Granite:** NWRFC April to July volume forecast is 18 maf, or 89% of average;
- **Libby:** Corps NWS June runoff forecast is 6,276 kaf, or 103% of average; and
- **Dworshak:** Corps NWW June runoff forecast is 2,397 kaf, or 97% of average.

**Treaty Fishing SOR** – Kyle Dittmer, CRITFC, presented SOR 2022 C-1 (posted on the TMT website) for the summer 2022 treaty fishing season. The request on behalf of CRITFC Tribes is to operate Bonneville and The Dalles pools within a 1.5-foot band and the John Day pool within a 2-foot band from June 16 at 0600 hours to June 18 at 1800 hours, June 20 at 0600 hours to June 24 at 1800 hours, and June 27 at 0600 hours to July 1 at 1800 hours for summer fishery.

Kyle noted that the fish forecast is up from last year, and the Tribes are planning for a 3-week initial period in order to take advantage of more fishing on the front end of the period. The fishery could end early or at the end of the season on July 31. CRITFC will have net flights each week, as they continue to experiment with special equipment for more accurate counts; Kyle expected data turnaround to the Corps' RCC office to be between 1-7 days. CRITFC will continue to work closely with the Corps and BPA in real time.

Kyle reported that the Tribes will be selling fish in their usual places (about 50% of normal due to COVID-19), and pointed TMT Members and the public to the CRITFC website for further details.

In response to a query from Erick Van Dyke, OR, Aaron Marshall, Corps, reported that if no SOR was presented, the Corps would be operating outside of the requested ranges: Bonneville would implement a 5-foot range, The Dalles within a 3-foot range, and John Day within a 2-foot range (MIP period). He also noted that the Corps does not expect any additional impacts associated with the SOR. Doug reported that the Corps will implement the SOR as requested.

**Upper Snake Flow Augmentation** – Joel made note of the unusual spring, including runoff, rain, and temperatures. Initial total flow augmentation prospects were estimated in the 220-250 kaf range. Although

Reclamation still does not expect to hit 427 kaf this year for upper Snake River flow augmentation, given the wet conditions and account refill so far in the Boise and Payette rivers, estimates have risen to between 300-350 kaf of flow augmentation.

Currently, Reclamation is planning to release 40 kaf out of the Boise for flow augmentation (upwards of 55 kaf or higher, if Anderson Powerhead space can be filled); starting tomorrow with 500 cfs, 300 cfs on Friday, and another 500 cfs on Monday, with a total of about 1,400 cfs coming out by next week. Reclamation does not anticipate flood operations on the Boise, and the intent is to get as much water as possible out prior to July 1, for the July 4 weekend. Reclamation will be coordinating the path forward with the Nez Perce Tribe, Idaho, and NOAA on Monday.

In terms of the Upper Snake, Joel was not sure of the exact number for Palisades Powerhead water; operations will ramp down Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday to expend that volume.

**Questions or Comments from Members of the Public** – There were no questions or comments from members of the public.

**An unscheduled TMT meeting will be on Friday, June 10, at 10:00 AM.  
The next regularly scheduled TMT meeting is on June 15 at 9:00 AM.**

**Columbia River Regional Forum**  
**Technical Management Team**  
**OFFICIAL MINUTES**  
**June 8, 2022**

**Minutes: Melissa Haskin, BPA (contractor, CorSource Technology Group, LLC)**

Today's TMT meeting was held via conference call and webinar, chaired by Doug Baus, Corps, and facilitated by Emily Stranz, DS Consulting. A list of today's attendees is available at the end of these minutes.

Much of today's conversation centered around spill operations in the Lower Snake River. After lengthy discussion, the group decided to take discussions offline. Fish managers will circle up to discuss recommendations and the Action Agencies will circle up with their policy and legal folks to discuss what options are available to aid fish passage and reduce the magnitude of fluctuations in river flow. The group will reconvene Friday at 10 a.m. to discuss potential options.

### **1. Review of Meeting Summaries**

The 5/11 and 5/18 meeting minutes were approved with no additional edits as well as the 6/1 facilitator's summary. Brian Marotz, MT, requested an edit to a previously approved facilitator's summary. Specifically, he requested the words "conserve water," be added to Montana's 5/18 polling response regarding SOR #2022-4. The request was approved with no objection and Emily Stranz, DS Consulting will revise the passage to include the edit.

### **2. Spill Operations Update**

Tony Norris, BPA, updated the group on spill operations. High flows have made it challenging for BPA to meet the 8-hour performance standard (PS) spill blocks for adult passage at Lower Granite Dam. Currently, BPA is storing during PS spill blocks to achieve spill targets. The high flows have resulted in a lack of space in the pool partially due to limitations at the Lewiston gauge for flood risk management. BPA is adding PS spill where it can. For instance, yesterday the agency was able to achieve a 2-hour block in the afternoon. This will persist until flows in the Snake River drop off. Like the Snake River system, the Columbia River system is also hitting peaks. This may lead to lack of market spill across the weekend. BPA may run out of room to store water this weekend. BPA is following the spring spill table footnote c in the FOP, which dictates how and when the agency can store water to achieve PS spill. BPA must also work to maintain the settlement agreement noted in the FOP. The agency is drafting water out each day prior to PS spill per the agreement.

Fish managers discussed options for managing the situation, including changing Lower Granite and Lower Monumental PS spill from a flat spill amount to allow projects to go higher up to a target percent, like other projects. BPA is open to this change but would need to hear a request from fish managers, for instance through an SOR. Norris noted that BPA can work with fish managers to develop a plan that is operationally implementable during high flows. He added that in the event the PS spill operation is changed to allow spill up to a percent, there is still a possibility for lack of market conditions, which may reduce the need to store above MOP to achieve spill. Fish managers expressed an interest in exploring how changing to a percentage would affect the region, for instance if it would result in ponding and how it would affect

downstream projects like Ice Harbor. NOAA indicated that they were not interested to seeing changes to Little Goose PS spill operation and maintaining the FOP operation at Little Goose was a high priority.

Jay Hesse, Nez Perce, brought up previous coordination between NOAA and BPA, noting that during that process, some fish managers had supplied written recommendations regarding PS spill in the afternoon and evening hours and that he sees it as unnecessary. The recommendations were dropped from the coordination, said Hesse, but Hesse notes they still stand, in his opinion. He does not think that afternoon blocks are necessary to maintain adult fish passage. Trevor Conder, NOAA, shared that NOAA strongly believes morning hours are crucial to fish passage and that afternoon hours are also helpful in passing adults, but that his agency also realizes the difficulty of this situation. Erick Van Dyke, OR, noted that the 8-hour operation was never meant for fish, but is instead focused on power. NOAA disagrees and believes that the PS spill is important to adult passage given the high spill levels during gas cap spill.

Hesse also noted that it is of importance to him to reduce within-day swings in project outflow. He commented that there can be swings in flow of 100 kcfs at Ice Harbor due to the ponding occurring upstream. Jonathan Ebel, ID, agrees that the pulses of water headed downriver may have unintended consequences. Norris noted that the fixed blocks at Lower Granite, Little Goose and Lower Monumental decrease inflows into Ice Harbor as those projects store above MOP. As the upper 3 projects are drafted back to MOP across the afternoon and night, that increases inflows into Ice Harbor causing the large swings in outflows as Ice Harbor maintains a relatively flat pool for MOP.

Conversation continued as the Action Agencies and fish managers talked through the technical details of making a change to spill levels. The Action Agencies asked for clarity on which issues the fish managers would like to see addressed. Items fish managers expressed interest in addressing were limiting ponding above MOP (especially at Lower Monumental and Lower Granite) to keep the 8-hr blocks of PS spill intact and limiting considerable swings in flow before and after the PS spill blocks. Lorz noted that these swings cause poor tailrace conditions. Chris Peery, Corps, added that the Corps Walla Walla District is seeing a delay in passage at Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, and Little Goose but not Lower Granite. He thinks these delays are being partially driven by operations at Lower Granite and Little Goose, which result in large flow swings at Ice Harbor.

While eventually the flows will subside and the issue will go away, current projections show flows remaining at or near their current levels for the next two weeks, noted Hesse. It would be helpful for the Action Agencies to have an operation on the table that they could both execute and track, noted Julie Ammann, Corps.

Overall, many agreed that the discussions should be taken offline so that fish managers can weigh options and the Action Agencies can check with policy and legal to see if the option suggested – changing PS spill at Lower Granite and Lower Monumental from a flat spill amount to allow projects to spill higher, up to a target percent – is possible. An additional TMT meeting has been scheduled for Friday 6/10 at 10 am to further discuss the matter. Between now and then fish managers will meet to discuss recommendations and the Action Agencies will meet internally to discuss options. The Action Agencies will direct any questions or clarifications to

Ebel in his role as FPAC chair. Norris noted that BPA is interested in finding a solution that fits the objectives of the fish managers but that is not so specific that it causes other issues. Flexibility could be important as the Action Agencies manage the high flows.

### **3. Water Supply Forecast**

Doug Baus, Corps, and Joel Fenolio, Reclamation, updated the TMT on the official June water supply forecast, which was released on June. The forecasts reflects some late runoff:

- Hungry Horse: June-July: 1,120 kaf (127% of average) and May-September 1,910 kaf (107% of average). Forecasts that start in April and May are still lower due to the lower than average stream flows that pushed snowpack and runoff into June. The peak should hit at Columbia Falls towards the end of the month, unless there is additional precipitation.
- The Dalles Dam: April-August, 88 maf (99% of average)
- Lower Granite: April-July, 18 maf (89%)
- Libby Dam: April-August: 6,276 kaf (103%)
- Dworshak Dam: April-July: 2,397 kaf (97% of average)

### **4. Treaty Fishing Update**

Kyle Dittmer, CRITFC, presented SOR 20221-C1 (posted on TMT website) submitted by CRITFC to the Corps, Reclamation, and BPA this week. The SOR requests to operate the Lower Columbia pools for the summer 2022 treaty fishery. Specifications include operating Bonneville and The Dalles pools within a 1.5-foot band and John Day within a 2-foot band during the time periods of June 16 at 0600 hours through June 18 at 1800 hours; June 20 at 0600 hours to June 24 at 1800, and June 27 at 0600 hours through July 1 at 1800 hours.

The run sizes this year are expected to be above average for adult summer Chinook in the Upper Columbia (~56,300) and below average for sockeye in the Upper Columbia (198,700). Typically, the tribes start by asking for a 2-week period. Following that, they often put in a request for an additional period. This year, the tribes would like to fish more on the front end of the season.

CRITFC will be running a series of net flights. Over the past few years, it has used a camera attached to the bottom of an aircraft. It can take 1 to 7 days to get the information to the Corps.

Emily Stranz, DS Consulting, offered the TMT the opportunity to poll on the SOR to follow the general SOR process. No TMT members expressed interest in polling. This particular SOR has not been polled on historically.

Van Dyke asked how the projects would be operated if the SOR was not implemented. Without the SOR, Bonneville would be operated to a 5-foot band; the Dalles would be operated to a 3-foot band and; John Day would be at a 2-foot band (the same as requested in the SOR) due to the minimum irrigation pool period. Kirk Truscott, Colville Tribe, asked what the effects of implementing the SOR will be. Marshall does not expect any potential impacts.

The Corps will implement the SOR as written.

**5. Snake River Flow Augmentation**

Initially, the prospects for flow augmentation this year were bleak, with initial April estimates at 220-250 acre-feet. However, delayed runoff due to cold temperatures has improved conditions. While Reclamation still expects to miss the 427 acre-feet mark, it is now estimating that it will be able to recover 300-350 acre-feet of flow augmentation.

In the Boise system, Reclamation is planning to release 40 kaf, but that may creep up to 50 kaf, depending on conditions. Releases in the Boise starting at about 1300 cfs is planned for releases next week: ~500 cfs tomorrow, ~300 cfs Friday, and ~500 cfs Monday. It is aiming to get as much water out as possible prior to July 1.

At Palisades, Reclamation will be ramping down Monday through Wednesday.

**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
Bureau of Reclamation	Joel Fenolio
NOAA Fisheries	Trevor Conder, Kelsey Swieca
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	Tom Lorz
Colville Tribe	Kirk Truscott
Warm Springs Tribe	Jen Graham
Kootenai Tribe	
Spokane Tribe	

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

Corps – Aaron Marshall, Alexis Mills, Dan Turner, Chris Peery, Catherine Dudgeon, Scott St. John, Eric Chow, Michelle Yuen

DS Consulting – Emily Stranz (Facilitator), Colby Mills

BPA – Melissa Haskin (Contractor with CorSource Technology Group)

Clearing Up – K.C. Mehaffey

Oregon DEQ – David Gruen

Snohomish PUD – Jesse Preuss, Mike Shapley

FPC – Erin Cooper

Umatilla Tribe/CRITFC – Kyle Dittmer

Public – Charles Pace

Yakama Nation Fisheries – Tom Iverson

Portland General Electric – Ruth Burris

