

## COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

April 23, 2025

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:*

*<https://public.crohms.org/tmt/agendas/2025/>. 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 approved the official meeting minutes and facilitator's summary from the April 16 TMT meeting.

**SOR 2024-1 - Cease Smolt Transport at Lower Monumental in 2024** – Erick Van Dyke, ODFW/FPAC Chair, shared an FPAC request to close the loop on the May 16, 2024, SOR to cease smolt transport at Lower Monumental Dam (LMN) ([SOR 2024-1](#)). TMT deliberated on the SOR last season, and it was then elevated to the Regional Implementation Oversight Group (RIOG). Erick emphasized the purpose of this discussion was to close the loop in the SOR process for TMT. Doug Baus, Corps/TMT Chair, noted that the [SOR disposition](#) has been updated to reflect the Action Agencies' (AA) decision after the RIOG discussion.

Jay Hesse, Nez Perce Tribe, offered further context on the SOR and resulting AA decision from the Nez Perce Tribe's perspective: the Corps decided to continue transportation at LMN despite recommendations from the Tribal and State fish managers to cease transportation at LMN for the remainder of the season. The decision included adjustments to reduce spill when fish barges traverse the tailrace area, while also increasing generation to mitigate flow fluctuations downstream.

It was noted that the link on the TMT website does not include all the information that was presented to RIOG. Charles Morrill, WDFW, requested that the full set of RIOG meeting slides be posted to the TMT website. There was recognition that the RIOG is not a public forum and typically it is the responsibility of RIOG members to provide information back to the TMT representatives; RIOG meeting materials are not typically linked via the public TMT website.

- **ACTION:** NOAA will look into the request for posting additional information/presentations from the RIOG meeting on the TMT website.

**Clearwater Basin Snow Flight** – Jessika Solleder, Corps, reported on the first snow flight of the season in the Clearwater Basin, conducted on April 10. She shared a detailed [StoryMap](#) which provides further information and photos. The flight was coordinated in collaboration with the USDA NRCS Idaho Snow Survey team and included visits to Cool Creek, Crater Meadows, and Hemlock Butte. Data collected during snow flights are used to enhance water management's ability to forecast water supply, improving risk-based decision-making regarding releases from Dworshak (DWR) reservoir. Jessika emphasized that the snow density from site surveys was "ripe," indicating favorable conditions for runoff and potential water supply. The next snow flight is expected around the first week of June.

### Operations Review

Reservoirs – Chris Runyan, Reclamation, reported on Bureau of Reclamation projects:

- **Hungry Horse (HGH):** Midnight elevation at the project was 3,522.2 feet (37.8 feet from full), with inflows of 3.9 kcfs and outflows of 0.86 kcfs. Outflow will be increased to 2.5 kcfs for the weekend, with plans to raise to around 5,000 kcfs with the start of refill next week.

- The reservoir received near average temperatures and about 1.2 inches of precipitation over the last week, which fell as rain at the dam and as snow in most of the watershed, contributing to snowpack.
- The 10-day forecast indicates near-average temperatures, with April precipitation so far at 131% of average (improving water supply).
- Snowpack levels are at 116% of average in the South Fork, 94% in the North Fork, and 84% in the Middle Fork.
- The official April through July forecast at the project was 85% of average, with a projected 10% increase for May through July.
- **Grand Coulee (GCL):** Midnight elevation was 1,269.3 feet (20.7 feet from full), with inflows of 90.4 kcfs and outflows of 115.6 kcfs.
  - The reservoir has drafted around 4.7 feet since last week and is currently drafting down to the April 30 FRM elevation of 1,265.2 feet; once FRM elevation is reached, storage will be managed there until the Corps calls for initial control flow and the reservoir will begin refill to meet McNary (MCN) flow targets.

Chris provided an update on flow augmentation in the upper Snake River. The current estimate is 470 kaf out of projects above Hells Canyon. It is too early to know specifics on timing (most projects are still in FRM operations); at this point, Reclamation estimates June for the Boise and Payette, and potentially May or June for volume past Milner.

The Corps clarified that flows at MCN are projected (120-day STP) to peak around 250 kcfs and the previously forecast flow changes at beginning of May have been smoothed to be more realistic, although flows remain uncertain at this point with potential weather changes. Dennis Moore, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CTCR), asked if there had been reconsideration of FRM targets due to the drying forecast, and whether there was a potential need to draft more from GCL to meet MCN flows. Aaron Marshall, Corps, confirmed that no changes are expected at this point for GCL. The Corps will continue to monitor and assess the situation project by project, but at this point do not see a compelling reason to reissue new FRM targets prior to the next regularly scheduled target.

Leah Hamilton, Corps, reported on Corps of Engineers projects:

- **Libby (LIB):** Inflows of 7 kcfs and outflows of 4 kcfs. The project is starting to refill, and the sturgeon pulse for May will be determined by the May water supply forecast (WSF).
- **Albeni Falls (ALF):** Inflows in the low 30s kcfs and outflows at 25 kcfs. The project is managing flows for refill, targeting an elevation of 2,055 feet by the end of the month. Additional project updates on refill and the spillway gate replacement project can be found on the Seattle District's [website](#).
- **DWR:** Current elevation is 1,545.3 feet, with inflows around 8-9 kcfs and outflows of 10 kcfs.
- **Lower Granite (LWG):** Outflows are in the mid-70s kcfs; the project is in MOP operations with no reported issues.
- **MCN:** Outflows are around 200 kcfs with an elevation of 337.7 feet.
- **BON:** Outflows are around 225 kcfs with an elevation of 73.7 feet.

*Water Quality* – Alexis Mills, Corps, reported that spill caps have only been hit at LWG and John Day (JDA) so far this season; spill caps were raised last week. TDG values are currently below water quality standards (WQS) at all projects.

Alexis addressed recent concerns regarding spill reductions for navigation at JDA. She explained that navigators reported issues during high spill conditions (tugs breaking free from barges), so a directive was issued to project staff to allow navigators to request spill reductions up to 100 kcfs if they believed river conditions to be unsafe for navigation. Following the directive there was an increase in requests for spill reductions, some of which were

during low spill periods. The Corps refined directions to maintain a minimum spill level of 150 kcfs during spill reductions for navigation as this level is generally understood to provide safe navigation conditions at the project. The Corps is working to refine the flow levels further to limit spill reductions as much as possible while allowing for safe navigation. Spill reductions for navigation are reported in monthly FOP implementation reports, which are posted on the third Friday of the following month.

Jay inquired about changes in conditions that are causing navigation concerns at 150 kcfs of spill, previously the passage concerns were during spill of 230 kcfs. Erick inquired about occurrence of requests for spill reduction in the past. Alexis noted that the Corps is working to refine the 150 kcfs threshold. She also noted that typically navigation issues arise during min-gen when the project is spilling to the gas cap, and that this year gas caps are being achieved earlier than last year due to higher flow conditions. The Corps is also considering options for a safe navigation spill pattern.

After some discussion and clarifications, Fish Managers emphasized the need for ongoing dialogue between AAs and Fish Managers regarding spill operations, navigation safety, and alternatives to reducing spill during navigation. Jay noted that at JDA there are only 8 hours of gas cap spill and from a fish perspective it is important to make every effort possible to maintain spill during those hours. Erick noted that it would be helpful to better understand details of the barge and navigation concerns. Fish Managers requested that these issues be discussed in more detail as soon as possible at a special FPOM meeting or within a FPOM subcommittee.

- **ACTION:** The Corps' FPOM representatives, Chris Peery and Nick Bertrand, will work to schedule an FPOM session prior to the regularly scheduled meeting to discuss spill and navigation operations at JDA.

*Fish* – Kelsey Swieca, NOAA, reported that yearling Chinook passage has been fluctuating throughout the system, with the passage index averaging about 16,000/day at LWG, 11,000 at MCN, and 36,000 at BON over the past two weeks. High numbers of sub-yearlings passed BON a week ago mostly due to large hatchery releases above the project. Steelhead and sockeye are generally increasing throughout the system. No chum have been observed over the project for several days, similar to last year.

Adult spring Chinook and steelhead are entering the system, now moving through all the mainstem projects. At BON to-date: Chinook are at 55% of the 10-year average, jack Chinook are at 249%, and steelhead are at 46%. In the Snake River at Ice Harbor Dam (ICH) to-date: Chinook are at 41%, jack Chinook at 466%, and steelhead at 134%. It was noted that when making relative comparisons to 10-year averages, these averages are not the management goals and from a fish perspective are substantially below the overall goals for returns. Additionally, the YTD can be skewed due to different migration timings over a range of years.

Kelsey noted there was an outage of the PIT Tag Information System (PTAGIS) for some days starting over the weekend, leading to intermittent DART system outages and data lags. The issue has been resolved and the overall system is back up and running.

Dave Swank, USFWS, had nothing to report for adult lamprey yet; small numbers of juveniles are showing up at mainstem dams, which is not unusual for this time of year.

*Power System* – Tony Norris, BPA, reported no significant changes or updates regarding the power system; water is in the river and temperatures are mild.

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

**The next scheduled TMT meeting will be on April 30, 2025, at 9:00 AM.**

**Columbia River Regional Forum  
Technical Management Team  
OFFICIAL MINUTES  
Wednesday, April 23, 2025  
Minutes: Andrea Ausmus, BPA (contractor, CorSource Technology Group)**

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.

**1. Review Summary and Minutes**

a. April 16 Summary and Minutes

- Approved

**2. SOR 2024-1 - Cease Smolt Transport at Lower Monumental in 2024 – *Erick Van Dyke, OR/FPAC Chair, and Doug Baus, Corps-NWD***

a. D2024-1

- [2024 System Operational Requests / TMT](#)

b. Fish Managers' Explanation – *Van Dyke (speaking as FPAC Chair)*

- 2024 Fish Managers (FM) had a request about LMN Transport Cessation that had gone through a lot of process.
  - RIOG process recently provided a response to the SOR.
  - Hope for today to close the loop in the SOR process for TMT.
- FM requested it to be put on the agenda:
  - FM requested that the disposition be updated with the actual information and dates that this particular SOR went through.

c. Action Agency (AA) Response - *Baus*

- Included the AA decision from May 2024.
- Baus said that this was a procedural update.
  - Baus said that they had coordinated the SOR, and it went to RIOG.
  - There was a request to update disposition to reflect the decisions made at RIOG.
    - Added a hyperlink [D2024-1](#) – This hyperlink is connected to the information associated with the decision.
    - This should address the procedural aspect of updating the SOR to reflect the entire process from the start to the finish.

Charles Morrill, WA, asked if the documents would be posted to the TMT website as part of the notes.

Stranz showed Morrill the hyperlink, [D2024-1](#), and told him that was where the SOR disposition could be found, which is on the TMT website. She added that the RIOG documents are linked within the disposition.

Jay Hesse, Nez Perce, said that he would like to provide context so that folks were not wondering what the content is of the RIOG decision, or he said more accurately the Corps' decision on the RIOG discussion. He said that if you followed that link what you would see is a decision memo and the supporting biological information by the Corps of Engineers that takes an action to continue transportation at LMN. Hesse said that decision was in opposition to the of the State and Tribal FM that were engaged in that discussion. He said that he highlighted that transportation will continue there and with some adjustments to reduce spill when the fish barge has to traverse the tailrace area and during the spill reduction the generation increased in an effort to reduce flow fluctuations downstream. He said that he wanted to highlight that it was the Corps of Engineers decision and what is not well documented in that is that it was not a unanimous decision, and Tribal and State recommendations were to cease transportation.

Morrill said that the link shows the Corps' decision. He said that he was speaking to was not necessarily the Corps' decision and their write up of that. He said that he was hoping that the documents submitted to RIOG for the discussion around this issue that raised the points from NOAA, the Corps, and the agencies and Tribes, that that information would be available for TMT to review.

Baus said that he could get back to Morrill on that request. He said that the Corps had got the request yesterday afternoon and they did their best to understand what the request was and what information that was to be provided. He said that he would look into his request. He said that if there is additional information that the Corps will post they will put it at that same link.

Morrill thanked Baus.

Stranz said that there is more there were some slides from NOAA in the disposition.

Van Dyke thanked Baus for putting it on the agenda and for providing the detail that he did. He said that he believed that it was what they were asking for.

Stranz said to follow up on what Morrill was asking for. She said that if Morrill had a specific document that he thought needed to be posted it might be helpful to email that over to Baus so that he is aware of what he is wanting on there.

Morrill said that he would confer with Baus and make sure that the information that was provided for the Senior Hydro Team as well as the RIOG information. He said that they can follow up with Baus offline to make sure that information is available.

Hesse said that he appreciated Baus posting the decision memo and the associated NOAA slides. He said that the associated slides are not the entirety of the RIOG discussion. He said that he thought there probably needs to be some coordination on how the RIOG materials are communicated to the public. He said whether or not that will be facilitated

through the TMT site. He said that Morrill's question was how to document the RIOG discussion. That issue has been raised as something that needs refinement going forward and the TMT site is a place for that. He said that he would like folks to think through whether that full RIOG discussion would be posted here or elsewhere, just for this group's education or information, what is posted now does not represent the entirety of the Senior Hydro Team technical discussions or the RIOG dialogue that occurred leading up to the Corps' decision memo that was posted.

Morrill said that he thought that Hesse addressed that well. He said that he shared a similar belief that all the information that led to this decision should be available. The TMT website appears to be a reasonable place to post that information and if need be there should be a discussion about where it is best suited for availability to all.

Jonathan Ebel, ID, said that Hesse addressed his comment more eloquently than he could have.

Kelsey Swieca, NOAA, said that from NMFS' perspective, she thought that TMT should have the conversation about where to post the RIOG materials and whether it makes the most sense to post them associated with last year's SOR or document them in some other way. She said that she would be happy to have the conversation. She said that she thought TMT should, but it does require conversation. She said that she was looking forward to that.

Stranz asked where is the best place and who are the best folks to have that conversation. She said that she thought that RIOG was chaired by NOAA.

Swieca said that was correct.

Stranz asked if it made sense for NOAA to have that conversation with the Corps and other TMT members. She said that we had heard some interest from TMT members, but she had not necessarily heard recommendation of preference for where those documents are posted. She said that it seemed like we have the TMT website as an option, and she did not know if there were any other options that need to be considered.

Swieca said that she thought she would need to ask her RIOG representative what had historically been done in this process. She said that it was her understanding that typically a RIOG decision and the supporting materials are distributed by email and not documented on a public site. With that said, she could not say for sure if that is the historical trend. She asked to let her check in and then potentially TMT could have this conversation at a process meeting or if it needs to happen sooner there could be coordination by email and think about what makes the most sense.

Stranz asked for clarification from Hesse, Ebel, and Morrill. She asked if they are all specifically requesting that those materials be provided publicly.

Morrill said that he certainly was. He said that in an interest of transparency over the discussions and the work that was put into looking at the available information by the Tribes and agencies, as well as providing complete transparency on the information that was provided to RIOG and what they based their decision on.

Ebel said he guessed it was a RIOG decision on how\_ or their discussion on how they want to or if they want to change how they are distributing or making documents public. He said that it did seem to be a little bit unbalanced in terms of the information there.

### 3. Clearwater Basin Snow Flight – *Jessika Solleder, Corps-NWW*

#### a. Story Map Link

- [Clearwater Basin Snow Flight](#)

#### b. Snow Flight

- First snow flight of the season was on April 10.
- Attached to the agenda and above is a link to the StoryMap detailing their findings and what the day looked like for them.
- Shout out to the USDA and NRCS Idaho snow survey team.
  - Coordinated the flight with them.
  - Excellent to work with.
- SNOTEL locations visited.
  - Cool Creek
  - Crater Meadows
  - Hemlock Butte
- Evidence of snow being ripe.
  - All details can be found via the link.

Stranz thanked Solleder and commented on the really neat way to display the information for everyone.

| *from Charles Morrill to everyone: 9:21 AM*

| *A thank you for the details and pictures of the flight*

Stranz asked Solleder if she had a sense of when their next snow flight would be.

Solleder responded it would be around the first week of June.

### 4. Operations Review

#### a. Reservoirs

*Reclamation – Chris Runyan*

- Hungry Horse Dam
  - Last Week Conditions:

- Over last week it was near average temperatures but below average minimum temperatures.
- HGH received three days of rain totaling about 1.2” of precipitation.
  - Fell as rain at the dam but snow in the majority of the watersheds.
  - Still building snowpack.
- Future Conditions:
  - Calling for near average temperatures
  - And a potential system moving in Saturday through Monday.
- April Precipitation: 131% of median
  - Improved water supply
- Snowpack
  - South Fork of Flathead 116% of median
  - North Fork of Flathead 91% of median
  - Middle Fork of Flathead 84% of median
- Official April – July: 85% of average
  - Projecting 10% increase in the forecast for this upcoming month
    - May – July will likely be ~10% higher.
- Inflows (4/22): 3.9 kcfs
- Outflows (4/22): 0.86 kcfs
- Midnight elevation: 3522.2 feet
  - From Full: 37.8 feet
    - Filling last few weeks.
  - Filled: 2.7 feet last week.
- Upcoming Operation: To meet FRM requirements HGH is increasing outflow on April 23 and 24 to get to 2.5 kcfs out before the weekend. Next week will be somewhere around 5 kcfs as HGH commences refill.
- Grand Coulee Dam
  - Inflows (4/22): 90.4 kcfs
  - Outflows (4/22): 115.6 kcfs
  - Midnight elevation: 1269.3 feet
    - Feet from Full: 20.7 feet
    - Drafted: 4.7 feet since last week
  - Operations: Drafting down to the April 30 FRM elevation of 1265.2 feet. Once GCL hits that they will manage storage at level until the Corps calls the initial control flow and the reservoir begins to refill and is operated to meet MCN flow targets.



- Flow Augmentation in the Upper Snake
  - Current Estimate is 470 kaf out of the Projects above Hells Canyon.
  - It is still too early to know specific timing because most Projects are still in FRM operations.
  - Best Guess:
    - Boise/Payette: June
    - Volume Past Milner: May or June

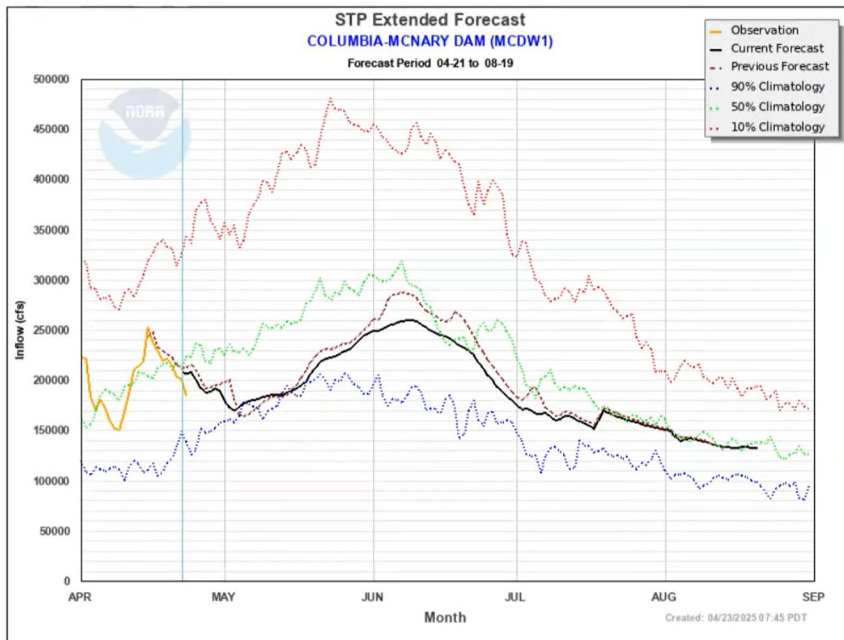
Morrill asked Runyan what his thoughts were right now on flows at MCN. He asked if Runyan thought the flows would drop off and be below 220 kcfs or if he thought that the picture was a little better for flows at MCN with flows at 220 kcfs.

Runyan said that when he looked at the STP it appeared that they were projecting to be above that. He said that he would have the Corps help him out on that question.

Leah Hamilton, Corps, referred to the 120-day STP.

#### COLUMBIA--MCNARY DAM

State: Oregon County: BENTON  
Latitude: 45 56' 25" North Longitude: 119 17' 52" West  
Elevation: 361 feet  
Supporting WFO: Pendleton



For Data Used In Plot

Hamilton showed how it compared to last week. She said that MCN would be getting up to 250 kcfs as the peak. She said that it is a little smoother at the beginning of May, which is more realistic than past STPs.

Morrill said the STP is still starting off early May at less than 220 kcfs and it has to get about ten days in before we approach 220 kcfs. He said that he was curious whether the latest information and updates suggested we might reach 220 kcfs sooner.

Hamilton said that we would have to wait and see how the weather plays out in the next few weeks to get more certainty about where those flows will be.

Dennis Moore, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CTCR), said last week there was a discussion about reconsidering some of the FRM targets and the potential for having to draft more from GCL to hit these MCN flows. He asked if there had been any continued discussion about that.

Aaron Marshall, Corps, said that for the Corps' Flood Risk Management Teams this is a busy time of year as we approach refill and start to watch runoffs and snow melt conditions. He said that they are continuing to reevaluate each day. He said that they are not seeing a compelling reason at the moment to release FRM guidance for the System, but they did have a drop on the Water Supply Forecast yesterday afternoon. He said that they have not had a chance to reevaluate that yet, but they will continue to track the conditions. He said that they have been discussing individual project operations and Marshall thought that they would get to that update. For DWR specifically, the Project will be transitioning to its Flood Control Refill Curve, so that is one adjustment that is being made at this time for Flood Risk Management given the decreasing Water Supply Forecast conditions.

Stranz said that discussions are happening, and the Corps is looking at it on a regular basis. She said that Moore had asked specifically about GCL. She said that she heard that there were no changes at this point to GCL and the Corps will keep an eye on it and assess Project by Project.

Marshall said that she was correct.

*Corps – Leah Hamilton, Corps*

- Libby Dam (Lake Koocanusa)
  - Inflows: ~7 kcfs
    - Will increase along with other Projects over the next week or two.
  - Outflows: 4 kcfs
  - Operations: LIB will hold the 4 kcfs for a little longer. LIB is starting to refill.
  - Waiting for May WSF to determine the sturgeon pulse.
- Albeni Falls (Lake Pend Oreille)
  - Inflows: Low 30 kcfs
  - Outflows: 25 kcfs
  - Operations: Starting to refill. ALF is changing flows regularly to manage refill.
  - April Target Elevation: 2055 feet
  - Seattle District has been posting regular and detailed updates on their [website](#) about ALF refill and spillway gate replacement project.
- Dworshak Dam
  - Midnight Elevation: 1545.3 feet

- Inflows: ~8 – 9 kcfs
    - Outflows: 10 kcfs
  - Lower Granite Dam
    - Midnight Elevation: 733.75 feet
    - Outflows: mid-70 kcfs
      - Flows should be rising in the next week or so.
    - MOP operation at all lower Snake projects. There have been no issues with LWG tailwater during MOP this year as in past years.
  - McNary Dam
    - Midnight Elevation: 337.7 feet
    - Inflows: ~200 kcfs
  - Bonneville Dam
    - Midnight Elevation: 73.7 feet
    - Inflows: ~225 kcfs
- b. Water Quality – *Alexis Mills, Corps*
- TDG
    - Only hit the spill cap at Lower Granite and John Day.
      - Spill cap at both projects were raised in the last week.
    - TDG 12-hr max values at the Forebays and the Tailraces are below the Water Quality Standard at all Projects.
- c. Concerns about Navigation at JDA – *Alexis Mills, Corps*
- The Corps has heard some concerns expressed regarding the spill reductions for navigation at John Day since the start of spill.
  - Fish Operations Plan (FOP)
    - Section 4.6. – Navigation Safety and Minimum Tailwater Elevations (FOP-15)
      - “Short-term adjustments in spill or minimum operating pool (MOP) elevations may be required at any of the fish passage projects to address navigation safety concerns.”
    - Over the first several days at JDA during the nighttime hours at gas cap, navigators reported instances where tugs broke free from barges and there were a couple near misses during those periods of high spill
    - Based on the spill levels during those instances direction was given to BPA and the Project staff that navigators could request a reduction in spill up to 100 kcfs if they believed river conditions inhibited safe navigation to or from the lock.
      - Distributed to navigators on April 18.

- Subsequent to the notice the Corps did see an increase in request for the maximum spill reduction.
- These reduction requests occasionally came in during periods of relatively low spills.
- In response to the increase in requests, the Corps refined directions to the Project and BPA that spill should not be reduced below 150 kcfs for the purposes of navigation
  - 150 kcfs is generally understood to provide safe navigation conditions at JDA.
  - RCC will continue to coordinate with the navigators and the Projects to determine if 150 kcfs is a safe spill level under all conditions.
- The Corps is exploring additional alternatives, including the potential to use safe navigation spill patterns. This may be brought up during a future FPOM meeting with the idea that a modified pattern may allow for higher spill levels that still provide safe navigation conditions.
- Instances where spill is reduced for navigation are reported in the monthly FOP implementation reports in the pre-coordinated operations table.
  - Caveat: the resolution of the reported instances is hourly and the spill reductions for spill navigation are typically less than an hour in duration.

Hesse said he appreciated the update. He repeated for clarification, he said what he had heard is that TMT can get a post-hoc summary in the FOP implementation reports. He asked Mills to remind him of how frequently they are posted.

Mills said that those are posted on the third Friday of the following month. They are posted monthly but it takes about three weeks to get them finalized. She said that if TMT ever looks at them and has questions to feel free to send her an email.

Hesse said great and followed up with a question. He said that it was their understanding that this might be a new issue with navigation challenges. He said that the FM were not familiar with this being an issue in the past when spill levels were above 150 kcfs. He asked if that was Mills' understanding as well and if so what had changed in the conditions that they are now creating problems.

Mills said that the Corps will continue to evaluate if 150 kcfs is an appropriate threshold for safe navigation under all flow conditions at John Day. The instances that occurred earlier this season were when we were at, or close to, the gas cap spill of ~230 kcfs that first weekend of spill. She said that was when the near misses were reported by the barge operators. She said what changed this year is that we hit the gas cap in April, when in previous years, flows in April had been too low for the project to reach the gas cap

Hesse recapped Mills. He said that she thought that this was just an occurrence in April and that it was occurring in past years, requests for spill reductions was occurring in the past years.

Mills said yes that the Corps had definitely seen this in past years as well. She said that it primarily comes up when John Day is at min-gen and spilling to the gas cap.

Hesse said he appreciated the update. He said that he thought that it was these types of operations that he thought required additional dialogue between the AA and the FM, understanding that the general comment is in FOP section 4.6 to accommodate those. Understanding when those are occurring in the magnitude, should be a dialogue. He said that he appreciated the update, and he hoped that AA and FM can continue talking about how to minimize those reductions and spill to the greatest extent possible.

Mills said that she appreciated the comments, and the Corps is also looking to minimize the reductions so they will continue to seek out opportunities to do so.

Van Dyke thanked Mills for adding this to the update and sharing more detail. He said that it was appreciated. He said that one thing she had said earlier was that the issues that took place were the barges were coming untied. He asked if that was correct.

Mills said yes that the barge came separated from the tow. She said that she did not have a lot more information at this time. She said that these were instances that were reported by the barge operators and that was all the information that she could provide at this particular meeting.

Van Dyke said that it certainly was a topic that he thought would be useful for FM, for learning and understanding how this process comes to be. He said trying to figure out how to talk about that and find out more detail would be useful. He said that it would be great if there were a way to find out a nexus for that conversation. He said that he was not trying to put it on Mills' plate directly knowing that she was sharing information that she had been given to offer at this meeting. He said that one thing that he thought might be a question she could answer would be where these issues occurred, if they were in the navigation channel or were the barges entering or exiting the lock. He asked where exactly where the events occurring.

Mills said that event occurred as entering and exiting the lock, in the tailrace.

Van Dyke said that would localize it to the egress, or the exiting of the lock. He said that this was interesting because the spill conditions are impacting that space. He said that it would be a new piece of information that does not seem to stand out with information that had been gathered in the past at modeling events and things like that. He said that it was intriguing, and we may need to have some more dialogue about isolating this event. He asked if that would be possible.

Mills said that the Corps is potentially looking into alternative spill patterns because if this is a localized issue to the lock entrance then it could potentially be resolved by focusing in on the spillways adjacent to the lock entrance. She said that it was her understanding that it would be brought up at a future FPOM meeting. She said that she did not have a timeline for that meeting at this point, but it was something that the Project is looking into and planning to work with Portland District on looking at past modeling results.

Van Dyke asked her to keep in mind that some of the FM had attended some of those and they have a pretty decent understanding of what was observed and the process that went about to establishing the patterns. He said that they are intimate in navigation, and all of the activities from his memory. He said that it was interesting that the issues seem to be

creeping in now and moving from one Project to the next. He said that the FM's eyes were on it, and he appreciated that Mills eyes were also on it.

Hesse said the referral of this to FPOM, for spill pattern assessment, made sense. He said that he would request that it be elevated in urgency and have a special FPOM scheduled as soon as possible and not defer to the regularly scheduled program. He said that this has an impact to the spill operations. Those high spill conditions at JDA only occur for an 8-hour period and those have been reduced significantly from the past couple of previous years where they were 16-hours. He said that we need to make every effort possible to make the full 125% gas cap spill operation to the greatest extent possible. He asked Mills if there was a way that we could place some urgency and have that request be expedited.

Mills said that she could pass that concern along and be she could still not guarantee a timeline, but they could certainly discuss and make sure that the message is communicated to the right folks.

| *from Thomas Lorz to everyone: 9:48 AM*

| *computer audio is off new computer. Need to deep dive at FPOM. maybe a subcommittee and more info about the incidents.*

Stranz said that she thought that Chris Peery, Corps, was on so she hoped that he was hearing this as well. She said that there was a chat from Tom Lorz, Umatilla, saying that he was having issues with audio and asking for a deep dive at FPOM, and maybe a subcommittee and more information about the incidents. She said that there was lots of support from FM to take a deeper of a dive into this topic, into the details, and to find some alternatives to reducing that spill during navigation. She asked if there was anything else from TMT members or from Peery.

Peery said that he would contact Nick Bertrand, Corps Portland District, and make sure that he was aware and see if he would be able to set something up.

Stranz asked if Peery was no longer the FPOM chair.

Peery said that he is co-chair for FPOM. He and Bertrand cover Walla Walla/Portland District topics. He said that this would fall under Bertrand.

Bertrand said that he was on.

Stranz told FPOM to stay tuned from correspondence from Bertrand and Peery to pull together a session sooner than the next session so that the region can continue this conversation. She thanked everyone for the good coordination and good conversation.

d. Fish

*Salmon – Kelsey Swieca, NOAA*

- Juveniles
  - Yearling Chinook
    - Fluctuating day to day throughout the system

- Passage Index (two-week average)
  - Lower Granite: 16k per day
  - McNary: 11k per day
  - Bonneville: 36k per day
- Subyearling Chinook
  - High numbers of subyearlings past Bonneville about a week ago.
  - Most are associated with very large hatchery releases above the Project.
- Sockeye and Steelhead
  - Increasing, generally, throughout the system.
- Chum fry
  - No chum over project in a few days.
  - Similar to last year.
- Adult Salmon Counts
  - Spring Chinook
    - Entering the system and moving through all of the Columbia Mainstem Projects.
    - Ten YTD Average:
      - Bonneville: 55%
      - Ice Harbor: 41%
  - Jack Chinook
    - Ten YTD Average:
      - Bonneville: 249%
      - Ice Harbor: 466%
  - Steelhead
    - Ten YTD Average:
      - Bonneville: 46%
      - Ice Harbor: 134%
- PTAGIS Issue
  - There was an outage of PTAGIS system over a number of days starting over the weekend.
  - This may have also resulted in the DART system being on- and offline over the past couple of days.
  - All should now be resolved.
  - If anyone had looked at the data, it likely would have been lagging for a couple of days.

Hesse said that he appreciated the updates on fish numbers and the relative comparison to 10-year averages. He said that the 10-year averages are not TMT's management goal and that the 10-year averages are substantially below the goals that we have for total returns coming back. He said to keep in mind that the 10-year average is not the gold standard or the level of adequacy for the abundance coming back. He said that he wanted to add that disclaimer when things are compared to the 10-year average.

Swieca added that in terms of the 10-year averages, because they are YTD, they can be a little skewed if you have different timings of migration that in previous years.

Morrill said that he wanted to share and confirm that the PTAGIS is back up, he said that there are still a few little holes to patch in the interrogation system. The overall system is up and running as it should be.

*Lamprey – Dave Swank, USFWS*

- Juvenile Lamprey Passage
  - Small number of juveniles are showing up at the Mainstem Dams, nothing unusual for this time of year.
- Adults
  - Nothing happening

e. Power System – *Tony Norris, BPA*

- Nothing to report.
- We have water in the river and mild temperatures.

**5. Set agenda for next meeting – April 30, 2025**



**Today's Attendees:**

| <b>Agency</b>                               | <b>TMT Representative(s)</b>                   |
|---|--|
| NOAA Fisheries                              | Kelsey Swieca, Trevor Conder                   |
| Oregon                                      | Erick Van Dyke                                 |
| Washington                                  | Charles Morrill                                |
| Kootenai Tribe                              |  |
| Confederated Tribes of Colville Reservation | Dennis Moore                                   |
| Umatilla Tribe (CRITFC)                     | Tom Lorz                                       |
| Yakama Nation                               | Tom Iverson, Keely Murdoch                     |
| Bureau of Reclamation                       | Chris Runyan                                   |
| Army Corps of Engineers                     | Doug Baus (Chair), Aaron Marshall, Lisa Wright |
| US Fish & Wildlife Service                  | Dave Swank                                     |
| Idaho                                       | Jonathan Ebel                                  |
| Montana                                     | Brian Marotz                                   |
| Spokane Tribe                               |  |
| Nez Perce Tribe                             | Jay Hesse                                      |
| Warm Springs Tribe                          |  |
| Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes     | Tom McDonald                                   |
| Bonneville Power Administration             | Tony Norris, Ben Hausmann                      |

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

COE – Leah Hamilton, Alexis Mills, Chris Peery, Tom Conning, Michelle Yuen, Jessika Solleder, Jon Roberts, Nick Bertrand, Tiffany Stoeckig-Dixon

Washington Ecology – Thomas Starkey

ODEQ – David Gruen

DS Consulting – Emily Stranz (Facilitator), Colby Mills

CorSource – Andrea Ausmus (BPA note taker, Contractor)

NPCC – Kate Self

EKI – Eve James, Eddie Sparks

Columbia Basin Bulletin – Mike O'Bryant

Chelan PUD – Jay Fintz, Lance Beyer, Kate von Reis Baron

Douglas Co. PUD – Andrew Gingerich

PGE - Phil DeVol

Vitol – Ryan Russell

Energy EPS – Joshua Rasmussen

Avista – Patrick Maher

Clearing Up – K.C. Mehaffey