

COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

January 28, 2026

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/2026/>. Suggested edits for the summary are welcome and can be sent to Colby at colby@dsconsult.co.

Review Meeting Summaries & Minutes – TMT Members approved the official meeting minutes and facilitator's summary from January 14.

Chum Operation – Doug Baus, Corps, reported on current conditions and forecasts for chum, noting persisting above average temperature conditions throughout the region. For the current month, the Snake River Basin above Ice Harbor Dam (IHR) has been 2.4 °F above average; the Columbia River Basin mainstem above The Dalles (TDA) has been 2.6 °F above normal; and the Willamette River Basin above Portland has been 1.9 °F above average. Doug highlighted that for the current water year season, the Columbia River Basin mainstem above TDA has been 3.9 °F above average.

The region has been experiencing below average precipitation for the month. The Snake River Basin above IHR observed 1.28 inches, or 52% of average; the Columbia River Basin mainstem above TDA observed 1.59 inches, or 53% of normal; and the Willamette River Basin above Portland observed 3.61 inches, or 42% of average.

Outflow at Bonneville Dam (BON) at 0700 hours was 187.6 kcfs, with a project tailwater elevation of 16.0 feet. The RFC 10-day inflow forecast ranges from a high of 199 kcfs on January 28 to a low of 189 kcfs on February 1. The RFC climate forecast over the next 6-10-day period shows a probability of above average temperatures throughout the Columbia Basin, with continued below-average precipitation; the same pattern follows for the 8-14-day outlook.

Doug noted that Action Agencies (AAs) are tracking concerns from Fish Managers regarding the drying conditions. The Corps is running and including early-bird FRM numbers into their modeling; numbers were sent out earlier this week. He emphasized that TMT Members may notice flow decreases at projects like Libby (LIB), as they ramp down early to minimum flows. February FRM values will be adjusted accordingly, and an update will be presented at the next TMT meeting, on February 11.

Tom Lorz, FPAC Chair/CTUIR/CRITFC, asked if AAs will be able to seek deviations or shift to minimums earlier than expected if dry weather continues, or if shifting must wait until the end of March. Kasi Underhill, Corps, confirmed that the Corps is considering opportunities, conducting risk analyses, and will work with partner agencies and the districts if deviations are warranted. FRMs for next month are looking high, requiring most reservoirs to drop flows considerably and some reservoirs to drop down to minimums, the Corps will continue to monitor the situation and keep TMT updated.

In response to another query from Tom regarding Corps decision-making on spill bay usage at McNary (MCN), Chris Peery, Corps, confirmed that more information will be available once the criteria on gate usage is decided (likely before spill season) and once the Corps knows the flow forecasts at the start of April. He also confirmed that the criteria will be developed with RCC and the MCN Dam Safety Group, and that the Safety Group must ultimately sign off on the criteria.

TMT – January 28, 2026

Other Updates – The DS Consulting Process Meeting was canceled. Process meetings will likely start to shift to in-person in March or April.

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

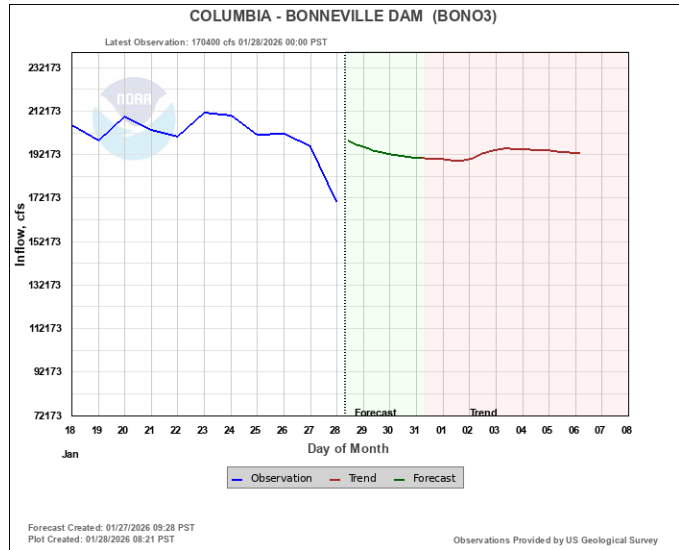
The next TMT meeting will be on February 11, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

**Columbia River Regional Forum
Technical Management Team
OFFICIAL MINUTES
Wednesday, January 28, 2026**

Today's TMT meeting was held via Microsoft Teams and conference call, chaired by Doug Baus, Corps, and facilitated by Emily Stranz, DS Consulting. Minutes were collected by Andrea Ausmus, BPA (contractor, CorSource Technology Group). A list of today's attendees is available at the end of these minutes.

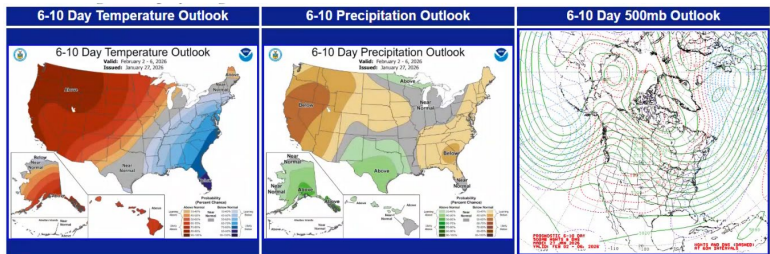
- 1. Review Summary and Minutes – Emily Stranz, DS Consulting**
 - a. January 28 Facilitator Summary and Minutes
 - Approved
- 2. Chum Operations – Doug Baus, Corps NWD; Tony Norris, BPA; Chris Runyan, BOR; Emi Milton, NOAA Fisheries; and Charles Morrill, WA**
 - a. Chum Incubation Phase Coordination
 - Effective, Friday, December 26, 2025, at 1300 hours, until further notice, the Bonneville Dam minimum tailwater elevation is 11.4 feet during all hours. This operation will continue until spring spill begins on April 10, 0001 hours, unless otherwise coordinated with the TMT.
 - b. NWRFC Monthly Temperature Table – Deviation from Normal
 - Current above average temperatures conditions continue to persist.
 - Snake River Basin abv Ice Harbor Dam
 - Monthly Deviation: +2.4°F above normal
 - Columbia River Basin abv The Dalles Dam
 - Monthly Deviation: +2.6°F above normal
 - Seasonal Deviation: +3.9°F above normal
 - Willamette River Basin abv Portland
 - Monthly Deviation: +1.9°F above normal
 - c. NWRFC Monthly Precipitation Table (Water Year)
 - In conjunction with the above average temperatures, it has been a below average month for precipitation.
 - Snake River Basin abv Ice Harbor Dam
 - Observed inches: 1.28 inches
 - Percent of Normal: 52%
 - Columbia River Basin abv Arrow Dam
 - Observed inches: 1.59 inches
 - Percent of Normal: 53%

- Willamette River Basin abv Portland
 - Observed inches: 3.61 inches
 - Percent of Normal: 42%
- d. Bonneville Dam (BON) – Hourly Data – *Baus*
 - Total Outflow (Hour 7): 187.6 kcfs
 - Tailwater Elevation: 16 feet
- e. NWRFC – BON Inflow Forecast (10-day) - *Baus*



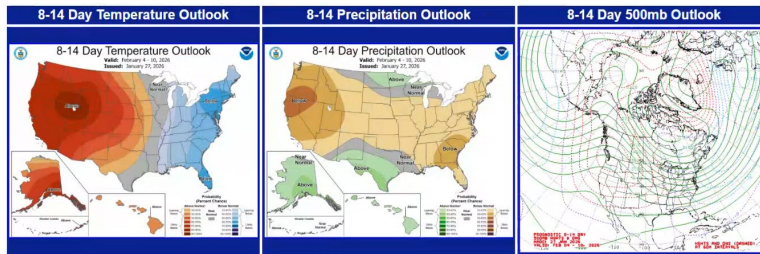
- Low: 189 kcfs (February 1)
 - High: 199 kcfs (January 28)
- f. NWRFC Climate Forecast

6 – 10 Day



- Temperature
 - Probability of above average throughout the basin.
- Precipitation
 - Continued precipitation is forecasted to be below average.

8 – 14 Day



- Temperature
 - Similar pattern.
- Precipitation
 - Similar pattern.

g. Corps Update – *Baus*

Baus said that he had heard from FPAC Chair Tom Lorz, Umatilla/CRITFC, that there are concerns about the low precipitation and the elevated temperatures. Baus said that he wanted to highlight that the Corps has been tracking the same issue regarding the drying conditions and they are running early-bird FRM numbers that have been included in their modeling, and those numbers were sent out earlier this week.

Because they are drying numbers, there have been increases in flood risk management elevations (FRM) at projects like Libby Dam (LIB) which are ramping down to minimums early. Baus said based on the conditions, to expect to see February FRM values to be adjusted accordingly.

Baus noted that the Corps would be updating at the next TMT meeting.

Lorz asked if we were to see the drying trend to continue through parts of February if the Corps was going to be able to make deviations if needed for further changes. He said that with Grand Coulee drumgate maintenance being required this year it would give the Corps a little more room at GCL for flood control. He asked if there was going to be some ability to shift and go to minimums much earlier and not have to wait to the end of March to do something like that.

Kasi Underhill, Corps, said that the Corps would be looking for other opportunities in working with partner regions and agencies in their district to find locations where if the Corps can run some risk analyses and if deviations are warranted_ She said that what she was seeing right now was a lot of FRM for next month is going to be pretty high, requiring most reservoirs to drop flow considerably and some reservoirs will need to be dropped down to the minimum to even be able to get there. She said that the Corps would continue to keep an eye on it as usual.

Lorz said that answered his question. He said on a related tangential question, in talking to FPOM and RIOG there were some discussions about the Corps making some calls about when and how many spill bays they would be able to use at McNary (MCN). He asked when they project that they would be making that determination.

Chris Peery, Corps, said that there were two events that would have to happen. He said first they have to actually come up with the criteria that would decide if we can or cannot use the full-leaf gates. He said that they were working on that. He said that the last he had

heard was that they would have it before spill season. He said that we would also need to know what the flow forecasts are for the first part of April and it would decide if we could use those gates or not.

Lorz said that the Fish Managers (FM) had just gotten the memo from the Corps about RIOG, and it was basically saying that they would continue on their path, for right or wrong, and that this was basically the only level of flexibility that the FMs have. Lorz said that he was trying to figure it out and wanted to make sure that they did not get lost in the weeds so that we had not had time to work on it. He said that the Corps could probably expect the FMs pressing on this trying to figure out when and if all the T's have been crossed.

Peery said that they understand and that they are actively working on it now.

Charles Morrill, WA, said one thing that he wanted to add to that was when we talk about flows and being able to possibly do things differently at MCN. He said that he wanted to remind TMT and ask again was that the Dam Safety Group turned out to be an issue for the FMs a year ago in terms of what they would allow for changing the operations last year. He said that he hoped that group was looking at the same thing that we are looking at and if we have another low flow year that we do not get to the point that we say that the flows are low enough that we could do that, but the Dam Safety Group says no. He said that he hoped that the coordination collaboration was ongoing right now.

Peery said that the work that they are doing to develop the criteria is hand in hand with RCC and the H&H group and the Dam Safety Group. He said once the criteria had been developed Dam Safety would have to sign off on that.

Morrill thanked Peery for the clarification. He said that it was not clear how it had played out last year. He said that he had understood that the Dam Safety Group had made the decision prior to the season and the Corps could not go back to do anything during the Spring Spill Season to adjust during the Summer. He thanked Peery again for the clarification. He said that he also wanted to add from Kyle Dittmer's presentation and worrisome outlook for precipitation is that FMs talked about the "March Miracle" and Dittmer shared with FPOM yesterday and before, that it has happened in eight out of the ten years, as far as the climate science being able to identify why and what drives that, they do not have an answer. He said even though the outlook is really worrisome right now, the potential possibility is that we may get another one, but the climate scientists do not have a way to forecast if and when that happens. He said currently things are not looking good.

3. Process Meeting – Stranz

Stranz shared that TMT would not be having a Process Meeting at this meeting (January 28). She said that TMT was still working towards moving process meetings to be in-person, however that would not be happening in February. She said that it would have to be in March or April and she would have to do some coordination with the different representatives offline to figure out which month works better.

4. Set agenda for next meeting – *Wednesday, February 11, 2026*

Meeting Location: Microsoft Teams

- a. Chum Update

Today’s Attendees:

Agency	TMT Representative(s)
NOAA Fisheries	Kelsey Swieca
Oregon	Erick Van Dyke
Washington	
Kootenai Tribe	
Confederated Tribes of Colville Reservation	
Umatilla Tribe (CRITFC)	Tom Lorz, Pete McHugh
Yakama Nation	
Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)	Eric Rothwell
Army Corps of Engineers (COE)	Doug Baus (Chair), 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	
Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)	Tony Norris, Ben Hausmann

Other Attendees (non-TMT members):

COE – Steven Lee, Jessika Solleder, Christopher Peery, Daniel Turner, Megan Biljan, Alexis Mills, Kasi Underhill, Patricia Madson, Michelle Yuen, Tom Conning

Oregon DEQ – David Gruen

DS Consulting – Emily Stranz (Facilitator), Colby Mills

CorSource – Andrea Ausmus (BPA note taker, Contractor)

AVA – Mike Dillon, Steve Lentini, Patrick Maher

EKI – Travis Togo, George Gardner, Eddie Sparks

PSE – John Chandler

FPC – Erin Cooper

PGE – Phil DeVol

Energy EPS – Joshua Rasmussen

Unaffiliated – Charles Pace