



Nez Perce Tribe

Department of Fisheries Resources Management

Administration • Enforcement • Habitat/Watershed • Harvest • Production • Research • Resident Fish
P.O. Box 365 • Lapwai, Idaho 83540



Date: August 14, 2026

To: Snake River Basin Adjudication Dworshak Board Members
(Idaho – Ed Schriever, BPA – Tony Norris, COE – Doug Baus, NOAA – Trevor Condor)

Cc: Joe Oatman; Technical Management Team

From: Jay Hesse – Nez Perce Tribe Dworshak Board Chair

Re: Dworshak Board 2025 Plan Implementation Summary and 2026 Operational Plan

Background

The Dworshak Board has developed Annual Operational Plans for the use of the Nez Perce Tribe's 200,000 acre feet (200 KAF) of stored water in Dworshak Reservoir¹. Dworshak Dam discharges outlined in these plans have been based on releasing water between elevation 1,535' and 1,520', with timing and elevation (but not volume) subject to change by the Dworshak Board. The Annual Operating Plans consider factors including a) Lower Granite Dam tailrace temperatures, b) juvenile fish rearing in the Clearwater River, c) migration status of juvenile fall Chinook, d) cultural resources, e) recreation, f) thermal refuge, and g) hatchery water supply.

The 2024 Operational Plan provides background and baseline reference documentation (https://public.crohms.org/tmt/agendas/2024/0828_Base_DWR_Operational_Plan_Aug_2024_Final_0829.pdf). Operational strategies typically begin on or about September 1 and gradually decrease outflows with incremental steps of no less than 2 days duration to achieve an elevation of 1,520 feet no later than September 30. Doble testing constrains flow ramp down in two out of three years, including 2026.

Release of the Agreement water in September targets:

- Lower Granite Dam tailwater temperatures not to exceed 68°F.
- Lower Granite Dam adult trap temperature not to exceed 70°F.
- Clearwater River at Spalding daily average water temperatures not to exceed 56°F.
- Clearwater River at Peck and Spalding daily average water temperature between day change of no more than 1°F.

¹ Snake River Water Rights Act of 2004 - Public Law 109-447 Title X - (Agreement) between the United States, through the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), and the Tribe and that Agreement's underlying Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Tribe, Corps, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service, Bonneville Power Administration and the State of Idaho (Parties) and Water Use Agreement (<https://public.crohms.org/tmt/SRBA-Dworshak-Agreement.pdf>).

2025 Implementation Summary

- Agreement water releases started September 1st and continued through September 19th.
- Dworshak reservoir elevation reached 1,535' on August 31, 2025 (Figure 1, Table 1).
- Dworshak reservoir elevation reached 1,520' on September 19, 2025 (Figure 1, Table 1).
- Release of Dworshak water above powerhouse minimum of 1.8kcfs continued for three days after the pool elevation 1,520 was reached. The pool elevation was 1,519.05' when minimum powerhouse flows were initiated on September 21st.
- Lower Granite Dam maximum daily tailwater temperatures exceeded 68°F on 22 of the 30 days in September 2025 (Figure 2, Table 1).
- Lower Granite Dam adult trap maximum daily temperature exceeded 70°F 14 of 30 days during September 2025 (Figure 2, Table 1). The adult trap was temporarily closed (not operated) for four days during September due to warm water temperatures.
- Clearwater River at Spalding daily average water temperatures exceeded 56°F on 17 days in September and another 5 days in October. It should be noted that daily average water temperatures at the Peck gauge did not reach 56°F (Figure 2, Table 1).
- Clearwater River at Peck and Spalding daily average water temperature between day change of no more than 1°F was exceeded 4 and 3 days, respectively (Figure 2, Table 1).

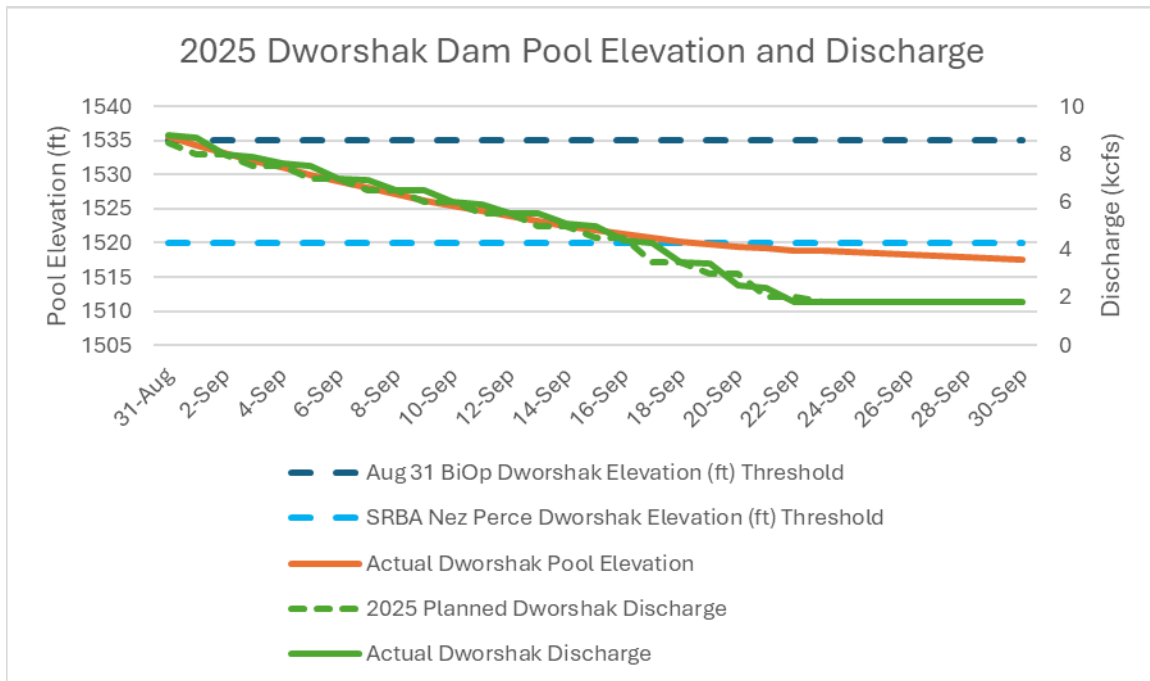


Figure 1. Dworshak Dam pool elevation and discharge associated with Dworshak Board Snake River Basin Agreement 2025 Operational Plan.

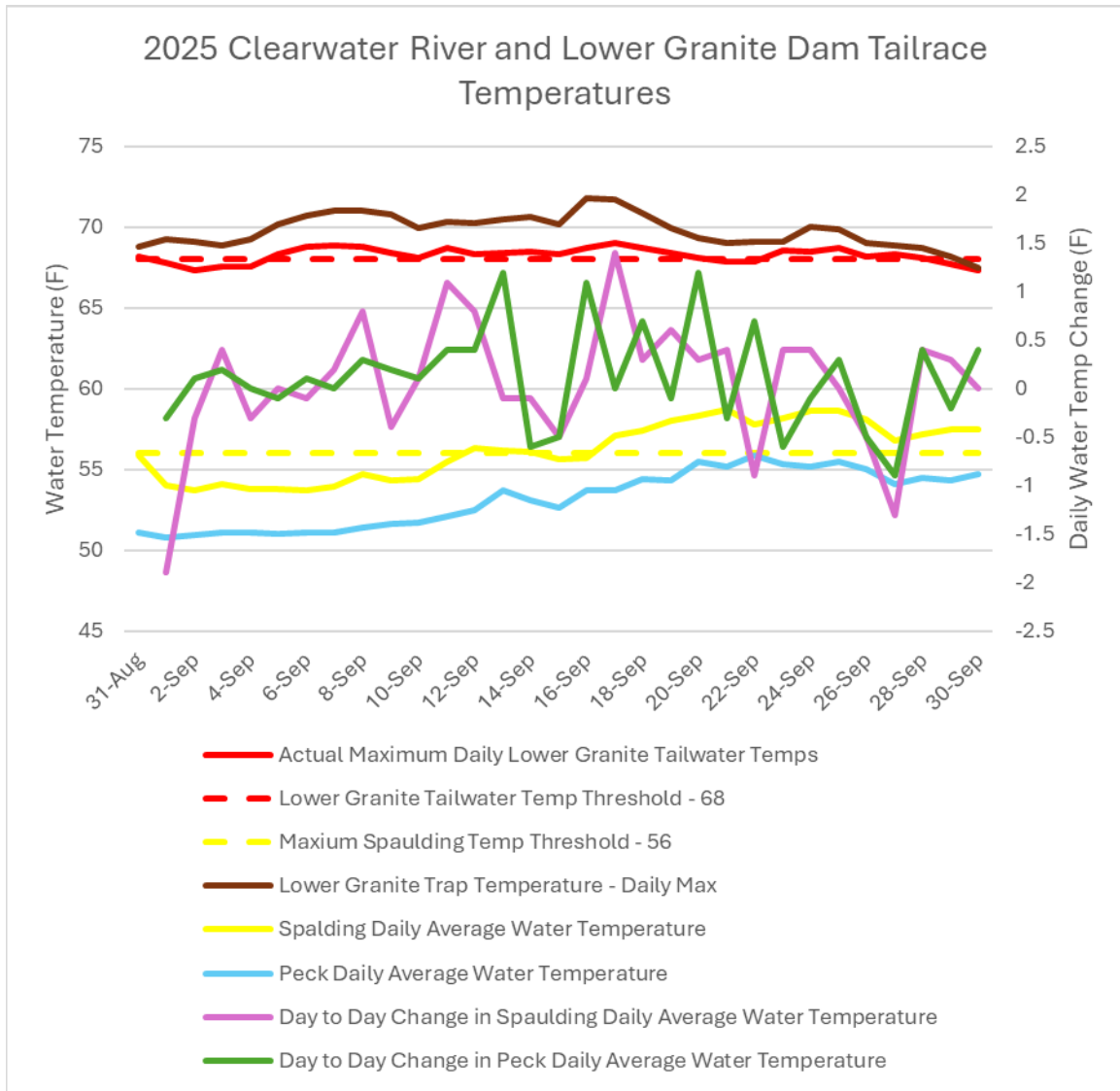


Figure 2. Water temperatures in the Clearwater River and Lower Granite Dam tailrace associated with Dworshak Board Snake River Basin Agreement 2025 Operational Plan.

2026 Release Alternatives

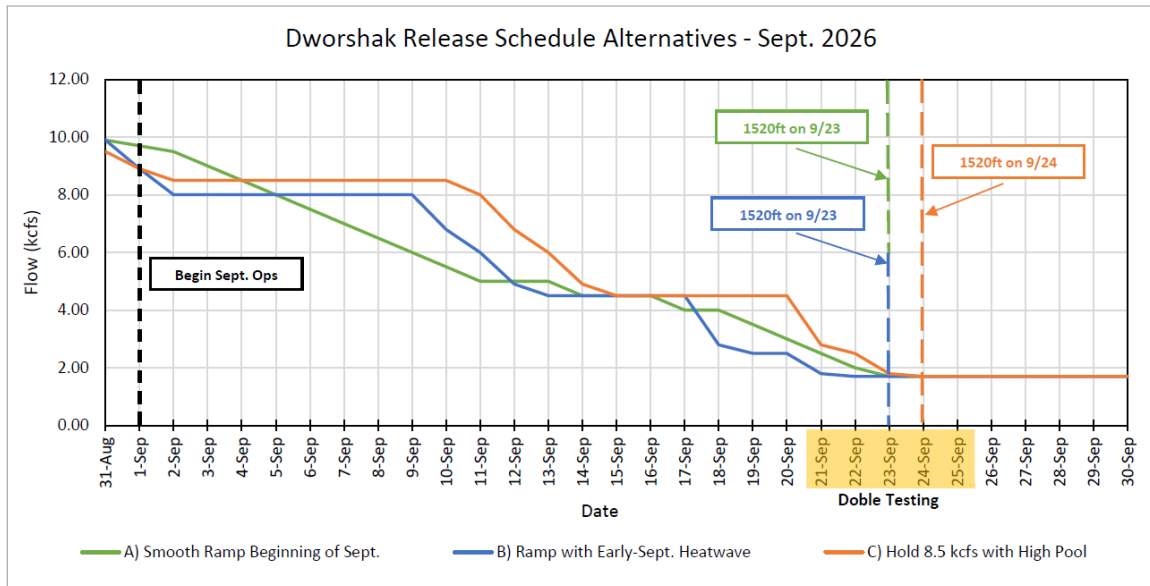


Figure 3. Range of Dworshak release strategy alternatives considered by Dworshak Board in 2026.

2026 Operational Plan

If the Dworshak reservoir elevation is between 1,535 to 1,536' on August 31, 2026, the Dworshak Board directs Alternative B (Ramp with Early-Sept. Heatwave; Figure 3 – blue line) be implemented beginning September 1. If the Dworshak reservoir elevation is between 1,536 and 1,538' on August 31st, then implement Alternative C (Hold 8.5 kcfs with High Pool; Figure 3 – orange line).

During the late August timeframe, the Corps of Engineers Walla Walla District Water Management staff, in coordination with the Nez Perce Tribe, will evaluate and determine the most appropriate release alternative based on real-time forecasting and basin conditions. Walla Walla District staff will notify Bonneville Power Administration staff of the selected alternative no later than August 28th at 10:00am. If during the planned release of the 200,000 acre-feet, real-time conditions or forecasting require minor changes to operations, coordination will take place between the Corps of Engineers Walla Walla District Water Management staff and Bonneville Power Administration real-time. If drastic deviations from the planned release schedule are required or if the planned release becomes infeasible, the Dworshak Board will be convened for additional coordination and approval.

Table 1. September 2025 daily data for actual water temperatures, flows, and pool elevations. Cells with red font indicate deviation from targeted conditions. See data summary details on next page for data source information.

Date	Aug 31 BtOp Dworshak Elevation (ft) Threshold	SRBA Nez Perce Dworshak Elevation (ft) Threshold	Actual Dworshak Pool Elevation	2025 Planned Dworshak Discharge (kcfs)	Actual Dworshak Discharge (kcfs)	2025 Actual vs Planned Difference (kcfs)	Lower Granite Tailwater Temp Threshold - 68	Actual Maximum Daily Lower Granite Tailwater Temps	Lower Granite Trap Temperature - Daily Max	Maximum Spaulding Temp Threshold - 56	Spaulding Daily Average Water Temperature	Spaulding Daily Max Water Temperature	Peck Daily Average Water Temperature	Day to Day Change in Spaulding Daily Average Water Temperature	Day to Day Change in Peck Daily Average Water Temperature
Data Source			DWR Bev- Forebay Ave. ~1 Day. 1Day. CBT- REV [ft]		DWR Flow- Out Ave. ~1Day. 1Day. CBT- REV [kcfs]			https://public.crohms.org/tm/document/s/ops/temp/2025091snake.html	IDFG		SPDI. Temp- Water. Ave. ~1 Day. 1Day. US GS- COMPUTED- REV [F]	SPDI. Temp- Water. Max. ~1Day. 1Day. G OES- COMPUTED- REV [F]			
31-Aug	1535	1520	1535.55	8.5	8.8	0.3	68	68.2	68.8	56	55.9	55.9	51.10		
1-Sep	1535	1520	1534.35	8	8.7	0.7	68	67.8	69.3	56	54	56.1	50.8	-1.9	-0.30
2-Sep	1535	1520	1533.22	8	8	0	68	67.3	69.1	56	53.7	56.3	50.9	-0.3	0.10
3-Sep	1535	1520	1532.12	7.5	7.9	0.4	68	67.6	68.9	56	54.1	55.9	51.1	0.4	0.20
4-Sep	1535	1520	1531.06	7.5	7.6	0.1	68	67.6	69.3	56	53.8	55.6	51.1	-0.3	0.00
5-Sep	1535	1520	1530.01	7	7.5	0.5	68	68.3	70.2	56	53.8	55.2	51	0	-0.10
6-Sep	1535	1520	1529.02	7	7	0	68	68.8	70.7	56	53.7	54.9	51.1	-0.1	0.10
7-Sep	1535	1520	1528.07	6.5	6.9	0.4	68	68.9	71.1	56	53.9	55.6	51.1	0.2	0.00
8-Sep	1535	1520	1527.17	6.5	6.5	0	68	68.8	71.0	56	54.7	56.3	51.4	0.8	0.30
9-Sep	1535	1520	1526.27	6	6.5	0.5	68	68.4	70.8	56	54.3	55.6	51.6	-0.4	0.20
10-Sep	1535	1520	1525.42	6	6	0	68	68.1	69.9	56	54.4	55.9	51.7	0.1	0.10
11-Sep	1535	1520	1524.62	5.5	5.9	0.4	68	68.7	70.3	56	55.5	57.4	52.1	1.1	0.40
12-Sep	1535	1520	1523.86	5.5	5.5	0	68	68.3	70.3	56	56.3	57.9	52.5	0.8	0.40
13-Sep	1535	1520	1523.13	5	5.5	0.5	68	68.4	70.5	56	56.2	58.3	53.7	-0.1	1.20
14-Sep	1535	1520	1522.44	5	5.1	0.1	68	68.5	70.7	56	56.1	57.2	53.1	-0.1	-0.60
15-Sep	1535	1520	1521.82	4.5	5	0.5	68	68.3	70.2	56	55.6	56.8	52.6	-0.5	-0.50
16-Sep	1535	1520	1521.25	4.5	4.4	-0.1	68	68.7	71.8	56	55.7	58.3	53.7	0.1	1.10
17-Sep	1535	1520	1520.7	3.5	4.3	0.8	68	69	71.7	56	57.1	59	53.7	1.4	0.00
18-Sep	1535	1520	1520.22	3.5	3.5	0	68	68.7	70.9	56	57.4	59.5	54.4	0.3	0.70
19-Sep	1535	1520	1519.78	3	3.4	0.4	68	68.4	69.9	56	58	59.7	54.3	0.6	-0.10
20-Sep	1535	1520	1519.44	3	2.5	-0.5	68	68.1	69.3	56	58.3	60.1	55.5	0.3	1.20
21-Sep	1535	1520	1519.16	2	2.4	0.4	68	67.9	69.0	56	58.7	59.5	55.2	0.4	-0.30
22-Sep	1535	1520	1518.95	2	1.8	-0.2	68	67.9	69.1	56	57.8	59.7	55.9	-0.9	0.70
23-Sep	1535	1520	1518.79	1.8	1.8	0	68	68.6	69.1	56	58.2	60.6	55.3	0.4	-0.60
24-Sep	1535	1520	1518.63	1.8	1.8	0	68	68.5	70.0	56	58.6	60.8	55.2	0.4	-0.10
25-Sep	1535	1520	1518.45	1.8	1.8	0	68	68.7	69.9	56	58.6	60.6	55.5	0	0.30
26-Sep	1535	1520	1518.26	1.8	1.8	0	68	68.2	69.0	56	58.1	59.7	55	-0.5	-0.50
27-Sep	1535	1520	1518.09	1.8	1.8	0	68	68.3	68.9	56	56.8	58.8	54.1	-1.3	-0.90
28-Sep	1535	1520	1517.91	1.8	1.8	0	68	68.1	68.7	56	57.2	59.4	54.5	0.4	0.40
29-Sep	1535	1520	1517.74	1.8	1.8	0	68	67.7	68.1	56	57.5	58.6	54.3	0.3	-0.20
30-Sep	1535	1520	1517.58	1.8	1.8	0	68	67.3	67.5	56	57.5	58.8	54.7	0	0.40

Data Summary Details

Data Source – Specific data queries generated at <https://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/dd/common/dataquery/www/>. Note that “Ave.~1Day.1Day” graphics in the Corps of Engineers’ Crohms Dataquery 2.0 depict daily averages with the subsequent day’s date from the actual hourly data. For example, the DWR.Elev-Forebay.Ave.~1Day.1Day.CBT-REV (1971-2026) data point for September 5, 2025 represents the average of actual hourly data from September 4th, 2025. Downloaded “Ave.~1Day” datasets are accurately associated with actually hourly conditions and used for analysis and graphing in this summary report.

- Actual Dworshak pool elevation data – DWR.Elev-Forebay.Ave.~1Day.1Day.CBT-REV [ft].
- Actual Dworshak discharge - DWR.Flow-Out.Ave.~1Day.1Day.CBT-REV [kcfs].
- Actual Lower Granite Dam tailwater daily maximum water temperatures - <https://public.crohms.org/tmt/documents/ops/temp/202509.lsnake.html>.
- Actual Lower Granite Dam adult fish trap daily maximum water temperature – Lower Granite Weekly Summary email distributed by Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Samuel Zabronsky) on November 4, 2025 (2025_1102 Lower Granite Trap and Window Summary.xlsx).
- Actual Clearwater River at Spaulding daily average water temperature - <https://public.crohms.org/tmt/documents/ops/temp/202509.clear.html>. Note that daily average water temperatures at Spaulding remained above 56.0 through October 5, 2025.
- Actual Clearwater River at Peck daily average water temperature - <https://public.crohms.org/tmt/documents/ops/temp/202509.clear.html>.