

Columbia River Regional Forum
SYSTEM CONFIGURATION TEAM
January 21, 2016
Final Meeting Notes

1. Introduction

Representatives of NOAA, Oregon, COE, BPA, Idaho, CRITFC/Umatilla Tribe and others participated in today's SCT meeting chaired by Bill Hevlin, NOAA. Draft and final SCT notes are available on the COE's TMT website under the FPOM link. For copies of documents discussed in the meeting, contact NOAA at 503-230-5420. Comments are due today on the draft November 19 meeting notes which will be finalized soon.

2. Review of Updated FY16 CRFM Spreadsheet

Ian Chane and Derek Fryer, COE, distributed copies of the updated FY16 CRFM spreadsheet that shows projects in ranked order followed by their line number on previous spreadsheet iterations. Randy Chong updated the spreadsheet although he couldn't be present at today's meeting.

Jim Ruff, NPCC, asked why the total cost for all FY16 CRFM items increased from \$77.56 million on the November spreadsheet to \$85.3 million on this one. He wondered whether the FCRPS increase reflects an equitable balance in mitigation funding between the Willamette and Columbia/Snake BiOps. Funding for the Willamette has been increased to \$28.63 million from \$24.5 million, Chane replied. He will follow up on this. The 2016 President's budget called for a total of \$85.3 million for FY16.

Discussion turned to individual line items, with Chane taking the lead on Portland District line items and Fryer taking the lead on Walla Walla District items:

- Ranked #3, line 8.5. Ice Harbor Spillway Chute Deflector Modification Settlement, \$500,000 – This new item will pay for a settlement with the contractor on a daytime work restriction due to problems with a joint seam in the RSW. SCT will revisit this at its February meeting.
- Ranked #6, line 19. Lower Granite Adult Ladder Temperature Measures, \$250,000 – The estimate is up \$100,000 since the last SCT meeting. There were problems with bolting the chimney to the concrete, but these have been resolved and the chimney is being installed.
- Ranked #8, line 22. McNary TSW Closure Leaf Seal Hoist Stilts, \$150,000 – The estimated cost of this mandatory work has been cut in half from \$300,000 since the last SCT meeting. Estimates for all Walla Walla district projects that involve performance standards testing have been increased to allow work to start in FY16. Money that would have been spent on survival testing at Bonneville is now

being used to front-load the contract for performance standards testing of summer operations at Lower Granite, Little Goose and Ice Harbor in FY17. There was discussion of whether testing makes sense if 2017 turns out to be a high water year, given that low flow years are the most challenging in terms of survival which the test is intended to measure. This will be on the next SRWG agenda.

- Ranked #21, line 15. Lower Granite Performance Verification Monitoring, \$3.29 million – This will allow contract award in FY16 for a spring and summer survival study in FY17. Fryer will find out whether the costs in FY17 are for tagging and whether they involve downsized tags. Further discussion of downsized PIT tagging technology and fish biology will happen at SRWG on February 1-3.
- Ranked #22, line 23. McNary Performance Verification Monitoring, \$75,000 – The cost went down from \$150,000 since SCT met in November.
- Ranked #23, line 4. Bonneville Sluiceway PIT Tag Detection Feasibility, \$100,000 – The estimate will be reduced to zero as the COE does not plan to proceed with this investigation. The line item is highly ranked by SCT, and the resulting controversy consumed a major chunk of today's meeting. See agenda item 3 below for details of the discussion.
- Ranked #31, line 20. Lower Granite Post Construction Evaluation, \$750,000 – The cost estimate went up from \$105,000 since the last SCT meeting, which will include noise and vibration monitoring.
- Ranked #33, line 40. The Dalles Sluiceway PIT Tag Detection Feasibility, \$0 – Both Oregon and NOAA view this line item as important in the broad scope of lower river survival monitoring in the future.
- Ranked #35, line 7. Ice Harbor performance Verification Monitoring - \$2.875 million – The estimate increased from \$200,000 in November. The COE will follow up on whether tagging costs were shifted into FY17.
- Ranked #39, line 25. MCN Spillway Weir Boat Barrier, \$0 – The estimate was zeroed out from \$10,000 because the work has been postponed indefinitely.
- Ranked #40, line 33. Snake River Intake Gate Closure (10 minute criteria), \$700 – The estimate is down from \$850,000 in November.
- Ranked #42, line 27. Lower River BiOp Performance Testing – BON Field Work and Tags, \$100,000 – The cost was several million dollars in November. The remaining funds will pay for moving equipment out of BON and closing out existing PNNL work.
- Ranked #27, line 3. B2 Fish Guidance Efficiency, \$3 million – It was noted the 90% design review gave an estimate closer to \$1 million.

- Ranked #13, line 13.5. Adult Ladder Temperature Study at Little Goose, \$150,000 – SRWG will develop objectives for this line item in 2016 and add it to the FY17 CRFM spreadsheet.
- Ranked #15, line 26. McNary Log Bronc, \$100,000 – At the last meeting, SCT agreed to spend \$100,000 on fixing up the reclaimed log bronc, and to reconsider if the cost would be higher.

3. Line Items Flagged During November SCT Meeting for Follow-Up

SCT focused on four items that were flagged at the November meeting as needing further consideration:

- Ranked #35, line 7. Ice Harbor Performance Verification Monitoring, \$2.875 million – In November, NOAA asked the COE to explain what the former estimate of \$200,000 would cover. Today's estimate of more than \$2 million raised some concerns. The COE responded that the cost includes a March trip to ERDC to investigate options for testing a single spill operation. The next FFDRWG meeting on February 24 will go into greater depth on this.
- Ranked #39, line 25. Lower River Performance Testing, \$0 – The cost has been zeroed out since the last SCT meeting.
- Ranked #23, line 4. Bonneville Sluiceway PIT Tag Detection Feasibility, \$100,000 – At the November meeting, SCT members asked the COE to provide a documented rationale for not funding a feasibility study of sluiceway detection at BON despite strong regional support. Prior to today's meeting, the COE responded with a memo to SCT stakeholders. Chane gave context for the memo. CRFM budgets are being scrutinized, so any items not directly linked to RPAs are ineligible for CRFM funding as a matter of policy. Cost is not the issue. Meanwhile, the COE is investigating the feasibility of PIT tag detection at another location, the Lower Granite spillway. Several SCT members expressed a sense of urgency about funding PIT detection at BON, and there was general consensus this issue needs to be elevated to agency executives, either RIOG or the senior hydro team. Several SCT members gave their views:

NOAA – Responded to the COE memo with a draft memo that will be finalized and sent to all SCT members. This line item is indeed linked to a BiOp RPA. In future BiOps, system survival studies will probably be the most important metric and higher detection rates at Bonneville will be necessary. Also, increased detection at B1 will help to replace the reduction of PIT detection due to the reduced FGE at B2 from installation of the new flow control plates at B2.

Oregon – The precision of in-river survival estimates could be improved immensely by tracking surface spillway passage at BON. A deeper look at this issue reveals links to RPAs that deal with FCRPS monitoring. The region has been considering this for a long time and the need has been discussed in detail.

CRITFC/Umatilla – Supported the new flow control plates at BON assuming that PIT tag feasibility would be investigated for the sake of monitoring guidance efficiency. The COE's denial of funding for a PIT tag feasibility investigation at BON will erode this support.

Idaho – The measure is relatively inexpensive and would provide important information as to how well the projects are meeting their in-river survival goals.

BPA – Supports funding this line item because it has potential for use in the next BiOp. Better detection at BON is needed.

NPCC – Shares BPA's view.

- Ranked #13, line 13.5. Little Goose Ladder Temperature Study, \$150,000 – In November, SCT discussed ways of cooling the ladder at Goose, which has become an SRWG scoping objective. Lorz asked whether the cost estimate includes additional monitoring. Fryer replied that it does not, the study will review existing data to identify what might be needed to keep the ladder cooler. With climate warming, it will become increasingly important to focus on helping fish survive warmer water temperatures.

4. Discussion of Preliminary Construction/Study List for 2017 CRFM Spreadsheet

Hevlin invited SCT members to review the preliminary FY17 CRFM spreadsheet distributed today and come to the next meeting prepared to discuss items that need to be added to the list. By the next meeting, preliminary information on the President's budget for FY17 will probably be available. SCT discussed a few of the FY17 items today:

- Line 23. McNary Performance Verification, \$2 million – NOAA questioned whether \$2 million would be sufficient funding. The COE will follow up.
- Line 37. McNary and Snake River Adult Migration Studies \$1.8 million – This is a placeholder for adult JSATS studies in 2017.
- Line 29, Lower River PIT Trawl, \$1.35 million (COE contribution) – The cost of the pit trawl is being split 50-50 with BPA. Concern was raised about the cost and whether the trawl could be funded through O&M. Fryer asked whether it would be possible to do away with the PIT trawl. Another way of getting PIT tag detections

below BON would be needed to get in-river survival estimates, Fredricks and Bettin replied. When flows are high, PIT trawl sampling efficacy goes down, but when flows are low, the PIT trawl samples a higher percentage of the river. Further discussion of this line item will take place at SRWG.

- Line 2. Lamprey, \$6 million – The \$6 million is what remains of lamprey settlement funding. Lorz wondered whether that will be enough to accomplish the needed lamprey work in FY17.

5. Summary Updates of Recent FFDWRG and SRWG Meetings

Portland District FFDWRG has been working on the BON FGE issue, as well as the pumps at JDA. The BON fish unit trash rack is still full of debris and is not functioning as hoped, Lorz said. Further discussion at FFDWRG is needed. It's important to keep both units running at TDA because the loss of one unit would mean the operation is down to half the AWS, Fredricks added. The BON trash rack will be on the next Portland FFDRWG meeting agenda. Chane gave two additional Portland FFDWRG updates:

- The award protest on the contract for the AWS at The Dalles will most likely be resolved this spring. The delay will mean added costs.
- A project manager is been assigned to work on the John Day PIT adult detection project.

Walla Walla District FFDRWG meets next on Thursday, **February 25**. Progress on the new bypass construction at Lower Granite will be discussed, and an update on the plan to work on unit 3 at Dworshak, which will be taken OOS in mid-August.

SRWG meets next on **February 1-3**. SCT members were invited to review the draft 1-pagers that have been sent out and come to the 3-day meeting prepared to give feedback. The COE is considering funding additional work this spring to prepare for performance standard testing in 2017 and wants SCT's feedback. Fryer will send out a draft 1-pager on that as well. Primary objectives of the work would be:

- Evaluate whether the assumption of downstream reach survival for tagged fish can be adequately met at multiple locations between the LGR and ICR pools. Compare survival rates for fish tagged w/injectable downsized tags.
- Estimate the survival of tagged juvenile steelhead between ICR and MCN forebay. The COE will release 50 dead fish to evaluate the proposed location of the detection array below Ice Harbor just downstream of the Snake River and send the resulting report to SCT members. It may be feasible to save about \$1.5 million in tagging costs for the Ice Harbor study by using fish that have been tagged with injectable tags at Lower Granite.

Next SCT Meeting

SCT will meet next in NOAA's offices on February 18. These notes prepared by technical writer Pat Vivian.

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