

**Columbia River Regional Forum**  
**SYSTEM CONFIGURATION TEAM**  
**November 17, 2016**  
**Meeting Notes**

***1. Introduction***

Today's SCT meeting was chaired and facilitated by Bill Hevlin, NOAA Fisheries. Representatives of the COE, NOAA, CRITFC/Umatilla, Idaho, BPA, Oregon and others participated in the meeting, which was held at the COE office in Walla Walla. Draft and final SCT notes are available on the COE's TMT website under the FPOM link. The October 2016 SCT meeting notes will soon be finalized and posted there. The December SCT meeting was cancelled, and the next meeting will be on January 19, 2017, in Portland.

***2. Final Scores to the 2017 CRFM Spreadsheet and Ranked Priority***

Today was the final session of scoring items on the CRFM spreadsheet, although Hevlin reminded everyone they can change their scores at any time. He distributed copies of two spreadsheets prepared by Randy Chong, COE, who could not attend today. The latest spreadsheet version (horizontal alignment) shows scores to date, while the ranked version (vertical alignment) prioritizes line items by their level of support, i.e. the average for all scores given that item.

The conversation focused on changes to the horizontal (ranking) spreadsheet since SCT last met:

- **#5. Bonneville Floating Orifice Gate Closures (placeholder), \$400,000** – The COE has decided this should be CRFM-funded. It has received all scores of 4 with an average of 4, meaning it is well supported.
- **#5.1. Bonneville 2<sup>nd</sup> Powerhouse FGE Post-Construction Evaluation, \$1.8 million** – Since the last SCT meeting, the Warm Springs Tribe ranked this as a 5; Idaho gave it a 4. The average is 4.2. Since SCT last met, the cost estimate has increased by \$300,000 from \$1.5 million for two years of work. Scott Bettin said BPA is skeptical of investing more than that because CRFM has already spent \$35 million on solving passage problems at the 2<sup>nd</sup> powerhouse.
- **#8. Ice Harbor Performance Verification Monitoring, \$50,000** – The average score is zero but the operation is still undefined, which makes scoring subject to change. Oregon gave this a zero and will do so for any performance testing-related item.
- **#9. Ice Harbor Turbine Runner Replacement Biological Testing, \$1.8 million** – Idaho added a score of 4 since the last SCT meeting. This item will cover the costs of sensor fish evaluation and balloon tagging to compare passage at ICR units 1 and 2. SCT previously agreed that if there is going to be a balloon tag study of the new unit, it should include unit 5 after repairs are completed. Scott Bettin asked whether it's worth investing

in a permanent fix that doesn't involve blocking faulty turbine blades. That design weakness is CRFM's responsibility, and finding the right design will be essential before turning it over to O&M for ongoing maintenance. The goal is a feasibility study of the best way to repair a fixed-blade turbine without blocking. SCT agreed to recommend that the COE add funding for a feasibility study at ICR to the FY17 budget. It could be either a new item #9.1 or added to #44 under System Studies.

- #13. Little Goose Adjustable Spillway Weir, \$500,000 – This work is mandatory. The COE will give an update at this afternoon's FFDRWG meeting.
- #16. Little Goose Adult Ladder Temperature Mitigation, \$2.25 million – Idaho gave this a score of 5 today. Scores are: Idaho – 5, Oregon – 5, Nez Perce – 5, Warm Springs – 5, Umatilla – 4, NOAA – 5, BPA – 5, COE – 5. The average score is 4.9.
- #17. Lower Granite Spillway PIT Tag Detection, \$5 million – Scores to date are all 5's. There will be an update on this at FFDRWG this afternoon. In relation to the effort underway at Lower Granite and Ice Harbor to detect PIT tagged fish during passage, Russ Kiefer proposed using any extra FY17 funds to evaluate the feasibility of using nets in the tailrace, perhaps similar to the lower river PIT trawl. The equipment could be used at multiple projects over the years. NOAA and Oregon both support this idea.

It was suggested the COE consider adding to the FY17 spreadsheet a line item to investigate the latest technology and build mobile PIT tag detection capability. This work could either be listed separately or added to #38. Turbine PIT tag detection feasibility study, \$100,000. If it's the latter, the title needs to include spillway PIT tag detection feasibility.

SCT members distinguished this effort from #17. Lower Granite spillway PIT tag detection, \$5 million, which has strong support, with all scores producing an average score of 4.8. It was agreed that PIT detection capability at Granite has funding priority over turbine and spillway detection capability.

- #18. Lower Granite Performance Verification Monitoring, \$7.275 million – All scores are either zeros or D's for now because this line item includes both performance verification and post-construction evaluation of the renovated bypass system/outfall, to be completed by the spring of 2018. The COE might use FY17 funds to award the contract near the end of FY17 before the bypass is done. The post-construction evaluation could be combined with performance testing. However, the COE does not know yet whether a full-blown performance evaluation will be needed. Hevlin suggested the COE break this into two separate line items so stakeholders can score the post-construction evaluation separately from performance testing. As it stands, Oregon would give this a zero because performance testing is involved, and Idaho considered it a 4 or 5 for post construction evaluation. SCT decided to defer scoring until the two items are listed separately.

It was noted that if lines #17 and #18 are both dropped from the 2017 CRFM budget, it would release an additional \$12 million in funding. SCT needs to start thinking now

about how those dollars might be spent. This will be a topic of discussion in January, including whether unused CRFM funds can be carried over to the next fiscal year.

- #21. Lower Granite Surface Passage Modification, \$400,000 – There was discussion of whether an RSW is really an effective fix for this location. It was noted that maintenance and painting of the structure alone could cost \$7-10 million.
- #22. Lower Granite Adult Ladder Temperature and Noise Impacts – Post-Construction Evaluation, \$600,000 – This project is fully scored, with an average of 4.9. There will be three presentations on Granite adult passage at the AFEP review on December 29-30.
- #23. Lower Granite Spillway Weir Boat Barrier, \$1.85 million – The average score for this line item is 3.3.
- #26. McNary Avian Array Feasibility Study (placeholder), \$100,000 – This will be discussed at FFDRWG today.
- #26.1. McNary Avian Water Cannon, \$100,000 – This line item was recently added to address design problems with the water cannon at the end of the MCN outfall.
- #28. Lower River BiOp Performance Testing, COE contribution to PIT trawl, \$1.45 million – The average score was 3.8; today Oregon added a score of 3. Oregon supports the PIT trawl, but is not supportive of performance testing. Hevlin reminded everyone the PIT trawl is what's really being scored here. Erick, with Oregon, suggested changing the title to clarify what's actually being funded.
- #29. Avian Island PIT Detection, \$450,000 – This has a full array of scores with an average of 3.9, indicating strong support.
- #32. Snake River Adult Sockeye Passage Initiatives (placeholder), \$350,000 – At the last SCT meeting, Idaho gave this a 5. This project to fund temperature modeling for alternative operations was flagged on today's SCT meeting agenda for further discussion, particularly regarding the passage depth of subyearling chinook during summer reservoir stratification. There will be an update on this at FFDRWG today, and the COE will send out a study proposal for comments next week.
- #34.1. Snake River Fall Chinook Retrospective Depth of Migration Study re: TSW Removal, \$300,000 – This was newly scored at the October meeting. The COE will send out a proposal soon for SRWG review.
- #35. Inland Avian Predation/Avian Management Plan, \$1.2 million – A special FFDRWG meeting on this is planned for December 6 in Walla Walla, but the date might change.
- #36. Snake River Adult Migration Studies, \$60,000 – This placeholder is listed as mandatory and likely it is funding for the completion of the Snake River passage

synthesis report. The COE will provide the specifics at the January SCT meeting determine whether to drop it from the FY17 spreadsheet.

- #37. FCRPS Adult Passage Synthesis, \$130,000 – This project is being completed by the Portland District.
- #38. Turbine PIT Tag Detection Feasibility, \$100,000 – This is highly ranked overall, but scores of 1 from BPA and the COE bring the average down to 3.3. It will be funded nevertheless because the FY17 budget is sufficient to cover everything on the spreadsheet. There will be an update on turbine PIT tag technology at the January SCT meeting.
- #39. Post Bonneville Survival Study (placeholder after avian actions are complete, \$0 – A vulnerability study is needed to assess compensatory mortality related to avian predation, Gary Fredricks said. This information will be needed for the BiOp long before avian actions are complete, which could take decades. SCT will discuss this further with the COE in January.
- #40. CRFM Contribution to Court-Ordered FCRPS NEPA Documentation and EIS (placeholder), \$100,000 – This mandatory line item will be labor-intensive.
- #41. Feasibility Study of Cooling Adult Ladders throughout System (placeholder), \$250,000 – The COE recently distributed a white paper on this, but has not yet scored the line item. Oregon gave it a 5, which means it has mostly 5's and one 4 from the Warm Springs Tribe.
- #42. The Dalles Adult Fishways and AWS Study, \$2.48 million – This is mandatory.
- #43. The Dalles Spillway PIT Tag Detection Feasibility, \$100,000 – See discussion of #17. Lower Granite Spillway PIT Detection above.

### ***3. FFDRWG and SRWG Future Meeting Dates***

- January 19 – Next SCT meeting in Portland
- February 23, 2017 – Next Walla Walla FFDRWG meeting
- February 29-30 – AFEP review

### ***4. Next SCT Meeting***

SCT will meet next on January 19 to review the updated spreadsheet and consider possible uses for extra FY17 CRFM funds, including whether these funds could be rolled over to the FY18 CRFM budget. These notes prepared by technical writer Pat Vivian.

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