

Columbia River Regional Forum  
System Configuration Team Meeting  
May 21, 2026  
Official Notes

Representatives of Corps, ODFW, WDFW, BPA, NOAA, and others participated in today's SCT meeting facilitated by Ian Chane & Ida Royer and was hosted via Microsoft Teams.

Draft and final SCT notes are available on the COE's TMT website under the FPOM link. See the final page of these minutes for the list of attendees of today's meeting.

**1. February Minute Review – *Chane***

- Chane said that Royer had requested SCT members to provide notes and feedback on the February minutes.

**2. FY27 Ranking – *Chane***

- SCT initiated FY27 Ranking.
  - Chane asked if there were any questions about the FY27 PBud projects
  - Today's meeting was not intended for the region to provide all the rankings but prepare them for the next meeting.
  - To prepare for the next SCT meeting on June 18, Chane recommended the region to develop their rankings and be prepared to provide them in June.

**3. FY27 PBud – *Royer***

FY27 PBud CRFM: \$15.25M

FY27 Appropriations: TBD

- Line #3: Post Construction Performance Standard Evaluations
  - Includes the PIT Trawl
- Line #4: John Day Fish Turbine Pumps U1 & U2
  - Longterm JDA project.
- Line #5: MCN PIT Detection Improvements

- Line #6: MCN Fish Pump System Upgrade
- Line #7: MCN South Fish Ladder and Collection Channel Rehab
  - Tied to fish pumps
- Line #8: IHR Turbine Post-Construction Evaluation
  - Oversight of the implementation plan that the Corps hopes to implement this year.
- Line #9: LMN Adult Channel and North Entrance Diffuser Grating

Erick Van Dyke, ODFW, said that it does not go unnoticed that this is one-third of the FY from 2026. It is a continued reduction, and the content is being advertised by the President's Budget, but the details that we talk about are what the District and the Corps of Engineers is providing to folks for review in developing a budget. He said that he thought that we have continuously tried to identify what is being shared. He asked if the nine-project list what was shared a few years back with the President to make a decision on the budget or was this a list that would be reviewed for the upcoming decision to award a budget.

Royer said that this was the Corps' capability so she would say\_ She said that she was not sure how to respond to that.

Van Dyke said that was fair and asked if she could find out how that really details out so this group actually understands what their input is providing because at this point it is really hard to tease that out and recognize our role.

Chane said he was looking at the numbers, and we have about half of the PBud that we had last year. He said that last year the PBud was about \$12M total for CRS and if Van Dyke could remember, what happened last year, is that we did receive an earmark for the program. That earmark came into play around the March time period when they actually got that earmark funding. Pretty late in the year. He said that he did have to say that this was the final President's Budget, so the Corps is saying that the President's Budget is their capability at this point. But what happened last year is that Congress got involved and they provided additional money through earmarks. So what is going on now is that this is the first phase of what the budget is going to be for FY27 and who knows, we could end up in a continuing resolution through the whole year if they cannot pass a final budget, but this is just the first step of that. He said to get at what Van Dyke was asking is that that the next steps on this would be that a discussion that Congress is going to have relating to earmarks on the project and also their

deliberation when it comes to a final appropriation for FY27. That is why FY27 appropriation is still to be determined. The next step is Congress. Congress has the purse strings. So now is when Congress chimes in based on the Administration's objectives, their goals, and what they want to see with the program. Now it is kind of up to Congress, the President has set the mark.

Morrill said that he gets the concept of the PBud, and defining the capabilities, however it is certainly his perception, and he thought others, that the Corps, if they got funding has a much higher level of capability and that is where the input comes from the fish managers (FMs) in terms of the things that they would like to be seen being done. He said that they understood when that is not the case, but the capabilities are not set by the Corps, the Corps can request additional, but it is Congress that determines what that capability is. It is not the Corps saying that they could do this much if they had this funding.

Chane said in the past, the Corps had actually shared outyears information and at this point they cannot do that. So how the process works now at this point is if there is an interest in more work to be occurring on the CRS, it has to be instigated through that bigger budget process through Congress. It would have to have Congressional input in order to get it changed at this point. And as the Corps had said very clearly, they cannot share anything that was above the President's Budget for FY27, they can only share what the PBud says as their capability. That said, if there was Congressional interest in continuing projects and moving things forward, that would be a conversation that the Congressionals would have at a higher level than us, that we are not involved in. Chane said that the Corps might get asked to provide information based on that, but they are not interacting with the Congressionals. So, getting to the question about what the region could do at this point based on where we are in the process, it would be that Congressional outreach, and it was not something that the Corps could do themselves. It would have to be triggered by the region, and the Corps might get asked for effects kind of thing, like a hey if you got this much money what could you do and that kind of stuff. But the Corps cannot trigger it and they cannot have those direct conversations. It is where we are at this point.

Morrill said that they could not even have that conversation with us as a regional group to say our projects is at stake if we had our funding, we could do this, we have to go through Congress to move that needle.

Chane said at this point the Corps cannot express anything beyond this PBud is our capability. That is just the way things are right now. He said Morrill was correct, that is the way to push the needle a little bit. The Corps cannot share anything else with the region but cannot say\_ The region can also submit stuff to

the Corps and nothing says that region could not submit the Corps what their interests are in the program, the Corps just cannot officially use that information to develop capability or anything like that. He said that the Corps could not say nope do not send us anything, feel free to send the Corps stuff, that is fine. They just have to make sure that it was information that they received from you and they are not expressing any external capability that is beyond the President's Budget, and these are just projects that are of interest in the region and the Corps' partners.

Morrill said the only way the region is to take the list that had been prioritized in the past and then the region would have to go to Congress through our delegations and lobbying to request additional capabilities to be included in the PBudget for that to even have a chance. He asked if that was what Chane was describing as the correct procedure.

Chane said yes, that would be the next step on this, because as he said the President's Budget has been laid out and now it is up to Congress. This is how we got additional funding last year with Congressional interest through the earmark process. So, he hoped that it helped but he could not say much more than that.

Morrill said okay, tell him if he was asking too much. For FY28 we have\_

Chane told Morrill that he would say straight up that the Corps could not talk about FY28 until the Presidents Budget comes out, which would be next Spring. So they cannot talk about FY28 at all.

Morrill said if the region wanted to have an influence on FY28 at all they would have to go directly to Congress now to make sure that these projects are identified on the list.

Chane said correct and at this point the President's Budget is not out so that kind of tells you that you could go a different direction as well until the President's Budget is out.

Morrill said that helped clarify it.

Van Dyke said that he appreciated Chane's candor and recognize that he has details that he could share and not share. He said that this was a closed circular loop at this point where we get together and the Corps shares what the President has told them. He said that he thought we all see that pretty clearly, but it is closed circular because Chane was also offering the earlier in the process details of what the Corps believes they have capabilities for excluding this regional coordination group because it does not come to the group until after the fact. He said that what

he was hearing was the circular loop process used now just to frustrate the conversation and it was not Chane's doing it is the reality of the process that had been thrown at folks. He said that it was hard to understand what the region provides the Corps at this point. It is not really collaboration on needs and recognition of details with anybody other than this closed group and that is kind of what the pattern is showing with this continuous reduction of the number which he assumed was based on the Corps commitments to the President's Administration's recognition of how much money they want to put into any one thing and not so much what is needed. That had been the pattern of the reduced PBud that we have been tracking as long as he had been here. He said right now it looked like these nine listed items, at least four of them involve infrastructure that is used by something other than fish, in fact its purpose is primarily for other purposes. And spending on looking at those things is quite small but not really sure what the Corps intend to learn from it that was not already available in the record. He said it was concerning because he was not sure how this group is supposed to function at this point other than the Corps shares what the President decided.

Chane said that he had talked to Royer about this. He said that he would like to keep the process moving forward where the Corps is still getting input on what \_

Van Dyke said that the input that the Corps gets from the region though, Chane said it himself, is not really going to the broader conversation because the Corps cannot provide it that way. He said that he was hearing that the region has to do it for the Corps and they need to do it through a different conduit. That was what Chane explained earlier but maybe he missed something.

Royer said that she would suggest acknowledging that the process is a little bit different right now. She said that she thought it was valuable to track needs just in case conversations happen internally they can be tracking needs and priorities. It also helps with their budget cycle long term. She said that she thought that there was still value in what the region considers needs. She thought that we would have to track it differently, it is not going to be our proposal, it would be the region's proposal. The Corps can add it to the sheet, it just cannot come from the Corps. She proposed next month SCT goes through and rank, everyone can compile all of the things that should be included and then we could rank those things and then the Corps would not rank anything that was not in the President's Budget, they would need to talk about it.

Van Dyke thanked Royer for the circular thing, he had heard it and he thought we have been hearing it. He said that he got it was what he was trying to reference. He said that we would see what happens next.

Chane told Van Dyke that it was their goal to maintain the working relationships that they have from all the region, try to retain as much of the purpose of this SCT group and the process as much as they can within the constraints that they have and try to be as transparent as they can. He said that was the best that they can do at this point. He said that it was frustrating for all of us, but they understand the purpose of what we do. Locally they understand the importance of what we do. He said that they are going to do their best to try to work through this as we have these challenges.

Van Dyke said that he agreed with that. He said that the group has always been committed to each other's hopes and desires. He said that he did not think that should be missed. It is a bigger picture that was being expressed about the realities of how what was being shared was being used. He said that he thought that was not incorrect that this has been circular.

Royer said that her recommendation, and she was welcome to feedback, in the interim time between this SCT and the next folks are welcome to add additional line items to the FY27 tab of the sheet and send those to her. And then in addition rank projects or go through the process of collecting suggested projects and then subsequently ranking, she was good either way. Then we could have that tracking of regional priorities and projects that folks feel should be included and that would assist in the Corps' budget process. But they are not going to be able to share or really provide a lot of feedback on that. She said that she thought it was valuable and if folks were amenable she asked for them to fill out the sheet and we would have more discussion next month about the priorities.

**Next meeting: June 18, 2025**

**Agenda Topics:**

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**Today's Attendees:**

| Name                      | Affiliation                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>Ian Chane</b>          | Corps                                   |
| <b>Charles Morrill</b>    | WDFW                                    |
| <b>Chuck Barnes</b>       | Corps                                   |
| <b>Kate Self</b>          | NPCC                                    |
| <b>Christine Peterson</b> | BPA                                     |
| <b>Erick Van Dyke</b>     | ODFW                                    |
| <b>Popenoe</b>            |                                         |
| <b>Christopher Yane</b>   | Corps                                   |
| <b>Chris Peery</b>        | Corps                                   |
| <b>Ben Hausmann</b>       | BPA                                     |
| <b>Trevor Conder</b>      | NOAA                                    |
| <b>Ralph La</b>           |                                         |
| <b>Sean Tackley</b>       | Corps                                   |
| <b>Ida Royer</b>          | Corps                                   |
| <b>David Trachtenbarg</b> | Corps                                   |
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|                           |                                         |
| <b>Andrea Ausmus</b>      | BPA Notetaker ( <i>recording only</i> ) |

Minutes by Andrea Ausmus, CorSource Technology Group LLC, Contractor for Bonneville, [amausmus@bpa.gov](mailto:amausmus@bpa.gov) (503-230-4439).