

Columbia River Regional Forum
System Configuration Team Meeting
May 19, 2022
Final Official Notes

Representatives of Corps, OR, WA, NOAA, and others participated in today's SCT meeting facilitated by Blane Bellerud, NOAA. Previous meeting notes are available on the COE's TMT website under the FPOM link. For copies of documents discussed in the meeting, contact kathy.ceballos@noaa.gov. See the last page of these minutes for a list of attendees at today's meeting.

1. Approval of 2021

All 2021 minutes have been approved. Charles Morrill, WA, may have some edits as he has not had time to review them. If he does, he will send them over the Blane ASAP.

2. John Day Ladder Cooling Strategies

Trevor Conder, NOAA, gave an update on John Day Ladder Cooling Strategies. A USGS 2019 report (also known as the Tina Lundell work) showed substantial differentials between the ladder and forebay temperatures at John Day Dam. At times, surface temperatures are significantly different than water at depth. In essence, the top layer of water is getting sunbaked. This water, which can hit temperatures of up to 80 degrees Fahrenheit, is then being pulled into the top of the ladder. When temperatures in the ladder hit 72 degrees Fahrenheit, sockeye stop converting. Just below that, they slow down significantly. The report shows that cooler water is available and NOAA is proposing that the region find a way to pull that deeper, cooler water into the top of the ladder. NOAA is not suggesting that the entire river be cooled. Instead, it is suggesting moving some water around at the project. The BiOp notes that cooling structures need to be provided if cooler water is available, noted Trevor. Thus, NOAA took this idea to FFDRWG and FPOM. The Corps is investigating, as well.

The Corps noted it is not wild about the O&M burden of a cooling structure but that they see no valid arguments against the cooling tower. The next available budget submission period this could be included in is 2025. That will be submitted in summer 2022. If something was to be done at John Day, there would need to be an DDR. Trevor noted that if a memo needs to be composed to help push this issue forward, he can write one.

In the meantime, a shad criteria test will be run at Lower Granite. In November, there should be an answer as to if there will be funding in 2025 for a John Day cooling structure.

3. Avian Wires at McNary

Tom reported that he heard that Steve Juhnke is finalizing a feasibility draft report that had been shelved a few years ago.

4. Improved pit tag detection (especially below BON, BON and MCN)

Brad shared that as of 2022, there are no pit trawl funds for FY23. The way it typically works, the last years' funds fund the next year. In this situation, that means there are no FY22 funds available for FY23, however there may be FY23 funds available. Funds usually cover maintenance on boats and detection systems as well as repairs to supplies such as nets. They also cover removing the boats from the water in late summer and returning them to the water in spring. The Willamette injunction pulled in all available funding from this year, which resulted in a loss of funding for the pit trawl, said Brad. Brad clarified that a specific person likely did not make this decision. The Corps is required to meet the requirements of the injunction. Any available money has to first be allocated to meeting those requirements before anything else can be funded.

Blane noted that system survival estimates are a BiOp requirement. Trevor concurred. This cannot be completed without a pit trawl. Trevor wondered if there is other funding that has been allocated, beyond the injunction, to other projects and if that funding could be redirected to the pit trawl since it is very important to the region. Brad said this is possible. This is something to also consider as the group starts to rank projects for FY23.

Scott Bettin is looking into BPA's funds for this.

5. Flex Spill Evaluation (no funding has been identified)

Jake is sending out a proposal after the meeting and there is a meeting scheduled for next week.

Today's Attendees:

Brad Eppard, Corps
Blane Bellerud, NOAA
Charles Morrill, WA
Christine Petersen, BPA
Doug Newton, Corps
Erick Van Dyke, OR
Jacob Macdonald, Corps
Jen Graham, Warm Springs
Jonathan Ebel, ID
Leslie Bach, NPPC
Melissa Haskin, BPA (CONTR)
Scott Bettin, BPA
Shane Scott, PPC
Tom Lorz, Umatilla/CRITFC
Trevor Conder, NOAA
Scott Fielding, Corps

Minutes by Melissa Haskin, Flux Resources LLC/CorSource Technology Group LLC, Contractor for Bonneville, mahaskin@bpa.gov (971-373-1288). Please send any requested edits to Kathy Ceballos, NOAA, kathy.ceballos@noaa.gov.