SYSTEM OPERATIONAL REQUEST: #2005-FWS-1 Amendment

FROM: Bob Hallock, USFWS

DATE: May 24, 2005

Post:
1. Beginning Saturday May 28 at about 6:00 AM reduce Libby discharge to 18,000 cfs, and maintain this discharge until June 2 at about 6:00 AM.

2. Then select a "flat flow" agreeable to NMFS which meets or exceeds the established bull trout minimum tiered flow of 7,000 cfs. It is acknowledged that releases to achieve this yet to be determined flat flow through approximately June 14 will be credited to the 0.8 MAF sturgeon tiered volume recommended in the Fish and Wildlife Service's 2000 FCRPS Biological Opinion.

May-25-2005

From: Bob_Hallock@fws.gov [mailto:Bob_Hallock@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, May 25, 2005 3:25 PM
To: Henriksen, Cynthia A NWD; David_Wills@fws.gov
Cc: Hoffman, Gregory C NWS; Ireland@Kootenai.org; prust@idfg.state.id.us; gbarton@usgs.gov; Paul.Wagner@noaa.gov; Susan_Martin@fws.gov; Jason_Flory@fws.gov

Subject: Amendments to System Operational Request 2005, FWS-1

Cindy / Dave

Please accept the below listed amendments to the Fish and Wildlife Service's subject System Operational Request.

Specification changes:
1. On Friday evening, May 27 at 6:00 p.m. reduce the outflow from full powerhouse capacity to 20,000 cfs. Beginning Saturday May 28 at about 6:00 AM reduce Libby discharge to 18,000 cfs. This reduction from full powerhouse outflow exceeds the recommended ramp rates, but is recommended after this short during of high flow. Maintain this discharge until June 2 at about 6:00 AM.

2. Then select a "flat flow" that has been coordinated with NMFS which meets or exceeds the established bull trout minimum tiered flow of 7,000 cfs. It is acknowledged that releases to achieve this yet to be determined flat flow will result in releases of 0.8 MAF in June which is the sturgeon tiered volume recommended in the Fish and Wildlife Service's 2000 FCRPS Biological Opinion.

Justification:
Based on past experience, the sudden drop in Kootenai River water temperatures (of about 3 degrees C) observed at the Bonners Ferry over the past few days may have left some of the sturgeon being held in the Kootenai Tribal Hatchery unable to spawn this year. We are concerned

this may occur in the river as well. In the subject SOR we were requesting releases of 15,000 cfs on May 29 and 30, followed by releases of 20.000 cfs on May 31 and June 1. Based on advice from the Kootenai River Sturgeon Recovery Team today, we would like to avoid the possibility of a increasing water temperatures followed by a second sudden decrease in water temperature of this magnitude, which could result if the subject SOR is fulfilled as written. The concern is that a second sudden drop in water temperature may cause additional sturgeon to be unable to spawn this year. Secondly, in order to complete the ongoing USGS field work, we will need combined flows measured at Bonners Ferry in the range of 20 to 21,000 cfs through daylight hours of June 3. Thus, to best respond to changing conditions, and meet both the hatchery and the research needs, we recommend these specifications changes to SOR 2005, FWS-1.

Sincerely,

Bob