

COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

MONDAY, June 8, 2020

DRAFT Facilitator's Summary

Facilitator: Donna Silverberg; Notes: Colby Mills, DS Consulting

The following Facilitator's Summary is intended to capture basic discussion, decisions, and actions, as well as point out future actions or issues that may need further discussion at upcoming meetings. These notes are not intended to be the "record" of the meeting, only a reminder for TMT members. Official minutes can be found on the TMT website: <https://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/agendas/2020/>.

Reconsideration of SOR 2020-3

Doug Baus, Corps, noted that today's unscheduled meeting was requested to provide an update on SOR 2020-3. Jay Hesse, Nez Perce, reported that the Flexible Spill Working Group meeting met last Friday, and decided to watch how things progressed over the weekend and discuss what they saw at TMT. If there is an objection and desire to elevate by one of the Working Group parties, elevation will go directly to RIOG.

In response to a question about whether the group saw a change regarding the SOR, Jonathan Ebel, ID, confirmed that the Working Group had not reached consensus on the direction of the SOR. Instead, weekend data showed fish numbers at Little Goose rising in daily passage, and after reviewing the data and conditions, Idaho and NOAA chose to rescind the SOR. He noted that the scientific debate over impacts on travel times is ongoing and there are still important questions to answer moving forward. Jonathan noted that travel times have changed with the onset of spill operations, and their concern has been present from mid-May to last week. Washington also supported the need for more discussion in the future. It was suggested to revisit this issue in the near term (July/August) and at the Year End Review.

Update on Current Operations

Doug was pleased by the fish passage response after watching counts over the weekend. Little Goose spill operations had to be adjusted over the weekend due to lack of load conditions. Operations were adjusted on Saturday, June 6, from the requested 8 consecutive hours at 30% spill starting at 0400 hours, to 8 hours at 30% with an ASAP start time (which was 0900), allowing for 30% spill operation to go past 1200 hours. Little Goose started on Sunday, June 7 at 0700 hours at 30% spill for 8 hours, then transitioned to 16 hours of Gas Cap spill. The special operation started on Saturday and ends today.

The Corps asked the TMT to consider lack of load conditions on operations moving forward, and if the Salmon Managers wanted to continue with the flexibility to spill at 30% past 1200 hours for a greater likelihood of achieving the full 8 consecutive hours of spill requested, or stop at the Gas Cap at 1200 hours when the special operation end tonight at 2400 hours.

Scott Bettin, BPA, clarified that the change in operation flexibility would extend through June 20 and, depending on the load available, AAs would do their best to stick as close as possible to the requested start time of 0400 hours, although there is never 100% certainty on conditions. Claire McGrath, NOAA, emphasized the priority from Salmon Managers to maintain the 8-hour FOP (or as close as conditions will allow), and the desire to keep a morning start time as that is when fish are more likely to pass.

After some discussion:

AAs will move forward with doing their best to implement 30% spill at Goose for 8 consecutive in the morning starting at 0400 hours, and will shift to an ASAP start time in the case of lack of loads. This special operation will continue at Little Goose through June 20, before summer spill starts on June 21.

Lower Monumental Passage

Dave Swank, USFWS, brought up a concern that passage at Lower Monumental has been slowing over the last couple of days, and asked AAs if it was feasible to run the Little Goose special operation of all hours of performance standard spill in one 8-hour block in the morning at Lower Monumental as well. Scott noted that the project was not able to flex spill over the weekend and that the data were indicative of light load conditions. He suggested that, in the post season, the TMT might want to look back to see if adult passage at Lower Monumental was potentially more of an issue than expected.

Doug confirmed that the Corps is watching this issue as well, and that the project only had 2 hours of Performance Standard spill over the weekend. Little Goose had higher passage as flows went down and Lower Granite had pretty good passage.

The Corps confirmed that the Adjustable Spillway Weir (ASW) at Little Goose is operating at high crest during Performance Standard spill and low crest during gas cap spill. The ASW will be changed to high crest during all hours when flows drop below the trigger of 85 kcfs, per criteria in the 2020 Fish Passage Plan.

→ **ACTION:** In response to a question from Claire, Doug will clarify ASW data and report back to her later today. Charles Morrill, WA, also requested the data clarification.

The next scheduled TMT meeting is a conference call on June 10th at 9:00 AM.

This summary is respectfully submitted by the DS Consulting Facilitation Team. Suggested edits are welcome and can be sent to Colby at colby@dsconsult.co

Columbia River Regional Forum

Technical Management Team DRAFT OFFICIAL MINUTES

Monday, June 8, 2020

Minutes: Melissa Haskin, BPA (contractor, FLUX Resources)

Today’s unscheduled TMT meeting was chaired by Doug Baus, Corps, and facilitated by Donna Silverberg, DS Consulting, and was conducted via conference call and webinar. See the end of these minutes for a list of attendees.

1. Reconsideration of SOR - Jay Hesse - Nez Perce Tribe

Jay Hesse, Nez Perce, requested today’s special TMT meeting on behalf of the Flexible Spill Work Group which met last Friday following elevation from TMT. The group convened to discuss SOR 2020-3 and was unable to reach consensus. It decided to wait and watch fish counts over the weekend and has noted that if the issue needs to be raised again, that it should be elevated to RIOG, not the Flexible Spill Work Group due to lack of consensus on a path forward.

Following this weekend’s fish counts, which showed an improvement, both ID and NOAA (2 of the 4 signatories on the SOR) decided to withdraw the SOR request. Jonathan Ebel, ID, reported that what spurred the initial SOR was the difference, starting in early May, in visual and PIT-tag counts between Lower Monumental and Lower Granite, which was substantially different than at other projects on the Snake. He provided some graphics, available on the TMT webpage. The gap began to subside on June 1 and daily passage at Little Goose rose this weekend, he reported.

That said, salmon managers including Claire McGrath, NOAA, Ebel, and Charles Morrill, WA, agree that there is a need for further discussion into lengthening travel times and their effect on fish survival and spawning success. McGrath noted that last year, she provided an end-of-the-season report in July. That may be a good forum to discuss travel times, she said. Others mentioned that YER might also be a good forum for these discussions.

2. Operations Update, Doug Baus, Corps and Scott Bettin, BPA

Doug Baus, Corps, reported that the Action Agencies adjusted spill at Little Goose over the weekend. Due to lack of load, the Action Agencies were unable to start performance spill at 0400. The Corps started a special operation this weekend, which will go through today. It allows for 30% spill past noon per the FOP. On Saturday, June 6, the 8-hour block started at 0900 and continued through 1300. Loads dropped so the Corps switched to gas cap spill, returning to 30% between the hours of 1400 and 1600. On June 7, the 30% spill block started at 0700 and continued for 8 hours. Moving forward, to increase the likelihood of 8-hour spill blocks, the Corps would need additional flexibility on what time spill can end.

Morrill asked how long the lack of load conditions will persist. Scott Bettin, BPA, said flexibility would be needed through the end of spring spill. Since load varies, it is hard to tell exactly when it will happen, he said.

McGrath commented that what happened this weekend was fine, since the 30% spill started in the morning. She wondered what would happen if there would be an instance they would start spill in the afternoon or could the Action Agencies guarantee a morning start. Bettin expressed concern for guaranteeing anything as there is always some uncertainty. He said it would be highly likely BPA would start the 30% spill in the morning hours.

NOAA and WA were supportive of providing extra flexibility. Hearing no other concerns, the Corps will continue with the current operation at Little Goose, which calls for 8 consecutive hours of spill starting at 0400. If lack of load conditions occur, the Corps will begin spill as soon as possible. This will continue through the end of spring spill, June 20.

Dave Swank, USFWS, mentioned a drop off in fish counts at Lower Monumental, following the end of the coordinated operation on Friday. He wondered if it would be possible to achieve 8-hour blocks at both Lower Monumental and Little Goose. Bettin noted that BPA did not flex much at Lower Monumental, Lower Granite, or Ice Harbor over the weekend because the priority was Little Goose. He suggested that at the end of the season, TMT revisit Lower Monumental to see if the project was more of a fish passage issue than expected.

Erin Cooper, Fish Passage Center (FPC), asked about the Little Goose ASW. Baus recapped the operation coordinated at the last TMT; starting on Thursday, June 9, the Corps changes the weir to high crest during performance standard spill and back to low crest during gas cap spill. The operation will continue until flows drop below the FPP trigger of 85 kcfs to change it back to high crest at all hours.

McGrath had some questions on ASW operations over the weekend. Doug Baus, Corps, will reach out to her and Charles Morrill, WA, with answers later today.

3. Next TMT

The next TMT meeting is call on June 10 at 9 a.m.

Today's Attendees:

Agency	TMT Representative
Army Corps of Engineers	Doug Baus (Chair), Lisa Wright, Julie Ammann
Bonneville Power Administration	Tony Norris, Scott Bettin, Jason Sweet
Bureau of Reclamation	Joel Fenolio
NOAA Fisheries	Claire McGrath
US Fish & Wildlife Service	Dave Swank
Washington	Charles Morrill
Oregon	Erick Van Dyke
Idaho	Jonathan Ebel
Montana	N/A
Nez Perce Tribe	Jay Hesse
Umatilla Tribe/CRITFC	Tom Lorz
Colville Tribe	Sheri Sears
Warm Springs Tribe	N/A
Kootenai Tribe	N/A
Spokane Tribe	N/A

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Other Attendees (non-TMT members):

Army Corps of Engineers – Dan Turner, Aaron Marshall, Laura Hamilton, Erin Kovalchuk

BPA – Melissa Haskin (CONTR, FLUX Resources, Notetaker), Shane Mosier

DS Consulting – Donna Silverberg (Facilitator), Colby Mills

Yakama Nation Fisheries – Tom Iverson

Portland General Electric – Ruth Burris

Columbia Basin Bulletin – Mike O’Bryant

FPC – Brandon Chockley, Gabe Scheer, Erin Cooper