



M e m o r a n d u m
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Date: January 9, 2007

To: Robert Willis, USACOE Portland
Ben Hausmann, USACOE Bonneville Dam

From: Robin Brown, Oregon Dept. Fish & Wildlife
Steven Jeffries, Washington Dept. Fish & Wildlife

Subject: Request for interagency cooperation and coordination of efforts to reduce pinniped predation on salmonids below Bonneville Dam in 2007

Pinniped Hazing Activities

ODFW and WDFW plan to use non-lethal hazing tools to deter pinnipeds from the BRZ on a 7 day/week, during all daylight hours from March 1 through May 31, 2007. We request permission to operate boats in the BRZ during any daylight hours during that period. Hazing activities in the BRZ may begin at an earlier date depending upon pinniped activity. All boating activities in the BRZ will be coordinated with Bonneville Control.

The primary hazing tools used in the BRZ will be above-water pyrotechnics. We anticipate using seal bombs (underwater firecrackers) on a very limited basis in the BRZ. We request permission to use seal bombs only when individual animals fail to respond effectively to any other hazing tool. We will avoid the use of any seal bombs within 100 m of all fishways, floating orifices, and the outfalls of the corner collector and the smolt facility as well as within 50 m of any shoreline or in any shallow water areas.

We request permission to operate hazing vessels up to the face of all project structures (i.e. powerhouses, spillway (prior to spills) and navigation locks in order to more effectively move pinniped away from the facility. Boats will not be operated within 50 m of the main fishway entrances. Whenever possible, this will be accomplished with coordination between the hazing boats and the ACOE-contracted USDA Wildlife Damage agents (via radio communications). In cases where hazers on the project are not available, hazing boats would move close to the powerhouse and use only above-water pyrotechnics in directions away from the structure (i.e. directed laterally or downstream) to move pinnipeds. While working in these areas, attention will always be

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paid to persons and vehicles on the powerhouses to avoid any unsafe operating situation. No seal bombs will be used in any of these cases.

Cooperation with USDA Wildlife Services

We request permission to supplement the hazing efforts of Wildlife Services staff on the project at times that we have additional staff available. We will coordinate all such activities with project staff and Wildlife Services on a daily basis.

Staff Training

We will conduct a detailed training session for all staff involved with work at the project to include: project orientation and safety, boat operations in the BRZ, firearms safety training, coordination with staff of all agencies, field protocols, use of hazing tools and data collection.

Pinniped Capture Activities

ODFW and WDFW have constructed a portable sea lion trap that is currently ready for transport to the Bonneville Project. We request permission to moor the trap in the BRZ in an effort to develop capture techniques for sea lions in this area. Sea lions may take many months or more than one season to become accustomed to using the trap. The ability to capture sea lions may be critical to our ability to lethally remove individual animals should that authority be granted to the states.

We request permission to moor the trap for capture purposes at two sites below PH2, both along the concrete wall on the north side of Cascades Island. These locations are at the points where the two concrete aprons off the gravel road along the island approach the edge of the concrete wall. These aprons will allow for the temporary placement and use of a lifting hoist to remove captured sea lions from the trap and transfer them to a truck. We request the assistance of project equipment (e.g. crane) and operators at times that sea lions are to be removed from the trap. If sea lions are regularly using the trap we expect to request this assistance from 0-2 times per week for 1-2 hours per event.

In 2007, any captured sea lions will be driven to Astoria for handling and marking (including placement of satellite-linked tracking tags) and released there. In addition to developing the ability to capture sea lions in the BRZ, this action provides us with more information on repeated use of the Bonneville area by individual sea lions. The trap may be moved from one location to the other depending upon the location most commonly chosen by sea lions for a haul-out area. We also request permission to moor the trap in the dead water area at the south end of PH1 (old navigation lock area) while not in use for capture attempts.

At this stage, we will need to remain flexible in our efforts to capture sea lions at Bonneville. We propose to place the trap in the BRZ early in the 2007 season, perhaps by mid-January. California sea lions are not likely to be abundant in the area at this time, so hazing efforts may be minimal. We will haze sea lions off all other haul-out

areas (including spillway ogees prior to spills). At such time that increased and intensive hazing efforts become necessary to reduce predation (e.g. sometime in March), the emphasis on sea lion capture will be reduced and hazing efforts will increase. However, as was observed in 2006, even after day-long hazing activities in the BRZ, some pinnipeds will haul out at night and may be available for capture in the early morning hours.

Access to Project Facilities

ODFW and WDFW staff propose to work occasionally with the USDA Wildlife Services staff on the project at the powerhouses, spillway and island shorelines. This work would be coordinated on a daily basis with the USDA staff before any actions took place. In this way, extra state staff may be able to supplement the on-project hazing efforts directed by ACOE.

ODFW and WDFW request permission for overnight moorage of 1 to 2 hazing boats (18-24 feet in length) at the ACOE dock in the channel below the main lock on a daily basis throughout the hazing period.

State agency staff will require identification passes, keys and pass cards as necessary to access the areas needed for hazing purposes and boat operations. All state agency staff expected to work on the project will obtain the appropriate safety and orientation training provided by ACOE.

Mid-season Project Consultations

We intend to keep ACOE staff fully informed of all activities conducted during this project. We request permission to consult with ACOE during the project on any changes in field activities that may be necessary to successfully carry out all project objectives.