

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: 14 LWG 05 MFR 8106 Barge Partial Release and Repairs.

A towboat (Clarkston) departed Lower Granite with the 8106 barge and picked up the 2127 barge at Little Goose as scheduled on May 9 for standard transport. The barges arrived at the release point below Bonneville Dam during the evening of May 10 around 1900 hours. Fish were successfully released from the 2127 barge and from five of the six holds on the 8106 barge. The sixth plunger's pneumatic actuator in the right rear compartment failed to operate/open, trapping the fish in the compartment (~38,000 smolts). The towboat crew was unable to winch the plunger up with a chain fall so the fish remained trapped in the hold. Fish remained in good health with the circulation pumps in service.

Since alternative methods of fish removal/salvage were deemed impractical and hazardous, the 5 empty holds on the 8106 barge were filled with water to maintain proper trim. The Clarkston and the barges in tow began to proceed back up river around 2330 hours. The Juvenile Fish Transport Coordinator was contacted, who in turn allowed barges to continue on the return trip to Lower Granite to perform the necessary repairs with fish in compartment.

The malfunctioning barge compartment contained NMFS Lower Granite transport research fish. On the morning of Monday, May 12, the Lower Granite JFF staff and the NMFS researcher held a conference to determine available options. The NMFS researcher did not support the use of a fish pump to transfer fish from the dysfunctional barge compartment into another barge. The group agreed that transferring these fish into another barge with the pump was too hard and stressful for the fish and that releasing these fish in the river was the best option for survival. This action was vetted as well with NMFS Portland Hydro staff.

The Clarkston and the 8106 barge returned to Lower Granite Dam late in the evening of May 12. The 2127 barge was left at the Little Goose Juvenile Fish Facility as previously planned to facilitate direct fish loading operations. Due to the late arrival at Lower Granite Dam, efforts to pull the plunger began this morning (May 13) at 0500 hours. After several attempts, the fish were successfully released at approximately 0900 hours. All fish were released in good condition and no more than the usual mortalities were incurred. A bio-technician tended the fish overnight. Repair work is expected to be completed this afternoon. Current plans are to load Lower Granite fish into the 8106 barge later today and send it down river with the Clarkston. The usual stops to pick up the 2127 barge at Little Goose and the loading of fish at Lower Monumental are still planned, but later in the day or evening. The Clarkston has ample horse power to make up for lost transit time downriver. Fish releases should take place as scheduled during the evening of May 14.

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