**Columbia River Regional Forum**

**System Configuration Team Meeting**

**March 19, 2020**

**DRAFT**

**\*\*Comments due by May 1, 2020\*\***

Representatives of Corps, ID, OR, BPA, NOAA, and others participated in today’s SCT meeting chaired by Blane Bellerud, NOAA. See the last page of these minutes for a list of attendees at today’s meeting.

**1. FY20 Budget Updates:**

Bonneville Powerhouse 2 Fish Guidance Efficiency and the lower river survival studies were deferred this year to fund the CRSO project. Ian has a deadline of June to find the funding to move forward with Bonneville Powerhouse 2 Fish Guidance Efficiency this year. If the survival studies were not funded this year, work would continue and it would be pushed into a new funding cycle. The plan is still to fully fund the pit trawl if funding becomes available, for instance from the Willamette. Ian should know more information by mid-April.

The Corps will start moving forward with the lamprey project per the 2018 fish accords (signed in 2019).

**2. FY21 Budget Updates:**

Ian reported that $15.377 million was the full funding received for the Columbia and Willamette projects. The Corps expressed a need for additional capability and is working through that to try to secure additional funding for the upcoming year.

**3. Update from Ian on any response from policy in regards to our concerns with the funding status, process to obtain adequate funding of O&M needs as well as BiOp needs.**

Ian is working through this and identifying additional needs to meet minimum requirements moving forward. It will be a while before the Corps knows anything on this.

There is a large concern regarding the O&M budget and being able to maintain the facilities.

Tom Lorz voiced that some concern is that by the read of what is in the BA anything new is going to have to be covered by the O&M budget and that budget could be in a deficit.

Chane said he would touch base with a few folks including Mike and circle back at the next SCT meeting. He said there is a burden on the O&M budget and it will be an issue if things continue to get added to it.

Erick Van Dyke, OR, noted that the concerns are systemic. Tackley said he would see if Mike could come talk at the next SCT meeting.

4. Identifying steps/actions regional entities can take to support increased funding in FY21

Charles Morrill, WA, brought this topic up but was not in attendance at today’s meeting.

Tom Lorz said this was more of an internal issue that agencies should bring up to their state representatives.

The Corps clarified that their role is to support interests by providing what the FY21 capability is. Tom Lorz asked for a copy.

Sean Tackley, Corps, noted that the current pandemic, which has resulted in many building closures, has caused a slowdown in communication and connectivity. The Corps will continue to update potential actions and cost estimates over the next few months. It had set up a meeting to solicit feedback on priorities in June or July but that may get pushed out due to the pandemic. There is a quarterly meeting next week between the Corps, Tribes and CRITFC, which may also get pushed back. Tackley noted that the conservation work group may be a better forum for these conversations.

Erick Van Dyke, OR, expressed that his desire is not to pit lamprey funding against salmon funding.

Tackley responded that it may help to list the lamprey projects individually on the SCT spreadsheet. Others agreed this is a good idea and Tackley will take the lead on updating the spreadsheet.

Ian Chane, Corps, noted that the $20 million currently in the budget is specifically earmarked for lamprey. The funding cannot be moved around.

Blane Bellerud, NOAA, noted that one concern is that if lamprey work does not get done, it may also affect salmon, such as with the ladders.

5. Other

Due to CRSO needs, the Corps is moving forward to fund equipment repair and get equipment ready this summer for the lower river survival studies and pit trawl. FY21 funding will cover the pit trawl portion of the work. The only thing that will change is that the funding will be pushed out. There will not be a gap in data collection and the contract for the trawl will be issued in spring.

The Corps has been preparing paperwork and funding the Bonneville Powerhouse 2 Fish Guidance Efficiency team. It is ready to issue a contract. June is the deadline for the contract to be issued this fiscal year. Chane will know mid-April if the funding is available. If it is, the project will move forward as soon as the funding is available.

6. Next SCT:

The next SCT will be the third Thursday in April. Chane will provide and updated FY21 spreadsheet at April meeting.

7. Today’s Attendees:

Blane Bellerud, NOAA

Christine Petersen, BPA

Erick Van Dyke, OR

Ian Chane, Corps

Jacob Macdonald, Corps

Jonathan Ebel, ID

Leah Sullivan, BPA

Melissa Haskin, BPA (CONTR)

Sean Tackley, Corps

Scott Bettin, BPA

Tom Lorz, Umatilla/CRITFC

Trevor Conder, NOAA

*Minutes by Melissa Haskin, Flux Resources LLC, Contractor for Bonneville, mahaskin@bpa.gov*