**Columbia River Regional Forum**

**System Configuration Team Meeting**

**May 17, 2018**

**DRAFT**

Minutes by Melissa Haskin, Technical Writer 1, Flux Resources LLC

**\*\*Comments due by July 15, 2018**

***1. Introduction***

Representatives of NOAA, Washington, BPA, Oregon, NPCC, COE, Nez Perce, and others participated in today’s SCT meeting chaired by Blane Bellerud, NOAA.

The main focus of the meeting was to wrap up the budget for *FY 2018* and discuss the *FY19 CRFM* ranking spreadsheet.

***2. McNary Overshoot Pit Tag Study***

Much of the day’s meeting centered around funding for the McNary Overshoot Pit Tag study. This study would answer the question, “How much does the top spill weir (TSW) need to be open.” A similar study was completed in 2012 or so that asked “Will fish use the TSW if it is open?” The answer to that was “yes.” This new study seeks to find out how much it needs to be open and whether the fish will dribble through slowly or pile up.

Funding for this study would make FY18 tight and would need to be completed shortly in order for the project to start on time as it can take several months to get a contract in place. There was some talk about the consequences of delaying the project, but Trevor Conder (NOAA) pointed out that until hydroacoustic was added to the study, it was a go for 2018. He mentioned it would be a shame to drop the study just because hydroacoustic was added.

Derek Fryer, COE Walla Walla, pointed out that NOAA could do the pit analysis in house in order to save money. One participant mentioned that this would require no line item or additional funding, however another mentioned that at the very least there would be labor costs.

Another suggestion was that to keep costs down instead of covering multiple outlets, only the spill outlet be covered. This would help SCT collect information on how fish are passing through TSW and help the team decide how to meter the water more efficiently.

Members of the SCT decided to postpone a decision until the next SCT meeting. It was decided that cost estimates and timelines would need to be decided before a decision could be made. One member commented, “We need a clear scope and a plan forward.” Before a decision can be made, the COE needs to know where this project stands in ranking compared to other projects. The meeting to decide the ranking of the project is scheduled for Monday, May 21.

***2. Review FY 2018 CRFM Spreadsheet***

Ian Chane, COE, distributed copies of the FY 2018 and FY 2019 CRFM spreadsheets and went over changes to the FY 2018 budget. Some unexpected projects such as issues at Bonneville caused increases in the budget, which must be balanced by taking funding from other places in the budget.

At Bonneville, there are plate issues that affect unit operation. These issues may result in the study being delayed a year. There was discussion of whether this was a design flaw by a contactor or if it was an internal flaw. However, both projects were done internally.

Another project discussed was AWS. Two weeks ago, the corps tried to open the valves but could only get them 7.5 feet – or 53% – open. Work necessary on the valve would cause a line item increase on the 2018 budget and the effect on the 2019 budget is unclear.

Ian reiterated that if any one item needs additional funding in 2018 then the budget has to be balanced by moving funds from elsewhere in the budget. This shifting is done based on the FY 2018 CRFM rankings.

SCT has already done most of the ranking for FY 2018 line items. SCT decided that for clarity all line items without budgets for FY 2019 would be removed from the 2019 budget as keeping them in with 0s adds confusion. Ian said he would make the change and redistribute the budget.

***3. Review FY 2019 CRFM Spreadsheet***

The President’s budget is $47.7 million for FY 2018 was passed, however this budget was passed based on estimates made in 2017. With work necessary due to spilling at the gas cap and other changes, there is a deficit of approximately 4 million. The corps estimates a need of 50 million.

The budget for FY 19 is considerably less than in years past. This is because the corps is wrapping up many contracts in 2018. Budget requests for anticipated work have declined. With many construction actions closing in 2018, such as the bridge biop, there is a major decrease in construction actions. While budgets for work on the Columbia are decreasing, budgets on the Willamette are expected to increase as actions increase there.

***4. Schedule June Meeting***

The June meeting was tentatively pushed up from its regular meeting time on the third Thursday of the month to the first Friday in June. This decision was made to accommodate changes to the ’18 budget, which are on a timeline. Members agreed that waiting until the next regularly scheduled SCT meeting would be too long.

***5. Approval of January and February SCT Minutes***

Meeting notes for the January and February SCT meetings were approved and marked as final.

Today’s Participants:

***Name Affiliation***

Blaine Bellerud NOAA

Charles Morrill Washington

Scott Bettin BPA

Trevor Conder NOAA

Erick Van Dyke Oregon

Leslie Bach NPCC

Ian Chane COE

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Margie McGill COE Walla Walla

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