WATER Steering Team Meeting
Tuesday, July 2, 2019
St. Helens Room, NOAA, Portland, OR

http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette_Coordination/

Facilitator's Summary
[Edits Received from: ODFW; COE]

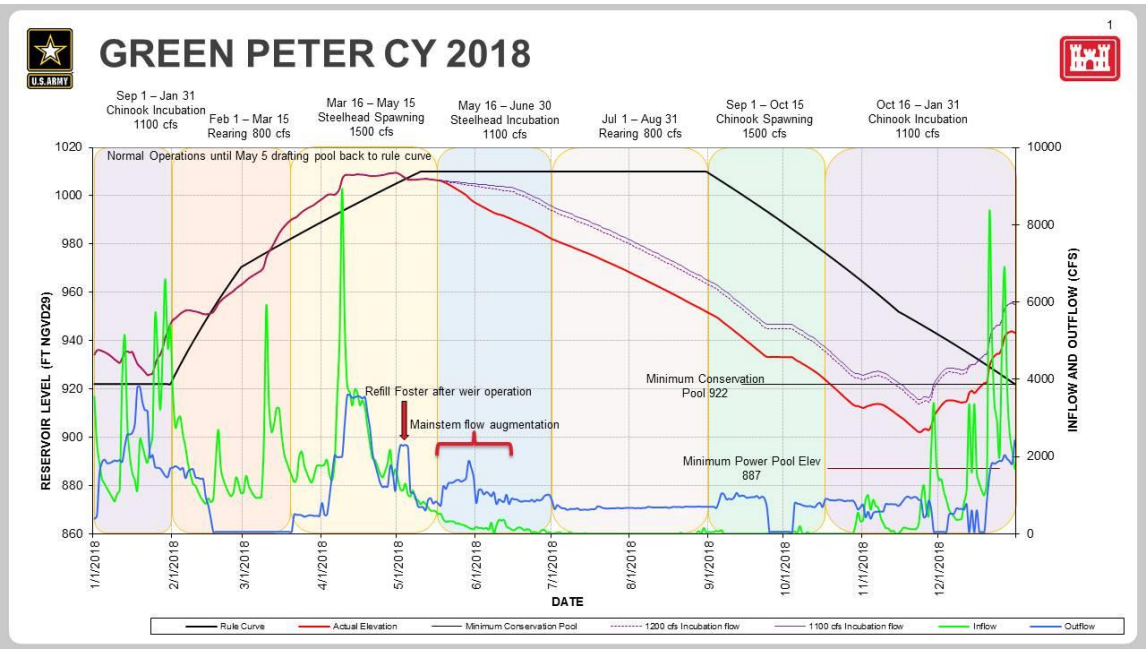
ACTION	BY WHOM?	BY WHEN?
Schedule Fall Managers Forum meeting.	DSC	ASAP
Schedule joint ST&RM&E meeting – potentially for August 6th.	DSC	ASAP
Consult internally at the Corps regarding FY19 funding to see if it is possible to fund a paper exercise aimed at creating a pre-feasibility/implementation plan for delayed refill at Lookout Point (JPL-19-02-LOP); circle back to the ST.	Andy	7/12

Participants in the room or on the phone: Amy Gibbons (USACE), Nancy Gramlich (ODEQ), Salina Hart (USACE), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Marc Liverman (NMFS), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Lawrence Schwabe (Grand Ronde), Dan Spear (BPA), Andy Traylor (USACE), and Karl Weist (NPCC).

Facilitator: Donna Silverberg, **Support:** Emily Stranz, Liz Blanas, DS Consulting.

Welcome, Introductions, & Housekeeping
Facilitator, Donna Silverberg welcomed the group to the meeting and conducted a round of introductions. She reviewed the agenda with the group, noting the presentation from Salina Hart regarding the 2018 Santiam flows and 2019 high flow event. The group reviewed and approved the June 4th Steering Team meeting summary.

Flow Team Presentation on Santiam 2018 Flows and 2019 High Flow Event
Salina Hart, Chair of Flow and Water Quality Team, (FWQT), presented on the 2018 flows in the Santiam Rivers, specifically in regards to Green Peter and Foster Dams operations (see image below).



She pointed out highlights, noting that there was good inflow in March that required drafting to get back down to the rule curve for flood risk management. Just about the same time they returned to the rule curve, additional flows were needed to meet mainstem and flow targets since the southern part of the basin (Middle Fork) did not substantially fill. The Middle Fork Projects are typically used heavily earlier in the year to meet mainstem flow targets, but additional releases from other projects including Green Peter/ Foster were required in 2018. . Later in the year, October was really dry, which contributed to the need for operations to dip into the power pool at both Hills Creek and Green Peter to support rearing flows downstream. Additionally, downstream passage using the spillway weir at Foster required flows greater than the minimum of 800 cfs for rearing which caused durther dipping into the power pool. Salina noted that the operations team is always working to try and balance downstream passage, power operations, recreation, and sufficient flow for incubation, spawning, and rearing. Salina also presented scenarios showing different operations (not pictured), for example if the project had operated at 1100cfs, which is the BiOp minimum for incubation, as well as a flow augmentation scenario as requested in season from NMFS. She explained that the Corps operates the Santiam projects as a system and tries to meet mainstem flow targets, however, it is challenging given that they do not know if it is going to be a dry or really dry year until in-season. If Green Peter is not filled to the maximum conservation pool each spring, there is a good chance that it will be drafted into the power pool in order to allow for downstream water needs. That is, unless the Corps coordinates early with partners to determine how to manage the risks and find the best balance for in-season management. Salina noted that so far, 2019, it is looking like it is going to be dry according to the Corps' modelling; she expects that they could potentially get into the power pool in late September. Salina's team has already started coordinating with BPA, NMFS, and ODFW within the FWQT process to determine path for this year given what they are predicting.

Despite the dry 2019 forecast, the Willamette reservoirs were full after a high water event in the Basin in April. The high waters actually filled reservoirs higher than the rule curve, and operators had to release water in order to get back down to the rule curve in case of another event that required storage. Earlier in the year (prior to the high flows), a deviation request to fill a bit above the rule curve was developed by Portland District and approved by Northwestern Division. Salina noted that they learned some good lessons this year and hope to incorporate more refill flexibility in the future, as the short term forecasts are good and allow for flexible in-season management.

Lessons learned from the 2018 and 2019 water years:

- Early coordination is needed.
- It is helpful to understand management priorities in low flow years, however, given the complexities, management may need to happen in real-time.
- In-season flexibility is a helpful management tool, particularly refill and rule curve exceedances that allow for short-term utilization of flows.

In response to a question, Dan noted that in a dry year augmenting flow in June creates a risk to supporting tributary flows later in the year. There are decisions that need to be made around the value of more certainty in meeting the mainstem flow values, versus meeting tributary flow targets later in the year. Dan posed the question of whether there is a priority between these two flow periods. Marc noted that there are tradeoffs depending on season, species, life stage, etc. and there is not a clear line. He suggested that there is not a "rule" that can be created; it is an in-season management question, and the answer will change given each year's flow conditions.

The Steering Team appreciated the information on the 2018 and 2019 water years and thanked Salina for her presentation.

FY19 Concepts Discussion

The Steering Team circled back to their request made at the June meeting for the RM&E Team to discuss FY19 concepts that were ranked high, potentially feasible to fund, and not yet funded in FY19. They reviewed two documents provided by the RM&E Team: a list of studies for further discussion by the Steering Team and an updated spreadsheet displaying

the FY19 Concept Rankings by agency and the current funding status for each project (see separate documents provided by DSC).

The RM&E Team identified four FY19 concepts to bring forward to the Steering Team for consideration:

1. **FMWQ 18-02** *Determination of habitat use patterns for rearing and emigrating juvenile spring Chinook salmon and winter steelhead below Willamette Project dams:* **Additional Juvenile Sampling.**
   Team members requested that the objectives for additional sampling be reviewed for consistency with the original ranked concept and a revised concept be brought to the team if the nature of the project has changed.

2. **JPL-19-02-LOP** *Evaluation of delaying refill and spring surface spill operation at Lookout Point Dam for improving juvenile spring Chinook Salmon dam passage:* **Paper exercise to do pre-feasibility/implementation plan** (ex. Consider the hydraulic probability to conduct study and identify risks and trade-offs).

3. **FMWQ 18-01** *Evaluation of habitat benefits associated with USACE revetment modification, including potential cold-water refuge enhancement:* **Paper exercise to evaluate habitat uplift with revetment modification.**

4. **Genetic pedigree sampling** of Chinook; analysis of Fall Creek and North Santiam samples. This work was not ranked**;** however, it is needed in order to implement multiple studies. **Note:** The Corps is checking to determine whether this work effort is already included in the FY19 funding package.

These concepts were noted as having high average ranking (above 3.0) and potentially feasible to fund in FY19. The list was developed as a team; however, it does not reflect consensus recommendation to pursue funding. The Steering Team reviewed the list and noted that there is uncertainty regarding the Corps' current funding situation. At the June RM&E Team meeting, the Corps shared that they are planning to fund FMWQ 18-01 and some of the genetic pedigree sampling. The other two concepts proposed were paper exercises that could be done in-house at the Corps if there is capacity.

After much discussion, the Steering Team aligned around making a request for the Corps to consider funding JPL-19-02-LOP as a priority if funds are available but limited, and they are not able to fund all of the concepts laid out by the RM&E Team.

→ **ACTION:** Andy will consult internally at the Corps regarding their FY19 funding to see if it is possible to fund a paper exercise aimed at creating a pre-feasibility/implementation plan for delayed refill at Lookout Point (JPL-19-02-LOP). He will circle back to the Steering Team regarding the Corps' funding status by 7/12.

Andy noted that the information provided by the RM&E Team is very helpful, as there are a lot of moving pieces and parts in the constantly changing CRFM funding situation. Updated information on what the teams see as priority studies is valuable to the Corps as they make decisions throughout the year.

In addition to the proposed concepts, the RM&E Team identified process improvements (add a "funding status" column to the WATER Concept Ranking & Prioritization Spreadsheet for in-season tracking; have quarterly check-ins on study priorities to identify opportunities to fund or tee-up studies; continue utilizing, and encourage the Steering Team to utilize, the annual RM&E Concept Planning spreadsheet). The Steering Team signaled their support for these process improvements.

Regional Updates

Team Updates:

- RM&E Team– NMFS representation on the RM&E Team is shifting, as Diana Dishman has taken on a new position at NMFS and will no longer be a part of the WATER process. Anne Mullan will be stepping in to the RM&E Team as NMFS' representative.
- Habitat Technical Team – The HTT is planning a river float field trip for August to look at some of the projects they've been working on. Also, the team has a series of projects proposed this year and are working to get final proposals. Currently, the project funding need is $2.1 million, which is more than the HTT has for funding.

- Flow Team- The Flow Team is starting to plan for the conservation flow season via conversations with regional partners.
- WWFDWG – There is a slight delay in the Foster study looking at water temperatures in the fish ladder; the delay is due to staffing changes. However, the study is still moving forward. The High Head Bypass Team is doing a charrette to see what HHB could look like Cougar. They are also talking about what passage could look like without power generation, and expect that these conversations may surface some new ideas for consideration.
- Hatchery Team – No one present to report.

Partner Updates:

- BPA – Nothing to report.
- Corps – Recently, it has been observed that pipe lining that is part of the Falls Creek Fish Facility is chipping off; the Corps is in the process of exploring where the epoxy is chipping. This will require a video camera to go in a check it out. Also, a fix for downstream passage at the Foster weir is in development (reminder: the new Foster weir is working well to attract fish, however, there were impact injuries to fish passing downstream due to high velocity flow and impacts with the concrete surface downstream of the weir.) The PDT's proposal is to fix it via a secondary weir on the spillway surface, which would create spiraling hydraulics and a lateral flow. There are still lots of uncertainties, however, the effort is in design this year, and hopefully the Corps will award and complete a fix in FY20. In regards to the Willamette Basin Review, the next steps for the Corps are to get final approval with HQ and then finalize the Chief's Report and work to get in the next WRDA Bill. Additionally, public meetings for Willamette EIS are complete and the scoping phase is almost done; the next phase in the NEPA process will be developing alternatives.
- CTGR – Nothing to report.
- NMFS – NOAA signed the Willamette Basin Review BiOp, which was supported by Congressionals and Governor Brown. The push on the BiOp caused some delay on the BLM and Federal Highways BiOps; the NMFS team looks forward to catching up on those work efforts, as well as the Willamette Valley EIS process.
- NPCC – The draft Fish and Wildlife Program addendum is expected to be out for public review in a few weeks. There will be a 90 day public review period (expected to end around mid-October 2019).
- ODEQ – Nothing to report.
- ODFW – The Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program (WWMP) has 3 new projects under consideration for FY21 funding, and 1 project has re-applied in the event it doesn't close in FY19. All four projects have been scored and ranked by the WWMP Technical Review Team. The projects will be considered by the WWMP Wildlife Advisory Group (WAG) next week for its ranking decision. The WAG will forward its ranking decision to ODFW's Director for recommendation to BPA for funding.
- USFWS – USFWS is working with the Corps on Section 7 ESA process for Cougar downstream passage for bull trout.

Next Steps

The team discussed the next Managers Forum session, which Donna noted was so far problematic to schedule, as none of the Manager's schedules were aligning. Steering Team members suggested that Donna conduct check-ins with Managers and that DS Consulting try a new set of dates for the session. Suggested dates included: September 26, October 16, 18, 22, 23, 24, and 28-31.

Additionally, DS Consulting is working to schedule the Joint Steering and RM&E Teams meeting for FY20 concept prioritization. The Steering Team suggested trying to use their next meeting on August 6th for the joint meeting. Emily will connect with RM&E Team members to see if that date works. There was also interest in finding a time in the near future for the Steering Team to go on a field trip together, options suggested were to visit Falls Creek and the USFS restoration downstream of Cougar.

With that, Donna thanked the Steering Team and the meeting was adjourned.

The next Steering Team meeting is scheduled for August 6, 2019.

This summary is respectfully submitted by the impartial facilitation team at DS Consulting. Suggested edits are welcome and can be sent to Emily at emily@dsconsult.co.