

Fish Passage Plan (FPP) Change Form

Change Form # & Title:	24AppL001 – Predator Management Updates
Date Submitted:	4-Jan-2024 30-Jan-2024 - Revised JDA 7-Feb-2024 - Revised Table 1 and TDA 4.2.h
Project:	Lower Snake and Lower Columbia projects
Requester Name, Agency:	Chris Peery, Corps NWW; Bob Wertheimer, Corps NWP; Kyle Tidwell, Corps NWP; Laura Ricketts, Corps JDA; and Bob Cordie, Corps TDA
Final Action:	FINALIZED as revised 7-Feb-2024

FPP SECTION: Appendix L – Predator Monitoring & Deterrence Action Plans

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE: Updates for 2024.

PROPOSED CHANGE: *See following pages for edits to existing FPP text in track changes.*

COMMENTS:

1-FEB-2024 FPOM FPP Meeting:

Trevor Conder, NOAA, via chat: Please add Chris Magel to all coordination related to John Day and The Dalles Dam. He will be taking over as our lead bio dealing with those projects as well as avian and estuary issues.

Michelle McDowell, USFWS, asked why the weekly recon flights were crossed out in Table 1? She thought it was funded this year from BPA so it seems incongruent with activities by all regional partners as described in the table title. If for some reason this isn't going to happen, it would be a big blow to much of the planning that has been done the past several years.

Patricia Madson, Corps NWP: Tidwell probably made these edits just for the Corps and wasn't aware that the table was for "all regional partners".

Jacob MacDonald, Corps NWP, will check with Amy Gibbons and get back to McDowell.

[7-FEB-2024: Wright confirmed with BPA that the flights are still funded for FY25 and should be kept in Table 1. However, the flights are not weekly – other methods (ground/boat) based surveys are attempted to be done weekly. See clarifying edits in Table 1.]

McDowell is concerned that dates in Table 2 have been shifted later. It was her impression that earlier in the season was the biggest threat of avian predators, particularly on steelhead.

Chris Peery, Corps NWW, replied that the higher spill has been resulting in fewer birds in the tailrace at a lot of these projects. Birds are showing up later as spill decreases. So the date changes are reflecting that by shifting hazing to later in the year when there are more birds. LoMo is actually starting a little earlier. In some cases, the hazing period is extended to cover that later date. In most cases, we're actually increasing the number of days and effort.

McDowell appreciated that feedback. She wanted to confirm that the Corps is maintaining the same level of non-lethal work as before, and not reducing it now that lethal is an option. She also noted that BON is on the lethal permit, but not included in Table 1.

Michael Lotspeich, Corps JDA, replied he thought BON had public safety reasons for not doing it.

Darren Gallion, Corps NWP, confirmed. BON is on the permit but they decided to not have lethal take there.

McDowell added that the lethal permit doesn't have dam-specific numbers so that will be up to the Corps to manage. If the Corps is not using the take authority at BON, then there will be more allowed at the other two dams.

Bob Cordie, Corps TDA, confirmed they're going to work with JDA to determine how to split those up. And they'll be tracking the numbers closely.

Tom Lorz, CRITFC, asked that since shore-based hazing at MCN is not very effective, and the Corps is doing it 12 hrs/day, 6 days/week, while boat hazing is only 3 days/week, shouldn't that be flipped? Boat hazing is more effective since you can get boats where the birds are. Especially now with the janky spill patterns at MCN, so more coverage, more better.

Peery replied that when they developed the scope of work it's up to the biologist at WS to set that. He can check with them on if they can transfer efforts, as long as it doesn't increase costs.

Lorz also asked that they revisit the shifted dates at the end of the year to see if the birds are still showing up later. He's a little nervous about starting April 28, that seems late, especially for steelhead.

Magel asked if there could be a trigger point in case they show up sooner.

Peery said that would be a challenge for staffing. He can check.

McDowell agreed it would be bad to start hazing after steelhead have moved through.

Peery will take that comment to WS and the project to see if there are options for earlier start based on some sort of trigger and more boat hazing. They will continue to evaluate timing of fish and birds.

Magel asked about TDA contracted hazing schedule and would like more detail on the schedule or frequency for falcon deterrence vs other hazing.

Cordie said they're still trying to come up with a good schedule for falconry to determine the most effective timing. It's still in development. It would be best to have the falcon when pyro is not happening to see how effective it is. Falconry is still in test stages. And there is still some overlap between falconry and pyro. For instance, when pyro is happening via boat downstream of the bridge and birds are at the powerhouse where they would use a falcon. Part of the testing is to see how well pyro and falconry work together.

Magel would like more specificity in **section 4.2.c** on how many hours hazing will occur (falconry and other hazing), something along the lines of the language that is being deleted. Also, in **4.2.h**, can we specify which new methods of abatement? Or refer to annual avian report for what these methods are? As long as we know where to look for that information.

Magel asked about **section 4.2.f** "Attempts will be made to collect samples for diet analysis" – is it hard or easy?

Cordie said they haven't done it in several years and aren't familiar with how difficult it will be, so they're hesitant to say with certainty that it will be done.

McDowell added that the permit says a really good effort should be made to collect those birds and they should not just be left there. Recognize that sometimes it's not practical but removing them from the landscape is what you should be striving for. If you're looking at stomach contents, USGS might be able to help. Check with them to make sure you have the right protocols in place to freeze them and put a copy of the permit nearby.

Cordie says that's part of the plan. USDA is familiar with doing this upriver. He will stress the importance of collecting the birds. On the sampling side of things, they're working through the challenges to build it into their workload. He knows that Eric is talking with the Yakama to explore sampling in conjunction with them.

McDowell asked that as the carcasses are moved around to other entities, that the Corps give them a letter that designates them as a sub-permittee that they carry along with the Corps' permit.

Cordie said they are tracking those requirements and that is part of the plans.

Van Dyke asked McDowell where those details are captured and if it's available.

McDowell said it's all in the permit. It should be readily available to anyone taking or handling a migratory bird.

Cordie asked about Table 2 and the "Action Trigger" column. Seems like there should be a standard applied across the projects. He proposed language for TDA – "as deemed necessary by USDA within lethal permit limits". Folks concurred this should be copied to JDA and MCN.

Peery said that the Snake projects still have the abundance trigger that applies. The number of birds they take is based on their judgment of what is needed to reinforce non-lethal hazing.

RECORD OF FINAL ACTION:

Finalized as revised 7-Feb-2024, per feedback at the FPOM FPP meeting 1-Feb-2024.

Table 1. Estuary Avian Activities by All Regional Partners (as of January 2024) – see Section 21 below for more information.

Objective	Activity	Location
Monitor avian predators in the estuary and discourage any avian predators that are found nesting at an upland disposal site.	Reconnaissance flights to detect avian predators on upland disposal sites	Disposal sites (estuary-wide)
	Passive and active dissuasion	Rice, Miller Sands, and Pillar Rocks Islands
Maintain no less than 1 acre of Caspian tern habitat on ESI annually to support approximately 3,125 to 4,375 breeding pairs and prevent terns from nesting on ESI outside the designated habitat.	Pre-season site preparation	ESI
	Colony size monitoring (annual peak abundance estimates every three years)	ESI
	Passive and active dissuasion (outside designated habitat)	ESI
Monitor DCCO on ESI and in the Columbia River Estuary annually for colony size and response to management, as necessary in support of the DCCO FEIS.	Weekly <u>ground and boat-based surveys and periodic (weekly to monthly)</u> reconnaissance flights and aerial photography of DCCO colonies in the estuary	ESI, Astoria-Megler Bridge, Channel Markers, Longview Bridge, Troutdale Towers
	Colony size monitoring	ESI, Astoria-Megler Bridge, Channel Markers, Longview Bridge, Troutdale Towers
	On-island management and response monitoring	ESI
Monitor DCCO on ESI annually to estimate DCCO abundance and nesting density.	Colony size monitoring	ESI
Estimate and assess ESI DCCO and CATE annual predation rates (impacts) on juvenile salmonids in support of the DCCO FEIS and the 2020 CRS BiOp.	Physical recovery of CATE PIT tags	ESI
	Physical recovery of DCCO PIT tags	ESI
	Statistical modeling of DCCO and CATE annual predation rates	ESI

Table 2. Hazing Dates & Methods at Lower Columbia and Lower Snake River Projects in ~~2023~~2024. See Sections ~~3-10~~2-9 below for project-specific descriptions.

Dam	Passive Deterrents	Hazing Dates	Location	Hazing hours/day	Hazing Methods	Action Trigger
BON	Avian wires, sprinklers	April 1 – July 31 (Avian)	Shore	8 hours/day	Pyrotechnics, sound, propane cannon (if necessary)	150 birds in a single zone
TDA	Avian wires	April 15 – July 31	Shore, Boat	Pyro April 15 & June 15 = 814 hours/day M-F, then June 15 – July 31, 8 hrs/7 day May & June = 16 hours/day Falcon Apr 15-June 15 Sat and Sun	Pyrotechnics and Lethal removal if necessary	50% of 5-yr average As deemed necessary by USDA within lethal permit limits
JDA	Avian wires	April 10 16 – July 31	Boat	8 hours/day	Pyrotechnics and lethal take if necessary	50% of 5-yr average As deemed necessary by USDA within lethal permit limits
MCN	Avian wires, needle strips	April 21 – July 27	Shore, Boat	<u>Shore:</u> April 21 –July 27 = 12 hours/day Mon–Sat, 8 hours/day on Sundays <u>Boat:</u> April 28 –July 13 = 10 hrs/day, 3 days/wk (except Sunday)	Pyrotechnics, sound, lasers, lethal take (if necessary)	As deemed necessary by USDA within lethal permit limits N/A
IHR	Avian wires, wire spikes, sprinklers	April 71 – July 6 ne 30	Shore, Boat	<u>Shore:</u> April 71 – 208 and June 911 –July 630 = 8 hours/day April 219 –June 810 = 16 hours/day <u>Boat:</u> April 219 – 272 and June May 28 –June 810 and July 7-27 = 8 hrs/day, 3 days/wk April 283 – June May 127 = 8 hours/day, 5 days/week	Pyrotechnics, sound, laser, lethal take (if necessary)	Daily count twice 3-yr average; unresponsive to hazing.
LMN	Avian wires, sprinklers	April 79 – June 30 ly 1	Shore	April 79 – 202 and May 26 June 4 –June 30 July 1 = 8 hours/day April 213 – May 25 June 3 = 16 hours/day	Pyrotechnics, sound, lethal take (if necessary)	86 gulls, 43 terns, 15 cormorants
LGS	Avian wires, needle strips, sprinklers, visual	April 21 March 29 – July 13 ne 18	Shore, Boat	<u>Shore:</u> April 21 March 29 –June 1 April 10 and May 23 –June 18 = 128 hours/day June 2 April 11 –July 13 May 22 = 816 hours/day <u>Boat:</u> April 21 March 29 – August 10 June 18 = 8 hours/day, 3 days/week	Pyrotechnics, sound, lethal take (if necessary)	100 gulls &/or terns, 50 cormorants
LWG	Avian wires, needle strips, sprinklers	April 1 – June 30	Shore	April 1–20 and June 2–30 = 8 hours/day April 20–June 1 = 16 hours/day	Pyrotechnics, sound, lethal take (if necessary)	57 gulls, 110 cormorants

1. ESTUARY

1.1. Estuary-Wide Efforts. Monitor avian predators in the estuary to support the Caspian Tern (CATE) and Double Crested Cormorant (DCCO) monitoring plans and fulfill Term and Condition 1k of the 2012 BiOp¹ for operations and maintenance of federal navigation channels and RPM #3 and T&C #3 of the 2020 CRS BiOp for the maintenance of the Columbia River System. Collectively these requirements direct avian predators to be monitored and dissuaded from select locations in the estuary.

1.2. East Sand Island (ESI) Caspian Terns (CATE) Monitoring and Hazing Plan.

- a) Maintain no less than 1 acre of CATE habitat on ESI annually to support approximately 3,125 to 4,375 breeding pairs. Prevent CATE from nesting on ESI outside the designated colony.
- b) The Corps Fish Field Unit will conduct the colony counts of CATE on ESI March through August and provide estimates of the number of birds ~~off-colony but~~ on ESI.
- c) PIT-tag recovery, reporting, and analysis will occur in 2024~~1~~.

1.3. Double Crested Cormorants (DCCO) Monitoring Plan.

- a) Monitor DCCO on ESI and in the Columbia River estuary annually for colony size and response to management, as necessary in support of the DCCO FEIS.
- b) PIT-tag recovery, reporting, and analysis will occur in 2021.

1.4. Rice, Miller Sands, and Pillar Rocks Islands.

- a) Monitor avian predators in the estuary and discourage any avian predators that are found nesting at an upland disposal site per the 2012 BiOp for the operations and maintenance of the federal navigation channel and the 2020 CRS BiOp.
- b) Under the directing documents of the 2012 and 2020 BiOps, avian predators (~~i.e., CATE and DCCO~~) must be monitored for presence and breeding attempts on dredge material placement sites. If observed, a combination of non-lethal dissuasion and lethal egg take must be used to discourage and stop birds from using these sites.
- c) FFU will conduct reconnaissance surveys to Rice, Miller Sands, and Pillar Rocks Islands on a weekly basis between March and August to detect CATE and DCCO interest in the sites. On Rice Island, a passive green laser will ~~continued to be used along with~~ ~~beta tested for efficacy in 2021 and~~ ropes, stakes, and flagging ~~will be used~~ to dissuade birds from using ~~western-most areas~~ of ~~historical~~ CATE interest. Miller and Pillar Rocks Islands will be monitored and, if necessary, dissuaded.

¹ NMFS. July 11, 2012. ESA Section 7 Formal Consultation and Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Essential Fish Habitat Consultation for the Columbia River Navigation Channel Operations and Maintenance, Mouth of the Columbia River to Bonneville Dam, Oregon and Washington. (NMFS No: 2011/02095).

2. BONNEVILLE DAM

2.1. Avian Monitoring. Bird numbers are accessed daily during fishway inspections by a Project Biologist. Due to low bird populations at the dam during winter months, bird numbers are recorded 7 days a week from April 1 through October 31. Avian monitoring occurs as often as possible outside of these dates and during the non-fish passage season. Piscivorous birds of interest are gulls & cormorants, though other birds such as mergansers, grebes, osprey, and eagles may occasionally be noted. Demarcated zones are Powerhouse (PH) 1 forebay, PH1 tailrace, Spillway forebay, Spillway tailrace, B2CC outfall, PH2 forebay, PH2 tailrace, and Juvenile Monitoring Facility (JMF) outfall.

2.2. Avian Action Plan. Measures for avian deterrence at BON are listed below. While gulls and cormorants are present to a significant degree during peak summer months, relative avian abundance is low and no further actions are being considered at this time.

- a) Avian wires are installed each year prior to April 10 in the tailrace of PH1, PH2, spillway and B2CC outfall.
- b) Avian hazers are present at the dam April 1 through July 31, 8 hours per day, 7 days a week, between 0800 and 2000 hours. Hours of hazing vary so birds do not acclimate to long periods of no hazing.
- c) A hydro-cannon operates continuously on the top JBS outfall flume.
- d) A propane cannon was tested for use during fish transport releases at the JBS and may be considered for use if avian predation risk is found to exist during truck releases of juveniles.

2.3. Avian Incident Response. The trigger for additional action is 150 piscivorous birds in a single zone during a single observation. When the trigger is met, hazing efforts will be increased in those areas and increase the number of long-range pyrotechnic devices. A propane cannon may be useful in some zones (e.g., JBS outfall, B2CC, PH2 tailrace) but application must be limited to avoid impacting project visitors and nearby public areas and towns. Lethal removal would likely work but is not approved and would require additional funding. The trigger is only reached a few times a year, usually between mid-September and early October. Hazing concludes on July 31. If the trigger is consistently being met in September and October, adjustment of hazing dates could be pursued.

2.4. Avian Reporting. Avian predation by species and zone will be in the Project Weekly Report. If warranted, a summary could also be included in the Annual Report.

2.5. Pinniped Predation Monitoring. The Corps will annually implement pinniped predation monitoring at BON:

- a) Pinniped presence and abundance will be surveyed Monday – Friday year-round (except federal holidays). As historically done, the tailrace area of the dam will be surveyed for pinniped presence by trained biologists using field glasses. These daily counts will be partitioned by species of pinniped and will attempt to evaluate which

individuals are present using unique identifiers (i.e., human-applied marks and brands). This information will be reported at each FPOM meeting and will also be described in an annual report.

- b) Pinniped predation on salmonids and other fish will be surveyed Monday – Friday (except federal holidays) when pinniped abundance is greater than or equal to 20 animals at Bonneville Dam. Sampling intensity may increase above the baseline criteria of 20 animals if resources are available. Predation estimates will be produced in a manner consistent with historic methods. This involves a stratified systematic sampling of daylight hours in the dam’s tailrace by trained biologists using field glasses to observe predation events. The result of this monitoring is a bounded-mean estimate of adult salmonid consumption by each pinniped species. If sufficient data is present, the Corps will also produce estimates of White Sturgeon and Pacific Lamprey consumption. Preliminary information will be reported at each FPOM meeting and finalized data will be described in an annual report.

2.6. Pinniped Predation Management. The Corps will annually implement pinniped predation management actions at BON:

- a) California Sea Lions and Steller Sea Lions shall be hazed at Bonneville Dam daily across daylight hours from March 31 through May 31 and from August 15 through October 31. Hours should vary so that pinnipeds do not acclimate to long periods with no hazing, unless otherwise coordinated with the POC.
- b) Pinniped hazing techniques are defined in the approved *Operating Plan* and in accordance with the *Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, Section 109 h.1.c.*
- c) Pinnipeds hazing shall occur in the tailrace of the dam and spillway, Tanner Creek, and areas where pinnipeds haul out (unless otherwise coordinated for trapping efforts), ranging to approximately 1,500 feet downstream of the dam and outfall site.
- d) Special activities will be coordinated each year as necessary with Federal, State and Tribal boat hazing, trap/take efforts and/or special evaluations or tests.
- e) Sea Lion Exclusion Devices (SLEDs) will be installed at all adult fishway entrances and floating orifice gates (FOGs). All SLEDs may be left in year-round.
- f) The downstream navigation lock gates will be kept closed until necessary to open for a vessel locking through.

3. THE DALLES DAM

3.1. Monitoring. Project Fisheries staff will monitor daily April 1–September 30 and record numbers of piscivorous birds foraging and non-foraging on a standardized form. Data will be provided in the weekly and annual fishway status reports. Observation zones include forebay, powerhouse tailrace, sluiceway outfall tailrace, spillway tailrace outside of the spillwall, spillway tailrace inside the spillwall, spillway tailrace upstream of bridge, and spillway tailrace downstream of bridge. New methods will continue to be explored.

3.2. Action Plan.

- a) Avian abatement measures shall be in place by April 1 unless delayed by inclement weather, in which case work will be completed as soon as weather permits.
- b) Avian lines are not in place downstream of the bridge where predation is most prevalent. However, 13 avian lines are upstream of the bridge which tends to keep gull numbers low in that area and 61 avian lines are across the entire powerhouse tailrace as well as half of the channel over the ice/trash sluiceway outfall. Any gulls within the avian line grid are immediately hazed.
- c) Contracted hazing will occur April 15–July 31, 7 days per week, 14–16 hours/day schedule will vary with use of falcon deterrence to cover most daylight hours. Avian hazing will be contracted to USDA as in prior years. Corps NWP employees are not allowed to haze gulls as was successfully done in the past.
- d) Hazing will consist of launching pyrotechnics when gulls are present.
- e) Lethal removal will occur via shotgun within the limits of the USFWS permit.
- e)f) Attempts will be made to collect samples for diet analysis.
- f)g) Almost all hazing occurs in SW4 immediately downstream of the bridge. Hazing will not occur from the Navigation Lock peninsula when barge traffic is present.
- g)h) From August through mid-April, there will be no avian abatement measures other than avian lines. However new methods of abatement will be investigated and tested during this time (refer to the Annual Avian Report for more information). Lines will be repaired and/or reinstalled as soon as possible following damage or removal. New lines will be installed and maintained in locations determined to have significant avian predation.

3.3. Incident Response. ~~The trigger for additional action is 50% of the 5-year average. Lethal removal is being pursued as an option but is not approved by NWP at this time. If for some reason hazing is not available, propane cannon, distress calls, and other recent bird-replant technology will be tried in attempts to abate gulls. Handheld lasers are being tested by COE employees and will be used if shown beneficial. Lethal removal will be applied as deemed necessary by USDA staff. Lethal will only be applied to foraging gulls and cormorants. Take limits will be determined by USFWS.~~

3.4. Discussion. Fish Field Unit (FFU) studies have shown that gulls are not highly efficient predators when looking at the entire juvenile salmonid run as a whole. Predation rates were calculated at an average 0.75 fish/gull/hour in the zone (SW4) in 2010 and 0.58 fish/gull/hour in

2011. The zones upstream of the bridge have a much higher predation success rate per gull, but gull numbers are effectively held lower due to avian lines. More recent data from PIT-tag recovery indicates a very high number of ESA-listed species consumed by gulls on the Miller Island colony. These gulls feed primarily below The Dalles and John Day dams. This area is not COE property and this population should be managed by associated wildlife management agencies. This has increased the need for improving avian abatement at the dam.

4. JOHN DAY DAM

4.1. Monitoring. Avian monitoring is done throughout the year at JDA. During the adult and juvenile fish passage seasons (March through November), inspections are made twice daily. These numbers for the week are included in the weekly status report to the region, along with a brief assessment of the effectiveness of the avian deterrent program. During the winter months (December through February), bird numbers are collected once daily due to only one inspection needed during the maintenance season. An annual summary will be provided in the fish facility annual report. The most commonly observed birds at JDA are gulls, cormorants, grebes, and American white pelicans. Their presence and distribution differ from each other throughout the season. Their foraging and non-foraging numbers along with Caspian terns will be monitored. There are 3 powerhouse tailrace zones and 3 spillway tailrace zones along with a forebay zone for both the powerhouse and spillway. Birds are counted in each of these zones during the fisheries inspections.

4.2. Action Plan. Measures for avian deterrence at JDA are listed below. ~~With the current configuration of the avian abatement array and boat hazing, JDA project fisheries believes this is sufficient for deterring gulls, the primary predator at JDA, from feeding in the tailrace.~~

- a) Avian array: 125 lines stretched across the tailrace expanding 2,200' below the dam.
- b) Boat hazing: April ~~10~~ 16–July 31, 7 days per week, 8-hour shifts. In the event weather and/or other conditions preclude safe boat operation, hazing shall occur from dam structures and/or adjacent shorelines.

4.3. Incident Response. ~~The trigger for additional action is 50% of the 5-year average. Lethal removal is being pursued as an option but is not approved by NWP at this time. Lethal removal will be implemented in 2024. Lethal take will not be the primary means of control but will be applied as needed within the permit quota and in conjunction with active hazing, harassment, and other non-lethal techniques.~~ If for some reason hazing is not available, propane cannon, distress calls, and other recent bird replant technology will be tried in attempts to abate gulls. Handheld lasers are being tested by COE employees and will be used if shown beneficial.

5. MCNARY DAM

5.1. Introduction.

McNary Lock & Dam has one of the largest piscivorous bird populations on the Columbia River due to the number of juvenile fish descending on McNary from both the Snake and upper Columbia rivers and due to the project's close proximity to several significant bird nesting colonies.

McNary has a large mix of piscivorous bird species, including California and ring-billed gulls, western grebes, Caspian terns, white pelicans, double-crested cormorants, mergansers and other piscivorous waterfowl. The most numerous and troublesome are the two gull species and they typically are found in the spillway tailrace, which is the most difficult area to reach with shore-based pyrotechnic devices, propane cannons and electronic bird alarm calls.

Much of what the McNary project does to control predatory birds is determined months in advance, when the project helps establish the predatory bird control contract with USDA Wildlife Services (WS), so there is very little additional that the project can do during times of unusually high avian predation, other than to shift USDA hazers around to different spots around the project. Early in the season, we will have already deployed the appropriate number of propane cannons and bird alarms, so more would not be appropriate. In addition to adding boat hazing, the project will continue with the two-shift hazing effort during the busiest months of the year.

Propane cannons, electronic bird alarms and other noisemakers are problematic, because they disturb nearby homeowners, fishers, park users and tugboat crews, so they must be used with discretion. They are of limited effectiveness and propane cannons in particular must be restricted to near-dam areas and away from recreational and navigational traffic.

5.2. Monitoring.

McNary biologists and biological technicians monitor the dam populations of gulls, grebes, Caspian terns, white pelicans, and double-crested cormorants at least once per day, seven days a week, from April 1 through September 30, the juvenile fish bypass season at McNary. The project may monitor populations more frequently, as needed, during bird population surges or outside this time window. We will include observations of hazing activity, hazing hours, boat hazing, monitoring times, foraging/non-foraging activity, etc.

5.3. Action Plan.

- a) Bird hazing occurs from April 21 through July 27 for 12 hours per day, 6 days per week and 8 hours per day on Sundays.
- b) Boat hazing is also used from April 28~~30~~ through July 13~~8~~, for 10 hours per day, 3 days per week (except Sundays).
- c) Hazing crews may at their discretion deploy limited lethal take of gulls and cormorants, particularly if hazing by itself loses its effectiveness.

- d) Project personnel may deploy a limited number of propane cannons and electronic bird alarms from time-to-time, typically early in the season.
- e) Overhead avian deterrent wires are located along the powerhouse tailrace.
- f) The sprinkler system on the juvenile fish bypass outfall and associated plumbing and electrical supply were lost during higher flows in 2019. Deterrent lasers, long range acoustic device (LRAD), and bird calls are currently being used to reduce avian predators at the outfall pipe.

5.4. Incident Response. When surges of predatory birds become apparent, the project will conduct the following actions based on the number of birds present:

- a) When predacious bird numbers at any location exceed 50-100 foraging birds, focus hazers on those locations.
- b) When predacious bird numbers at any particular location (most usually the spillway outfall) exceed 100 - 200 foraging birds, increase hazing efforts in those areas and increase the number of long-range pyrotechnic devices. Focus boat hazing in those areas. If hazers have not already initiated lethal take, deploy limited lethal take.
- c) When predacious bird numbers at any particular location exceed 200-300 foraging birds, increase hazing efforts. Continue to focus boat hazing in those areas. Place more emphasis on lethal take. Lethal take is a critical part of these predatory bird control efforts. Without it, hazing will likely have only a limited effect on local bird congregations.

5.5. Reporting. As noted in the “Monitoring” section above, McNary biologists and technicians monitor bird numbers from April 1 through September 30, the juvenile fish bypass season at McNary. Records of this monitoring are maintained on an Excel spreadsheet. Regular updates will be provided in a table in the fish facility weekly report, along with a brief statement on the effectiveness of the bird deterrent program for that week. A summary of seasonal bird abundance and the overall effectiveness of the bird deterrent program will be provided in the fish facility annual report. Reporting is by zone, with the project divided into the following zones: Forebay (FB1); Juvenile Bypass Outfall (JFOF); Powerhouse Tailrace (PHT1); and Spillway Tailrace (SWT1). Reporting is by bird species when clear identification is possible. There is no differentiation between gull species due to the difficulty in determining gull species from a distance. Data are also provided by contract hazing personnel working on the project. During the hazing season, hazing personnel turn in daily and monthly reports.

6. ICE HARBOR DAM

6.1. Monitoring. Bird monitoring dates are April 1 to July 31. Gull, cormorant, Caspian tern, grebe and pelican numbers are counted once per day, 6 or 7 days a week from April 1 to June 30, and 4 days (Monday through Thursday) a week from July 1 to July 31.

6.2. Hazing. Ice Harbor Dam utilizes the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Wildlife Service (WS) for hazing of piscivorous birds to reduce predation on ESA-listed fish passing the dam. Bird hazing occurs from April ~~7~~ through ~~July 6~~~~June 30~~, 7 days per week, and is focused on gulls, terns and cormorants observed to be feeding on passing fish. Land-based hazing is conducted by a WS Specialist 8 hours per day April ~~7-20~~~~1-8~~ and June ~~9-July 6~~~~11-30~~, and 16 hours per day April ~~21~~~~9~~-June ~~8~~~~10~~. Boat-based hazing is conducted 3 days per week April ~~21-27~~~~9-22~~, ~~June 2-8~~, and ~~July 7-27~~~~May 28~~~~June 10~~, and 5 days per week April ~~28~~~~23~~-~~June 1~~~~May 27~~.

6.3. Action Plan.

- a) Birds are actively hazed in the immediate forebay of the dam to the Boat Restrictive Zone (BRZ) and from the immediate tailrace downstream to Eagle Island.
- b) Birds are hazed daily using pyrotechnics.
- c) If a gull or cormorant becomes unresponsive to hazing and is leading other birds to feed on juvenile fish (instigator bird) who are also unresponsive to hazing, lethal take of the instigator bird or a bird in the group of unresponsive birds will occur at the discretion of the boat-based hazing crew. This action will occur most sparingly after hazing efforts have failed to move the birds.
- d) Data that are noted are the time, avian zone, bird species, number of birds, if they are foraging or not foraging, and control action taken.
- e) Bird wires are in place across the turbine discharge area and the spillway area below the dam.
- f) A water cannon is located on the juvenile fish bypass pipe terminus.
- g) Wire spikes are installed on light poles, forebay buoys, and other bird perching areas.

6.4. Incident Response. If the daily *total* count of gulls, cormorants, and terns increases to twice the most recent 3-year average daily count for the same *week* (“threshold”), the Project Biologist will consult with the WS field crew leader about focusing hazing efforts at problem bird zones (if this has not already occurred). If these focused efforts do not reduce bird numbers below the threshold, Corps personnel will deploy additional bird deterrent devices, including propane cannons, bird distress calls, and/or hand-held lasers. If bird numbers are still not reduced, the Project Biologist will consult with the WS field crew leader about increasing the use of lethal take.

6.5. Reporting. Bird observations will be reported weekly on the Project’s ESA Weekly Report and will include a brief statement on the effectiveness of the bird deterrent program for that week. A summary of the season will be included in the Annual Fish Report.

7. LOWER MONUMENTAL DAM

7.1. Monitoring. Bird monitoring by Juvenile Fish Facility staff will occur at least once daily from April 1 to September 30, but more frequently if deemed necessary by the Project Biologist. The primary species for monitoring activities include gulls, grebes, Caspian terns, white pelicans, and double-crested cormorants. Data collection will include the number of individuals present in each of five zones as well as bird behavior: foraging (flying, diving or feeding) and non-foraging (resting in/on water, on debris, structures or land, or while scavenging). Zone monitoring will include the forebay (FB1), spillway (SWT1), powerhouse outflow under the bird wires (PH1), powerhouse outflow downstream of the bird wires (PH2) and the juvenile bypass outfall (JFOF).

Additional bird monitoring, as part of standard fish ladder inspections, will occur October 1 through December 30. During those inspections, basic bird abundance observations will be recorded.

7.2. Action Plan.

- a) Lower Monumental Dam will have an active hazing program consisting of one 8-hour shift per day from April ~~7-209-22~~ and ~~May 26-June 30~~ ~~July 1~~ and two 8-hour shifts (non-concurrent) from April ~~2123~~ - through ~~May 25~~ ~~June 3~~. Gulls, cormorants, and terns will be the major focus of this hazing effort.
- b) Hazing shifts and zones to be emphasized will be adjusted to maximize deterrent effect on feeding bird populations.
- c) Lethal take may occur as part of the hazing program and would exclusively be performed and regulated by licensed agencies and/or companies.
- d) Bird wires will be maintained across the turbine discharge area (see zone photo). The addition of bird wires across the spillway is not practical or safe as the fish transport barge and tug would run through them.
- e) Bird aversion water cannons will be in operation from April 1 through October 1 at the bypass outfall.
- f) Boat hazing is not needed at Lower Monumental as the river is sufficiently narrow to allow effective hazing from the dam structure and shore.

7.3. Incident Response. The following toolbox items will be utilized based on the trigger criteria of birds present and the availability of trained staff.

- a) Focus hazing efforts in areas with the greater abundance.
- b) Propane cannon placement.
- c) COE employee (added) hazing with screamers and poppers fired from shore.

The following action point number is based on the most recent 5-year (2016-2021) dataset and is proposed as a starting point for the toolbox items.

- a) Action point for total number of birds including gulls, cormorants, terns, grebes, and pelicans = 90 birds

7.4. Reporting. Bird monitoring data collected from April 1 through September 30 is maintained in an excel spreadsheet. Piscivorous bird abundance along with a summary of hazing effectiveness and deterrent program will be provided on the fish facility weekly report. A summary of seasonal bird abundance and overall effectiveness of the bird deterrent program will be provided in the annual report.

8. LITTLE GOOSE DAM

8.1. Monitoring. Little Goose will monitor and collect daily data on gulls, cormorants, and terns from April 1 – October 31. Bird monitoring will occur 2 to 3 times per day in two zones: the forebay and tailrace. There will be two bird activities monitored: foraging and non-foraging.

8.2. Action Plan.

- a) Little Goose will perform bird hazing ~~April 21~~~~March 29~~ through ~~July 13~~~~June 18~~, 7 days per week, which includes at least 8 hours per day of contracted services.
- b) During the peak period for bird abundance, April ~~21~~~~4~~ – ~~June 1~~~~May 22~~, up to ~~12~~~~6~~ hours of hazing will occur.
- c) Boat hazing will occur ~~April 21-August 10~~~~March 29~~–~~June 18~~, 8 hours per day, three days per week.
- d) Gulls, cormorants, and terns will be hazed as needed during juvenile fish passage season.
- e) Hazing will be performed using scare products, including consumer fireworks, scare cannons, bird bangers, and bird screamers.
- f) Passive deterrents will be used, including needle strips, an overhead bird wire array composed of 12 wires across the turbine discharge area, visual scare devices, and a hydro-cannon located at the juvenile fish bypass outfall.
- g) Limited lethal take may occur at the discretion of qualified APHIS Wildlife Services personnel.

8.3. Incident Response. If gulls and/or tern numbers reach an average of 100 per day or cormorants reach an average of 50 per day during the April 1 to August 31 period the project will commence into action one or more of the following toolbox control measures, in any combination, to best achieve reduced bird predation to an acceptable level.

- a. Deploy additional remotely activated propane canon(s).
- b. Increase hazing with pyrotechnics and other bird scare devices.
- c. Initiate limited lethal take by Wildlife Services personnel if not already started.

8.4. Reporting. Bird management data will be recorded into computer spreadsheets, assimilated, and reported weekly and annually. A brief statement assessing the effectiveness of the avian deterrent program for that week will be included in the weekly report, with an overall summary provided in the annual report.

9. LOWER GRANITE DAM

9.1. Monitoring. Monitoring at Lower Granite Dam will be done by COE biologists April 1 through October 31 and by control agents of the USDA conducting bird hazing work at the dam April 1 through June 30. The agencies will conduct independent counts. Hazers will usually be counting birds once daily in all zones, in conjunction with their normal hazing activities. Binoculars will be utilized to make the counts and the normal count area will be from the base of the dam downstream to a buoy approximately 1/2 mile below the dam. The tailrace area of the dam has been divided into zones and the technicians will count the birds in each zone and record foraging or non-foraging behavior. Bird count data will be limited to gulls (California and ring-billed), cormorants, and Caspian terns. American white pelicans will be recorded on an incidental basis in attempt to monitor their increasing abundance.

9.2. Action Plan.

- a) Base actions will include the array of methods in long-time use by the USDA WS and will also include limited lethal control when the other methods prove ineffective.
- b) Hazing activities will take place 8 hours per day April 1 through April 20 and June 2 through June 30. Hazing will take place 16 hours per day April 20 through June 1 when the maximum numbers of juvenile salmonids are normally passing the dam.
- c) Agents will haze birds on both side of the river and will work as far as two miles downstream of the dam.
- d) Nonlethal control measures will include 15mm pyrotechnics and Dominator rocket pyrotechnics.
- e) Passive avian deterrent structures include the overhead array of 34 wires spanning the tailrace downstream to the end of the navigation lock wall and across the river to the pole located just upstream of the visitor center overlook.
- f) Limited lethal control of gulls and cormorants will be at the discretion of the agents working on site. Lethal take will be conducted with a shotgun in accordance with the USFWS-issued permit. Powerhouse operators and persons conducting tours will be notified before any lethal take activities take place. No lethal take will be allowed when schools or other tour groups are on site.

9.3. Incident Response. A trigger for additional control measures is listed below. The trigger level is presently set at an order of magnitude above the average gull counts for the previous 5-year period. It might be wise to consider lowering this number somewhat, but it appears gulls are being effectively controlled at Lower Granite at the present time using the available techniques. The addition of limited lethal take in 2014 should help keep the numbers at reasonable numbers. If the numbers do significantly increase over time, possible control measures would include remote-activated propane canons, biotech hazing with pyrotechnics (in addition to WS), playing remotely activated gull distress sounds and emergency call-out of off-duty JFF personnel to assist with hazing activities.

9.3.1. Avian Predation Trigger Level and Proposed Toolbox Control Measures. Gull numbers were obtained from daily counts off the Lower Granite JFF separator platform. At the present time, terns are not very abundant at Lower Granite and the project does not have count data. Cormorants are certainly present but much more difficult to count (and haze) than gulls. At this time, I recommend that a trigger level be calculated and utilized for gulls (both species combined) only. Below are the average gull numbers for each of five years running from April 1 through June 30 each year (WS hazing was being conducted):

Year	Gulls/Day (April 1 – June 30)
2013	9.36
2012	6.03
2011	6.43
2010	14.09
2009	11.5
2009-2013 Average	9.48 (st dev 3.05)

9.3.2. If gull numbers reach an average of 95 per day between April 1 and June 30 (10x the 5-year average), the following project toolbox measures would be utilized in combination with WS hazing activities. To achieve the best control, it is likely a combination of measures would need to be utilized:

- a. Remotely activated propane cannon(s).
- b. Biological Technician hazing with pyrotechnics.
- c. Emergency call of off-duty separator technicians for hazing.
- d. Play audible gull distress sounds (*Bird Chase "Super Sonic" Player, Bird-B-Gone Catalog PN #1B50-PCOM*).
- e. Others to consider in combination with above: visual deterrent devices (e.g., raptor effigies, scare-eye balloons, etc.).

9.4. Reporting. Reporting of bird numbers will consist of a table of average daily bird counts that will be included in each weekly ESA report April 1 through October 31, along with a brief statement assessing the effectiveness of the avian deterrent program for that week. In addition, a section on bird predation control work will be included in the annual "Adult and Juvenile Fish Monitoring Report".