

Fish Passage Plan (FPP) Change Form

Change Form # & Title: 24MCN001 – Surface Spill
Date Submitted: 31-DEC-2023
Project: McNary
Requester Name, Agency: Lisa Wright, Corps RCC
Final Action: **FINALIZED 1-FEB-2024**

FPP SECTION: 2.2 Spill Management

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE: Updates surface spill operations per the MOU.

PROPOSED CHANGES: *edits to existing FPP text in “Track changes”*

2.2.4. Surface Spill for Adult Steelhead Overshoots.

2.2.4.1. Surface spill will be implemented at John Day, McNary, and the four lower Snake River dams as described in the FOP (Appendix E) as a means of providing non-powerhouse downstream passage for adult steelhead that overshoot natal tributaries prior to spawning or that strive to repeat a subsequent reproduction cycle (iteroparity).

2.2.4.2. This operation ~~is~~ was first implemented in fall of 2020 at McNary and the four lower Snake projects pursuant to non-discretionary terms and conditions in the 2020 NOAA Fisheries Columbia River System (CRS) Biological Opinion, which calls for surface spill via the spillway weir ~~at each of the five projects~~ March 1–30 and October 1–November 15, three times each week on non-consecutive days for four hours in the morning (generally between 05:00 and 11:00). This operation is also considered in the 2020 USFWS CRS Biological Opinion as a means of providing safe and effective downstream passage for adult steelhead and other fish.

~~2.2.4.3. In 2023, spring surface spill will continue through the start of spring spill for juvenile fish on April 10, and fall surface spill will begin on September 1, to comply with the Agreement for short term operations of the Columbia River System. As such, in 2023, surface spill for adult steelhead will occur at McNary Dam March 1–April 9 and September 1–November 15, three times each week on non-consecutive days for four hours in the morning.~~

2.2.4.3. Starting in 2024, this operation will be expanded pursuant to the “U.S. Government Commitments in Support of the Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative”, as included in the 2023 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)¹. Details of this operation are defined in the FOP (see section 6 of Appendix E) and summarized below:

- March 1 – 20: Spillbay 20 TSW for 4 hours in the morning, 7 days/week.
- March 21 – April 9: Spillbay 20 TSW 24 hours/day, 7 days/week.
- September 1–November 15: Spillbay 20 TSW for 4 hours in the morning, 7 days/week.

¹ See “Fall/Winter Spill Operations” in Attachment 2, Appendix B of the MOU, page 88 of 92 (pdf page 141): https://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/JointMotion_TermSheet_CourtOrder_and_Extensions_2023_and_Stay_Motion_MO_U_2450-1.pdf

COMMENTS:

1-FEB-2024 FPOM FPP Meeting:

Van Dyke is concerned that the context of the spill operations in the MOU aren't fully captured in the FPP. [via email: *"I want to let you know that I am concerned about the progress thus far incorporating USG operations. What seems to be missing is the broader context edits throughout project chapters and appendices that adequately stream-line specified operations found in the December 2023 stay of litigation."*]

Wright replied that spill operations in the MOU will be in the FOP. The draft FOP will be sent to RIOG for review and comments within the next couple weeks.

Van Dyke added that the operation has broadened to provide benefit for earlier migrating juveniles and isn't limited to just adult steelhead as implied in this section. He would like the language revised to reflect that. He will provide his comments and concerns during the FOP review.

The Corps will take that into consideration during FOP review and revise the FPP if there is refinement needed.

RECORD OF FINAL ACTION: Finalized at the FPOM FPP meeting 1-FEB-2024.