Preliminary Draft Fall / Winter Update

Introduction

The Fall / Winter update is part of the annual Water Management Plan (WMP). It is intended to supplement the WMP with information about fall and winter operations that were not available when the WMP was written. The WMP is written well before any information is available about water supply conditions in the fall and winter.

Chum Spawning Flows

The planning date for beginning the chum spawning operations is November 5, 2002. The initial operation will be to manage flows to a Bonneville tailwater elevation of 11.4 ft. The exact starting date of the operation will be determined by actual fish arrival. It is likely that the Bonneville minimum tailwater elevation will increase as the chum spawning season progresses. Otherwise, chum operations will be as specified in the WMP.

Bonneville Corner Collector Construction

Construction of the Bonneville powerhouse corner collector will occur this fall. The in-water work period has been extended to start November 15 in order to aid construction. Starting November 15 Bonneville powerhouse 1 will become the priority powerhouse. Also Bonneville powerhouse 2 will be limited to operating the 4 northern most units when flows permit. In addition during construction it is desired to not operate the spillway. Periods of reduced flow maybe necessary for short periods during possible blasting operations. A tailwater limit of less than 14 feet during the day Monday through Saturday and a tailwater limit of less than 15.5 ft the rest of the time has been placed through October 31 to facilitate construction. This tailwater limit will increase incrementally as construction work progresses. Contract completion is scheduled for December 19, 2003.

Burbot Spawning Flows

Note: the following information is based on SOR 2002-B1. This operation is still under discussion.

Try to maintain flows in the lower Kootenai River from December 15th to January 31st between 4 and 10.6 kcfs. Preferably the releases from Libby would be 7.3 kcfs. If a temperature gradient exists in the reservoir the selector gates will be used to release the coldest available water. This operation is subject flood control constraints.

Flood Control

Projects will be operated for flood control in accordance with the Columbia River Treaty Flood Control Operating Plan.

Spring Creek

The action agencies have traditional provided special operations during the normally March release of fish from the Spring Creek Hatchery. These operations have normally consisted of special project operations (fish screens installed, etc.), project spill, and lower tailwater limits. There are concerns about continuing to provide spill for this operation since it is implemented for a non-listed hatchery fish population. Therefore, TMT is considering non-spill management alternatives for this release.