

## **SYSTEM OPERATIONAL REQUEST: #2005-3**

*The following State, Federal, and Tribal Salmon Managers have participated in the preparation and support this SOR: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, NOAA Fisheries, Nez Perce Tribe, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, and the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission.*

**TO: B. G. Grisoli COE-NWD**  
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**FROM: David A. Wills, Chairperson, Salmon Managers**

**DATE: April 1, 2005**

**SUBJECT: Lower Snake and John Day Operations<sup>1</sup>**

**SPECIFICATIONS:** The Salmon Managers listed above are requesting the following operations for reservoir drafts in the Lower Snake river and at John Day.

1. Draft Ice Harbor Pool to MOP +1 on the evening of Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup>;
2. Draft Lower Granite pool to MOP +1 beginning the evening of Monday April 11, 2005;
3. Draft Little Goose pool to MOP +1 beginning the evening of April 12<sup>th</sup>;
4. Draft Lower Monumental Pool to MOP beginning the evening of April 13<sup>th</sup>;
5. Draft John Day Pool evenly over a three-day period to MIP beginning the evening of April 15<sup>th</sup>.

Grand Coulee Dam should be operated as planned before this request (steady draft of several 1/10<sup>ths</sup> of a foot per day, 3-30-05 STP). It is anticipated that the combination of

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<sup>1</sup> CRITFC and the Nez Perce Tribe agree with the intent of this SOR; however, would like all Snake projects drafted to MOP, as outlined in their 2005 River Operations Plan.

all of the requested drafts will increase flows at Bonneville Dam relative to that planned (163-173 Kcfs at Bonneville Dam between April 10<sup>th</sup> to April 20<sup>th</sup>, 3-30-05 STP). If Grand Coulee decreases planned drafts (STP 3-30-05) as a result of these increases in flow, then an overall increase in flow at Bonneville Dam will not be accomplished.

**JUSTIFICATION:**

Fish collection at the Snake River Traps has been increasing. With the recent freshet in Snake River tributaries collection of yearling chinook at the Salmon River Trap reached 3,700, while collection at Grande Ronde and Imnaha traps also increased this past week. However, collection at the Snake River Trap at Lewiston remains low as well as at Lower Granite Dam. Passage indices at Lower Granite averaged 210 per day for yearling chinook and 280 per day for steelhead since sampling began March 26. These numbers are relatively quite low. Many of the chinook appear to be holdover fish indicating that active migrant chinook from tributaries have yet to reach the dam in significant numbers.

The intent of this operation is to delay the drafts of pools by one week to benefit a greater number of fish. In addition to benefiting juvenile fish through the Snake and Columbia rivers, these drafts will benefit chum below Bonneville Dam and facilitate the beginning of spring spill at Bonneville Dam.