

SYSTEM OPERATIONAL REQUEST: #2019-1

WALLA WALLA DISTRICT

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

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| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
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FROM: Paul Wagner, FPAC Chairperson

DATE: July 9, 2019

SUBJECT: Dworshak Dam Discharge Management

OBJECTIVE: Utilize Dworshak Dam discharge to not exceed 68°F temperature in the Lower Granite tailrace while conserving water for use in September.

SPECIFICATIONS

This SOR seeks to have Dworshak summer (July and August) discharge management prioritize temperature management when allocating available water¹. As such, 1,535' on August 31st should be viewed/treated as the limit for maximum drawdown, not as a target. After August 31st, water above the 1,535' elevation (if any) would be added onto the Snake River Basin Adjudication Dworshak Dam release of 200 Kaf and used to extend water temperature management as far into September as possible, while still achieving a 1,520' pool elevation by September 30th.

JUSTIFICATION

The 2019 Columbia River System Biological Opinion includes proposed actions relative to Dworshak Dam summer water discharge that target both water temperature cooling in the lower Snake River and flow augmentation². Reducing summer water temperatures in the lower Snake River benefits juvenile fall Chinook salmon emigration and rearing, as well as adult sockeye, spring/summer Chinook, steelhead, and fall Chinook migration. Fisheries managers support the use of Dworshak discharge to meet the Lower Granite Dam tail-water temperature criteria to not exceed 68°F between July 1st and August 31st. However, there are also biological benefits for applying cooling water for adult migrants in September. Cool water releases in September maintain a cool migratory corridor and holding areas in the lower Snake River below Lewiston, Idaho, and in the Clearwater River (including fish being held at Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery) for pre-spawn adult salmon, steelhead, and lamprey.

¹ Does not preclude considering use of Snake River Basin Adjudication (SRBA) Dworshak Board (200 Kaf) reserved water in August if 68°F temperature criteria is modeled to not be met with water available from Dworshak within the 1535' summer draft limit.

² Pages 38 and 39 <https://www.salmonrecovery.gov/doc/default-source/default-document-library/proposedaction2019crs.pdf?status=Temp&sfvrsn=0.29652687684318046> - *“Once the reservoir is refilled, Dworshak is operated in the summer for the gradual evacuation of water through a combination of temperature objectives to maintain Lower Granite Dam tailwater temperatures below 68° F and reach an elevation of 1535 feet by August 31 and elevation 1520 feet by September 30.”*