

COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL EXECUTIVES
Facilitator's Meeting Summary
June 1, 2001 Conference call

The following are the facilitator's summary notes from the June 1st Regional Executives conference call. These notes are meant to capture the general discussion of those on the call. They are not meant to be a verbatim transcript or a "record" of events. Instead, they are intended to both remind people of the discussion points and keep the process moving by highlighting action items. These notes should not be construed to be final policy statements of any agency or government. Corrections may be made at the next meeting. I apologize in advance if I did not hear your name or if I spelled it incorrectly. Please help me out with this! Thanks.

Present by Telephone:

Steve Wright, BPA
Ken Pedde, BOR
Bill Shake, USFWS
Brian Brown, NMFS
Keith Hatch, BIA
Mike Bart, COE
Roy Sampsel, CRITFC
Mike White, COE

Greg Delwiche, BPA
Jim Ruff, NMFS
Bob Nichols, WA Governor's Office
Alex Smith, BPA
Tom Carrier, NWPPC-WA
Mary Verner, Spokane Tribe of Indians
Lorri Bodi, BPA
Charlie Grist, NWPPC, OR Office

Technical Staff and Others:

Cindy Henriksen, COE
Doug Arndt, COE
Gail Lear, COE
Bill Branch, COE
Therese Lamb, BPA
Fred Olney, USFWS
Bob Heinith, CRITFC
Gary Sims, NMFS
Bill Rudolph, Clearing Up
Richard Forester, Facilitation Team

Pat McGrane, BOR
Craig Sprankle, BOR
Jim Fodrea, BOR
Karen Hunt, BPA
Bill Maslen, BPA
Bill Kinsey, BPA
Brain Walsh, NWPPC, WA Office
Howard Schaller, USFWS
Jim Kempton
Donna Silverberg, Facilitator

Spill:

BPA's Greg Delwiche reminded the group that spill began on May 17 on a limited basis. Spill is occurring at McNary, John Day, The Dalles and Bonneville dams to aid the movement of migrating juvenile salmonids. The spill was based on a number of factors including the NWPPC's recent updated reliability study. BPA and COE are continuing their review of the analysis and hope to have that complete by next week or soon thereafter. Delwiche noted that on top of this information, the energy crisis and demand have dropped dramatically in the last three weeks. In light of this, the federal agencies, with input through the Regional Forum's Technical Management Team (TMT), have

decided to continue the limited spill for another week. Currently they are looking at the possibility of spilling a total of 600MW-Mos, although the real goal is to provide flows sufficient to move juvenile fish during the peak of their migration. If there is no need to continue spill due to biological factors, or if Grand Coulee begins a dramatic slowing in its refill, then the spill decision will be revisited. Grand Coulee elevations were at 1273.3' this morning and refill seems to be continuing towards the 1280' goal.

A question was raised about the possibility of adding water from Albeni Falls to provide more flow through the Mid-Columbia. Salmon managers have been alarmed by the lack of fish showing up in this area and believe that additional flow levels will help move the juveniles. Delwiche noted that Grand Coulee is being managed for both power needs and Mid-Columbia fish needs. Flows at Priest Rapids dam have increased to above 70kcf to support those fish. He also said that TMT discussed this issue and, given the increase in flow at Priest Rapids, were not pursuing Albeni Falls water at this time. TMT will continue to monitor the situation.

NMFS noted that the McNary transport study ended when spill began because there was no guarantee they could provide the numbers of fish to meet the 50% detection levels promised to the Mid-Columbia partners for their study. The NMFS McNary transport study was secondary to the Mid-Columbia fish study and any possibility of confounding the results of the first study meant stopping the second.

Update on the Action Agencies' BiOp Implementation Plan

Lorri Bodi reported that the implementation plan had an anticipated release date of Tuesday June 5. BPA will post the plan on the www.salmonrecovery.gov website for regional review. She said that discussion was planned at the June 7th Implementation Team meeting as well as the next Regional Executives face-to-face meeting. She clarified that the plan is still a draft and noted that some questions still need to be resolved before the plan is complete. The plan includes the five-year action plan, performance standards, and research, monitoring and evaluation plans. The one-year implementation plan will be a more specified version of this plan and is anticipated one month after the release of the 5-year plan.

Update on Emergency Project Solicitation

Alex Smith reported that BPA would be posting information on the project solicitation process on the website. The request for proposals closed on May 24th and recommendations from the ISRP are due by June 20th. It is anticipated that decisions will be made by June 27th with notification to proposers by July 7th. Public comments on the proposals are encouraged up to the June 20/25 timeframe.

Other Discussion

A question was raised about plans for an end of season evaluation of this year's FCRPS actions. Normally, such a review would occur at the TMT in late fall. In order to incorporate review of species other than endangered fish, there was a suggestion that NMFS and NWPPC coordinate a special assessment for this unusual water year involving other interested parties to increase the legitimacy of the final analysis.

ACTION: NMFS and NWPPC will coordinate an inclusive end-of-year assessment of the impacts of this year's water, power and weather situation on fish and wildlife in the Columbia Basin.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Silverberg,
DS Consulting
Meeting facilitator

Changes or corrections to these notes may be requested at the next meeting

Thank you for your continued participation in these regional discussions