



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, NORTHWESTERN DIVISION
PO BOX 2870
PORTLAND OR 97208-2870

June 11, 2010

Planning, Environmental Resources,
Fish Policy and Support Division

Mr. Barry Thom
NOAA Fisheries Service
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd, Suite 1100
Portland, OR 97232

Dear Mr. Thom:

I am writing on behalf of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Bonneville Power Administration (the Action Agencies) to inform you of the implementation action taken by the Action Agencies on development of a summer spill safeguard pursuant to the requirements of the 2010 FCRPS Supplemental Biological Opinion (BiOp). As you know, the Adaptive Management Implementation Plan (AMIP) called for the development of a summer spill safeguard in the event that Snake River fall Chinook adult returns drop below a critical threshold. The relevant paragraph is included below.

To further enhance the summer spill program, the Action Agencies will develop an appropriate safeguard, based on adult returns, that continues summer spill at the Snake River projects through August 31, during the subsequent juvenile outmigration. Using this trigger, low abundance of naturally-produced Snake River fall Chinook in one year would trigger spill through August 31 at the Snake River projects the following year, regardless of the number of juveniles collected. The Agencies will coordinate with the Regional Implementation Oversight Group (RIOG) in developing the trigger, to be in place for the 2010 juvenile fish migration.

AMIP, at 19

On March 11, 2010 we briefed the RIOG on a proposed trigger for the summer spill safeguard. We asked that RIOG members provide comments or suggestions back on the proposed safeguard by March 25, 2010. No comments were received; therefore, the Action Agencies have decided to adopt the proposal shared with the RIOG. Specifically, we propose that in any year where natural-origin adult returns of Snake River fall Chinook salmon are equal to or less than 400 fish, summer spill in the following year would continue at Snake River projects through August 31, even in years where sub-yearling Chinook counts fall below the 2008 BiOp trigger of 300 sub-yearling migrants per day for three consecutive days at Snake River collector projects. The Columbia Basin Fish Accords modify the implementation of this

requirement so the trigger is applied at each dam and the cessation of spill progress downstream as follows: spill at Little Goose ceases no earlier than three days after cessation at Lower Granite; Lower Monumental ceases no earlier than three days after Little Goose; and Ice Harbor ceases no earlier than two days after Lower Monumental. In the event that collection numbers exceed 500 fish per day for two consecutive days after spill termination, spill will resume at that project until the 300 fish per day trigger is tripped again.

The Action Agencies have chosen a one-year return of 400 adults for this trigger as that number corresponds to the AMIP's Early Warning Indicator level for this Evolutionarily Significant Unit. However, the Early Warning Indicator is a rolling four-year average of 400 adult returns, approximately equal to the 20th percentile of the data used for the AMIP (1975-2007, Table 1). A one-year return of 400 adult fish would have a higher likelihood of occurrence than the Early Warning Indicator level, and is therefore, more precautionary.

This new summer spill trigger would apply to returning adults in 2010 and for every year thereafter during the term of the 2008 BiOp and the 2010 Supplemental BiOp.

If you have any questions, please contact Rock Peters at (503) 808-3723.

Sincerely,



Witt Anderson, SES
Director, Programs

Enclosure

Table 1.— Snake River fall Chinook salmon returns to Lower Granite Dam, 1975-2007.

Year	Adult returns	Rolling four year average	Ranked abundance	
	@LGR (wild SR fall Chinook)		(highest to lowest returns)	
			Year	Adult returns @LGR
1975	1000		2001	5163
1976	470		2003	3856
1977	600		2004	2983
1978	640	678	2005	2602
1979	500	553	2006	2483
1980	450	548	2002	2116
1981	340	483	2007	2016
1982	720	503	2000	1148
1983	428	485	1975	1000
1984	324	453	1999	905
1985	438	478	1997	797
1986	449	410	1993	742
1987	253	366	1982	720
1988	368	377	1978	640
1989	295	341	1996	639
1990	78	249	1977	600
1991	318	265	1992	549
1992	549	310	1979	500
1993	742	422	1976	470
1994	406	504	1980	450
1995	350	512	1986	449
1996	639	534	1985	438
1997	797	548	1983	428
1998	306	523	1994	406
1999	905	662	1988	368
2000	1148	789	1995	350
2001	5163	1881	1981	340
2002	2116	2333	1984	324
2003	3856	3071	1991	318
2004	2983	3530	1998	306
2005	2602	2889	1989	295
2006	2483	2981	1987	253
2007	2016	2521	1990	78

AMIP Early Warning Indicator – rolling 4 year average of 400 wild adult returns
(~20th percentile of the data)

AMIP Significant Decline Trigger – rolling 4 year average of 350 wild adult returns
(~10th percentile of the data)

Proposed AMIP Summer Spill Trigger – 1 year return of 400 wild adults
(~28th percentile of the data)