

# IMPLEMENTATION TEAM MEETING NOTES

May 3, 2001, 9:00 a.m.-4 p.m.

## NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE OFFICES PORTLAND, OREGON

### *I. Greetings, Introductions and Review of the Agenda.*

The May 3, 2001 meeting of the Implementation Team, held at the National Marine Fisheries Service's offices in Portland, Oregon, was chaired by Jim Ruff of NMFS and facilitated by J. Richard Forester. The meeting agenda and a list of attendees are attached as Enclosures A and B.

The following is a distillation (not a verbatim transcript) of items discussed at the meeting, together with actions taken on those items. Please note that some enclosures referenced in the body of the text may be too lengthy to attach; all enclosures referenced are available upon request from NMFS's Kathy Ceballos at 503/230-5420 or via email at [kathy.ceballos@noaa.gov](mailto:kathy.ceballos@noaa.gov).

Forester welcomed everyone to the meeting, led a round of introductions and a review of the agenda. John Fazio of the Northwest Power Planning Council staff then offered a number of changes to the minutes from the April IT meeting; Ruff said he will ensure the requested modifications are made.

### *2. Updates.*

**A. In-Season Management (TMT).** Jim Athearn reported that TMT has been meeting weekly, either face-to-face or by phone, primarily to develop recommended river operations in two-week increments. The goals of the current operations include filling headwater storage projects to the extent feasible and operating Grand Coulee to store as much water as possible while meeting power system needs and Vernita Bar minimum flows. There has been no spill or flow augmentation to date; there will not be any until the Federal Executives decide otherwise. The BPA power system emergency continues, Athearn said.

Yesterday, the TMT decided to extend higher-flow hours at Lower Granite to midnight, expanding the Lower Granite operating range to 1.5 feet (MOP+1-MOP+2.5 feet). Libby is at elevation 2387, passing minimum outflow. At Lower Granite, flows have averaged between the

high 50 Kcfs range and the high 60 Kcfs range over the last three days. At The Dalles, flows have been in the 130 Kcfs-160 Kcfs range over the last few days. Dworshak elevation was 1531.5 feet as of midnight on April 30. Spring transport has begun at McNary, on an every-other-day basis, Athearn added.

Jim Fodrea said Hungry Horse is currently at elevation 3490, 70 feet from full. Grand Coulee is currently at elevation 1224 feet and filling slowly. The lowest-level boat ramps are back in service, so fishermen are once again able to access lake Roosevelt. That's good news, said Mary Lou Soscia.

Forester added that Reclamation has requested that Vernita Bar minimum flows be dropped from 65 Kcfs to 55 Kcfs beginning this Saturday; that matter has been referred to the Vernita Bar Settlement Agreement parties for discussion at a conference call at 10:30 this morning.

**B. Independent Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB).** No ISAB report was presented at today's meeting.

**C. Water Quality Team (WQT).** The Water Quality Team has done some good thinking the past few months, Soscia said; EPA is using the WQT as a forum for sharing information on the two main water quality efforts underway in the mainstem: the mainstem TMDL, and the development of the action agencies' water quality plan. There has also been some discussion of the work the Corps has been doing with the states on the granting of variances, Soscia said; the Corps will be meeting with the water quality agencies in Oregon, Washington and Idaho in the third week in May to discuss the potential granting of long-term variances.

The WQT has added a subcommittee to review water quality monitoring locations, to make sure the data we're receiving on in-river conditions is as accurate and representative as possible, Soscia said. In addition, she said, there was a very productive Transboundary Gas Group meeting in early April; there are many opportunities to work with the Canadian entities to develop dissolved gas solutions. The next meeting of the TGG has been scheduled for Nelson, B.C. in late October; there are a number of subcommittees working to help us make coordinated decisions on the gas abatement front. That is important work, particularly the cooperative effort to add turbines at Brilliant Dam, Ruff said. Soscia agreed, noting that EPA is committed at a high level to continue the dialogue with the Canadians, to develop coordinated solutions to water quality issues on both sides of the border.

**D. System Configuration Team (SCT).** Bill Hevlin said he wanted to update the IT on three issues: the spillway erosion situation at Lower Monumental, the activities of the Bonneville 1 decision document subcommittee, and the start of the SCT's FY'02 CRFM prioritization process. We're going to alter the criteria we use in this process to accommodate some of the nuances in the new Biological Opinion, Hevlin said.

With respect to the Lower Monumental spillway, some large erosion holes have developed in the tailrace area below the spillway, Hevlin said. The holes are getting larger; if normal Biological Opinion fish spill was occurring this year, it would have been necessary to limit it severely at Lower Monumental.

The Corps' first option to fix the erosion problem was the COE major rehab process; unfortunately, if that route is used, the soonest it will be possible to fix the problem is 2006, Hevlin said. The Corps is now pursuing a congressional add-on to the FY'02 and FY'03 CRFM budgets, \$5 million in each year, to get the problem fixed sooner, Hevlin said. If we don't get that add-on, it's going to have to come out of the \$81 million we hope to have for the FY'02 CRFM program, which will mean a number of already-prioritized projects will have to be deferred.

Hevlin added that if the Corps' analysis shows that a 50-year flood event could cause more serious structural damage to the dam itself, there is an emergency funding process the Corps could use which could funds available sooner.

Any sense of how likely it is that you will get the requested add-ons to the CRFM budget? Ruff asked. We won't know the answer to that for awhile, Jim Athearn replied. But the Corps is actively pursuing it? Ruff asked. Yes, Athearn replied.

Moving on to the recent activities of the Bonneville 1 decision document subcommittee, Hevlin said this group has been developing a numerical analysis of survival values, plus a risk analysis associated with the various passage options under consideration, to develop an overall benefit analysis on those options. The two options currently under consideration are to improve the current JBS system, or to install a surface collector across the front of the powerhouse. The goal of the analysis is to help us make a conscious, well-reasoned decision about which option to choose, Hevlin said; a draft report should be available from the subcommittee within a month or so.

Finally, said Hevlin, the SCT has begun to discuss the FY'02 CRFM prioritization process; this year, given the language in the new BiOp, we've decided to make some changes to our prioritization criteria to reflect the new requirements and specific survival objectives the BiOp contains. The B1 decision document subcommittee is an example of the kind of work the action agencies want to see done in developing the SCT's prioritized list, Hevlin said – analyses based more on numerical values than on subjective discussion and debate.

Jim Nielsen pointed out that, with respect to the B1 decision document subcommittee, while it's fine to try to develop numerical criteria, there isn't a great deal of data on which to base them. In such cases, he said, it will still be necessary to use our best biological judgement. Still, he said, I think that has been a worthwhile effort. At least we'll have better accountability for the priorities we develop, Hevlin said.

On May 17, he continued, the SCT will be meeting at McNary Dam; in the afternoon, there will be a tour of that facility to look at the new activities underway on there. We need to talk, first of all, about what new information we need to generate in support of the FY'02 prioritization process, Hevlin said.

*E. TMDL Update.* See Agenda Item 5, below.

***3. Update on Power Outlook Studies for the Next Year and Possible Impacts for Winter 2001 Based on Strategies Employed.***

John Fazio said Council staff is in the process of updating its power outlook analysis; this has become a larger task than originally anticipated, he said. We're revising both load and resource numbers to be sure they are as accurate as possible, said Fazio, and reflect current numbers for emergency resources, buyback of load, voluntary conservation, thermal maintenance schedules and contracts. This effort is complicated by the fact that, while everyone wants us to do this analysis, nobody wants to share their power resource secrets, Fazio said. We're also updating the hydro side to reflect the most recent water supply estimates, he added.

We do have at least some preliminary numbers, Fazio said, noting that the analysis starts on May 1 with the actual reservoir elevations. Another change is the fact that we are running the analysis using eight synthetic water years between 52 MAF and 62 MAF, rather than the 1944 and 1977 water years, Fazio said; we have also incorporated the anticipated Canadian project operation for 2001. Fazio noted that the May start study numbers are extremely preliminary, and have not yet been reviewed.

Fazio then distributed Enclosure E, a single-sheet summary of the Council staff's power outlook analysis comparing the numbers from the March start (1944 and 1977 water years) and the May start (eight synthetic water years) model runs. He noted that the March study concluded that if no extraordinary actions were taken, the region could expect total May-August curtailments of about 5,300 MW-months; the curtailment peaks would occur in May and June, when most of the unit maintenance takes place.

Fazio then went through the numbers under the "May Start Study" section of the Council analysis. You will note, he said, that the average May curtailments for both the May and March start studies were about the same. The June curtailments were a little better in the May start study, but much worse in July and August. The reason for that is that the synthetic water years gave us an average generation of 9,292 MW-months in July and 8,086 MW-months in August, compared to an average of 10,500 MW-months in July and 9,251 MW-months in August under the 1944 and 1977 water years. The reason for this, said Fazio, is the projection of lower flows because the Canadian projects are expected to be filling during July and August 2001. In response to a question from Nielsen, Fazio said that, if the revised Canadian operation were to be plugged into the March start study, the average July and August generation figures would likely be significantly reduced.

So what do the curtailments drop to under the emergency operation currently in place? Ruff asked. That's the next phase of this analysis, Fazio replied – we will be running the proposed federal operation, as well as the various spill scenarios that have been proposed. Fazio said a technical formatting issue has so far limited Council staff's ability to run those scenarios. What's the time-frame for completing that additional analysis? Ruff asked. We hope to make a presentation at the next Council meeting in mid-May, Fazio replied.

Fazio added that there is considerable variability, both in the synthetic water years and the results the model is yielding for those water years. In other words, he said, there is still a lot of uncertainty about how much fuel we're going to get from the hydrosystem this year, and when we're going to get it. Does this study assume BiOp elevations at the storage reservoirs on August 31? Litchfield asked. Yes, Fazio replied.

We have found some additional emergency generating resources, as well as further reductions in load, Fazio said; it looks as though we may be able to find 1,000-2,000 MW-months in additional conservation and generation. If, however, the Canadian operation is accurate, that change will more than offset the MW-months gained through conservation and generation, Fazio said.

The group devoted a few minutes of discussion to the nuances of the Council analysis; ultimately, Fazio noted that the shape of the runoff is probably the most important variable in this analysis. It feels like we're sitting on the deck of the Titanic, computing how fast we're sinking, Fodrea observed. In response to another question, Fazio said that, at this point, given the uncertainties about the actual volume and shape of the 2001 water supply, the "average" lines under "hydro generation" and "anticipated curtailment" provide the best current estimates of monthly generation and energy shortfall.

#### ***4. 2001 FCRPS Operating Priorities Update.***

With respect to the April 27 meeting of the Regional (federal, state and tribal) Executives, said Ruff, both the Council and the federal agencies discussed their draft 2001 operating plans; the federal agencies plan to release their final operating plan on May 17, the same day the action agencies expect to be releasing their RODs on the 2000 BiOp. There are a number of key operating decisions that need to be made, he said – on spring transport from McNary and Vernita Bar flows, among others.

With respect to the latter issue, said Ruff, there were still large numbers of newly-emerged fry being seined at the index sites as of yesterday's survey; that being the case, the current recommendation is that the Vernita Bar protection flows will be maintained at 65 Kcfs through May 9, with several days of rampdown beginning May 5. After May 9, BPA said it intends to reduce Grand Coulee discharge to the Priest Rapids minimum flow of 36 Kcfs.

Other items still at issue include the surging operation at Lower Granite Dam, said Ruff;

TMT has been discussing this question, and has agreed to expand the project operating range to MOP+1-MOP+2.5 feet in order to help keep Lower Granite discharge up through midnight. My understanding is that passage has increased significantly at Lower Granite thanks at least in part to this operation, said Ruff.

The second part of the surging operation has to do with the use of Lower Granite pool storage to produce weekly surges to help fish pass the project, said Ruff; the idea would be to backfill Lower Granite pool using water from either Dworshak or Brownlee, preferably Brownlee. BPA is working with Idaho Power to reach an agreement on obtaining Brownlee storage for use in this operation; however, there is no agreement to date.

Finally, there is the question of May spill, said Ruff; at the April 27 meeting, the executives heard several presentations about the biological benefits of providing at least some spill for spring migrants this year. Oregon, the tribes and the Council all recommended limited spill, at least at The Dalles and Bonneville Dams; the federal operators are looking to see if it might be possible to provide at least 400 MW-months of spill, beginning next week and lasting 30 days, at The Dalles and Bonneville. A work group has developed a series of spill scenarios; contingency spill scenarios have been developed for 200, 400, 600 and 800 MW-months of spill. That way, if spill becomes available at whatever level, we'll be covered, Ruff said, adding that the spill question should be resolved within the next couple of days. The next Regional Executives meeting is scheduled for May 11, Ruff added.

Ruff touched briefly on ESU steelhead passage at McNary Dam, noting that, based on historic passage timing, spilling at The Dalles and Bonneville from the first week in May through the first week in June could protect between 80 to 90% of the 2001 run. How will we find out about the spill decision? Dennis Rohr asked. We'll contact the IT participants directly; there will also be press notification, Ruff replied. In response to another question, he said that if spill is provided in 2001, it will likely be 30% spill 24 hours a day at The Dalles and 50 Kcfs spill 24 hours a day at Bonneville, said Ruff.

##### ***5. EPA and Corps Temperature Modeling.***

Dick Cassidy of the Corps provided an overview of the Corps/Battelle effort to model expected water temperatures during the summer of 2001. We initially asked Battelle to model 1977 flow conditions, Cassidy said; EPA, through their modeling work, pointed out that while 1977 was an extremely low water year, water temperatures that year were not the worst on record. The 1994 water year had higher temperatures, even though it wasn't as dry a year, Cassidy said.

What we asked Battelle to do, then, was to superimpose 1994 meteorological conditions on the 1977 water year, to create a synthetic worst-case water temperature year, Cassidy said. We also modeled a series of scenarios developed by TMT, which included various levels and delivery regimes for flow augmentation water from Dworshak, looking for the operation that will

produce the best water temperature conditions possible under the worst-case flow and meteorological scenario.

Cassidy then went through a series of graphs describing the model outputs; this information is Enclosure F. In general, said Cassidy, what this analysis shows is that releasing 10 Kcfs from Dworshak beginning on July 1, under this worst-case scenario, would yield an average reduction in Lower Granite forebay temperature of about 1 degree C through the summer. Cassidy added that, according to this analysis, if Dworshak runs at 10 Kcfs outflow from July 1 through the end of August, it will be at elevation 1500 on August 31.

Soscia asked that Battelle work closely with EPA's modelers to ensure they don't wind up with apples and oranges, in terms of developing information on which the region can base its water management decisions this summer. Understood, Cassidy replied – perhaps it might be most appropriate to coordinate the two efforts at TMT. Have the two models been cross-checked to ensure that they produce comparable results, if the same data sets are used? Litchfield asked. Essentially, yes, Soscia replied. That is correct for the models the Corps used to produce the Lower Snake EIS, Cassidy added, but whether that is also true of the models used for DGAS, I don't know at this point. And these are results from the 2-D MASS2 model used in the DGAS study? Ruff asked. Correct, Cassidy replied. He distributed a brief description of this model (Enclosure G).

Soscia then provided a description of the current status of the temperature TMDL. She distributed a packet of overheads on the Columbia/Snake Mainstem Temperature TMDL (Enclosure H) and the workplan for the Columbia/Snake temperature TMDL, dated April 2001 (Enc. I). She added that EPA's most recent modeling work shows the potential for 20-25 days of water temperature standard exceedences at Lower Granite during the summer of 2001, depending on how much water is available from Dworshak, how and when it is released, and meteorological conditions.

Soscia noted that the Western Governor's Association has announced its support for the mainstem TMDL development process; that is a very positive development, she said. EPA is in the process of briefing the Congressional delegation in Washington D.C., she said; in addition, we're meeting monthly with the states and tribes to discuss TMDL development. The next meeting is May 24 in Boise; the action agencies are also invited to attend.

Soscia then spent a few minutes reviewing the contents of Enclosure H, touching on the following topics:

- What a TMDL is
- The boundaries of the mainstem TMDL (Pacific Ocean to Canadian border on the Columbia and the Snake River's confluence with the Clearwater River)
- the state and tribal agencies with a CWA role in the project area
- Columbia/Snake River 303 (d) listings for temperature

- The technical process for TMDL development
- Applicable water quality standards
- The definition of numerical targets for the TMDL
- Interpretation of the water quality standard
- The identification of sources and evaluation of linkages of sources to river response
- Quantification of loading capacity
- The allocation of loads
- Sources of additional information (EPA Region 10 homepage ):

[www.epa.gov/r10earth/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/index.htm), Columbia/Snake Rivers TMDL homepage –  
[www.epa.gov/r10earth/columbiainstemtmdl.htm](http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/columbiainstemtmdl.htm), the Office of Water TMDL homepage –  
[www.epa.gov/OWOW/tmdl/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/OWOW/tmdl/index.html)

Soscia noted that the majority of the effort, currently, is being expended on defining the appropriate numerical targets for the mainstem temperature TMDL, based on the applicable water quality standards. The target temperature regime will come from EPA’s natural conditions simulation. You plan to treat the tributaries as point sources? Dan Daley asked. That’s correct, Soscia replied. The entire Clearwater River, then, would be a point source? Daley asked. The Clearwater is a special case, Soscia replied – we’re doing a lot of modeling to try to understand the temperature impacts of Dworshak on the Lower Snake. What if a tributary like the Grande Ronde is not able to achieve compliance? Daley asked – will the standards still apply? We’re still talking about that, Soscia replied – so far, from a mainstem loading allocation perspective, our analysis doesn’t show a great deal of influence from the tributaries.

Soscia then moved on to the TMDL workplan (Enc. I), focusing on the key dates listed on Page 2 of this document:

- April 1, 2001 – written communication and collaboration strategy
- April 30, 2001 – final report, “Columbia River Temperature Assessment: Simulation Methods” including peer review comments and responses
- April 30, 2001 – CD with model and supporting documentation for distribution on request
- April 30, 2001 – Paper on the use of a 1-D model for the TMDL
- June/July 2001 – public workshop on the water quality modeling
- June 30, 2001 – Written problem assessment for public review
- June 30, 2001 – Written report on numerical targets for public review
- July/August, 2001 – Public workshop on the problem assessment and numerical targets
- September 1, 2001 – Written report on loading capacity and allocations for public review
- September/October 2001 – Public workshop on loading capacity and allocations
- February 1, 2002 – Draft TMDL for public comment
- March 2002 – State public meetings on the draft TMDL
- July/August 2002 – Final TMDL

Soscia reiterated that, if there are any regional entities who would like additional information or one-on-one briefings on the TMDL development process from EPA, they should contact her directly.

#### ***6. Action Agencies' 1- and 5-Year Plan: Overview and Schedule for Completion.***

Daley said that, at the last IT meeting, he had agreed to try to bring the draft five-year implementation plan to the May IT meeting. We almost succeeded, he said; however, it now appears that it will be mid-May before that draft is ready for release. What we would like to do, instead, is give you an idea of where we are, and get a sense of how the information that is in the draft implementation plan sits with everyone here.

One thing we can give you today is a sense of the types and sheer number of projects that will be included in the implementation plan, said Daley; the easiest way to do that is to distribute some of the tables and appendices that will be included with the draft plan. We would also like your feedback on the performance standards that will drive the rest of the plan, as well as the general approach we're taking, Daley added. He noted that all of these elements are working drafts, so a lot of things could still change.

With that, Katherine Cheney distributed Enclosure J, a flow chart overview of the 2002-2006 Implementation Plan. She touched on the plan's goals, performance standards, scientific assessments and uncertainties, strategies and priorities, R, M&E, the five-year tables and one-year plans. The goal is to provide a direct link between the goals and performance standards and the specific actions that will be taken to achieve these objectives, Cheney said. The five-year tables include detailed summaries and workplans for each of the RPAs, she explained. This is a dynamic framework, geared to achieve the performance standards within 10 years, she added. So there are criteria that will need to be met under each "H" in order to achieve the RPA? Jim Yost asked. Essentially, yes, Cheney replied.

BPA's Steve Waste then provided an overview of the tables appended to the five-year implementation plan; he noted that the various one-year plans will be informed and guided by these tables. In essence, they represent our first effort to organize ourselves according to timeline, funding, and the application of specific criteria to existing projects and projects that will be needed in the future to satisfy the RPAs. Essentially, he said, we did a crosswalk with existing projects vis-a-vis the RPA; when we take a second pass at this task to determine high, medium and low priorities, as well as which RPAs are not being adequately addressed, we will need to do some focused solicitations.

The ISAB is reviewing the front part of the draft five-year plan, Waste said; actions identified as priorities will go to the ISRP for review. Again, it will probably be necessary to do some targeted solicitations until we can get this process in synch with the Council's three-year rolling provincial review process. The tables will be available from the salmonrecovery.gov website, he added.

We would like to get the IT's feedback on the front end of the draft five-year implementation plan as soon as possible, Waiste said. When will we get a chance to see that front end? Ruff asked. Hopefully by the week of May 21, Cheney replied. How do we get from the five-year to the one-year plans, given the potential disconnect with the Council's rolling review process? Ruff asked. We will lay the foundation for the entire 10-year period this first year, but the projects themselves will likely be different, Waste replied. So when the tables are released, they will lay out a list of the projects you feel should be priorities for the next five years? Palensky asked. Correct, Waste replied, with the recognition that, depending on how things go during the first couple of years of this process, and get a feel for what is working and what is not, that list could change significantly.

The group discussed the coordination of the one- and five-year implementation planning process with the Council's 3-year rolling provincial review process; Daley observed that, while there will likely be ESA-related activities that will not fit into the Council's plans, and Council-supported activities that will not fit into the BiOp implementation planning process, it behooves the region to ensure that the two processes and the prioritized actions they produce mesh as closely as possible. The fact is that our authorities and responsibilities are different, said Waste – the federal action agencies are on the hook for ESA compliance, while the Council is not.

BPA's Ken Barnhardt then spent a few minutes describing the hydro appendix to the five-year implementation plan; the table of contents of this appendix is Enclosure K. This document includes a detailed list of the specific projects – system configuration projects and studies – included under the hydro implementation plan. Barnhardt noted that about 150 of the 191 RPAs included in the 2000 FCRPS Biological Opinion fall under the hydro umbrella; for that reason, he said, this will be a very lengthy appendix.

Next, BPA's Jim Geiselman distributed Enclosure L, Section 4 of the draft Five-Year Implementation Plan, "Performance Standards." Geiselman also distributed Appendix 4A from the draft Plan, "Development of Provisional Performance Measures and Standards for Federal Hydrosystem Impacts in the Columbia River Basin" (attached as Enclosure M). Geiselman spent a few minutes going through these documents, providing a general overview of the various tiers of performance standards and performance measures that will establish the level of improvement needed in each life-stage of the salmon and steelhead life-cycle if survival and recovery are to be achieved. Please refer to Enclosures L and M for details of Geiselman's presentation.

Geiselman emphasized that the help of the states and tribes is crucial to the further development of these performance standards; he asked that any comments, issues or suggestions be submitted directly to him as soon as possible.

Ruff noted that the action agencies have been working very hard on this five-year plan for the past several months; NMFS and USFWS have had an opportunity to review several drafts, and have provided some fairly extensive feedback. That's why Jim is requesting state and tribal input, said Ruff – we've seen it, but you have not.

Who is actually going to do and fund this work, in terms of on-the-ground implementation? Yost asked. Also, Idaho would appreciate an opportunity to see a draft of this implementation plan, just so we can see what you have planned for us. Daley replied that much of the state and tribal input will be provided through existing fora; we expect the states and tribes to continue to make their wishes known through the Council and Regional Forum processes, he said. Because those programs aren't going to go away, he said, the assumption is that we can avoid another layer of process and seek input through the normal channels. My point, said Yost, is that if you think Idaho is going to be satisfied that the Council process will satisfy its ESA and CWA responsibilities, you're mistaken – until the Council process changes, Idaho is not going to accept the Council process as the ultimate source of guidance in its ESA and CWA responsibilities.

The group devoted a few minutes of discussion to the relative roles of the states and the federal parties in the development and implementation of the BiOp implementation plans; Tony Nigro noted that the line between federal and state responsibility is somewhat blurred, because of the extreme complexity of this effort. Palensky observed that, once the Council has developed its subbasin plans for each state, some of this uncertainty will be eased. Again, said Yost, the planning process in Idaho will be done by people in the state of Idaho, not by the Council – that is our authority and our responsibility. We will coordinate that planning, and work to satisfy the parameters laid out in the template, but Idaho will develop the plan, and will then submit it to the Council for review.

All I'm saying is that once the plans are in place, that will provide a road map for what gets done in the future, said Palensky. The challenge, as always, will be to ensure coordination between what the states, tribes, local watershed councils and the federal parties are doing, Ruff observed.

Again, said Cheney, our plan is to release the draft five-year implementation plan the week of May 21. Should we request a walk-through of the plan at the June 7 IT meeting? Palensky asked. As long as it's relatively brief, highlighting areas where we should pay special attention, or where feedback is particularly needed, said Nigro. It was so agreed.

### ***7. Update on the Council's Provincial Review Process and Subbasin Planning.***

Lynn Palensky reported that, with respect to the rolling provincial review, Council staff has just produced a new information packet on the subbasin planning process. She distributed copies of this packet, which is Enclosure C.

We asked you here today because there have been a number of questions from IT members about how the Council's subbasin planning process integrates with the BiOp implementation planning process, said Ruff. Lynn Palensky went briefly through the contents of Enclosure C, beginning with the document titled "Rolling Provincial Review Schedule."

The group devoted a few minutes of discussion to this packet of information, offering a variety of clarifying questions and comments. With respect to the Bonneville funding process, Lynn Palensky said NMFS is providing a great deal of feedback to BPA regarding the BiOp focus of the projects being funded.

She added that the subbasin planning process is still some years away; the Council will be taking a state-by-state approach to subbasin planning. We don't want to impose another planning process on top of what is already in place, Lynn Palensky said; to that end, we've already begun having meetings with the appropriate state agencies to get that process underway. The most progress has been made to date in Oregon, she added; we're in the process of setting up meetings with Idaho and Montana. There may be some institutional barriers to overcome in Washington, she said. Topics under discussion include who will write the subbasin plans, who will fund their implementation, and what the schedule should be for this effort. The Council is currently working on a subbasin plan template and a schedule covering the next couple of years.

Basically, what we're getting at this point in the process is a reality check, Lynn Palensky said – at least initially, for the first group of provinces, it's going to be difficult to write the subbasin plans within the time available. We have several ad hoc groups underway, working on the various elements of the template, coordination issues with the TRTs, coordination on CWA activities and issues that need to be included in the plan, as well as the development of the Council's preliminary assessment in June.

Obviously, there are still a lot of coordination issues that need to be resolved, said Lynn Palensky; we're still working on the details of exactly how this process is going to come to fruition. So the Council will provide a subbasin plan template, which the states will then customize to reflect state-specific issues? John Palensky asked. Correct, Lynn Palensky replied.

Since this is a Council-sponsored process, I assume you're involving all of the appropriate state agencies, said Ruff – how are you coordinating with the tribes? Through several ad hoc groups, as well as one-on-one meetings, Lynn Palensky replied – we've also had a number of sidebar conversations and meetings. The tribes are on board, if that's what you're asking, she said.

What about coordination with the BiOp implementation planning process? Jim Litchfield asked. After all, there are several hundred action items in the BiOp. We've got Council people at all of those meetings; they then come back and coordinate with us, Lynn Palensky replied. Basically, we do have groups working on that issue, and it's a matter of integrating what's discussed at those meetings with our activities. In addition, said John Palensky, within the next few weeks, we'll see a draft of the five-year implementation plan, which will include a list of all of the action items required under the BiOp, together with a schedule for their implementation. At this point, however, I don't believe that schedule bears much relationship to the schedule you've laid out for the rolling provincial review process, John Palensky said. True – we're working on that, Lynn Palensky replied.

My understanding is that, currently, we're having discussions with both NMFS and the Council about how we're going to coordinate the implementation of the Council's rolling provincial review process and the One- and Five-Year BiOp implementation planning process, Dan Daley added – in short, we're aware that this is going to continue to be a challenge over the next several years. BPA's likely response will be a series of targeted solicitations or targeted RFPs, Daley said – that's the best we can come up with, at the moment at least. We will coordinate those solicitations through NMFS and USFWS, Daley added. We're hoping to develop a better process, he said, but that's the way we're approaching it for now.

In response to a question from Jim Fodrea, Daley said BPA is in the process of issuing a solicitation for mitigation activities for the power emergency. The intent is not to mitigate for the drought, he said, but rather, to mitigate for the effects of ongoing power system emergency operations, recognizing that the distinction between those two conditions may be somewhat blurred. We're not committing to fund anything at this time, he added, but we are asking for proposals. Any demarcation in the solicitation between ESA impacts and resident fish impacts? Litchfield asked. The priority in this solicitation is to offset the impacts to ESA-listed stocks, Daley said – I would recommend that you read the solicitation itself for further clarification, as it includes some examples of the kinds of projects BPA will likely consider a high priority – water acquisitions, tributary screening, etc.

What will the project screening process and schedule be for this effort? Ruff asked. The Council voted to not have anything to do with this solicitation, said Daley; however, we will likely seek their staff help anyway. The Council hasn't said no to ISRP review of projects, added Lynn Palensky, although there may be some scheduling difficulties to overcome. To answer Jim's question, said Daley, we will work with Council staff, but we will not do a formal Council solicitation. There will be NMFS review and participation such that NMFS will be able to credit these projects toward achieving the BiOp RPAs, with the stipulation that there may be other needs out there, Daley said. The funding sideboards haven't been strictly established, Daley said, but the BPA Administrator envisions something in the low tens of millions of dollars. Basically, NMFS will be evaluating whether or not these projects are consistent with the activities laid out in the RPA, said Ruff; in general, we will also be doing an after-the-fact assessment of the actions taken or not taken, such as the lack of BiOp spill this spring, in 2001, Ruff said.

#### ***8. Next IT Meeting Date.***

The next meeting of the Implementation Team was set for Thursday, June 7. Meeting notes prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.