

Final Notes

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM MEETING NOTES

May 1, 1997, 9:00 a.m.-4 p.m.
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE OFFICES
PORTLAND, OREGON

I. Greeting and Introductions.

The May 1 meeting of the Implementation Team, held at the National Marine Fisheries Service's offices in Portland, Oregon, was chaired by Donna Darm of NMFS. The agenda for the May 1 meeting 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 Kathy Ceballos at 503/230-5420 or via email at kathy.ceballos@noaa.gov.

Doug Arndt updated the IT on the status of the SAIC independent review process, saying that the engineering firm plans to present a draft report on its findings on May 8, from 9 a.m. to noon, here in the NMFS fifth floor conference room. Anyone who is interested is invited to attend. Darm reiterated that this study was undertaken in response to a Congressional directive to COE to examine ways to implement capital improvements at the FCRPS dams faster, cheaper and better. The Corps has hired an outside consultant -- SAIC Engineering -- to produce this analysis. One question, she said -- is the idea to solicit comment before a final draft report is produced? Yes, Arndt replied -- SAIC will be presenting the material, and will likely distribute copies of the draft report at that time. Comments on the draft report are due by May 31, with the final report scheduled for distribution in mid-June. Further copies of the report will be distributed to those who cannot attend the May 8 meeting.

II. Updates.

A. In-Season Management.

1. Operations Report.

a. Fish Passage Center. Margaret Filardo of the Fish Passage Center distributed Enclosure C, an extensive packet of 1997 juvenile migration information and data on total dissolved gas, incidence of gas bubble trauma and water temperature data. Among her main points:

-- Cumulative passage indices at major index sites throughout the basin indicate that the timing of the 1997 juvenile outmigration, through April 28, is generally earlier or on par with historic run timing information

-- Through April 28, 1997 transport proportion data indicates that 58% of hatchery

chinook, 59% of wild chinook, 65% of hatchery steelhead and 76% of wild steelhead have been transported.

-- PIT-tag detections of Snake River stocks indicate that these stocks have been migrating through the Lower Columbia since April 5 and have been detected at McNary Dam consistently since then.

-- Dissolved gas levels have consistently exceeded the water quality standard, due to high flows resulting from flood control operations.

-- Thus far the highest occurrence of gas bubble trauma signs was observed at Bonneville Dam on April 26. The occurrence of symptoms and high dissolved gas levels is related to special operations at John Day Dam. Five of the spillbays at John Day were unavailable for use through April 28 due to spillway deflector installation. This exacerbated the dissolved gas levels below John Day at higher flows. Since then, construction work has been completed, such that 19 of that project's 20 spillbays are now back in service, hopefully easing the dissolved gas problem at John Day somewhat.

(Please see Enclosure C for more detailed information).

b. Corps of Engineers. Just a brief update, said Technical Management Team chair Cindy Henriksen -- as Margaret mentioned, the hydropower system is now in flood control mode; most projects are at or near their minimum flood control elevations in preparation for the start of the 1997 freshet. The current expectation is that that will happen after May 10 this year. Current flows in the Lower Snake River are 170 Kcfs-180 Kcfs at Lower Granite; Lower Columbia River flows at McNary Dam have averaged 450 Kcfs-470 Kcfs during the past week.

2. Water Management Plan.

a. Review of Final Federal Draft. On April 22, we distributed the final Federal draft of the 1997 Water Management Plan, along with a cover letter explaining the Federal response to outstanding issues, via mail and the TMT's Internet homepage, said Brown. We agreed that we would revisit those two documents today, and finalize the Water Management Plan for 1997. Also, he added, when the Emergency Protocols appendix to the 1997 WMP was adopted at the April 4 Executive Committee, it was agreed to allow a further 30-day comment period on the Emergency Protocols; I would like to know today whether anyone plans to comment, and, if so, to nail down a due date for those comments.

Are there further comments or elements of the 1997 plan that individual participants feel would impact their ability to continue to participate in this process? asked Brown. It's safe to say that the CRITFC tribes still have some significant issues with the 1997 WMP, which were outlined in our February 11 memo to the Implementation Team, said Bob Heinith. We'll be following up on those issues in some further comments, which will probably be available after our Commission meeting in a couple of weeks. So we'll see those comments in a few weeks, possibly sooner? asked Brown. That sounds reasonable, Heinith replied.

You'll note three place holders in the April 22 draft of the Water Management Plan, said Brown. Two of those place holders have to do with spring and summer operations in the Upper Snake; the third has to do with water temperature, so obviously, there will be some further changes to

this document down the road. Oregon may have a few further comments, said Tony Nigro of ODFW -- if so, we'll provide those within a week.

If I receive anything that needs immediate attention, I'll convene a conference call, said Brown. Otherwise, I guess we can expect to revisit the 1997 WMP at the June IT meeting, when we should have an update on the placeholder sections. Absent any change in response to comments received, he added, I guess what you can expect to hear from the Federal parties is that this is the guidance document to be used for in-season management in 1997.

One other item, said Heinith -- we're still waiting for the Corps' response to our comments on the 1997 Fish Passage Plan. I understand that response is still on Jim Athearn's desk, and we would appreciate receiving it soon so that we can address it in our overall comments on the Water Management Plan, Heinith said. That was mailed Monday, April 28, replied Henriksen -- you should have it by now.

Any comments forthcoming on the Emergency Protocols? asked Brown. The tribes are planning further comment, replied Heinith. Shall we set a date for comments on the Emergency Protocols, timed so we can send them out with the agenda for the next IT meeting? suggested Brown. It was agreed that any further comments on the Emergency Protocols would be sent to NMFS's John Palensky by close of business Monday, May 19.

b. Snake River Operations. Jim Yost of the Idaho Governor's office provided a brief overview of the discussions of this subcommittee at its meeting last week; in general, he said, with respect to Milner operations, the feeling of the group was that increasing the rate of delivery for the Upper Snake salmon augmentation water to more than 1.5 Kcfs at Milner would provide only minimal benefits to salmon downstream. The group pretty much left it up to Idaho to check on a few other alternatives, said Yost, including a possible stairstep approach; however, there isn't much enthusiasm in the Idaho Legislature for anything above 1.5 Kcfs. Basically, said Yost, the feeling is that the benefits to salmon would be inconsequential compared to what Idaho would have to go through to speed up delivery of that water.

I had a slightly different perspective on the meeting, said Steve Herndon of Idaho Power. Basically, after a great deal of discussion, what it really boiled down to was that increasing the flow out of Milner was not going to make any change with respect to the delivery of water out of Brownlee for anadromous fish, he said. Recreational access to Brownlee Reservoir was a concern raised primarily by the State of Oregon; we pointed out that, last year, Idaho Power had extended the Richland ramp on the Oregon side down to elevation 2037 feet, which provides better recreational access to Oregon boaters under the water budget operation. The consensus of the group was that the main problem in the past, during the Brownlee shaping operation, was recreational access. That problem now appears to have been taken care of satisfactorily. As Jim said, the bottom line agreed to at the end of the meeting was that it would be a State of Idaho decision about whether or not to change the 1.5 Kcfs flow cap at Milner, a change that Idaho irrigators have some real concerns about.

Does the group plan to meet again, to develop specific language that we can insert in the Water Management Plan? asked Brown. I don't believe another meeting is planned, Yost replied. I would like to request that the Snake River operations subcommittee develop a written recommendation for IT consideration, said Nigro. I'll talk to Jim about that, said Brown.

In response to a question from Heinith, Henriksen said that the Fish Facilities O&M Subcommittee had met to discuss the requirement at Lower Granite that, if flows at that project reach 300 Kcfs -- a strong possibility in 1997 -- in order to keep enough freeboard on the Lewiston levies, Lower Granite would need to be drafted to as much as eight feet below MOP. That means we need some fish passage contingencies in place, because drafting Lower Granite pool to that extent would leave some orifices out of the water, trapping fish in the gatewells. Also, if the surface collector in front of Units 4, 5 and 6 cannot operate, as would be the case at MOP-8, then Units 4, 5 and 6 cannot be operated either, Henriksen said. The question then becomes, do we operate Units 1, 2 and 3, and try to dip the fish out of the gatewells, do we try to spill 100% of river flow, or do we pull the screens in units 1-3 and let the fish pass through? The recommendation from the O&M Subcommittee is that we turn off all six units and spill the whole river, Henriksen said.

In response to a question, Henriksen said that the Corps plans to begin drafting Lower Granite to MOP-8 if flows of 300 Kcfs at that project are forecast three days in the future. Again, she said, it's quite possible that this could occur in 1997. Sounds like more fish in the river, said Darm.

c. Water Temperature. EPA's Mary Lou Soscia distributed the following statement, dated May 1, 1997:

Report to the Implementation Team
Mainstem Temperature

A "committee" has been established under the auspices of the Recovery Planning Forum (EC, IT, TMT, SCT) to address mainstem Columbia and Lower Snake temperature issues. The first meeting of this group was Wednesday, April 30.

This team will be facilitated by EPA as a way to address the need for the Federal Columbia River Hydropower System to meet water quality standards promulgated under the Clean Water Act. This group will work with the System Configuration and Technical Management Teams and begin reporting to the Implementation Team on progress on addressing temperature concerns. The first report will occur at the Implementation Team meeting on May 1 in Portland.

Topics for discussion at the April 30 meeting included:

- Organization and display of available temperature data
- Feasibility of 1997 interim temperature measures; discussion of feasibility of interim temperature measures proposed in the 1997 Water Management Plan.
- Long-term strategy for temperature management
 - a) initiation of discussions on long-term temperature management
 - b) future temperature modeling efforts, ongoing and proposed

Participants on this team include: Jim Athearn, COE, Kirk Beiningen, ODFW, Jim Bellatty, Idaho DEQ, Ed Bowles, IDFG, Jim Ceballos, NMFS, Rick George, Umatilla Tribes, Russell Harding, ODEQ, Bob Heinith, CRITFC, Dave Hurson, COE, Gary Johnson, COE, Jim Nielsen, WDFW, Steve Pettit, IDFG, Jim Ruff, NPPC, Eric Schlorff, WDOE, Mary Lou Soscia, EPA, Dave Statler, Nez Perce Tribe, Dick Wallace, WDOE.

The next meeting of this group has been scheduled for Thursday, May 29 from 9 a.m.-noon at the Power Planning Council offices in Portland.

After some minutes of discussion, it was agreed to move the next temperature workgroup meeting forward so that the group can report to IT at its June 5 meeting.

With regard to the last discussion item, long-term strategies for temperature management, COE's Rock Peters said the Gas Abatement Program includes the development of a numerical model looking at dispersion water particle travel time in order to measure dissolved gas dispersion; the model also factors in temperature. This database has been under development for about three years, said Peters, and may provide a good starting-point for the temperature workgroup's efforts.

Heinith reminded the IT that CRITFC had raised the issue of fish handling criteria when water temperatures at collection facilities reach 68 degrees F. Heinith said the Tribes want temperature of 68 degrees to trigger spill, and to get the fish back in the river. Tom Cooney, WDF, asked "Regardless of what river conditions are, the fish should go back in the river?" Heinith answered, yes. For the record, Heinith said, that issue was not resolved by the Corps' O&M Subcommittee, and is likely to come back to IT. We will be discussing this issue further at our next meeting, as well, said Socia. If you can reach consensus, great, said Brown. If not, I would request that the temperature subcommittee frame the issue for discussion at the June IT meeting. In the meantime, we'll leave the placeholder in the 1997 WMP.

B. Plan for Analyzing and Testing Hypotheses (PATH). The Council would like to have a presentation on the PATH budget -- now estimated at \$1.5 million per year through the year 2000 -- and schedule, comparing the information PATH has under development with the decision points NMFS has identified, said Doug Marker of the Council staff. We would like to raise some questions about the consistency of the workplan with those decision points, and the overall amount of resources assigned to the PATH effort. It may help also to spend a few minutes talking about the evolution of PATH, from what was primarily a modeling exercise to more of a decision development process, said Alan Ruger of BPA -- the Council should recognize that PATH has become a different animal than what may originally have been envisioned. So specifically, Doug, you're requesting...? asked Brown. A PATH project update at the June 3-4 Council working session, Marker replied. After some minutes of further discussion, Marker agreed that the PATH update could probably be postponed until the July Council working session, if necessary.

Chris Toole of NMFS distributed Enclosures D, E, F and G, an outline of the tasks for PATH's decision analysis of spring/summer chinook, a detailed list of PATH's FY'97 tasks, a schedule of PATH's hydro and habitat decision analysis tasks, and an overall schedule of PATH activities 1995-1998, respectively (please see enclosures for detailed schedule and activities information).

In general, our main priority at the moment is the prospective analysis of spring/summer chinook, said Toole. We're working with an IT subcommittee to identify the particular scenarios that will be modeled in this analysis; IT is also helping to coordinate some of the assumptions that will be used in the non-hydro modeling work. The hydro regulation subgroup, headed by Phil Thor, has been putting some definition into the management scenarios identified by the IT subcommittee, and will be doing the first hydroreg runs in mid-June. The third main component

of the prospective analysis is passage model coordination, setting up the passage model input into the decision analysis. Overall, the draft prospective analysis is scheduled for completion in October 1997.

Toole touched on some of the other currently ongoing PATH tasks: putting the final touches on the spring/summer chinook retrospective analysis; laying the groundwork for the fall chinook retrospective analysis; scoping the available steelhead databases in preparation for the steelhead retrospective analysis, to name a few.

In terms of administrative connections, Toole continued, PATH has been coordinating its efforts with the Corps' Lower Snake River Feasibility Study; in response to a request at a recent IT meeting, we've also touched bases with the Independent Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB), primarily regarding their role in the PATH peer review process. Those discussions are ongoing, Toole said. He added that several specific PATH work products mentioned in the current schedule are now in draft form and are under review by PATH's Scientific Review Panel (SRP) prior to regional release.

C. Integrated Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB). No ISAB report was presented at today's meeting.

D. Dissolved Gas Team (DGT).

1. Gas Abatement Report. Arndt explained that, at a previous IT meeting, the Corps had committed to providing a briefing on its Dissolved Gas Abatement Study (DGAS). As most of you are aware, he said, this study came about in response to a measure in the Biological Opinion, which requires the Corps to investigate long-term measures to reduce dissolved gas at its projects. Through the SCT process, there is now a significant study effort underway to look at the alternatives that could be employed to reduce TDG, Arndt explained.

The technical aspects of the DGAS study are being handled through COE Portland District, and the AFEP and FFDRWG processes, he continued. That's moving along pretty well, but there have been some significant questions raised about the goals, scope, schedule, costs and alternatives chosen for analysis. In other words, said Arndt, people are questioning how the Corps will be making its decisions at the end of this study, and what the goals of that study are.

With that, Arndt introduced Rock Peters and Kim Fodrea of COE Portland District, who went through a series of overheads describing the goals, scope, schedule, costs and overall decisionmaking process included in the DGAS study. These overheads are reproduced in Enclosure H; please see enclosure for details of this presentation. A few main points:

-- There are two main DGAS program goals:

1) Initially, to determine how eight Lower Snake and Columbia River projects can be modified to comply with state water quality limit of up to 110% TDG saturation for discharges up to the 10-year, 7-day flood event and

2) In response to the NMFS Biological Opinion, identify means to reduce TDG at Corps projects to the extent economically, technically and biologically feasible.

-- Initially, 53 gas abatement alternatives were identified; these have now been winnowed

down to the following seven active alternatives:

- ? Spillway deflectors
- ? Spillway deflectors and raised tailrace
- ? Raised stilling basin
- ? Raised stilling basin with deflectors
- ? Submerged discharge with spill
- ? Additional spillway bays
- ? Side channel spillway

-- For John Day Dam, prototype installation, cost and resulting TDG reductions from each alternative include:

Spill (KCFS)	Cost			
100	200	300		
Existing Configuration	131%	141%	141%	
Deflectors	116%	124%	128%	\$6.5 million
Raised Tailrace w/deflectors	115%	121%	126%	\$33.5 million
Raised Stilling Basin with Deflectors	116%	128%	128%	\$139 million
Raised Stilling Basin	119%	123%	126%	
Submerged Passageway w/Spill	112%			\$47.5 million (4 bays)
Submerged Passageway w/Spill	112%			\$85.5 million (8 bays)
Submerged Passageway w/Spill	116%			\$133 million (13 bays)

-- The criteria that will be used to evaluate these alternatives include:

- ? Reduces TDG for significant levels of discharge
- ? Allows fish passage with high survival rates
- ? Does not significantly reduce project hydraulic capacity
- ? Reasonable cost to construct, operate and maintain

-- The Corps convened an expert panel of biologists in a workshop last fall to discuss data needs to evaluate each alternative for potential physical injury during passage; their next workshop is scheduled for June 1997 at WES.

-- In terms of prototype implementation and evaluation, FFDRWG is making the following recommendations:

- ? Initiate Feature Design Memorandum (FDM)-level work on an Ice Harbor raised tailrace test
- ? Evaluate potential sites for testing submerged outlets for fish passage
- ? Initiate evaluation of raised tailrace design potential at Bonneville Dam (estimated cost -- \$24 million, vs. \$4 million at Ice Harbor)

-- The final DGAS Phase II study report will be available in September 2000.

(Again, please see Enclosure H for details of DGAS tasks, costs and schedule).

The discussion paused for a moment on the composition of the expert panel of biologists who have been assembled to consider the potential mechanical injury hazard associated with each alternative, with CRITFC, in particular, taking issue with the fact that this "blue-ribbon panel" had been assembled by FFDRWG with little input from non-Corps participants. If FFDRWG has exceeded its scope, I would still like to give FFDRWG a chance to add some more people to the expert panel if others in the region feel they are needed, said Arndt. I agree that it's important for FFDRWG to work this issue, said Darm, but I also don't think it's a good idea to put our technical people in the position of appointing expert panels of biologists. I guess I misspoke, said Peters -- really, all we're talking about here is an offshoot of FFDRWG. Their task is to look specifically at design issues, not to make policy decisions.

In response to a question, Peters said some members of this FFDRWG subgroup are being paid for their participation by the Corps. That brings up a couple of issues, said Darm. First, that compensation falls under the Memorandum of Agreement, which imposes certain consultation obligations. Second, we've heard on several occasions from the tribes about their inability to participate in all levels of this process due to funding constraints. We have to wonder, in a case where people are being reimbursed for their participation in this expert panel, why more effort wasn't made to secure tribal participation in this group.

If these issues are of special concern to the tribes, and you want to participate in the FFDRWG meetings but need reimbursement for special activities, we can address that, said Arndt. In the case of trips to WES, for example, the Corps routinely pays the expenses of agency representatives who want to participate, added Peters. I should also clarify that we are not paying the members of the expert panel for analytical work, he said -- we're just reimbursing them for travel and other expenses associated with the work.

Are you suggesting, Bob, that there should be a special consultation process between the Corps and the tribes outside the Regional Forum? asked Arndt. Yes, I am, Heinith replied -- even if we did have the resources to send a representative to FFDRWG, that's not consultation, and that's not acceptable to the tribes at the policy level. For the record, said Arndt, from the perspective of the Corps of Engineers, our trust responsibilities in this area are being met through the Forum process. We strongly encourage the tribes to participate in the Regional Forum process, and are willing to discuss reimbursing the tribes for expenses associated with specific activities. At this time, however, we are not willing to establish a separate channel for consultation outside the Regional Forum process.

There is a BPA MOA workgroup meeting scheduled for Tuesday, said Darm -- I would suggest, Bob, that this is an issue we could talk about at that meeting.

Returning to the subject of the FFDRWG subgroup to consider the biological impacts of each DGAS alternative, Heinith asked what, contractually, the group is expected to provide. It's a travel reimbursement contract, period, replied Peters. In terms of what we expect to get from this group, we hope that they can rate the potential passage impacts of each of the various alternatives still under consideration. Will that carry forward into developing information and

parameters to be input into the biological models? asked Heinith. Yes, Peters replied. And this group is open to any FFDRWG participant who wants to take part? asked Nigro. Absolutely, Peters replied.

Where shall we leave this? asked Darm. I think it might be a good idea for FFDRWG to lay out a clear charter for this biological subgroup, said Arndt -- that way, there will be no misunderstanding about what the group's expected output will be. Can you provide that by the next IT meeting? asked Darm. Actually, since, technically, the System Configuration Team oversees FFDRWG, it might be more appropriate for the SCT to develop that charter, suggested Phil Thor. It was so agreed.

Will you be going through a NEPA process on the Ice Harbor raised tailrace prototype? asked Heinith. Yes -- as part of our risk assessment, both NEPA and ESA consultation will have to be done for that project, Peters replied. In response to another concern raised by Heinith, Peters said information from the Ice Harbor raised tailrace prototype will be applicable to all projects in the system except Bonneville. That's why we need to separate Bonneville out, Peters added -- we know we have major gas problems below that project, it's simply not like any of the other dams in the system.

E. System Configuration Team (SCT). These issues (Bonneville passage improvements, Lower Granite surface collection, John Day extended-length screens, juvenile fish separator at Lower Granite, completion of John Day smolt sampling facility, The Dalles spillway survival study, and the Turbine Passage Survival Study Program) were placed on today's agenda with the understanding that further discussion needed to take place at the SCT level before they were brought before IT, said Brown. My understanding is that these issues are not yet ripe for IT consideration; at least some of them will be discussed further at the May 6 SCT meeting and at the CBFWA meeting the following week.

Brown distributed Enclosure I (a memo from SCT co-chairs Jim Ruff and Bill Hevlin to the IT, dated April 22, articulating the IT majority opinions on the following projects: the juvenile fish separator evaluation, completion of the John Day smolt monitoring facility, The Dalles Dam spillway survival study and the turbine passage survival study program), Enclosure J (the draft Tribal Capital Construction Plan for Bonneville Dam, dated April 22), Enclosure K (the draft Tribal Position Paper on Lower Granite Surface Collection Development, dated April 24) and Enclosure L (the draft Tribal John Day Passage Plan, dated April 24).

III. Power Peaking.

The tribes are still interested in seeing if there has been any sort of analysis, as outlined in the Biological Opinion, of power peaking at Bonneville, said Heinith -- we have received some economic information from BPA, but that's about it. There is also the 80% weekday/weekend issue; according to information from the Fish Passage Center, there were a few instances when that objective was not met in 1996. The 80% is incorporated as a requirement in the 1997 Water Management Plan, said Brown, primarily due to concerns about the frequency with which that objective was not met during the first two years of BiOp implementation.

At recent IT meetings, we agreed that CRITFC would work with the appropriate parties to develop a biologically-based limit for power peaking activities, said Brown. The IT was then to

form a technical group to assess the impacts of that alternative on the power system. At the same time, the technical group would be asked to formulate a question to the ISAB on the adequacy of the scientific information supporting that biologically-based alternative.

At least in preliminary discussions, a fluctuation of no more than 10% in a given 24-hour period was suggested as a possible limit, said Brown. Do we want to accept that 10% as a working premise, and begin the second and third parts of this initiative? What bothers me about that idea is that it would have a huge effect on the power system, said Darm. If we really want to change current power peaking practices, we're going to have to be more strategic about it. That's why I

suggested, several months ago, that the WE Team look at this issue. Rather than simply saying, don't fluctuate flows more than 10%, there may be opportunities to re-regulate, or we may discover that it's more important to limit power peaking in certain tributaries, or certain reaches of the river, she said. We're going to get a lot further with this if we take a more sophisticated, ecosystem approach -- a scalpel, rather than an ax.

After some minutes of further discussion, it was agreed to convene a joint IT/CBFWA subcommittee to develop power peaking alternatives; the first meeting of this group was set for Tuesday, June 24. One "bookend" to this effort might be an analysis of the impacts of the 10% limitation on the power system. It was further agreed that BPA will provide a briefing at the next IT meeting on the difficulties inherent in this type of analysis. The June 24 meeting will be coordinated jointly by Darm, FPAC chairman Fred Olney and CBFWA. Darm also agreed to formulate a formal request to ISAB to get that group working on the biological side of the power peaking question.

IV. Regional Forum.

A. Forum Procedures. At the last IT meeting, I promised to distribute the 1997 interim Regional Forum procedures, incorporating the comments received to date, said Darm. I don't have them today, she said, but they will be available in time for the next IT meeting.

B. Facilitation for TMT. This item came up through the Alternative Dispute Resolution committee's Impasse Subgroup, Brown explained. In general, there seems to be a feeling among some TMT participants that some issues proposed for TMT decision are not receiving the full consideration their proponents feel they deserve. From that sense of frustration came the suggestion that we should consider hiring an independent facilitator for TMT; a scope of work was developed by the Impasse Subgroup, and is currently being reviewed by NMFS and the Corps. It's on the agenda here mainly to start the IT thinking about this issue, said Brown -- we don't have a specific scope of work to share with you at this time.

In response to a question, Brown said the duties of the TMT facilitator, as outlined in the draft scope of work developed by the Impasse Subgroup, would primarily be to manage the distribution of agendas, issue papers, SORs and other background information in advance of the TMT meetings -- similar, in other words, to the role John Palensky plays with the IT. The idea would not be to replace the TMT chair, but to provide support for the TMT chair. A second function would be to take a more active role in managing the discussions that occur within TMT, to free up the Corps from having to both manage and provide technical participation in those discussions.

In response to a question, Darm said the funding for a TMT facilitator would most likely come from Bonneville's direct-funded program. I've spoken to Bob Lohn, she said, and he is quite enthusiastic about the idea of a facilitator for TMT. I wouldn't say we're trying to fix the TMT process because it's broken, said Nigro -- what we're trying to do is improve the process, and ensure that the most effective possible communication of ideas and viewpoints takes place. I think what you're hearing from some of the TMT participants is, that forum isn't always as effective, from a communications standpoint, as it could be. It's not dysfunctional -- it could simply be improved.

The group discussed specific areas of dissatisfaction with current TMT meeting management, with some IT participants saying that they have heard complaints about too little scope being allowed for the full discussion of issues, and others saying they have heard that a lack of focused, forward-moving discussion is the main problem. After some minutes of further discussion, the IT referred the facilitator question to TMT, asking that group to develop a brief description of the possible role and duties appropriate for an independent TMT facilitator. Henriksen will then provide an overview of the TMT's conclusions at the next IT meeting.

C. Montana Withdrawal. Darm distributed Enclosure M, a memo from Tim Hall to the Implementation Team, dated April 29, 1997, explaining the reasons for Montana's withdrawal from the Regional Forum process (see Enclosure M for details). The memo includes a copy of the letter from Montana Governor Marc Racicot to Will Stelle, dated April 15, 1997, formally notifying NMFS that Montana will no longer be participating in this process. Despite their withdrawal, said Darm, I would ask that, if Montana does choose to participate at a future TMT meeting, that any requests or suggestions Montana makes be given full consideration. Also, if opportunities arise to substitute alternative water for Montana flow augmentation water in-season, such as the 1996 Libby-Arrow swap, it would be my expectation that those opportunities will also be given due consideration, she added. Does NMFS plan to respond to Governor Racicot's letter? asked one meeting participant. Yes, but I don't believe the letter has been signed yet, Darm replied.

V. Approval of Minutes from April 3 IT Meeting.

The April minutes will be finalized at the June IT meeting.

VI. Other.

Darm distributed copies of CRITFC's written testimony to the Congressional Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, Committee on Appropriations, dated March 5, 1997 (Enclosure N).

One heads-up, said Brown -- some of the Salmon Managers, Washington in particular, have raised concerns about the need for flow specifications in the Mid-Columbia reach. That issue is getting some consideration in the PNCA forum in terms of the development of a regulation for next year; NMFS is concerned that that may have an impact on BiOp flows for Snake River stocks. We are suggesting that as this issue ripens, it come back to the IT for discussion, Brown said.

VII. Next Meeting Date and Agenda Items.

The next full meeting of the Implementation Team was set for Thursday, June 5 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at NMFS' Portland offices. Darm noted that an Executive Committee meeting has been scheduled for Monday, June 23, at the Ramada Inn at the Airport in Spokane, Washington. With that, the meeting was adjourned. Any comments on these notes should be submitted to John Palensky of NMFS (503/231-2177) or Kathy Ceballos (503/230-5420) , 503/230-5441 (fax) or john.palensky@noaa.gov (email). Meeting notes prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.