

System Configuration Team (SCT)

Reasonable & Prudent Measure #26

Meeting Notes

September 8, 2000

Greetings and Introductions.

The September 8 meeting of the System Configuration Team was held at NMFS' Portland offices. The meeting was chaired by Bill Hevlin of NMFS and facilitated by Trish McCarty. The agenda and a list of attendees for the September 8 meeting 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 may be too lengthy to routinely include with the meeting notes; copies of all enclosures referred to in the minutes are available upon request from Kathy Ceballos of NMFS at 503/230-5420.

1. Continued Discussion of the FY'01 CRFM Program and Individual Line-Items .

Hevlin noted that the cost of several line-items has been reduced significantly since last meeting; he added that, as the SCT agreed on August 23, all three caucuses – state, tribal and federal – had met to re-score some line-items. The results of their discussions are reflected in the newly re-ranked SCT measures worksheet, dated September 7 (Enclosure C). The group spent a few minutes reviewing the changes John Kranda made to the spreadsheet in response to the comments received from the three caucuses, as well as the new funding amounts for some line-items.

Woodin asked how the reduction in cost for the total FY'01 CRFM program from more than \$120 million to about \$85 million was accomplished. Kranda replied that the cost of many line-items has changed; in addition, the Corps has proposed reducing, eliminating and consolidating a number of line-items. As you'll recall, he said, at the last SCT meeting, the total cost of the program was estimated to be about \$88 million; since that meeting, the Corps has reduced the estimated cost of the Bonneville PH1 DSM, Monitoring and Outfall line-item by \$3 million.

Kranda noted that the Corps is continuing to explore possible sources of additional funding for the FY'01 program, including the assumption that savings and slippage will be returned in FY'01. He said that, at this point, both he and Mike Mason were reasonably comfortable with initiating an \$86 million FY'01 CRFM program, despite the fact that Congress will likely appropriate only about \$80 million. There are major off-ramps and decisions coming up regarding the Ice Harbor auxiliary water supply and Bonneville 1 surface bypass line-items, he said; in other words, there appears to be adequate flexibility in the budget to initiate funding on all of the line-items shown in the current spreadsheet.

Woodin noted that, in order to reduce the FY'01 CRFM measures package to a total cost of \$85 million, the Corps has zeroed out a number of line-items supported by the states and tribes – for example, adult fallback reduction at McNary. After a brief discussion, it was agreed to restore \$100,000 for this program in FY'01. Funding for another line-item, John Day adult holding in transition pools, was also restored to the \$250,000 level.

Much of the remainder of today's meeting was devoted to an item-by-item discussion of the FY'01 CRFM spreadsheet, beginning with an overview of the changes made to this document in response to the comments made at the last SCT meeting. Kranda noted that the items highlighted in light green are those whose cost has changed since the last meeting; items highlighted in yellow are those the Corps is now proposing to defer or modify, items highlighted in purple are Bonneville Powerhouse 1 decision items, while those highlighted in dark green would fall below the funding cutoff line if the FY'01 CRFM budget is \$80 million or less.

A variety of comments, changes in priority and cost, questions and suggestions were made in the course of today's meeting. At the close of this discussion, various SCT participants, notably Bob Heinith, expressed their dissatisfaction with the way the prioritization process has worked this year. At the close of this discussion, Hevlin expressed his appreciation for all of the long and difficult caucus work that has gone into the development of the ranked FY'01 CRFM measures list. I think where we've wound up, he said, is with a series of rankings that express what the SCT can do when we put our heads together. That doesn't mean we all agree on every item, Hevlin said; there are still a number of disagreements over the cost of certain items, for example. However, we do, I think now have a workable list of priorities with which to move forward, he said.

Is it safe to assume that, when we leave today's meeting, the Corps intends to move out on every funded item on this list? Woodin asked. With the exception of two items, Kranda replied – Bonneville gas abatement fast track and the John Day drawdown study. With respect to the latter line-item, the Corps is saying we don't think any funds will be needed in FY'01, but if they are, we will find them, Kranda said. With respect to the Bonneville gas fast track line-item, there are some funds shown in the spreadsheet for this work, but it isn't going to start in October, said Kranda. Some funding may also be restored to the McNary fish ladder exit modifications line-item, contingent on the Corps' finishing its report, he said.

Kranda added that all of this is based on the assumption that Congress will appropriate about \$80 million for the FY'01 CRFM program, and that the Corps will be able to obtain some additional funds, probably through the restoration of savings and slippage. If that does not happen, or if the Conference Committee decides to cut the appropriation, then the SCT will have to revisit the funding issue, Kranda said.

Kranda said he will produce a new, simplified version of the CRFM measures spreadsheet, reflecting the discussion at today's meeting, and will distribute it for SCT review within the next two weeks.

2. FFDRWG Update.

Tom Lorz reported that, with respect to the Bonneville 1 surface collector, the contractor has developed nine alternatives for review and discussion, ranging from an investigation of blocked trash racks to doing away with the current modules and installing a completely new surface collection system. The Corps has asked all interested parties to review and comment on those nine alternatives, and to offer any additional alternatives they feel are appropriate. Close of comment on the alternatives is today, Lorz added.

The group spent a few minutes discussing this issue; ultimately, the conclusion was that further discussion of the design alternatives, as well as the results from the 2000 field study, is needed before a decision can be made about which alternative to pursue. At Gary Fredricks' suggestion, Kranda said he will talk with the Corps' Doug Clark about setting up a special meeting to update the Bonneville 5-year plan so that the Bonn 1 surface collection project can be appraised in that broader context, hopefully some time in the next two weeks.

With respect to the Bonneville 2 corner collector, Lorz reported that the completion date for this project has now slipped to 2004, due to outfall problems, timing and lack of hydraulic modeling data availability. He added that there appears to be a need to re-work some of the design prototypes before they can be effectively modeled.

3. Next SCT Meeting Date.

The next meeting of the System Configuration Team was set for Thursday, October 12, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at NMFS' Portland offices (the September 27 SCT meeting was cancelled). Meeting notes prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.