

Columbia River Regional Forum
System Configuration Team
RE: May 22, 2003
Notes - prepared by Bill Hevlin

The following are summary notes of the discussion from this meeting. Please e-mail bill.hevlin@noaa.gov any suggested changes, additions or comments. The meeting was held at the Lower Granite Dam visitors center conference room. The project staff did provide a speaker phone for those that wanted to participate via the conference line, regrettably however, the line static was high and Rod Woodin and Dave Wills were not able to participate by phone.

1. Minutes and Notes: Draft notes from the April 25 meeting were distributed, comments on these are due June 19. No comments were received on the draft notes from the March 20 meeting and will be considered final.

2. FY03 CRFM Program funding problem update: No substantive changes since the April SCT meeting to report. There still is the possibility of \$6.5 million being restored. If not, it will come from the FY04 budget.

3. McNary Spillway Hoists: Six spillbays are now inoperable due to problems with the hoists. The interim spill pattern has holes and may slow tailrace egress. Rick Emmert detailed the Corps preliminary plan to address the problem. Preparation of plans and specs for gate rehab would begin this summer with \$65,000 from O & M funding. First phase would be to rehab 3 to 5 gates hoists, and, at the least, have one ready for use in the spring of '04. Parts could not be ordered until '04 CRFM funding is available in October, and then not likely available for installation until March of '04, leaving only one month of work before spring spill begins. Work could start earlier if money for part procurement was available before October. Preliminary cost estimate is \$500,000 per bay, and while nearly everyone had an opinion on whether funding should come from CRFM or O & M, everyone agreed that fixing these hoists is a top priority regardless of the funding source.

4. SRWG Update:

The BPA proposal to evaluate turbine and gatewell survival when operating outside the 1% efficiency rate at McNary this summer was discussed. Ken Barnhart expressed BPA's interest in the study and their ability to fund the study from the additional revenue generated by higher turbine loading. Rebecca explained the SRWG recommendation from a previous conference call, which was to implement a pilot study this summer and possibly do a full powerhouse study next summer. The proposal is under revision and will be discussed next week in a follow-up SRWG conference call. SCT generally agreed that continued unresolved SRWG issues over this study would be best addressed at IT rather than returning for further SCT consideration.

Next addressed were the '04 study needs for the Lower Granite RSW and BGS, in order to develop one-page summaries for the SRWG priority session on June 10. Steve Rainey briefly outlined the modeling work and discussion recently at WES regarding BGS configuration and location changes under consideration and results of fish behavior simulation models. He pointed

out the need to inform SRWG on these developments prior to the June 10 meeting. SCT requested that the Corps develop broad one-pagers which cover all the needs discussed.

5. FFDRWG update:

Mark Smith briefly described some surprising preliminary data reported from the balloon tag spillway survival study conducted earlier this spring. While holding survival was high for the tagged fish the incidence of eye injuries ranged from 10 to 25%, depending on the spill conditions and release elevation in front of the spill gate. Sensor fish data indicated a higher incidence of strike occurring under lower spill conditions. Questions were raised about summer spill at Ice Harbor and Smith wanted to delay that discussion until some of the spring RT survival data are available for consideration.

Also, the question was raised whether to operate the Lower Granite RSW during BiOp spill once the evaluation is completed at the end of May. It was generally agreed that water quality would benefit if the RSW was operated in conjunction with the other seven bays. However, it was mentioned that transport SARs were generally higher in late May and the RSW operation would reduce numbers transported. Also mentioned were the good conditions for in-river fish now available, a rising hydrograph and still relatively lower water temperature. Rebecca said the Corps needed some in-house discussion before taking a position on this and SCT did not reach a recommendation, the decision should be addressed next week at TMT or FPOM.

6. FY04 CRFM Program: Review of the FY04 program was deferred to the next SCT meeting on June 19, 2003. Updated workplans, which should be ready for the June meeting, are needed to update cost estimates and better describe the work planned for '04.

7. After lunch the team observed the RSW and training spill from the upper deck and spillway walkway. Unexpectedly, some of the surface flow from the RSW appeared to be forming an eddy downstream of the powerhouse. Also, observed and questioned whether safe for fish, was the shallow uneven flow coming through the spillbays used for training spill.

8. The next SCT meeting is scheduled for June 19, 9 am, at the Forum Building, NMFS office in Portland.