

System Configuration Team Meeting Notes

August 17, 2006

1. Greetings and Introductions.

The August 17 SCT meeting was chaired by Bill Hevlin. The following is a summary (not a verbatim transcript) of the topics discussed and decisions made at this meeting. Anyone with questions or comments about these notes should contact Kathy Ceballos at 503-230-5420.

2. Continued Prioritization of FY'07 CRFM Work Items.

John Kranda distributed the most recent version of the FY'07 CRFM measures worksheet. He noted that the total cost of all of the projects for which estimates are available is \$83.5 million. We're unlikely to receive our funding until after October, he said, and so will likely be in continuing resolution for several months. It is likely that the appropriation will be in the ballpark of what we need, and although savings and slippage may be deducted, I think we're in pretty good shape, budgetarily, for FY'07, Kranda said – the spreadsheet total for the high- and medium-priority projects so far is about \$78 million.

The group devoted a few minutes of discussion to the zero, "do not fund" scores some projects received; it was noted that the majority of these projects are, not surprisingly, down at the bottom of the list. Tom Lorz said that, given its advisory role in this process, CRITFC is unlikely to actively oppose the funding even of the line-items it scored as zeroes. Hevlin observed that those projects which received zeros from several of the SCT agencies ended up low in the rankings and will likely not be funded. There may be other studies or projects yet to be proposed for CRFM funding which are higher priority for the region. The Projects receiving "zero" rankings included:

- Stilling basin erosion (line-item 33), only BPA gave a zero.
- John Day mitigation – Ringgold (45), only ODFW gave a zero.
- Configuration/Operation Plan – Ice Harbor (54), only ODFW gave a zero.
- B1 surface bypass (50), only WDFW gave a zero.
- Spill injury mechanisms (58) received three zeros.
- Ice Harbor RSW ballon tag study (59) received four zeros.
- Forebay guidance structure – The Dalles (61), received four zeros.

Line Item 57 – Delayed Mortality of juvenile salmon – did not receive a score

from WDFW, ODFW, IDFG, NPPC and CRITFC. During the ranking process, agencies recommended that all studies proposed for funding via this line item be reviewed and scrubbed by SCT prior to ranking. At SCT, Tom Lorz suggested that once these proposals are available, they be reviewed and ranked by SCT, perhaps during the September SCT meeting. Jim Ruff pointed out that it might be a good idea to consider ISRP review of some of these more controversial projects. That's a good idea, said Lorz, but that review process takes time. We need to work that out, said Ruff, because we've spent \$1 billion to date on this program, and Congress, at some point, is going to ask what peer review we've done.

The last comment I have is that, given the funding level for this year, we may want to consider moving some of the mainstem/systemwide projects from the Council fish and wildlife program over to CRFM, such as the delayed mortality study, said Ruff. We should consider all of these together, he suggested – another possibility for CRFM funding is the whole suite of tagging projects. Gary Fredricks noted that O&M projects are consistently under-funded; in years when there are may be some extra money in this program, it might be possible to move some funding from CRFM to O&M. The group devoted a few minutes of discussion to this concept; Ruff offered to e-mail out to SCT the delayed mortality project proposal, together with the ISRP review of that project. I would also like the SCT to consider the future PIT tagging/tag development projects for CRFM funding, Ruff said. Kranda noted that some sort of cost-sharing structure might be an appropriate way to approach these types of projects.

After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that it should be possible to fold the tagging technology development work into existing CRFM line-item 7, with an appropriate increase in estimated FY'07 funding.

The discussion then turned to other potential projects that could be added to the FY'07 CRFM spreadsheet. Among the suggestions:

- A study to determine where the Snake River fall chinook yearling smolts are overwintering, by using microchemistry on hard structures, such as scales or otoliths, as has been done for Flathead cutthroat trout, using fish that have been PIT-tagged for the ongoing Snake River fall chinook transport study. The SCT would need to develop a request for proposals for this study
- Little Goose flow deflector -- spill bay 1. According to Marvin Shutters, the region now knows a lot more about flow deflector design, and it should now be possible to optimize the design for that bay. Design and build the flow deflector now, while the RSW is being built. The Corps estimated the cost of a single deflector at about \$250,000. It was agreed that the Corps will discuss the feasibility and potential utility of this project and report back to the SCT.
- Steelhead kelt reconditioning facility (system) – possibly multiple facilities would be needed; a kelt reconditioning research facility may be needed to determine the most cost-effective kelt reconditioning strategy. It may also be possible to use the Bonneville juvenile facility to rear kelts during a pilot study. Ruff noted that

there is a Yakima kelt reconditioning proposal that is being considered for funding under the mainstem/systemwide program.

- A test to round the corners of one ladder to see whether lamprey passage is improved, because lamprey are not designed to make 90-degree turns. One comment: this may already be a part of line-item 35. Another comment: may be more of an add-on than a new line-item.
- Increased PIT-tagging of wild Snake River steelhead to look at SARs by passage route – more wild-PIT-tagged steelhead are needed to conduct valid analysis. This project was considered for funding through the Council program, but was rejected. May be possible to add this project onto an existing line-item, possibly in the transportation or delayed mortality categories.
- John Day general model – a model is needed that would be useful for alternatives selection in the configuration/operation plans development process. A study, or at least a work group, is needed to clearly identify the problems with existing models and the appropriate scale for the John Day model.

That makes eight suggested new line-items, although some may be incorporated into existing line-items, said Ruff. It was agreed to discuss these potential add-ons at the September SCT meeting, including the Corps' response to how they might be folded into the program.

3. Recent FFDRWG and SRWG Meetings.

The next Portland District FFDRWG meeting is set for August 28; the next Walla Walla District SRWG meeting will be held August 29; the next Portland District SRWG meeting will be held September 11. There is also a surface bypass workshop scheduled for early September at the Doubletree Hotel in Portland.

4. Next SCT Meeting Date.

The next meeting of the System Configuration Team was set for Thursday, September 21. Meeting summary prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.