# System Configuration Team (SCT)

**Reasonable & Prudent Measure #26**
**Meeting Notes**
**April 22, 1999**

# DRAFT

**Greetings and Introductions.**

The April 22 meeting of the System Configuration Team was held at the National Marine Fisheries Service offices in Portland, Oregon. The meeting was co-chaired by Bill Hevlin of NMFS and Jim Ruff of the Northwest Power Planning Council staff, and was facilitated by Donna Silverberg. The agenda and a list of attendees for the April 22 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.

Hevlin noted that NMFS is in the process of putting together an SCT web page; in the future, all of the SCT meeting notes and written materials will be available through this homepage.

**I. Discussion of Criteria Development and Timeline for FY'00 CRFM Project Prioritization Process.**

Yoshinaka said FPAC is still working on the list of remaining "extra" projects for funding under the FY'99 CRFM budget. One project that has been discussed is the relocation of the Lower Monumental bypass outfall; another possible project is the modification of fish ladder transition pools, changing the existing weir elevation to increase velocity and reduce fallback, probably starting at Little Goose Dam. Yoshinaka said FPAC is continuing to discuss the list of

potential FY'99 "extra" projects; others may be proposed, and he will update the SCT as they come up.

What about the projects we've already discussed, such as CRITFC's lamprey passage study? Hevlin asked. They didn't make it at SRWG, Steve Rainey replied. Can you develop a list of additional FY'99 projects prior to the next SCT meeting? Hevlin asked. Yes, Yoshinaka replied, adding that anyone with additional projects to propose should contact him directly.

Moving on to the FY'00 ranking criteria development process, Hevlin reported that he, Bob Heinith, Phil Thor and Witt Anderson had met since the last SCT meeting to try to refine the list of criteria to be used in ranking FY'00 projects, as well as a plan for how those criteria should be applied. We were able to come up with what we think may be a workable plan, he said; we wanted to describe it to you today, to see whether we can make some progress.

The plan breaks down into two tracks, Thor explained. Track one is a full-group review of the criteria, and assigning weights to those criteria. Track two is for everyone to take those weighted criteria and develop their own individual rankings of the FY'00 projects. The caveat the subgroup agreed to on Track 2 is that it would be a 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 compilation, with a third of each project ranking representing the tribal, state and federal perspectives, Thor explained.

He added that the current list includes 24 separate criteria, and the subgroup was unable to agree that any of the 24 could be eliminated. Given that fact, the subgroup decided that, instead of asking the SCT members to rank each project under 24 separate criteria, they would group those criteria under three categories: biological effectiveness criteria, policy/management criteria and monitoring and evaluation criteria. In other words, said Thor, we're asking the group to assign a single score to each project under biological effectiveness, policy/management and monitoring and evaluation, rather than trying to assign separate weights under 24 different criteria. He distributed Enclosure C, a memo detailing which of the 24 criteria are included under each of the three headings.

In terms of the weights each category should be assigned, said Anderson, clearly biological effectiveness is the most important criteria and should receive the highest weight. The subgroup went so far as to suggest that biological effectiveness should receive 60% of the weight, with 20% each assigned to policy/management and monitoring and evaluation.

The group spent a few minutes discussing these criteria and their suggested weights; ultimately, it was agreed that each of the three entities represented at SCT (state, tribal and federal) will apply the criteria listed in Enclosure C to develop their rankings of each of the FY'00 projects prior to the June SCT meeting, using the following weights: biological effectiveness, 50%, policy/management, 20%, monitoring and evaluation, 30%. The maximum score any single project can receive is 300 points. The current FY'00 project list is attached as Enclosure D.

**II. Update on Chief Joseph Dam Gas Abatement Alternatives**.

Kathy Hacker of the Corps distributed Enclosure E, a detailed plan of study for the Chief Joseph Dam gas abatement evaluation report, including the plan for the near-field TDG study at that project and the plan of study for the system evaluation. In response to a question from Ruff, Hacker said this project is not included in the SCT's CRFM ranking process because it is O&M-funded.

Hacker also touched on the schedule for this effort, which includes the following key dates and components:

Initial appraisal report: May 1998
Screening document: November 1998
Plan of study: April 1998
Chief Joseph stand-alone
Chief Joseph-Grand Coulee joint study
Systemwide TGG (underway)
Deflectors
Side channel
System evaluation (underway)
Near-field study (May 1999)
Numerical model (underway)
Physical model studies (underway)

Hacker said the evaluation report on dissolved gas abatement at Chief Joseph will be completed in April 2000. At that point, she said, we should already have an idea of how construction will be funded. Anderson added that the FY'99 and '00 work on the gas abatement study at Chief Joseph falls under 100% hydropower, BPA direct funding under the reimbursable category of the MOA.

Under the schedule laid out here, Hacker said, if Construction General funds are available, we're on track to begin construction in January 2001. It's a little different type of project than CG generally funds, because Chief Joseph is an existing facility, and this is not considered to be major rehab work. In response to a question from Boyce, Hacker said the Corps is also in the process of applying for an FY'01 Congressional add-on for the construction work.

Marian Valentine of the Corps provided an overview of the planned 1999 near-field TDG study at Chief Joseph; she drew the group's attention to the description of this study in Enclosure E. Please see this document for details of Valentine's presentation. She noted that the Corps plans to conduct the study for 14 days, beginning May 16, 1999; she also drew the group's attention to her memo, dated April 20, describing some of the concerns about the proposed test raised by NMFS, WDOE, the Corps, BPA and the Colville Tribe. Valentine requested that anyone with additional concerns provide them to her as soon as possible.

In response to a question from Jim Nielsen of WDFW, Valentine said Chief Joseph tailwater TDG levels exceeded 140% during the spring of 1997, the highest-flow year on record. During the test period in 1999, she said Wells Dam forebay TDG levels are expected to be in the

120%-125% range, given forecast total river flow at that time.

The group spent a few minutes discussing the timing of the 1999 test; Valentine said the test will attempt to target the peak flow period this spring, so the above-listed test dates may change, based on real-time runoff data. Some SCT concerns were raised about the potential for exceeding the 120% TDG standard during the test period; Rainey said there has been some discussion of the possibility of scheduling a conference call to evaluate TDG impacts immediately after the test begins. In response to a question from Nielsen, Valentine said the Corps does not anticipate that the planned test at chief Joseph will affect the Wells Dam spill program.

Valentine said that, if the SCT has any additional input on the planned test, she needs to receive it soon. At this point, she said, the Corps is continuing to coordinate on the test, and is planning to do it this year, as soon as runoff conditions are optimal. Thor made the point that this qualifies as a special operation; he suggested that Valentine discuss the planned test with the Technical Management Team, which is responsible for coordinating weekly hydrosystem operations. Valentine agreed to do so.

**III. Feedback from Studies Review Work Group Discussions**.

In the absence of Rebecca Kalamasz, it was agreed to defer the discussion of this item until the May 17 SCT meeting. Ruff asked about attendance at the SRWG meetings; BPA's Bill Maslen said there was a good turnout for the adult meeting in Walla Walla, the transportation meeting in Seattle was less-well-attended. Anderson said it is the Corps' intention to see what comes out of these subgroup meetings before setting up a process to integrate the project rankings under the various study categories. It could probably be accomplished in a one-day meeting, because the heavy lifting will have been done at the subgroup meetings, one meeting participant observed.

**IV. FFDRWG Updates**.

No FFDRWG updates were presented at today's meeting.

**V. Next SCT Meeting date and Agenda Items**.

The next meeting of the System Configuration Team was set for Monday, May 17; it will be held in conjunction with a field trip to John Day, Bonneville and possibly The Dalles Dams. The SCT meeting itself will be held at John Day, the first stop on the tour, at 9 a.m. Anderson noted that the Corps would like to have a discussion about the FY'01 CRFM budget at that meeting, prior to making their initial budget submission to Congress.