



FISH PASSAGE CENTER

847 NE 19th Avenue, #250, Portland, OR 97232

Phone: (503) 833-3900 Fax: (503) 232-1259

www.fpc.org/

e-mail us at fpcstaff@fpc.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: FPAC

FROM: FPC Staff

DATE: April 15, 2014

RE: Action Notes from April 15, 2014 FPAC face-to-face meeting

On April 15, 2014 FPAC met at the FPC offices in Portland, OR for its monthly face-to-face meeting. Present for the meeting were: Paul Wagner (FPAC Co-Chair, NOAA), Tom Lorz (FPAC Co-Chair, CRITFC, via phone), Tom Skiles (CRITFC), Dave Wills (USFWS, via phone), Charlie Morrill (WDFW, via phone), Sherri Sears (Colville Tribe, via phone), Russ Kiefer (IDFG), Trevor Conder (NOAA, via phone), Tom Iverson (CBFWA, via phone), Erin Cooper (FPC), Margaret Filardo (FPC), Brandon Chockley (FPC).

Agenda Items

Water Supply/Flood Control

- Dave Benner (FPC) provided a summary of the current reservoir operations and water supply forecasts. Below is an overview.

<i>Project</i>	<i>Current Elevation (feet)</i>	<i>Change in Elevation (feet over past week)</i>	<i>Last Week's Outflows (Kcfs)</i>	<i>April 30 FC (feet)</i>
GCL	1246.9	Drafted 3.9	106.7 – 131.4	1235.2
LIB	2404.2	Drafted 5.9	25.2	2387.0
HH	3507.6	Drafted 4.8	11.9 – 12.6	3495.4
DWOR	1493.4	Drafted 5.9	20.0	*
BRNLE	2056.8	Drafted 1.7	14.4 – 16.2 (inflows)	2056.3

*COE has received a flood control deviation based on flow. Project will release outflows of 20 Kcfs until the beginning of refill operation (expected April 18), when it will reduce outflows to 10 Kcfs.

- The Spring Biological Opinion flow period began on April 3rd in the lower Snake River. The flow objective this spring will be 100 Kcfs at Lower Granite. Flows at Lower Granite have averaged 74.1 Kcfs between April 3rd and April 13th.
- The Spring Biological Opinion flow for the Upper and Lower Columbia began on April 10th. The spring flow objective at McNary Dam will be 260 Kcfs (averaged 235.4 Kcfs so far) and 135 Kcfs at Priest Rapids (averaged 128.4 so far).
- Snowpack estimates from Natural Resource Conservation Service, provided by Dave Benner.

<i>Basin</i>	<i>Snow Water Equivalent (% Avg) March 18, 2014</i>
Columbia above Snake confluence	119
Snake River	98
Lower Columbia, between Bonneville and McNary	63

- ESP runoff volume estimates as of April 12, 2014.

Location	% Average (1981–2010)	Runoff Volume (Kaf)
The Dalles (Jan–July)	104	104995
Grand Coulee (Jan–July)	104	62253
Libby Res. Inflow, MT (Apr–Aug)	111	6559 6868*
Hungry Horse Res. Inflow, MT (Jan–July)	111	2327
Lower Granite Res. Inflow (Apr–July)	112	22247
Brownlee Re. Inflow (Apr–July)	67	3688
Dworshak Res. Inflow (Apr–July)	131	3158 3111*

*COE April Forecast

Juvenile Fish Passage

- Yearling Chinook passage has increased over the past week at the Salmon and Snake Rivers traps, Lower Granite, John Day, McNary, and Bonneville.
- The first Spring Creek hatchery release was on Friday, April 11th. Less than 2% mortality was observed and no incidences of descaling.
- Steelhead counts have increased in recent days at all sites.
- Sockeye observed at Lower Granite are likely Kokanee spilled from Dworshak.
- Estimated collections of juvenile lamprey at John Day have been in the 200–650 range over the past week. Collections at BON have been much more variable (30–850).

Adult Fish Passage

- Counts of spring Chinook at Bonneville ranged from 243 – 1368 over the past week. The year-to-date count is 5971, 357% of 2013 and 138% of the 10-year average.
- The year-to-date spring Chinook count at The Dalles is 1539, which is 86% of the 10-year average.
- Steelhead counts at Bonneville are approximately 50/day, with a year-to-date count of 3232, 113% above the 10-year average. The Steelhead year-to-date count at Lower Granite is 6558.

Biological Opinion Spill

- Spring spill, as outlined in the 2014 Biological Opinion, has started at all projects.
- At Lower Monumental Dam, the spill cap was raised to 30 Kcfs on April 10th, followed by TDG exceedences at the Lower Monumental tailrace and Ice Harbor forebay. The gas cap was reduced to 26 Kcfs for about 24 hours and is currently 28 Kcfs.
- No other exceedences were observed.

Sort-by-Code Requests

- A request from Debbie Milks at WDFW for Lyons Ferry yearling fall Chinook was approved.

Wanapum Dam Update

- Weekly meetings (Monday mornings) continue to give updates on the status of the dam and plans for repairs.
- Several potential causes for the crack have been eliminated, including earthquake or military testing. Not eliminated is the potential the crack was caused by forebay pressure.
- The modified adult ladder at Wanapum is planned to be functional by April 15th. This ladder will require a drop of 13 – 15 feet, which will be observed by WDFW biologists for orientation during the drop and for instances of immediate mortality.
- The adult trap at Priest Rapids is completed and will load adults into eight trucks prepared for transport 5 miles upriver starting April 15th.
- A test of acoustic- and PIT-tagged adults will start with 200 PIT-tagged and 50 acoustic-tagged adults. These fish will be tracked for travel time and conversion rate to Rock Island. The proposal for meeting “proof of concept” states a minimum conversion rate of 80% must be reached before trucking will be replaced by normal passage and a travel time of 356 hours. Concern was expressed that these criteria are too high and not stringent enough to assure safe fish passage.
- CRITFC comments recommend a similar tagging effort be put into testing survival through the trucking operation.
- FPAC expressed concerns with using MS222 during the tagging process and suggests an exploration of other possible anesthetics.

Changes to Smolt Monitoring Program

- At last week's FPOM meeting, the COE expressed a desire to reduce separator monitoring at McNary Dam. The COE suggested McNary sampling could be more similar to Ice Harbor, where sampling occurs only a couple of days a week (for condition only). The desire to reduce separator monitoring is primarily a budgetary concern.
- A reduction in separator monitoring at MCN would reduce sampling for the SMP. Given the potential change to the SMP, FPAC has asked the FPC to provide a review of the SMP program to FPAC. Review should include an overview of what data are being collected, where, and how these data are being used by the fisheries managers. FPAC will use the review to make recommendations to FPOM on potential changes to the SMP. Changes to the SMP should not be driven by COE budgetary concerns.

Transportation Start Date

- Paul Wagner (NOAA) reiterated that the 2014 BiOp and 2014 FOP states stated that transportation at Lower Granite can begin between April 20th and April 25th with a staggered start at Little Goose and Lower Monumental Dams. Alternatively, NOAA may propose that transportation can begin at all three sites on May 1st, with no staggered start or transportation starts at LGR on May 1st, with a staggered start at LGS and LMN and a change in RSW operation.
- Due to lock outage at LGS, it is unlikely that transport would start any earlier than April 25th.
- There are currently no proposals to study the effects of changing RSW operations in 2014.

Coordination

- The next FPAC face-to-face meeting will occur on May 20, 2014, at the FPC office.