



# FISH PASSAGE CENTER

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## MEMORANDUM

To: Fish Passage Advisory Committee (FPAC)

From: FPC Staff

Date: November 1, 2018

Subject: Action Notes from October 29, 2018, FPAC meeting

On October 29, 2018, FPAC met for a special conference call to discuss chum operations. The following people participated in the meeting:

Paul Wagner (NOAA, co-chair)  
Erin Cooper (FPC)  
Brandon Chockley (FPC)  
Erick Van Dyke (ODFW)  
Jay Hesse (NPT)

David Swank (USFWS)  
David Benner (FPC)  
Gabe Scheer (FPC)  
Jennifer Graham (Warm Springs Tribe)

## AGENDA ITEMS

### ***Chum Operations (00:00 – 35:23)***

- Paul Wagner reviewed the chum counts at Ives/Pierce Island Complex over the last week. 60 chum were observed on Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup> and 137 were observed on Oct. 25<sup>th</sup>. According to crew conducting surveys, chum appear to be close to spawning and operation should be started soon.
- According to BPA, if agreement was met today, earliest they could guarantee water would be Friday, Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Proposed operation would be to maintain target tailrace elevation of 11.5-13.0', with the actual elevation closer to 11.5'.
- Paul reviewed some current conditions:

- We are currently in a drought. As of last Monday (Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>), soil moisture was 20% of average. Likelihood of emerging from drought was likely improvement during October but no certainty.
- NOAA 90-day forecast calling for below average precipitation and above average temperatures. NOAA's new 1-year forecast is similar to 90-day forecast, through January below average precipitation and above average temperatures, then trending to average for first few months of 2019 and then back to below average precipitation and above average temp.
- Recent precipitation has improved things. Current forecast calling for continued precipitation for next 7-10 days.
- Current TW elevation at BON is 9.2-9.5'.
- Risk of starting operation too soon is still there.
  - Based on conditions at the time, BPA was estimating that maintaining 11.5' TW would take 1 foot per day (130 Kcfs needed to provide TW elevation of 11.5'). Conditions have changed so this projection has likely changed.
  - To maintain 85% probability of refill at GCL, BPA will not go below 1,278' by end of November and 1,270' by end of December.
  - Current elevation at GCL is 1,287.4'. If BPA's worse projection played out, GCL could be at 1,277 within 10 days of starting operation. Not likely that this would happen given current conditions.
- Jay Hesse (NPT) asked why BPA is leading the TMT discussions on chum operations as opposed to a fish manager.
  - Fish managers could lead the discussion but BPA has best understanding of the risk.
  - Erick Van Dyke (ODFW) noted that the information needed for these discussions is more readily available to BPA and they are sharing that information with rest of TMT.
- Don't know if Hamilton and Duncan creeks are accessible. They were not as of last Friday (Oct. 26).
- Erick Van Dyke (ODFW) asked for BON graph of TW elevations further back than currently available on FPC website. Brandon Chockley (FPC) provided chart during call (available in recording).
- Dave Swank (USWFS) asked if we've ever had a chum operation where we targeted an elevation below 11.5' or delayed the start of operation due to concerns over water supply. Paul Wagner (NOAA) noted that we have delayed the operation beyond Nov. 7 but usually due to low fish numbers. Water supply is always a question. We've had to bail prior to emergence due to low water supply. Once you drop below 10.8', things dry up and creeks are inaccessible. May be able to drop as low as 11.2' or 11.1' and do periodic releases of water to maintain water over redds. Also, ground water may maintain redds and keep them viable and elevations below 11.5'. Dave asked, why would managers do a periodic pulsing release as opposed to a constant minimum flow level? Paul noted that it is typically a water conservation issue. If water gets above desired elevation and chum spawn at those higher elevations, pulses of water may be

provided to keep higher elevation redds viable. First goal is to maintain a minimum but water supply at GCL may not always allow for this.

- NOAA, NPT, ODFW, and USWFS are all ok with proposed operation of targeting 11.5' elevation at BON, starting Friday, Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Based on conversations with WDFW from last week, WDFW supports the operation.
- Erick Van Dyke (ODFW) noted that managers will need to be watching refill probability at GCL as operation progresses.
- TMT call on this issue is scheduled for 2:00 pm.

These minutes have been reviewed and approved by the Fish Passage Advisory Committee.