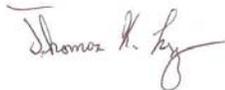


State, Federal and Tribal Fishery Agencies Joint Technical Staff Memo

*Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
Nez Perce Tribe
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife*

TO: Steve Barton, TMT Chair



FROM: Tom Lorz, Vice-Chair
Fish Passage Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: Flood Control Operations at Dworshak Reservoir

DATE: January 21, 2011

The Fish Passage Advisory Committee (FPAC) has met and discussed current and planned operations occurring at Dworshak Reservoir over January of 2011. Recent weather events have caused the noted Salmon Managers to have some concern regarding Dworshak Reservoir.

There are currently two January Water Supply forecasts (April-July) for Dworshak, one issued by the COE and the other by the River Forecasting Center (RFC). The January Final (April-July) forecast at Dworshak issued by the COE is 3340 Kaf; whereas, the January Final Forecast over the same time period issued by the RFC is much lower at 2640 Kaf, a difference of 700 Kaf. Because the calculation of Flood Control Elevations at storage reservoirs are primarily dependent on the water supply above a certain reservoir, the water supply forecast used in this calculation is critical in the determination of flood control elevations. In a year such as 2011 at Dworshak, when there are two forecasts that are very different, flood control elevations could be much different depending on which forecast was used to determine flood control. At the current time, the COE January Final forecast is used to determine the January Flood Control Elevations and because the COE January Final forecast is relatively high at 3340 Kaf (approximately 124% of average), the flood control elevations set by the COE are relatively low.

In addition, due to recent rain events and high temperatures, inflows to Dworshak reservoir have been as high as 32.3 Kcfs on January 17th, 2011. As a result of the increased inflow to Dworshak Dam, the COE has increased outflow to full powerhouse early on January 18th, 2011 and further increased outflows on January 20, 2011 to 14.1 Kcfs (3.7 Kcfs spill) in effort to draft the reservoir (at elevation 1535.1 feet on midnight January 20th) to its end of January FC Elevation of 1526.2 feet. As of January 20th, 2011 the NRCS website¹ has

¹ <ftp://ftp.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/data/snow/update/columbia/wy2011/cu110120.txt>.

snowpack in the Clearwater and Salmon at 104% of average. The FPAC is concerned that at least some portion of this increased inflow at Dworshak Dam may be a result of melting snowpack, and this current inflow could effectively be water that should be melting during the April-July Water Supply period. This in conjunction with the discrepancy between January Water Supply Forecasts issued by the COE and RFC have led the FPAC to be wary of a potential situation where Dworshak be drafted aggressively over the last portion of January only to have Water Supply decrease and Flood Control Elevations increase later in February.

Based on the above information, the FPAC is concerned regarding the increased outflow from Dworshak to meet the end of January Flood Control at Dworshak Dam. We request that the COE consider the recent snowmelt in their flood control operations and proceed cautiously. If necessary, based on the current information, we would request the COE to consider a deviation request for project operations.