

State, Federal and Tribal Fishery Agencies Joint Technical Staff

Columbia River Inter-tribal Fish Commission
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Nez Perce Tribe
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

June 29, 2004:

Witt Anderson
NWD Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 2870
Portland, OR 97208-2870

Greg Delwiche
Bonneville Power Administration
905 NE 11th Avenue
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, OR 97208

Re: Lower Granite Summer RSW Test

Dear Mr. Anderson and Mr. Delwiche:

This is a follow-up to our May 10, 2004 letter and the Corps May 28, 2004 response to our letter regarding our recommendation to conduct a test of the Removable Spillway Weir (RSW) at Lower Granite this summer. The main purpose of this letter is to again express the consensus support by Fishery Managers for this test and expedite resolution of funding so this test can begin immediately since we are already well into the summer migration season. However, using this project as an example, we are also becoming increasingly concerned about how Columbia River Fish Mitigation Program funding decisions are being made.

According to the May 28, 2004 letter from the Corps, the reason for not funding the study this year was "Money returned after cancellation of the spring evaluation contract was

applied to other items that were identified as higher priority by the System Configuration Team”. First and foremost, as members of the System Configuration Team (SCT), we do not recall discussing funding for a summer RSW test at Lower Granite. This raises the procedural question of how do we ensure that all projects, that are deemed worthy by at least one member of SCT, get on the spreadsheets for SCT ranking. Secondly, the Corps should have recognized the strong regional support for a test of the RSW at LGR on summer migrants this year with receipt of our May 10 letter signed by the state, federal, and tribal fishery agencies representatives on SCT. Because of the strong support within SCT for this test and the short timeframe to put a study in place, we believe the Corps should have moved quickly to resolve this issue. By waiting to address this issue, the Corps has greatly hampered our ability to get this study implemented this year, if for no other reason than because we may not have enough time to get the study started soon enough.

For FY04 projects, the Corps made decisions on funding that could have been used for the Lower Granite summer RSW test. An example:

1. *Re-distribution of funding for the McNary spill hoists (\$1.8 million) to augment funding for the Ice Harbor RSW-* although the project could not proceed because of a contested contract, the Corps re-distributed funds without discussing with the SCT. An SCT discussion about such a large sum of money, coupled with the fast track decisions to fully implement RSW installations, could have provided a re-prioritization of projects and allowed for funding of the RSW test at Lower Granite.

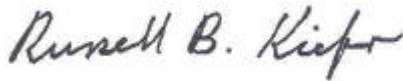
Within the next month, we will be elevating these procedural issues for discussion by the Implementation Team.

As discussed in our May 10 letter, a summer RSW test at Lower Granite is paramount to future deployment and operation of RSWs in order to fulfill the Columbia River Fish Mitigation Program’s objective of improving anadromous fish passage survival for fall chinook salmon, as well as improving the cost effectiveness of the mitigation program. Determining how best to operate RSWs for Snake River fall chinook is critical to evaluating transportation as identified in the Biological Opinion as RPA 148. This RPA calls for optimizing in-river passage conditions for comparison with transportation by 200?. It will likely take several years of summer tests to determine how and where to deploy RSWs in the Snake and Columbia Rivers to optimize in-river survival of summer migrants, until then we will be required to provide bulk spill to the gas cap in order to provide best possible in-river conditions. We have completed two years of tests for spring migrants and as you know results are very promising. Benefits to summer migrants could be potentially greater since their guidance efficiency is much lower. We deeply regret the apparent lost opportunity to begin to provide answers to this regionally important

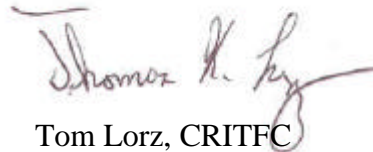
issue. It is still our hope that funding could be found for this test and the Corps could initiate a contract to conduct a limited RSW test (hydroacoustic monitoring) at Lower Granite this year, as proposed in our May 10 letter.

We look forward to working with the Corps and BPA to improve decision making on the SCT and to provide expedited summer testing of the RSW as we propose at Lower Granite.

Sincerely,



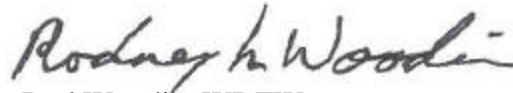
Russ Kiefer, IDFG



Tom Lorz, CRITFC



Dave Statler, NPT



Rod Woodin, WDFW



Ron Boyce, ODFW



Dave Wills, USFWS



Keith Kutchins, SBT