

# 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  
US Fish and Wildlife Service  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife*

February 15, 2005

Marvin Shutters  
US Army Corps of Engineers  
Walla Walla District  
201 N. 3rd St.  
Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876

Dear Mr. Shutters:

On December 14, 2004 the Salmon Managers representing the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Nez Perce Tribe, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Shoshone-Bannock Tribe, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and US Fish and Wildlife Service sent a letter to the Corps of Engineers (COE) and the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) explaining our rationale for recommending testing, in 2005, the effectiveness of Removable Spillway Weirs (RSWs) in passing summer out-migrants at both Lower Granite Dam (LGR) and Ice Harbor Dam (IHR). At subsequent regional meetings, Salmon Managers have verbally outlined in general terms our thoughts on the treatments that should be tested. Recently, representatives of the COE and BPA have asked if we could provide specific treatments we would recommend to be tested. The specific treatments that should be tested are dependent upon the hydraulic modeling work that will be conducted at Vicksburg from February 7-11. However, the following is an outline of our recommendations with as much detail as is possible until the modeling work is conducted and evaluated. These recommendations are also based upon COE researchers' determination that only a two-treatment block design is realistically doable at each dam per season (spring and summer).

Overall, we believe the RSW spill levels selected should be at a level that is estimated to provide comparable, or better, spillway passage and survival as obtained with current bulk spill at BiOp levels. Proposed test spill levels should be discussed and approved at the technical level in the Corp's SRWG process and the Regional Forum (TMT).

## **Ice Harbor**

### ***Spring Evaluation***

Implement a two-treatment random block study design. One treatment would be Spill Volumes directed in the BiOp using the Bulk spill pattern. The other treatment would be RSW with training spill. The amount of training spill is still uncertain until the hydraulic modeling work is completed to determine what level of training spill will provide adequate tailrace egress. The amount of training spill selected should be at a level that is estimated to provide at least as high spillway passage and survival as can be obtained with bulk spill at volumes directed in the BiOp. Proposed test spill levels should be discussed and approved at the technical level in the Corp's SRWG process and the Regional Forum (TMT).

### ***Summer Evaluation***

Use the same methods to determine the two treatments as described above for the Spring test.

## **Lower Granite**

### ***Spring Evaluation***

Constant RSW and training spill operation, with the treatments being in-out operation of the Behavioral Guidance System (BGS). RSW and training spill amounts should be at the same level (if possible) as selected for the test at IHR. Selecting the same spill levels at both projects would provide information on whether an RSW can be expected to perform similarly at multiple lower Snake River Projects for spring migrants.

### ***Summer Evaluation***

Implement a two-treatment random block study design. The first treatment should once again be RSW and training spill amounts at the same level as selected for the IHR summer test (if possible). This would provide information on whether RSWs can be expected to perform similarly at multiple lower Snake River Projects for summer migrants. The second treatment would consist of the same total volume of spill used in the first treatment, but using a more conventional bulk style pattern. The specific bulk spill pattern to test would be determined based upon the results of the Vicksburg hydraulic model testing. The BGS would be left in either the deployed position or the stored location. Currently the stored position would seem to make more sense, however the Salmon Managers do not have strong opinions on this aspect of the study design, only that the BGS should not be moved during the evaluation. The Salmon Managers envision these tests starting in late June and continuing through most of July.

Before IHR tests are finalized, we should consider and discuss the possibility of adjusting the RSW + training spill levels at IHR to match the projected RSW + training spill capacity at LGR during its summer RSW test. This would be to secure a test that is as comparable as possible between the projects during the summer season. Although this water year is beginning to shape up as one of the lower flow years, it would be easier to establish similar spill levels under these low flow summer conditions.

Sincerely,



Dave Statler, NPT



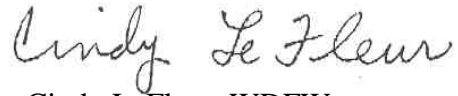
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